Mission Studies as Evangelization and Theology for World Christianity: Reflections on Mission Studies in Britain and Ireland, 2000-2015

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In 2000 and in 2012 I wrote papers for the British and Irish Association for Mission Studies (BIAMS) on mission studies in Britain and Ireland, which were published in journals of theological education.¹ These two papers surveyed the state of mission studies and how in this region it is related to various other disciplines. Each paper suggested a next stage in the development of mission studies: the first saw mission studies as facilitating a worldwide web of missiological discussion; the second suggested that mission studies should be appreciated as internationalizing theology more generally. This paper will review the developments in Britain and Ireland over the years which are detailed in these articles and bring them up to date. It will also further argue that, while continuing to develop as “mission studies” or “missiology”, the discipline should today claim the names “theology for world Christianity” and “studies in evangelization”.

Introduction to a World-Wide Web (2000)

British and Irish Association for Mission Studies

In the 1984 Conference of ACATE, the Association of Adult Centres of Theological Education, that “every curriculum ought to find some place for the study of the theology of mission”.² In response to this call, The British and Irish Association for Mission Studies (BIAMS) was founded in 1989 to promote the study of mission as a recognized discipline within theological education at the instigation of a consortium of Anglican mission agencies—Partnership for World Mission—and the General Synod Board for Mission and Unity of the Church of England.³ In the succeeding decade BIAMS made further links with universities, colleges and training institutions and strengthened its church connections through a close relationship with the Churches’ Commission on Mission, an ecumenical body. BIAMS drew together both practitioners and theorists of

mission\textsuperscript{4} at biennial conferences interspersed with day conferences.\textsuperscript{5} It stimulated interest in mission studies by a twice-yearly *Newsletter*, website, and interest groups.

**Mission studies as a theological and academic discipline**

In a paper written with the help of the then BIAMS executive and published in 2000, I argued that mission studies was an established theological and academic discipline in the UK. It was represented in some shape or form in most theological colleges and in many university departments in Britain and Ireland. The main university centers were Birmingham, Edinburgh, and Cambridge. The University of Birmingham Department of Theology claimed to be the first in the country to focus on the study of mission and world Christianity and had the only chair of mission in Britain or Ireland.\textsuperscript{6} New College, University of Edinburgh claimed a double distinction in the history of mission studies. It was the venue for the great World Missionary Conference of 1910 and had what has been called “the first chair of mission studies anywhere in the Protestant world”.\textsuperscript{7} The Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World founded by Andrew Walls was based in the Faculty of Divinity.\textsuperscript{8} The Henry Martyn Centre,\textsuperscript{9} an associate institute of the Cambridge Theological Federation, was a foundational resource for research projects in the Faculty\textsuperscript{10} and for courses on mission and world Christianity taught in the University and Federation. There were substantial archives of mission societies in the UK concentrated principally at the Universities of London (SOAS), Leeds, Birmingham, Cambridge, Edinburgh and Oxford.\textsuperscript{11} Two academic journals of mission were being published: *Studies in World Christianity* at the University of Edinburgh and *Transformation*, “an international evangelical dialogue on mission and ethics” based at the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies. There were specialist publishers for mission studies: SPCK in the UK and Columba Press in Ireland.

\begin{footnotes}
\item[5] BIAMS was constituted at Edinburgh in 1990, which reflected on mission studies in the light of Edinburgh 1910, eighty years before.
\item[6] It was held jointly by the Department and the School of Mission at the Selly Oak Colleges. In 2000 the chair was occupied by Werner Ustorf and previously by Walter Hollenweger.
\item[8] The director at that time was David Kerr.
\item[9] Founding director, Graham Kings.
\item[10] The North Atlantic Missiology Project and Currents in World Christianity (1996-2001), both directed by Brian Stanley.
\item[11] An indication of this is that in 1999 these universities received a joint grant of £415,000 from the Research Support Libraries Programme to accelerate, extend and improve access to their missionary collections.
\end{footnotes}
Mission studies and other disciplines
No one had done more to establish mission studies as a theological and academic discipline than the South African missiologist David Bosch. Nearly a decade after its publication, Bosch’s *Transforming Mission* looked set to remain the indispensable *summa missiologica* and Bosch’s broad view of mission, “biblical, and systematic, and historical, and practical” was largely accepted. Nevertheless uncertainty about the nature of mission lingered, together with questions about what constitutes mission studies and where it should fit in the theological curriculum.

Since the study of mission depended on interfaces with a wide range of disciplines, the paper surveyed the main partners of mission studies in the UK and Ireland to illustrate its scope, serve as an introduction to the subject, and show its importance to the theological curriculum. These were:

a) The interface with behavioral sciences and with communications when treated as evangelism, with the emphasis on the proclamation and translation of the message.

b) The use of social studies when missiology is a partner of development studies and it relates to social justice, peace studies and ecology, the prophetic voice of mission.

c) The historical study of missionary activity, which is a particular strength in the UK because of the presence of so many archives. Although of growing interest to secular historians, Timothy Yates argued it is best done by holding theology and history in tension.

d) The interface with religious studies and theology of religions. This was providing much of the impetus for study of mission in Britain because of rising awareness of the presence of significant numbers of people of other faiths.

e) The study of mission through cultural anthropology and cultural studies was seen as foundational to mission studies as missionaries have adapted themselves

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12 On whose work the BIAMS conference at Lampeter in 1993 focused.
15 The 1995 BIAMS conference ”Mission on Trial” at Bearsden, Glasgow, asked whether the church was guilty of collusion in an unjust global economy and discussed how *kerygma*, *koinonia*, and *diakonia* can be held in creative inter-relationship in mission. Timothy Yates, Editorial, *BIAMS Newsletter 6* (March 1996), 1-3.
17 This is clear from the case studies in Cracknell and Lamb, *Theology on Full Alert*.
18 The ambiguous relation of mission and cultures was recognized in the BIAMS conference at All Nations Christian College, Ware, in 1991 which looked at "Christ, Culture, and Columbus" and highlighted the necessity for a positive appreciation of cultural difference and the validity of other ways of life if mission is to be practiced in a Christ-like manner.
to other cultures and attempted to express the gospel in indigenous terms.  

Furthermore, the challenge of Lesslie Newbigin in the 1980s to “a genuinely missionary encounter” with modernity had raised the awareness of “our culture”.  

f) The close relationship of missiology and ecumencics, with which at that time in Europe it was often twinned. This reflected the fact that the ecumenical movement grew out of the missionary movement and the insight of the *missio Dei* paradigm that mission results in ingathering.  

g) The bringing together of mission and biblical studies, which had opened the way to studies of the biblical foundations for mission that did not depend merely on the Great Commission passages but on the thrust of Scripture as a whole. Mission studies was also conscious of the re-reading of the Bible from non-Western contexts as developed in post-colonial interpretations or intercultural hermeneutics.  

h) Mission studies interfaced with systematic or dogmatic theology in both theology of mission and the development of a missionary theology. The study of Third World theologies or Non-Western theologies emerged naturally out of study of mission. It not only contained a critique of Western models of mission but suggested that the issues for theology in the new millennium would be pioneered outside the West.

**Mission studies and theological education**

As a recognized discipline mission studies should be a subject in the theological curriculum in its own right; it would be impoverished if reduced to one of its constituent parts or squeezed into a narrow section of the theological curriculum.

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19 For a comprehensive study of inculturation by a British missiologist, see Aylward Shorter, *Towards a Theology of Inculturation* (London: Chapman, 1988).


22 The importance of the missionary motif in biblical studies is recognized in the work of such contemporary British biblical scholars as Richard Bauckham, Christopher Rowland, and Christopher J.H. Wright.


24 Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 492-96. The 1999 BIAMS conference at St Stephen’s College, Oxford, invited Jürgen Moltmann, a theologian with a missionary perspective, to what proved to be a very lively debate with Theo Sundermeier, a missiologist, on the theme “Mission—an Invitation to God’s Future”.

25 John Parratt, University of Birmingham.

26 Andrew Walls, University of Edinburgh.

27 Mention has already been made of Edinburgh’s CSCNWW and the recognition of the subject at the University of Birmingham. The University of Cambridge also had a Christianity in Asia Project (1997-200*). See Sebastian Kim (ed.), *Christian Theology in Asia* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008).
Furthermore, “the dimensional aspect” of missiology, that is its task of highlighting theology’s reference to the world, means that a missionary perspective should also permeate all theological disciplines.\textsuperscript{28} And the questions raised by mission studies about the contextual nature of theology mean that missiology is party to the post-modern critique of theology, as Bosch tries to demonstrate.\textsuperscript{29} In this sense missiology appeared to represent the future of theology. At the High Leigh conference, Kenneth Cracknell and Christopher Lamb drew attention to what they saw as parochialism in British theology, “its enclosure within an exclusively European, not to say Anglo-Saxon, cultural framework” and the “timeless and uncontextualized” nature of much theology teaching.\textsuperscript{30} They had suggested that mission studies, by the boundary-breaking nature of mission itself, is an important factor in overcoming these limitations. In the newly electronically globalized era, I suggested that the study of mission is an introduction to a world-wide web. It is a subject which crosses theological and academic boundaries in its reflection on the mission of God to the world expressed in the living Word and the life-giving Spirit.

I concluded the article with the words of Orlando Costas, who highlight the way in which missiology challenges mainstream theology:

> Missiology contends against all theological provincialism, advocating an intercultural perspective in theology. Missiology questions all theological discourse that does not seriously consider the missionary streams of the Christian faith; all biblical interpretation that ignores the missionary motives that shape biblical faith; all history of Christianity that omits the expansion of Christianity across cultural, social, and religious frontiers; and all pastoral theology that does not take seriously the mandate to communicate the Gospel fully and to the heart of the concrete situations of daily life.... By fulfilling such a critical task, missiology also enriches theology because it puts theology in contact with the worldwide Church with all its cultural and theological diversity.\textsuperscript{31}

**Internationalizing Theology (2012)**

In the twelve years between the first and second survey, the world had changed significantly. The first article was published before the events of 9/11 (2001) and the British equivalent 7/7 (2005), before the credit crunch and the Euro crisis, before the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{28} Cf. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 489-98.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Although whether Bosch’s paradigm is post-modern is questionable—see Kirsteen Kim, “Post-Modern Mission: A Paradigm Shift in David Bosch’s Theology of Mission?” *International Review of Mission* 89/353 (2000), 172-179.
\item \textsuperscript{30} Cracknell and Lamb, *Theology on Full Alert*, 8, 15.
\end{itemize}
election of Barack Obama or David Cameron, and before China became the world’s second largest economy. Since mission is inextricably related to context, the changing global landscape must lead to changes in mission studies. Another important factor driving change in mission studies is the state of higher education in Britain and Ireland and the diminishing place of Christian theology within it. The second article aimed to update the earlier one and sketch the current state of mission studies in these nations in light of these developments as well as others which are more internal to the churches in these nations. The article looked at the changing nature of mission studies, the changing location of mission in the academy, and the changing content of mission studies. And, picking up from the conclusion of the earlier paper, it ended by asking whether and to what extent mission studies and its changing nature impact the teaching and study of theology in Britain and Ireland.

Challenges and opportunities for mission studies

Decline of the study of mission as a focused subject
Since the year 2000, the place of mission studies in universities, colleges and research institutions had changed and relations between bodies had been reconfigured. University departments of theology continued the trend toward diversifying into “theology and religious studies”. Where there has been integration between the two disciplines, the Christian input has developed into Christian studies and theology is no longer only Christian theology. Amid continued political anxiety to identify common ground among the religions, the missionary dimensions of faiths tended to be neglected. Mission studies seemed to have lost its (admittedly tenuous) foothold as a distinct discipline. The Centre for Mission Studies at the University of Birmingham, a legacy of the Selly Oak Colleges had closed and the chair in mission was not occupied. Two Catholic centers for mission studies had closed: the Missionary Institute London, which was affiliated to the Universities of Middlesex and Leuven, and Kimmage Mission Institute, Dublin. The University of Leeds, which during the time of Adrian Hastings produced many doctorates in mission and world Christianity, no longer reflected that orientation. However, there were still bright spots. The Oxford Centre for Mission Studies had been revived by Wonsuk Ma and continued to attract students for postgraduate degrees, but most were from overseas and this power house of global mission thinking was not really engaged with the British churches. The Irish School of Ecumenics at Trinity College, Dublin specialized in the world mission-related topics of intercultural theology and interreligous studies, international peace studies, and conflict resolution and reconciliation. The number of masters programs in mission

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32 The author acknowledged the advice of Wonsuk Ma, Nigel Rooms and Cathy Ross in finalising this article.
validated by universities had actually increased.\textsuperscript{33} Much of this was driven by the growth of church-planting initiatives. This suggested that the profile of mission studies in the colleges training more generally for Christian ministry was is increasingly mainstream.\textsuperscript{34}

**Shift from world mission to local mission**

The most noteworthy change in the nature of mission studies was that in the space of less than twenty years the meaning of the word “mission” in the British churches had gone from being used almost exclusively for overseas work to referring primarily to the outreach work of local churches in Britain. The British and Irish Association for Mission Studies (BIAMS) was founded in 1989 to study the history, theology and practice of mission and to encourage awareness of the major issues in contemporary mission. BIAMS was to serve a consortium of churches and mission agencies, which were known for their activities overseas, so when the Constitution was approved the following year no one thought to specify that the study of mission should have a global dimension – that was a given. Yet only fifteen years later, under the influence particularly of the Gospel in Our Culture Network and the missional church movement, the use of the word “mission” in Britain had become so focused on the local context that a global interest could no longer be taken for granted. Moreover, the long-term decline in missionary sending and the problems of the partnership model had led to the demise of the umbrella bodies that had founded BIAMS. In order to hold together local mission in Britain and the wider world church, at its conference in 2005, BIAMS found it necessary to amend its Constitution by including “worldwide” in the description of mission.

**Mission and world Christianity**

Although mission studies had declined in the universities, “world Christianity” was proving acceptable because it did not have the same colonial baggage as “mission”. Mission studies that takes its global context seriously is clearly linked to the study of world Christianity. However, there is a danger that the study of world Christianity is presented as the successor to mission studies because it is seen as the fruit of colonial missions which had planted churches in every continent. I argued that mission, and its study, continues to be highly relevant even in the era of world Christianity for two main reasons. First, because world Christianity is not just the result of recent missionary expansion but is a phenomenon that goes back into the New Testament which brings together documents – such as the four Gospels – from a wide geographical area. Second

\textsuperscript{33} These included Redcliffe College, Gloucester; Cliff College, Derbyshire; Springdale College, Selly Oak; All Nations Christian College, Ware; the Queen’s Foundation, Birmingham; Trinity College Bristol.

\textsuperscript{34} The author verified this in the case of the six colleges affiliated to Queen’s University Belfast, the Queen’s Foundation in Birmingham, the Yorkshire Ministry Course based at Mirfield, St Michael’s Llandaff, and Ripon College Cuddesdon. Further evidence is the publication by the main specialist theology publisher, SCM, of Stephen Spencer, *Christian Mission: SCM Study Guide* (London: SCM Press, 2007).
because mission itself has never been entirely a Northern or colonial phenomenon. Every church has its own missionary activity, and world mission is now well established from populous Christian nations in the South and East, such as Nigeria, Brazil and Korea.

The prominence of “world Christianity” in Britain and Ireland and elsewhere was largely due to the work of Andrew Walls at Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Princeton and Liverpool Hope University. There was other significant discussion of the nature and significance of “world Christianity” emanating from the UK context in this period. In 2008, Liverpool Hope University launched a new Andrew F. Walls Centre for the Study of Asian and African Christianity directed by Daniel Jeyaraj, Professor of World Christianity, with significant archives. The former Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World at the University of Edinburgh had reduced somewhat in size but continued to attract postgraduate students as the Centre for the Study of World Christianity, led by Brian Stanley. The Henry Martyn Centre in Cambridge, under Emma Wild-Wood and soon to be renamed the Cambridge Centre for Christianity Worldwide, continued to contribute the teaching of mission to the Cambridge Theological Federation and to develop its important library of books and journals related to mission and world Christianity. Two leading scholars of the sociology of religion in England were treating Christianity in global perspective: Grace Davie at the University of Exeter and Linda Woodhead at the University of Lancaster.

**Edinburgh 1910 centenary project**

Probably the most significant event in mission studies in the intervening decade was the centenary of the World Missionary Conference of Edinburgh 1910. The research done for the conference a century ago was one of the earliest examples of mission studies and one of the main reasons why Edinburgh 1910 is remembered a century later.

Encouraged by the World Council of Churches, for which the Edinburgh conference was a historical milestone, the anniversary project was constructed to highlight important mission-related developments over that period: the growth of the ecumenical movement, the rise of awareness of world Christianity, and the consensus around the *missio Dei* paradigm.


37 In contrast to 1910, Edinburgh 2010 was not a gathering of Protestants only; its governing body included all the main streams of world Christianity—Catholic, Evangelical, Orthodox, Pentecostal and
The commemoration of Edinburgh 1910 by the Edinburgh 2010 project and conference at the University of Edinburgh was a great opportunity for mission studies in Britain and Ireland. Brian Stanley, Professor of World Christianity at the University of Edinburgh, produced the definitive history of the 1910 conference and the preparatory volumes and conference report were published by Regnum Books International as part of the Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series. Although Edinburgh 2010 was a truly global project involving Christians from every region of the world and leaders of global church and mission bodies, British-based missiologists and institutions were very well represented in the research project. However, the benefits of hosting the project were not as great as they could have been because of the weakened infrastructure for mission studies and also the tensions within the United Kingdom.

Changing content of mission studies
In 2012, I found that mission studies was not so much a focus for inter-disciplinary work but rather carried on under various other headings, particularly ecclesiology, culture, spirituality, interfaith relations, development studies, public affairs, eco-theology and the study of migration.

Mission-shaped church
Undoubtedly the widest and most intense discussion around mission in the first decade of the new century was generated by Mission-shaped Church, the report of the Mission and Public Affairs Council of the Church of England in 2004, which called for “a new Protestant, demonstrating the great strides in ecumenical cooperation in mission. See the Common Call, available at www.edinburgh2010.org.

38 The composition of the research network and conference delegations was intended to include 60 per cent from the global South to represent the proportions identified in Todd Johnson and Kenneth Ross (eds.), The Atlas of Global Christianity (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

39 This stood for the post-war and post-colonial insight that mission does not belong to the churches but is God’s initiative in which we are called to participate in humility and hope. Bosch, Transforming Mission, republished in 2011, was taken as still the best exposition of this.


42 British-based missiologists were very well represented in the research project in its inception (Ken Ross), on its steering group (Rose Dowsett, John Kafwanka, Wonsuk Ma), as research coordinator (Kirsteen Kim), and as co-conveners of six out of the nine study themes (Janice Price, Andrew Kirk, Mark Oxbrow, Afe Adogame, Darrell Jackson, Wonsuk Ma and Cathy Ross).
inculturation of the gospel within our society”. Reflection on national social trends led the writers of *Mission-shaped Church* to endorse work already being done in planting churches among networks rather than necessarily in geographically defined locations. And their observation that consumerism is a metaphor for much of contemporary Western culture led them to argue that to reach out in consumer society the church must reshape itself around worshippers as consumers. These were the main reasons for encouraging “fresh expressions of church”, a movement which has now diversified to cover all sorts of experiments with new ways of being church plus emerging churches of all sorts. The original *Mission-shaped Church* report and Fresh Expressions were endorsed and developed and also criticized from many angles. Some of the concerns are, first, that mission studies is in danger of being reduced to social and cultural anthropology without its ethical, historical and theological dimensions; second, that the mission-shaped church approach may lead to multiplying churches to compete for “customers” in a way that is contrary to the spirit of Christian unity, or to the “McDonaldization” of the gospel and the church for the sake of the efficiency, calculability, predictability and control so valued in the market; and third, that the original report assumes a homogenous English culture and pays little attention to ethnic minorities or to social inequality, both of which are issues that a rounded study of mission should include. However the report has helped to establish the missionary nature of the local church and ensured that mission studies is represented in this way in most places where training for ministry takes place.

**Mission and culture**

Despite criticism of mission-shaped church, attention to the relationship of mission and culture continued, and probably the chief dialogue partners of mission studies at the present time are cultural studies and postcolonial thought. This has resulted in a variety of different approaches. Most of these are represented in the wide-ranging lecture series of the Oxford Centre for Christianity and Culture at Regent’s Park College. At the University of Birmingham many mission-related studies were carried out under the

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heading “intercultural studies”\textsuperscript{48} or using the post-colonial approaches pioneered by R.S. Sugirtharajah at Selly Oak and the University of Birmingham. Black theology was represented by Anthony Reddie then at the Queen’s Foundation, Birmingham.\textsuperscript{49} Gordon Lynch at the University of Kent looked at the interface of religion with postmodern and popular culture.\textsuperscript{50} David Kettle, who led the Gospel and Our Culture Network, built on the work of Lesslie Newbigin to challenge Western culture in general. Anne Richards led the Mission Theological Advisory Group of the Church of England and Churches Together to take postmodern and popular culture seriously and approach them sympathetically through contact points with spirituality.\textsuperscript{51} After the attention given to Celtic spirituality in the 1980s and 90s,\textsuperscript{52} recent missional attention has been given English culture. Christianity and Culture, directed by Dee Dyas of St John’s Nottingham and the University of York, explored the influence of Christianity in English culture through history.\textsuperscript{53} Nigel Rooms from Nottingham looked at contemporary English culture with a view to integrating, or re-integrating, the gospel with it.\textsuperscript{54}

\textit{Mission spirituality and pneumatology}

At the turn of the millennium, spirituality and mission was a current area of interest in BIAMS.\textsuperscript{55} In 2004 the results of a major research project led by Paul Heelas and Linda Woodhead at Lancaster University caused a stir in the press when it showed there was a shift from “religion” to “spirituality”; that is, away from belief in a system expressed through membership of a congregation and toward individual pursuit of subjective experience especially through alternative “holistic”, therapeutic religious experience of a neo-Pagan or New Age type.\textsuperscript{56} Some Fresh Expressions and other creative ways of being church were included in the Heelas-Woodhead definition of spirituality.\textsuperscript{57} Steve


\textsuperscript{50} Gordon Lynch, \textit{Understanding Theology and Popular Culture} (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).


\textsuperscript{53} E.g. Dee Dyas, \textit{The Bible in Western Culture: The Student’s Guide} (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005).

\textsuperscript{54} Nigel Rooms, \textit{The Faith of the English: Integrating Christ and Culture} (London: SPCK, 2011).

\textsuperscript{55} The BIAMS day conference in September 2000 considered “The Spirituality of the Un-Churched” led by David Hay and this led into the 2001 residential BIAMS conference, published as Howard Mellor and Timothy Yates \textit{Mission and Spirituality: Creative Ways of Being Church} (Sheffield: Cliff College Publishing, 2002).


\textsuperscript{57} “Fresh Expressions”, see \url{www.freshexpressions.org.uk}; See also The Group for Evangelisation (Churches Together in England), “Church in a Spiritual Age”, at \url{www.churchinaspiritualage.org.uk} and
Hollinghurst at the Sheffield Centre was doing mission studies in relation to such post-Christian groups.\(^58\) Since, holistic spiritualities involve a new relationship to the creation and the natural world, eco-theologies and a mission of environmental justice were being developed, particularly by Celia Deane-Drummond, then at the University of Chester and David Bookless of A Rocha, who spoke at the BIAMS day conference in 2007.\(^59\)

Interest in God in creation and in spiritual experience and spirituality were two reasons for increased attention to the Holy Spirit and to pneumatological perspectives in mission studies. Another reason is the rise of Pentecostal and charismatic perspectives in the study of mission, culture and practical theology. The latter was reflected particularly at the Centre for Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies, University of Birmingham and in the work of Allan Anderson, Mark Cartledge and Andrew Smith there. A noticeable shift had taken place in the *missio Dei* paradigm, which was first expressed as “partnership in Christ” but which had now become “finding out where the Holy Spirit is at work and joining in”.\(^60\) As Andrew Lord explains, holistic mission is “Spirit-shaped mission”.\(^61\) Many of the implications of this are captured in the recent World Council of Churches’ statement *Together towards Life: Mission and Evangelism in Changing Landscapes* (2013).\(^62\)

**Mission, evangelism and other faiths**

Although the growing presence of non-Christian faiths had provided impetus for the establishment of BIAMS, most Christian involvement with them was separated under the heading of interfaith or dialogue. However, after 9/11 and 7/7 called government policy of multi-culturalism into question, there developed a more robust dialogue and it was recognized that prophesy and proclamation—from all sides—has a place in inter-religious relations.\(^63\) A Church of England report in 2005 led to a closer relationship between mission, evangelism and dialogue through Presence and Engagement,\(^64\) and

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63 Israel Selvanayagam, then principal of the United College of the Ascension, drawing on his Indian experience, always insisted that evangelism and dialogue were inseparable. E.g. Israel Selvanayagam, *A Second Call: Ministry and Mission in a Multifaith Milieu* (Madras: CLS, 2000), 338-53.

64 See website, http://presenceandengagement.org.uk/.
there was growing recognition that religions may be in mission toward one another and in a new willingness to learn from the long experience of many churches outside the West who have lived as minorities in nations dominated by other faiths about how to engage with different religions.

**Mission and economic justice**

In the post-colonial era the work done by missionary societies in education, medical care and other aspects of human well-being, which was such a large part of their work before the Second World War, was mostly transferred to governments, development agencies and other secular bodies. In the secularist environment since then, Christian mission organizations which engage in development activities were sometimes tarred with suspicion that they may be using this as a cover for church expansion or inducing people to convert for ulterior motives. In such a climate it has been a struggle to maintain a holistic approach in mission. But the first decade of the twenty-first century witnessed something of a change in attitude as represented, for example, by the Religions and Development project of the International Development Department of the University of Birmingham, which was funded by the government Department for International Development to explore “the relationships between several major world religions, development in low-income countries and poverty reduction”. The project showed the extent to which, in the Christian case, mission agencies and churches themselves are agents of development and it encouraged a partnership of faith-based organizations with government bodies. Similarly within the UK, successive governments have encouraged faith-based social initiatives for a number of political reasons. In view of mission history, mission studies has a critical role to play vis-à-vis such policies. In the Jubilee 2000 and Make Poverty History Campaigns the UK led the world in this respect as mission organizations and development agencies came together with churches and faith groups to exert considerable political pressure on the world’s political leaders meeting as the G8 to address questions of debt and poverty. In view of the current economic crisis, it is more necessary than ever that mission studies addresses itself to questions of economic justice.

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66 E.g. Heythrop College and CTBI jointly hosted a colloquium in 2011 on “Globalised Christianity and Inter Faith Engagement: Implications for Theological Reflection in Britain and Ireland” at Heythrop College.

67 See [www.religionsanddevelopment.org](http://www.religionsanddevelopment.org).
Mission, public theology and reconciliation

In first decade of the twenty-first century “public theology” emerged as a missional interface with public affairs, politics and civil society: “Public theology is an engagement of living religious traditions with their public environment—the economic, political and cultural spheres of common life.”68 The Global Network for Public Theology included a disproportionate number of institutions and centers in the UK.69 There were also specialist institutions, such as the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity and the Kirby Laing Institute for Christian Ethics, Cambridge and a number of Christian public theology think-tanks such as Theos and Ekklesia, which aimed to bring theology to public life. Public theology is less adversarial alternative than the political theology which arose in the 1960s or the liberation theologies of the 1970s and 1980s. One of the main contributions of theology in the public sphere was to work for reconciliation in society on the basis of the reconciliation in Christ. Reflection on mission as reconciliation was particularly developed in Ireland by theologians from different communities.70 It was the subject of the BIAMS conference in Belfast in 2003.71 Reconciliation was the focus of a conference at York St John University (which is part of an ongoing worldwide series) and a series of seminars at the United College of the Ascension.72

Mission and migration

The Wallsian “shift in the center of gravity of Christianity” heightened the importance of dialogue with theologies from Africa, Asia and Latin America but still this tended to be treated as an exotic optional extra in theological studies. In the past decade such dialogue has become less of a choice as we have found more and more churches from the global south and east on our doorsteps. In the UK, the relevance of studies of migration to mission studies has been recognized particularly by Afe Adogame at the University of Edinburgh and Emma Wild-Wood in Cambridge, and BIAMS focused on

69 Centre for the Study of Religion and Politics, University of St Andrews; Centre for Theology and Public Issues, University of Edinburgh; Irish School of Ecumenics, Trinity College Dublin; Manchester Centre for Public Theology, University of Manchester; University of Exeter Network for Religion and Public Life; and York St. John University. Luke Bretherton also made an important contribution at King’s College London: Luke Bretherton, *Christianity and Contemporary Politics: The Conditions and Possibilities of Faithful Witness* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).
this at its conference in 2007. We are beginning to realize that in a globalized world we cannot ignore what is going on “out there” because sooner or later it will also be here and therefore “world church and local mission” need to be more closely connected. The greatest blind-spot in mission studies has always been reflection on the West as part of the global community, and this is a legacy of colonialism. The mission-shaped church debate, for example, failed to recognize the “migrant churches” that would be identified just a few years later as important examples of new and emerging churches. Since the end of the colonial period, Europe has also been recognized as a mission field and it is now being treated as such not only by North Americans but also by the agents of what has been termed “reverse mission”. Mission studies needs to do more to interface with global or international affairs in order to understand the global significance of mission movements and churches their local implications. Above all, understanding the United States, its impact on the world and these nations in particular, and its influence on our practice of Christianity, should be an important part of mission studies. The reflections of migrants and reverse missionaries, who see Britain and Ireland from outsider perspectives, enriches mission studies by setting the discourse within a wider context and helping us to see ourselves as others do.

Further Developments in Mission Studies (2015)
In the three years since 2012, there have been further significant changes in the landscape of mission studies. As we increasingly see ourselves in contemporary Britain and Ireland as in a missional context of, insights from mission studies have become more relevant and have permeated the rest of the theological curriculum. However, alongside a decline in institutional church life, the study of academic theology of any kind has continued a long decline. This is most marked at undergraduate level; postgraduate numbers are more resilient. This has affected interest in mission studies in two main ways: first, it is a victim of its own success in that mission is no longer distinguishable from other church activities; second, the shift of interest in mission to the local church has tended to benefit the study of practical theology rather than mission studies. The effect of both activities combined was that in 2014, BIAMS accepted an invitation to become a network within the British and Irish Association for Practical Theology (BIAPT) and ceased to exist as a separate entity. So where does that

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74 Kim, Joining in with the Spirit.
76 There are many reflective papers on mission in the UK from outsider perspectives posted on the Rethinking Mission website created by USPG, www.rethinkingmission.org.uk
77 Kim, Joining in with the Spirit.
leave missiology in Britain and Ireland? I have shown that the permeation of aspects of mission studies in theological studies is greater than ever before but the focused study of mission, particularly in its global dimensions, is struggling. In this situation, I suggest two further ways in which interest in mission studies can be maintained and re-ignited: missiology as theology for world Christianity and missiology as the study of evangelization.

**Missiology as theology for world Christianity**

Given the continued interest in "world Christianity", while continuing to develop as "mission studies" or "missiology", mission studies should today claim to the name "theology for world Christianity". I concluded the 2012 article with a plea that studies of mission and world Christianity would continue to enhance and diversify the theological curriculum leading to its genuine internalization so that it reflects the reality of our nations and that Britain and Ireland are part of world Christianity. The shift in the center of Christianity away from Europe is changing the churches in Britain and Ireland. This is seen, for example, by the way the shape and authority structures of the Anglican Communion have been challenged on issues of human sexuality, for example by the church in Nigeria, which has significantly more practicing Christians than the English church. The presence of so many "migrant churches" in these islands is also a challenge to assumptions that there is a normative form of Christianity here, which is also a global norm, and to which newcomers need to be assimilated. The evidence that we are part of world Christianity should make an impact on theological education which is both profound and broad. We can no longer assume that our students were formed here or that their ministry will be to a settled population originating in these nations and sharing the same culture (if that assumption was ever true). We have a multicultural Christian community which is in touch with, and open to, global trends in theology and practice.

The rise in interest in world Christianity attests to a growing awareness of the importance of global perspectives and recognition of the interconnectedness of Christian movements across the world. Philip Jenkins, another influential (originally) British scholar in the field, drew attention to the significance of this for theology when he wrote: "All too often statements about what "modern Christians accept" or "what Catholics today believe" refer only to what that ever-shrinking remnant of Western Christians and Catholics believe. Such assertions are outrageous today, and as time goes by they will become ever further removed from reality." Although Regnum Books International has been responding to this challenge for several years, we do not yet

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80 Regnum Books International publishes on mission, global Christianity, resources for mission and also includes the Regnum Edinburgh Centenary Series. See [www.ocms.org.uk/regnum](http://www.ocms.org.uk/regnum).
see in Britain and Ireland significant change in the teaching of theology. It should be the case that practical theology takes account of global affairs; biblical studies interfaces with cultural, postcolonial and religious studies; church history recognizes simultaneous histories of different regions of the world; and dogmatic or systematic theology engages African, Asian and Indigenous philosophies and theologies. The church is moving in migration and mission and so theology also needs to move beyond recounting and developing the Western tradition toward much greater engagement with theologies emerging from other contexts. Missiology, by its nature, has important resources to inform the debate about how the teaching of theology responds to these challenges. It can facilitate the internationalization of theology and global theological conversation.³¹

**Missiology as the study of evangelization**

The *missio Dei* paradigm, in which all human missions are thought of as part of the one mission of God, has formed the theological foundation for ecumenical mission studies since the 1950s.³² It was given its fullest development in David Bosch’s work, *Transforming Mission*. However, there is increasing theological and missiological discontent with the “paradigm” of *missio Dei*. The extension of *missio Dei* to suggest that God’s work in the world might bypass the church was challenged by Bosch.³³ Furthermore, much *missio Dei* theology is a form of the social Trinity, a model which has been heavily criticized as ideologically constructed.³⁴ *Together towards Life* (see above), overcame the separation of the immanent and economic Trinity in *missio Dei* formulations by focusing instead on the mission of the Spirit. Missiologically, the *missio Dei* paradigm was established in the very different context of the Cold War as a way of responding to the limitations on horizontal sending in that era and it was developed in the 1960s to justify mission as a secular development movement.³⁵ It has encouraged biblical reflection on mission and conception of the church as missional.³⁶ But it also implicitly discourages horizontal or geographical sending. Moreover, *missio Dei* has been appealed to for so many causes as to render Bosch’s “consensus” largely meaningless.

³⁵ John Flett’s recent corrective of the tendency of *missio Dei* theology to cleave God’s being from his act goes a long way to responding to Tanner’s criticism by reconnecting the *missio Dei* to the kingdom of God. John G. Flett, *The Witness of God: The Trinity, Missio Dei, Karl Barth, and the Nature of Christian Community* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2010), 290-92.
³⁶ For in-depth study of the origins of the *missio Dei* paradigm, see Flett, *The Witness of God*.
Since at least Edinburgh 1910, an alternative and often synonymous term to mission has been “evangelization”. From a biblical studies perspective, evangelization—“proclaiming” or “effecting” good news—could be regarded as the Lukan version (Luke 4.18) of the Johannine mission—“sending” (John 3.16; 20.21). Whereas mission theology starts from above with the sending of Christ, evangelization starts from below by following the example of Jesus Christ. Long before the shift away from “missions” as activities of the church to “mission” to refer to God’s sending, Protestants in 1910 used evangelization in a holistic way. In 1975, Pope Paul VI in Evangelii Nuntiandi adopted this term to describe a broad missional agenda and in 2013 Pope Francis revived its use in Evangelii Gaudium, also in a broad sense that covers most of what is, in Protestant circles, discussed under mission. The publication of Evangelii Gaudium presents an opportunity to bring the two parts of the Western church together for renewed discussion on mission under the heading of evangelization. Furthermore, since the term “gospel” is embedded in it, use of evangelization helps to identify the Christian agenda in an era when “mission” is used by all sorts of organizations, businesses, and so on. Certainly in the UK Evangelii Gaudium has awakened interest in mission themes.

In conclusion, although study of mission as a discipline in its own right has declined in the UK and Ireland since 2000, the themes and insights of mission studies are increasingly found in ministerial training and in studies of world Christianity. They have the potential to internationalize theology but this is not yet realized. The challenge is, on the one hand, to keep ministerial training in touch with developments in the academy and the wider world and, on the other, to maintain relationships between the study of religion at secular universities and what actually happens in churches. In other words, it is to hold together the study of local mission or evangelization and research on world Christianity and theology worldwide.

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87 Evangelii Nuntiandi. Apostolic Exhortation of Paul VI following the third assembly of the Synod of Bishops in 1974 (1975; available from www.vatican.va).


89 I concede that the connection with “good news” is lost on most English speakers but it is more obvious in other languages.

1. Title “Our Digital Footprint: Protecting the Next Generation of Field Personnel”

   Author--Karen Ann Tremper is a Professor and Director of Global Life at Life Pacific College. Served with Wycliffe Bible Translators and YWAM and is an ordained minister in the Foursquare Church.

2. Abstract--We live in a global community that continues to become exceedingly smaller. As universities and colleges face the challenges of preparing students to “go to the ends of the earth” it has become evident that providing outstanding curriculum is not the only aspect of preparation they must consider. The specific language used to promote their programs must be adjusted since their audience has expanded well beyond their perspective or current students.

   Internet access has allowed the global community to visit universities and their program offerings online. As degree programs seek to neutralize their language a further element that must be addressed is the extracurricular programs that supplement student learning. The issue more precisely is the digital footprint that is left by the university and students themselves through social media, not limited to the university’s website. This digital footprint, if not properly neutralized, can have ramifications in the future for a student whose heart is for the mission field.

   This paper seeks to address the need to consider changes in the language used to describe extracurricular programs as well as the use of social media and its potentially damaging digital footprint on the future of the next generation of field personnel.
Introduction

“The Internet is at once a world-wide broadcasting capability, a mechanism for information dissemination, and a medium for collaboration and interaction between individuals and their computers without regard for geographic location” (Leiner et al. 2001, 1). The revolution of the ability to communicate via the Internet has made it possible for the establishment of a global community. From the late 1960’s with the onset of the Internet to the early 1990’s with the launching of the World Wide Web, communication to a larger global audience has become a reality.

The ability to communicate to the global community has not been lost on the church as it has seen the potential “to go to the ends of the earth” without ever leaving the comforts of home. The challenge faced in being able to communicate freely in this global environment is that one cannot always control the audience. The explosion of technological advancement and the ability of people the church perceives as their audience to now engage in the global dialogue has forced universities and colleges to consider the language they use to promote their programs and course offerings. In addition, these institutions must consider how they will neutralize the language of extracurricular programs that supplement student learning including the use of social media. The issue more precisely is the digital footprint that is left by the university and students themselves, which if not properly neutralized, can have ramifications on the future of a student who desires to work outside of this country.

This paper seeks to address the need to consider changes in the language used to describe extracurricular programs and the resulting digital footprint, and will conclude with suggestions programs can incorporate to reduce a potentially damaging digital footprint on the next generation of field personal.

Our Digital Footprint

The Internet has provided the world with rapid access to information. This ability has been seen as a great advantage to declare the good news as it “enables new forms of social relations, new ways of
networking, and new ways of organizing social, cultural, and political life” (Cheong et al. 2012, vii-viii). The new missiological strategy that emerges is one that specializes in online media that would allow Christians to evangelize and “to do mission without having to leave their full-time job or relocate” (Vu 2011). Walter Wilson, the CEO for Global Media Outreach, stated in 2011 that by 2015 there would be WiFi everywhere and “we are the first generation in all of human history to hold within our hands the technology to reach every man, woman and child on the earth by 2020. . . Our generation has within its grasp everything that is required to fulfill the Great Commission” (Vu 2011). This seems to be good news when considering the Great Imbalance of field personal working among the unreached people groups versus reached people groups (Winter and Hawthorne 2009, 543). Thus it makes sense where countries have limited access and minimal personnel to use the potential of technological advances to reach them.

From this perspective the new mission field is a virtual one where online missionaries interact with people around the globe. Social media sites are the “tools to spread the Gospel like never before” (Young 2013, ii). Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and blogging are all vehicles used for the creation of a virtual community in which one can be invited by you or ask you to be their friend or they become a follower. Your success as a member in the virtual community is based on the number of friends or followers you have. But one must be cautious with regards to who is following or becoming your friend in your network. This produces challenges for students participating in short-term cross-cultural experiences called mission teams. The way they stay in touch with friends they made on their trips is to friend them on Facebook. All friends and followers are not always what they appear to be.

Christians are not the only ones who see the Internet, and in particular social media, as a vehicle for revival or revolution in the global community. Uprisings referred to as the Arab Spring were driven not with rifles and weapons but iPhones linked to social media sites. “The medium that carries the
message shapes and defines as well as the message itself. The instantaneous nature of how social media communicate self-broadcast ideas . . . explains in part the speed at which these revolutions have unraveled, their almost viral spread across a region” (Beaumont 2011, 3). Since governments tightly control and censor Internet use, and thus social media sites, they have the ability to block their usage. However, in the case of the uprisings of Spring 2009, it was the ability of Facebook to share video and images and “users were able to transmit news bites that would otherwise never make it to mainstream news media” (Beaumont 2011, 7). As a result, those around the globe could express solidarity by their likes on a Facebook page.

It is clear that many groups capitalize on the interconnectivity of a globalized world. The question is what information should be listed on their sites. For programs sending teams from colleges and universities in relationship to field personnel it would be difficult “to survive without the Internet and electronic interconnectivity, but they are also limited by it. Opposition has been mounted against Christian workers based on what anti-Christian extremists have learned about the plans of agencies from the agencies’ websites” (Pocock, Van Rheenen, and McConnell 2005, 26). Institutions cannot be naïve in terms of their programs or the development of students via experiential learning opportunities. Not only must those who oversee departments which supplement a student’s educational experience with learning opportunities around the globe be aware of necessary security measures for the student, but also take into consideration the ramifications student teams and their global interconnectivity could have on the long term field worker.

**Beginnings of Security Measures**

Issues of security are not new. Wycliffe Bible Translators (WBT) and Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) are a good example of the early strategies to protect those on the field. The sister organizations were “two parts of one focus—providing Scripture in mother tongues to people without God’s Word” (Franklin 2003, 7). WBT is the home organization, organized around the country of origin,
which provides for the care of its members\textsuperscript{v} and voice in the local church. SIL members are assigned to field branches in specific countries. SIL, which began in 1934 as a summer training program, was not seen as a mission organization whose focus was evangelism but a “non-profit, scientific educational organization of Christian volunteers that specializes in serving lesser-known language communities around the world. . . [seeking] to understand their culture and learn their language” (Franklin 2003, 9). Membership in SIL provided a more acceptable explanation in non-Christian environments.

Christian colleges and universities have made name changes to their institutions as well as specific programs. Much of the logic for these changes in nomenclature is similar to that of WBT and SIL, which is to protect their graduates. Fuller Theological Seminary changed the name of one of their schools after receiving reports from their graduates “working in Muslim contexts,. . .that they could not get visas or appointed to positions that required governmental approval as soon as it was known they had degrees from a school of mission” (Kraft 2005, 237). Fuller, following the lead of Biola University\textsuperscript{vi}, chose a “secular-sounding label for missiology instruction [and] in 2003 the School of World Mission officially became the School of Intercultural Studies” (Kraft 2005, 238).

L.I.F.E.\textsuperscript{vii} Bible College changed their name in 2002 to Life Pacific College. The president, Dick Scott, noted several reasons for a name change, one specifically being the “present mission realities which would allow greater access for graduates wishing to work and study abroad [as well as] denial of entrance to Muslim countries and excessive interrogation to enter [limited access countries] (Primrose 2015). This name change was met with some resistance from the college’s stakeholders. After a presidential change in 2009, the new president remarked that the college’s constituency would like to return to the historic name of the college. However, in discussing this with the president, he had not been aware of the layer of protection offered to LPC graduates whose goal upon graduation was long term field service\textsuperscript{viii} that the new college name provided.
Such changes in nomenclature do aid in supporting the security of graduates either returning to their home countries or those wishing to deploy after graduation. However, there are some challenges faced when these nomenclature changes occur, many of which can be attributed to histories which are no longer remembered. Many of these schools were founded as Bible institutions that were a result of a reaction against the established theological training schools in the early 1900’s. As Bible institutions transitioned to accredited colleges and universities in the late 1940’s the shift in focus was from training lay people to “standardizing academic programs . . . with an emphasis on training career pastors and missionaries” (Thigpen, 3). When institutions begin making adjustments in their programs via changes in nomenclature the problems which emerge are issues with the constituency as suggested by the president at Life Pacific College. Charles Kraft echoes these concerns in relationship to Fuller’s name changes:

We anticipated a difficult time with our constituency if we adopted a secular name. We deemed it unlikely that the more conservative of our supporters would really understand the seriousness of the plight of certain of our students and how sympathetic we were with their problem. Indeed, we suspected that they would feel that a change of name, especially if the new name sounded “secular,” betokened a move on our part toward liberalism and a loss of missionary zeal.” (Kraft 2005, 237-238)

Thus as colleges and universities make adjustments in nomenclature for the protection of their graduates’ future service, their historical foundations as Bible institutes may be seen in the value placed on experiential learning via the promotion of short term mission trips. The language of mission trips and mission teams is deeply embedded in the culture of Christian colleges as an important value and contribution to the mission and vision of these institutions. The challenge for this new generation of graduates is that national governments look beyond the neutrality of the student’s program to the digital footprint of the institution’s website as well as that of the student. This results in a need to help the constituency and supporters of colleges and universities understand that training the next generation of field personnel is still valued and students will continue to deploy to the field upon
graduation. However, to protect them, it will be necessary to neutralize the language of programs that provide mission experiences.

**You are being Watched**

“Unlike George Orwell’s novel *1984* in which only Big Brother controlled the cameras, in 2015 cheap, mobile technology has turned everyone into a watcher” (Lien and Dave 2015, A1). In a world where education abroad in any format, two weeks to a semester, is a career booster\(^{viii}\), experiential learning programs must coach their students how to share their experience (West 2014, 54). Students’ ability to share their story is not only about issues of debriefing and re-entry but also the integration of their experiences into the flow of their lives in the United States upon their return. It is vital to engage students prior to departure for briefing and training on what of their experiences to share and how best to do so before, and after, as well as during their time abroad. No longer do students travel with cameras to capture the moments of their cross-cultural trips to enjoy upon their return to share with family and friends. Rather they use their mobile phones to connect to the WiFi and instantaneously post experiences on social media formats complete with their geographical location.

It is clear that technology is a double-edged sword. “Easy and inexpensive access to mobile services in the poorest parts of the world is now commonplace. Study-abroad administrators generally see this as a positive development for health and safety reasons” (Huesca 2013, 4). No one would suggest that for the protection of our students the use of a mobile phone is a bad idea. I make sure all my teams have mobile phone capability. However, the down side to this capability is the lack of discernment on the part of students (and faculty) with regards to their actions as they access the Internet\(^{ix}\).

In looking at these issues one must acknowledge that the next generation of field personnel are digital natives. They have grown up in the midst of an information revolution and are masters at
manipulating all manner of devices. However, they have not begun to understand the global implications and frankly nor have we as leaders. Changes have occurred in the way we “shop, bank, and go about our daily business—changes that have resulted in an unprecedented proliferation of records and data. . .preserved forever in the digital minds of computers, in vast databases with fertile fields of personal data” (Solove 2004, 1). Thus whether one is aware of it or not, and regardless of how adept one is at utilizing the technology at hand, one is being watched and what is seen becomes a digital footprint.

It is important to understand how information is gathered to see the ramifications a digital footprint could have on potential field personnel. A digital footprint “is a collection of detailed data about an individual [and] dossiers [footprints] are being constructed about all of us” (Solove 2004, 2). Three types of information flow, or the movement of data, are used to construct digital footprints.

First, information often flows between large computer databases of private-sector companies. Second, data flows from government public record systems to a variety of businesses in the private sector. Third, information flows from the private sector to government agencies and law enforcement officials. . .[which has resulted in] an elaborate lattice of information networking, where information is being stored, analyzed, and used in ways that have profound implications for society.” (Solove 2004, 3)

A student is often unaware that their digital footprint, which they assume to be private, increasingly flows to the government. Their footprint provides detailed records of their “reading material, purchases, diseases, and website activity [that] enable the government to assemble a profile of an individual’s finances, health, psychology, beliefs, politics, interests, and lifestyle” (Solove 2004, 5). Many students communicate over the Internet using an avatar or a screen name which they feel provides anonymity, but the data in their digital footprint “can unveil their identities as well as expose all of the people with whom they associate or do business” (Solove 2004, 5). One can surmise that when relating to field personnel in limited access countries one’s digital footprint could have major ramifications. Thus there is
a need to help students who feel called to long term service to neutralize their footprint and for colleges and universities to use neutral language in providing opportunities for exposure and training.

These issues challenge how one understands the meaning of privacy. Up until recently an individual’s personal information was kept relatively private due to its inaccessibility. With the onset of the Information Age this perspective became no longer accurate. The concern is not so much the exposure of secrets and the loss of reputation, but how information flow allows for more “increased access and aggregation of data” (Solove 2004, 149). The threat that programs must take into consideration for their students who desire to serve in limited access countries is “not in isolated pieces of information, but in increased access and aggregation, the construction of digital dossiers [footprints] and the uses to which they are put” (Solove 2004, 161).

Disclosure of government surveillance programs became something the public needed to grapple with after the former contractor with the National Security Agency, Edward Snowden, leaked their activity. The concern of this paper is not the ethical nature of government surveillance as it relates to one’s privacy but more so what is being monitored—“phone use and internet use” (Rainie and Madden 2015, 1). Pew Research found “most Americans believe it is acceptable to monitor others, except U.S. citizens” (Rainie and Madden 2015, 3). But the government has the capacity to monitor the digital behavior of those found within their borders regardless of whether they are citizens or not. Communication and online activities such as, “[use of] search engines, email messages, cell phone use, activity on social media sites, [and] mobile apps” are what come under surveillance which are all aspects of what makes up a student’s digital footprint (Rainie and Madden 2015, 4).

Within the United States such issues of surveillance are perceived within the notion of our overall safety and security as a nation. But what institutions must wrestle with is that the countries in
which we take students have similar capabilities to monitor digital activity. It therefore becomes crucial to implement changes in programs that support experiential learning.

**Simple Changes**

There are three simple changes all programs can make. The first is one many colleges and universities have already made by neutralizing the name of their programs. As already stated, sending students out in mission teams is a historical value for most Christian academic institutions. LPC, from its founding in 1923, has sent students out in summer mission teams with the goal of long term deployment upon graduation. The college has maintained this practice, but in 2010 created a more neutralized name for the oversight of these programs called Global Life and also ceased calling summer teams *short-term mission teams* and replaced it with *short-term cross-cultural experiences*.

A second change is to place all mission trips under the umbrella of study abroad as Global Life did in this academic year. This decision was made because study abroad is an academic program that is understood around the world. Thus, students participating in Global Life Study Abroad programs can choose from short-term cross-cultural experiences, summer internships, and semester programs which vary in length from a long weekend to an entire semester. Using the neutral and well understood language of study abroad protects an institution’s digital footprint as well as that of students. It allows for some use of social media because students are connected to an academic program. A further benefit is the protection of existing field personnel who often help with teams and have to answer questions regarding why students are in the country.

The connection to field personnel is of particular significance in all Global Life programs. All experiences are set-up in relationship with global and national leaders within the Foursquare denomination. One might think that simply being a Christian college would produce red flags in limited access countries; however that is not the case. Some terms used in programs prove to be more
Because of our close connection with the field, Global Life is thoughtful in how the interconnectivity of the college, students, and study abroad experiences has implications not only on our digital footprint but on that of field personnel, too. A simple Google search can provide an ample explanation for why a group of students are in a country and can be damaging to the reputation of long term field personnel as well as the student whose goal is to deploy after graduation.

Academic institutions might do an excellent job in maintaining neutrality and thus protecting the connections with field personnel, however early briefing and training is important with students to ensure the link to their digital footprint is neutral as well. Therefore, a third change programs can make is related to security briefing.

It is common practice, for the security of students in experiential learning programs, to register their students with STEP. However, during the briefing or preparation for study abroad experiences additional training should be added relating to digital security. Students who feel “called to the nations” often experience that call at camps when they are teenagers. As digital natives, they are not considering their digital footprint at this point in their life. Posts on social media sites are unlikely to consist of neutralized language. Consequently it is important as a part of briefing or training for all study abroad experiences to include best practices for digital security and how to maintain a neutral identity in their own digital footprint.

It is not the goal of preparing students to create fear as they travel outside of the country, but it is necessary to help them be wise in what they say and what they post online. In training students at LPC, all security measures are placed in a metaphorical “box”. A box contains a script for explaining why a student is in a country as well as helping students to create an online profile that extends beyond their short-term trips. Part of the script is a description of who a student is, why they are in the country, and what is presented regarding their identity on social networking sites. It is vital that students understand
the risks of posting online as well as “accessing their personal accounts from public computers or through public WiFi spots” (Justice, 1). According to the U.S. Department of Justice, “once information is posted to a social networking site, it is no longer private. The more information you post the more vulnerable you may become. Even when using high security settings, friends or websites may inadvertently leak your information” (Justice, 2). It is important for students to avoid making critical comparisons or political statements regarding the countries they are visiting especially if they are posting those statements with a picture and have not disabled the GPS on their phones. Recently, students I was traveling with wanted to post all their pictures on a variety of social media sites and link them together with the hashtag of the name of the country and the word gangster. Although they viewed this as funny and it was innocent in nature, it did reveal their naivety regarding the security risks related to social media.

Students on short-term trips are asked to leave their laptops and tablets at home since it is very easy to access personal and confidential information from these devices. For students who are spending the summer as interns or in a semester study program, this does create a challenge. It is important for these students to encrypt communications with websites and in particular social media sites. They all must learn to use a variety of discreet communication tools to protect their digital footprint and those they are in contact with. Virtual Private Network (VPN) and Pretty Good Privacy (PGP) secures a computer’s internet connection to help guarantee that all data one is sending or receiving is encrypted and secured from prying eyes. When using these tools it is necessary to use them on all devices including a student’s mobile phone.

In a perfect world students and leaders would travel with a dedicated phone and tablet that contained no personal or private information. However, as a part of their box this information can be removed and stored in a password protected, encrypted, cloud storage where VPN connections can be
made. Alternatively, a student can get a password protected, encrypted USB stick to carry personal or confidential documents. It is also helpful to use a pen name or avatar that cannot be linked to you except by those you chose to disclose your identity to. When students return home whether from a short term or extended summer or semester trip, it is important for them to check all their devices for malware and change their passwords.

The creation of a secure box when coupled with a neutralized program name under the umbrella of study abroad will help minimize the digital footprint of colleges and universities as well as that of students.

Conclusion

The interconnectivity of the world today has presented colleges and universities with challenges that have implications on their digital footprint as well as students who participate in experiential learning programs, traditionally called mission trips. With the greatest need for field personnel in limited access countries, it is vital that considerations and changes be made in programs to protect their digital footprints as well as those of students who would deploy after graduation.

The Internet does provide creative access opportunities in a virtual community in which one can share the good news, but this strategy does not eliminate the mandate to also physically “go to all the nations”. Issues of security are not new to those who are called to the field but with the advent of the Internet it has become necessary to reassess our training for current security issues. Initial security measures have been made by many schools as they have neutralized the names of their degree programs and classes. However, security must go beyond formal learning and encompass the experiential learning opportunities in which students participate. Such simple changes as changing the name of their experiential learning programs, placing all aspects of these programs under the academic umbrella of study abroad, and helping students integrate security protocol within a secure box as they
travel outside the country will aid in the reduction of a digital footprint that potentially could limit the next generation of field personnel.

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i This prediction has proven to be true as students studying abroad around the world with Life Pacific College are able to access courses in an online format using WiFi.

ii My husband and I were translators with WBT/SIL from 1984-1994 working among the Eastern Keres Pueblo Indians in New Mexico.

iii WBT has a number of supportive departments to aid those serving on the field. Its structure provides aid to the field personal by reducing some administrative tasks (Franklin 2003, 7-8).

iv Biola University made changes in the 1980’s regarding the name of the college as well as one of its programs Cook School of Intercultural Studies (History and Heritage).

v L.I.F.E stands for Lighthouse of International Foursquare Evangelism.

vi This was a private conversation with the president of Life Pacific College after I had been asked to give oversight to the mission program on campus. The college was facing a variety of issues related to a lack of connection with the constituency within the Foursquare denomination. Thus it was suggested to reconnect with the constituency that the college return to a time where there was a strong connection which was prior to the name change.

vii NAFSA: Association of International Educators creates opportunities for Americans to study abroad, participate in scholarly exchange programs, and study foreign areas and languages and supports the perspective that study outside of the country are valid items to include in one’s resume.

viii Although not the purpose of this paper, the accessibility of the Internet to entertainment comes at a cost to the student’s cross-cultural immersion. It is difficult to resist the temptation to check Facebook or instant message your BFF back home. Students are not present in their cross-cultural environment because they become consumed with being present in their virtual community. They often stay up late into the night to engage with those in a different time zone while robbing themselves and others of an opportunity to experience and apply their education in another setting.

ix Suggestions are based on conversations over the past four years with the college as well as field personnel.

x Terms like “mission trip”, “mission or evangelistic outreach”, and “missionaries” among others create red flags.

xi STEP (Smart Traveler Enrollment Program) is a free service for U.S. citizens traveling abroad which allows them to register with local U.S Embassy or Consulates.

Works Cited


Primrose, Bruce. 2015. LIFE to LPC, April 6.


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