

*The Case of Dean Diana Garland:
Taking a Stand at Southern Baptist Theological
Seminary*

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Abstract: Isaac Newton's third law of physics states that, "For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction." History shows that this law often applies to social movements as well. The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), the largest Protestant denomination in the United States, was historically comprised of a diverse collection of leaders and individuals. However, in the years following the Women's Liberation Movement of the 1970s, a group of conservative SBC leaders devised a plan to purge the denomination of moderate and liberal minded leaders within SBC administrative units, churches, and seminaries. By the 1990s, most SBC leaders who did not support the conservative agenda, which banned the leadership of women, had resigned, retired, or been fired, and replaced with conservative leaders. In 1994, Seminary President Roy Honeycutt named Dr. Diana Garland Dean of the Carver School of Church Social Work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Shortly after, Honeycutt retired and was replaced by conservative President Al Mohler, who began enforcing unofficial hiring criteria that required faculty to oppose the leadership of women in the church. Garland thought it would be impossible to find any qualified candidates who could meet Mohler's criteria; few licensed social workers would support discrimination against anyone based on gender. As a result, Garland was unable to recruit the minimum requirement of faculty and faced losing accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education. Garland considered two possible alternatives for action: resignation, or a public statement. Most likely, both options would result in negative consequences for the Carver School of Church Social Work and its faculty, including Garland.

Dean Diana Garland¹

Diana Garland sat in her living room along with faculty colleagues, her attorney, and her husband, David Garland. The room was filled with a sense of discouragement, as everyone worked together to determine their options. All present were overcome with emotion and defeat, and some were considering resignation. Garland knew that it would be difficult when she accepted the position of Dean at the Carver School of Church Social Work at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, almost two years earlier. As one of the first women faculty members at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (also referred to as Southern Seminary), Garland came face to face with many professional obstacles. When she was the first faculty member to become pregnant, she initiated the development of the Southern Seminary's first parental leave policy and the transformation of a faculty men's restroom into the first women's

¹ This account is taken from Garland's published writings and personal correspondence and interviews between Garland and the author.

restroom in the faculty wing of the administration building. She endured anxiety-filled evenings as faculty meetings ran late and past the closing time of her children's daycare. Garland had no expectations of smooth sailing and quickly learned how to negotiate and maneuver around these seemingly persistent obstacles, all the while trying to communicate her needs and expectations to administrative officers. However, she never imagined that in her time as dean she would find herself in a situation where these skills would fail her to the point of considering resignation. She also did not expect that the acting president of the seminary, Al Mohler, who explicitly communicated his support for her leadership in their initial meeting just two years earlier as well as during the many months to follow, would now be the reason she considered resignation.

Garland had spent most of her adult life in Louisville, Kentucky and received her M.S.W. and Ph.D. from the University of Louisville. Additionally, Garland had been a faculty member of Southern Seminary's Carver School for seventeen years as a professor of Christian family ministry and social work. Similarly, her husband, David, had received his M.Div. and Ph.D. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and had been a professor of New Testament studies at Southern Seminary since 1977. Both Garlands were endowed chairs, the most secure of faculty positions. Not only did the Garlands build their professional lives in Louisville, they began their family there as well. By 1993, they had two children, two successful careers, and deep roots in the Louisville community and at Southern Seminary.

When she decided to retire, Garland's predecessor, Dean Anne Davis, recommended Garland to succeed her, during a period when the institution's theological and political grounds were beginning to shift. Davis felt that the school needed "strong leadership." Garland, a shy, introverted professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary immediately responded with "No way!" She had no interest in taking on the burden of the role of dean. At the time, Garland was on sabbatical in Australia. When she returned, Roy Honeycutt, President of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, told her there was no better person for the job and was enthusiastic about working together. At this point, Garland relented and accepted the position of dean.

In 1993, President Roy Honeycutt, who had hired the first two women faculty at Southern Baptist Seminary in the mid-1980s, officially appointed Dr. Diana Garland as Dean of the Carver School of Church Social Work, the social work school at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Unbeknownst to Garland, her appointment would be one of President Honeycutt's last actions before announcing his retirement. The Carver School of Church Social Work, the oldest social work program in the United States, had been in existence since 1907. Garland looked forward to continuing the Carver School's legacy of outstanding social work education.

By 1994, President Honeycutt had retired, and the Board of Trustees elected Albert Mohler as the new president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. As a doctoral student at Southern Seminary, Mohler was known for advocating and supporting the leadership of women, both inside and outside the church. However, during Mohler's time as a student at Southern Seminary, the Southern Baptist Convention had experienced a resurgence of conservative Baptists who strongly opposed women in leadership positions, as well as the "liberal" profession of social work. While conservatives had taken over the boards at the other six Southern Baptist seminaries, Mohler's past work did not necessarily suggest he would support these more conservative initiatives. A conservative takeover was, at this point, unlikely for Southern Seminary.

As time progressed, however, Mohler's decisions reflected a conservative agenda. Mohler privately communicated new criteria for hiring faculty to the deans. These criteria required candidates to hold conservative views on a variety of social and theological issues. Garland grew discouraged as she found it close to impossible to find qualified candidates who met Mohler's changing set of criteria. Finally, Garland found Dr. David Sherwood, whom she believed to be the perfect candidate to fill a current vacant faculty position. She and her faculty unanimously agreed

that he was the most qualified candidate for the job. Before Sherwood returned for his interview with the full seminary faculty, however, Mohler asked him for a written description of his personal beliefs about abortion, the role of women in the church, homosexuality, and the authority of Scripture. Mohler found Sherwood's personal beliefs about women's role in the church to be unacceptable. Like Garland, Sherwood believed God had the power to call both men and women to leadership positions. The next day, Mohler informed Garland that he had rejected Sherwood's candidacy.

Garland thought it would be impossible to find any qualified candidates who could meet Mohler's criteria; few licensed social workers would support discrimination against anyone based on gender. As a result, Garland was unable to recruit the minimum requirement of faculty and faced losing accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education. The adverse effects of Mohler's abuse of his presidential power to circumvent the institution's hiring policies and practices on the Carver School and her faculty concerned Garland. Therefore, she decided to take action.

Garland considered two possible alternatives for action: resignation or a public letter. The thought of resigning from the Carver School, however, seemed unimaginable to Garland, as her resignation meant the discontinuation of a legacy that so many women before her had worked so hard to create and preserve. Furthermore, her resignation would guarantee the endangerment or loss of the school's accreditation. She also considered making a public statement to faculty and students about Mohler's lack of adherence to institutional hiring policies. This decision would most certainly result in termination (although her lawyer did not agree), but it would expose Mohler's abuse of power. While speaking publicly might hold Mohler accountable, it did not guarantee a positive impact on the fate of her faculty, students, or the Carver School. Additionally, this decision could quite possibly result in professional suicide; being publicly fired would raise all kinds of questions about what really happened.

Southern Baptist Perspective

The dispute between conservatives and liberals at Southern Seminary serves as a microcosm of the battle between conservatives and moderate-liberals within the larger Southern Baptist denomination at the time. Conservatives, moderates, and liberals within the Southern Baptist denomination have traditionally disagreed on a variety of subjects. Most of these disagreements revolve around the authority of biblical Scripture, as well as the role of women in the church and in society at large. However, given the autonomous nature of Baptist churches and their history of opposition to upholding a formal, centralized creed, these differences were generally accepted among Baptists.

Conservatives' beliefs are typically absolute and any deviation from these normative beliefs is thought to be dangerous. This perspective reflects an ultra-conservative approach to biblical Scripture. They believe in the inerrancy of Scripture, meaning it is divinely inspired and is therefore without error. By this understanding, all writings are historically and contextually correct and applicable to present time. Conservatives also believe that Scripture should be interpreted literally rather than figuratively or symbolically. For example, they believe Adam and Eve were absolutely real, historical people. In this way, scripture is both historically true and divine Truth. Conservative Baptists' literal approach to Scripture contributes to an understanding that women should not be leaders in the church, but rather they should hold primarily domestic roles in broader society.

Moderate-to-liberal Baptists, in contrast, have a more progressive theological perspective. Most moderate-to-liberal Baptists do not assume that the newness or oldness of an idea determines if it is good or bad. Typically, these groups do not believe Scripture to be inerrant, but believe it to be infallible. While error within Scripture does exist because humans constructed it, the

biblical themes are considered to be infallible and divinely inspired. In comparison to the conservative perspective, interpretations may be literal and/or figurative. For example, Adam and Eve may have, in fact, been real people, or they may have been symbolic figures that illustrate the story of the human condition. Regardless, either interpretation does not cause Scripture to be more or less True. In this way, Scripture may not necessarily be historically true but remains divine Truth. By approaching Scripture less literally, moderates and liberals are guided toward broader themes of equality and justice rather than exclusive and oppressive themes derived from more literal interpretations of Scripture. Exclusively liberal Baptists maintain that there should be more flexibility in how the church teaches on these subjects than both moderates and conservatives. Within conservative Southern Baptist circles, however, moderate-to-liberal Baptists are usually understood as strictly liberal. For the purpose of this article, liberal and moderate Baptists will be referred to simply as ‘moderate Baptists’ or ‘moderates’ as many of the actors in this case identified as moderates at the time.

Southern Baptist Convention (SBC)

The Southern Baptist Convention is the largest Baptist denomination in the world as well as the largest Protestant group in the United States. With 16 million members in 2010, it is second only to the Catholic Church as the largest Christian body in the United States (Lindler 2010). In 1845, Southern Baptists split from the northern Baptists due to disagreements about mission appointments and the proscription of ordaining missionaries who were slave owners (Ammerman 1990). A second split occurred after the Civil War when black Baptists split from white churches to create independent Baptist churches that formed the National Baptist Convention.

The Southern Baptist Convention continued to grow and develop associations, mission societies, and schools, particularly in the southern United States. These organizations were vital in spreading the “pious Southern way of life” (Ammerman 1990, 30). Southern Baptists began to dominate Southern culture through revivals and “establishing an evangelical ethos that continues until today” (Ammerman 1990, 30). The Southern Baptists’ evangelical approach of targeting poor, uneducated “ordinary folk” contributed to a membership growth rate that almost tripled the region’s population growth rate at the time (Ammerman 1990). Historian Donald Mathews (1977) notes that evangelical “symbols, style of self-control, and rules of social decorum became dominant in the social system” (12). Nancy Ammerman (1990), author of *Baptist Battles*, wrote, “With evangelicalism at the center of the culture, Baptists in the South began to proclaim theirs as the best possible way for a Christian to live, a model for humanity” (Ammerman 1990, 31).

Today, in addition to having thousands of church affiliations, the Southern Baptist Convention owns six seminaries: (1) Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, (2) Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina, (3) Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, (4) Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri, (5) New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana, and (6) Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, California. It also oversees the North American Mission Board (NAMB) as well the International Mission Board (IMB), which are responsible for sending, placing, and training missionaries both within the United States and internationally.

Carver School of Church Social Work

In May of 1888 in Richmond, Virginia, women delegates from twelve different states met and established the Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU), an auxiliary organization of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). Twenty years later in 1907, the WMU established a Training School for

female Christian social workers, the predecessor to the Carver School of Church Social Work, in Louisville, Kentucky. The WMU created this school “to train women for efficient service in foreign, home, and city missions and as church and Sunday School workers” and “to provide courses in missionary methods, social work, fine arts, and domestic science” (Scales 2000, 1). Historian Gregory Vickers (1989) argued that the WMU Training School played a role in broadening the scope of a woman’s world within the sphere of Southern Baptist culture at the time (Vickers 1989, 52). Originally created as a place to train women as missionaries, to be caregivers and community homemakers for “the entire world”, the WMU Training School also sparked curiosity and desire for a deeper theological knowledge within its women students. Implicit in this desire was a movement that challenged the traditional role of women as “homemakers and church workers” in SBC culture. Vickers points out that while the WMU Training School preserved the SBC’s understanding of traditional gender roles, it also played a vital role in a breaking down gender barriers that students faced. A few years after the founding of the WMU Training School, female students joined their male counterparts in the classrooms at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary for the first time.

The introduction of women to the historically male-dominated Southern Baptist seminary classrooms emerged at a time when the entire country was wrestling with “the woman question” (Scales 2000, 4). The Progressive Era called into question the traditional roles of all American women when it reached its peak in 1920, with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment. Seventy-five years earlier, in 1848, a group of feminists had passed the Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions at Seneca Falls, New York. This declaration called for the removal of structures that separated the roles of women and men. As it pertains to Southern Baptist women, the declaration particularly called for an “overthrow of the monopoly of the pulpit,” as well as equal professional and educational opportunities for women (Scales 2000, 4). Women pushing for this overhaul stated that God created women and men equal and no sex should be treated as inferior to the other.

In the mid-1920s, Southern Seminary relocated to Beeches, a suburb of Louisville, geographically separating it from the Training School for fifteen years. The Training School struggled to provide a quality theological education to its female students as the seminary’s faculty and classes were no longer nearby. In 1941, under the direction of WMU president Laura Dell Armstrong, the Training School relocated to property adjacent to the seminary in Beeches in order to revive the pre-existing partnership with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Women students joined men in theology classes once again.

In 1951, WMU elected Emily Lansdell as president of the Training School. Lansdell joined the administration at a time when the Training School was struggling to define its purpose because enrollment was down and women students could enroll directly into Southern Seminary to pursue a Master’s of Religious Education. In 1952 at a meeting in Miami, Florida, WMU made three significant changes concerning the future of the Training School. WMU made a commitment to put greater emphasis on social work and theological mission education in the curriculum and to allow students of all races and both sexes to enroll. Additionally, they changed the name of the Training School to Carver School of Missions and Social Work. These changes, however, did not increase enrollment as expected. In 1957, WMU officially transferred ownership of the Carver School to the Southern Baptist Convention. This move was a financial necessity, as the SBC had more available resources than WMU, but Lansdell also noted that “she thought the school would have a better future if a man were president” (Scales 2000, 253). In 1963, Nathan Brooks became the first male president of the Carver School and pursued accreditation by the Council on Social Work Education after merging with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Now housed in Southern Seminary, the Carver School offered classes taught by seminary professors. The School of Theology conducted theology classes while social work classes took place in the School of Religious Education.

By 1970, more than 100 students were working to attain a Master's in Religious Education with a specialization in social work. Additionally, Southern Seminary hired Anne Davis, one of the seminary's first female faculty members, as a social work professor. In 1985, the Carver School of Missions and Social Work, renamed Carver School of Church Social Work, became the only accredited Master of Social Work program in the United States housed in a theological seminary. The Carver School of Church Social Work was thriving when Davis retired as its first dean in 1993 and Garland became its second dean.

The Conservative Takeover

In 1976, Paige Patterson, President of Criswell College in Dallas, and Paul Pressler, a judge in Houston, met at Café Du Monde in New Orleans to devise a political plan: Elect a conservative president of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) who would, in turn, nominate like-minded people to the Committee of Committees, a committee responsible for nominating members to all other committees. The Committee of Committees would then nominate like-minded people to the Committee of Nominations who would, in turn, nominate like-minded board members and directors of Southern Baptist institutions and organizations. These board members and directors would then hire like-minded faculty and staff members and slowly purge the moderate-to-liberal minded leaders from the SBC. Pressler described this plan as “going for the jugular” (Shurden and Shepley 1996).

Less than three years later and after months of campaigning, the initial stage of this plan came to fruition. In 1979, the SBC elected a conservative president, and conservative candidates have secured the position of presidency in every year since. By 1989, a conservative majority affiliated with the “takeover” plan comprised almost all SBC committees and boards. The conservative takeover of the SBC made its most significant headway in the mid-1980s through the mid-1990s. In 1984, the SBC met in Kansas City and adopted an emphatic proposition against the leadership of women in churches “because man was first in creation and the woman was first in the Edenic fall” (Ammerman 1990).

During a 1985 meeting in Dallas, Texas, the SBC elected a Peace Committee to address the conflicts and controversies that were brewing between moderate and conservative minds within the denomination. The purpose of the Peace Committee was “to determine sources of the controversy in the denomination, and make findings and recommendations regarding these controversies so that Southern Baptists might effect reconciliation” (SBC Convention Bulletin, First Day, Part II 1987, 20). Conservatives, moderate-liberals, as well as those not publicly aligned with either side comprised the Peace Committee. While this committee was intended to bridge differences in political and theological perspectives and beliefs between moderate-liberals and conservatives within the SBC, the balance of power on the committee was heavily slanted toward the conservatives' side. Moderate-liberals consistently lost major votes, but their presence was occasionally effective in moderating the results of decisions.

The Peace Committee compiled a report for the utilization of institutions, faculty, and staff affiliated with the SBC. Although this report acknowledged the existence of diversity within the Southern Baptist denomination it functioned more as a “fundamental creed rather than an inclusive Baptist confession of faith” (James et al. 2006, 44). First, the report stated a belief in direct creation (i.e. Adam and Eve were absolutely real people). Second, it took the position that the named authors did, in fact, write the biblical books ascribed to them in those books. Third, the report declared that historical, biblical narratives are full, wholly accurate and reliable accounts given by the authors. While many conservatives and moderate-liberals did and still do feel comfortable with the aforementioned statements, conservatives posit that “they cannot support nor have fellowship with any Christian who disagrees at any point with their list of ‘commonly held beliefs’” while moderate-

liberals grant other Christians more room and freedom to differ (James et al. 2006, 45). In 1987 in St. Louis Missouri, the SBC voted to officially adopt the report compiled by the Peace Committee.

In 1987, the mostly conservative Board of Trustees of Southeastern Baptist Seminary in Wake Forest, North Carolina voted to hire only faculty members who followed and fully believed in the revised Baptist Faith and Message. With this decision, the SBC asked Randall Lolley, President of Southeastern Baptist Seminary, to resign, because he did not fully agree with this revised message. One year later, the SBC diverged from its tradition of applying Baptist Faith and Message as a guideline and decided to employ it as a creed for hiring new faculty and staff at its seminaries. Furthermore, at a conference in San Antonio, Texas in 1988, the SBC voted on a resolution that drastically contradicted the established Baptist understanding of the “priesthood of the believer” and “soul competency,” democratizing the role of priest. In contrast, the former President of the SBC, W.A. Criswell, said “the man of God who is the pastor of the church is the ruler” (James et al. 2006, 13).

The 1990s brought forth a series of resignations and terminations, which further pushed the conservative agenda. In 1990, a young, recently-appointed trustee on the board of Southern Seminary accused Roy Honeycutt, president of Southern Seminary, of “not believing in the Bible,” based on his moderate approach to Scripture. Honeycutt’s retirement—and the appointment of Al Mohler as the new president of Southern Seminary—subsequently followed this accusation in 1993. Additionally, the SBC terminated Al Shackelford and Dan Martin, journalists of the Baptist Press, the SBC’s official news service, for “persecuting the fundamentalists in their news coverage” (James et al. 2006, 13). In 1992, moderate Keith Parks resigned under pressure from conservatives after serving as president of the SBC’s Foreign Mission Board for thirteen years. The president of the Sunday School Board, moderate Lloyd Elder, also resigned while under pressure from the fundamentalists, with Jimmy Draper, a fundamentalist pastor and Texas-native quickly replacing him.

Later in 1992, the predominantly conservative board at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth suddenly fired Russell Dilday, the seminary’s president for over fifteen years. Although the trustees gave him a favorable annual job performance evaluation the day before he was fired, they released a statement asserting that Dilday failed to support the conservative takeover in the SBC and “held liberal views of Scripture” (James et al. 2006, 14). While Southwestern Seminary faculty opposed these charges made against Dilday, the Board of Trustees denied him access to his office by quickly changing the locks. In the month of November 1992 alone, 159 employees of the SBC voluntarily or involuntarily retired.

In 1998, the conservative takeover reached full circle with the election of Paige Patterson as president of the SBC. The man who began planning the conservative takeover almost exactly twenty years before was now the most powerful leader in both the SBC and the conservative takeover. After his election, the SBC added a clause to the Baptist Faith and Message stating that a wife is to “submit herself graciously” to her husband (Baptist Faith and Message, 2000). In 2000, the SBC officially adopted the new version of the Baptist Faith and Message as a creedal statement to be used by SBC organizations and institutions. This version forbade the ordination and leadership of women in the church.

Dean Garland’s Dilemma²

Until 1995, the SBC considered Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky to be its flagship seminary among theological educational institutions. It also considered Southern Seminary to be the most theologically moderate seminary within the SBC. By 1995,

² This account is taken from Garland’s published writings and personal correspondence and interviews between Garland and the author.

however, President Roy Honeycutt had retired, and the SBC reconstructed the trustee board by appointing mostly conservative members. This newly appointed Board of Trustees then elected Al Mohler as the new president of Southern Seminary. At the time, Al Mohler, an alumnus of Southern Seminary, was well respected, and the Southern Seminary faculty and staff welcomed him.

Recently named Dean of Southern Seminary's Carver School of Church Social Work by President Honeycutt, Diana Garland offered her resignation to President Mohler in their first official private meeting, stating, "the Faculty and Staff Manual of the institution stipulated that deans serve at the pleasure of the President, and I believed that he should be able to choose his own dean" (Garland 1999, 61). Additionally, Garland drew attention to the fact that they disagreed theologically on issues that were recently elevated to high importance within the current transformation of Southern Seminary, particularly their opposing views on women in leadership. Despite their differences, however, President Mohler assured Garland of his overwhelming support of her as Dean of the Carver School. Mohler told Garland that their conflicting beliefs concerning women in pastoral leadership was not an issue since the Carver School's mission was to educate women to become social workers, not pastors. However, he did challenge Garland to prove that social work belonged in the seminary.

Mohler charged Garland with the role of "shepherd," leading the Carver School through the institutional transition from a moderate perspective to a conservative one. He also seemed open to learning more about the importance of the role of social work within the church. In response to Mohler's supportive position, Garland made an ethical commitment, not only to advocate for the Carver School, but to support the institution of Southern Seminary, along with its administration. Garland became proactive, informing Mohler of the vital significance of educating social workers within the seminary setting in order to equip them professionally to work in faith-based organizations and church congregations. As an advocate for Carver School's Church Social Work program, Garland seemed to win President Mohler over, sharing her own publications concerning church social work (Garland 1992; 1994; 1995) in addition to statistics on the achievements and involvement of alumni in faith-based organizations and congregations. Mohler not only fought on Garland's behalf to convince the SBC's Executive Board not to cut financial support provided to students of Carver School, but six months into his presidency, in reference to the vital role of church social work, he told Garland, "You've convinced me" (Garland 1999).

Although Mohler supported the ongoing growth and development of the Carver School, he began to show signs of inner conflict. He unofficially redefined the formalized institutional hiring processes in order to exclude faculty he considered "liberal." Nonetheless, the faculty and staff continued to use the Faculty and Staff Manual as the official guideline for the search process for hiring new faculty. According to the Faculty and Staff Manual, the search committee only considered candidates who were members of Baptist congregations, adhered to the seminary's "Abstract of Principles," which documents particular theological beliefs (not addressing roles of men and women), and demonstrated competence as a teacher and scholar. The Baptist Faith and Message was not used as a theological test at Southern Seminary as it was in other agencies and institutions of the SBC.

Southern Seminary's search committee was comprised of faculty members and chaired by the dean. The committee interviewed candidates and made recommendations based on these interviews to the rest of the faculty. Additionally, a student search committee worked alongside the faculty search committee and submitted its recommendations. Once all of the faculty members on the committee agreed, the search committee invited the candidate to campus for an interview with full seminary faculty. The faculty then voted to determine whether or not to recommend the candidate to the president. Once the committee recommended the candidate to the president, he decided whether or not to recommend the candidate to the trustees who, in turn, determined whether

or not to offer the candidate a position. The Faculty and Staff Manual officially documented this process. Mohler confidentially told the deans to influence the search process in a way that prevented the consideration of any candidate who did not meet the president's criteria, despite the process stated in the manual. Furthermore, Mohler instructed the deans not to share the president's growing list of criteria with the search committee. In response, some deans opted out of hiring any faculty for the 1995 academic year in the hopes that President Mohler would begin adhering to institutional guidelines once he became more secure in his position.

Dean Garland did not have the option of waiting until the following year to hire new faculty. President Mohler had recently denied tenure to a faculty member who the faculty unanimously recommended receive tenure. This particular faculty member was the first African-American recommended for tenure in the history of Southern Seminary. Once denied tenure, he resigned and made a public statement accusing the seminary of racism. This left Garland with only five full-time faculty members and only a few months to find another one in order to meet the Council of Social Work Education's minimum requirement for accreditation. Moreover, she knew that President Mohler was confidentially offering enticing retirement packages to three of the remaining five faculty members who were considered too liberal. Garland knew that losing four of the six faculty members in the school would seriously jeopardize the school's ability to continue functioning.

A few months later, Garland found Dr. David Sherwood, the editor of *Social Work and Christianity* for many years, someone she believed to be the perfect candidate, who she called "one of the most respected academic leaders in social work education" (Garland 1999, 63). Trying to walk the fine line between the official search process and pacifying the president by meeting his criteria, Garland arranged a meeting between Sherwood and Mohler when Sherwood came to visit the campus for his preliminary interview with the search committee. To Garland's relief and delight, Mohler was very pleased with the candidate and "impressed with the gifts he would bring to the faculty" (Garland 1999, 63). Subsequently, both faculty and student search committees recommended the candidate to the full seminary faculty.

The hiring process was going according to plan until Mohler interjected his own guidelines that deviated from the institutional process. Just before Sherwood arrived for his full faculty interview, Mohler required him to compose a statement illustrating his personal positions on four particular social issues: abortion, the role of women in the church, homosexuality, and the authority of Scripture. Not only was this not a part of the hiring process at Southern Seminary, but Mohler also explicitly asked Sherwood what his personal beliefs were rather than what he taught in his classrooms. After reading over Sherwood's responses, Mohler denied his candidacy. Mohler's issue with the candidate pertained to Sherwood's personal beliefs concerning the role of women in the church since Sherwood essentially stated that God had the power to call both men and women.

At this point in the process, Mohler's rejection of Sherwood's candidacy was inconsistent with institutional policies. Moreover, the hiring process did not require a statement of personal opinions in consideration of a candidate's eligibility. While faculty must state their commitment to teach in accordance with the Abstract of Principles, the personal beliefs of candidates were beyond the scope of consideration of the search committees, president, faculty, and trustees.

Garland considered Mohler's decision to be an abuse of his presidential power that would have adverse effects on the future of her faculty and school. Although she recognized that Mohler was expected to placate the agendas of several different stakeholders, Garland's greatest concern was the impact of Mohler's actions on the future of her school. Additionally, she was concerned for Sherwood and future candidates, because the withholding of pertinent information about required hiring criteria throughout the search process was not only unethical, but also caused candidates to waste valuable time and energy. In Sherwood's case, his candidacy had become public knowledge, his home institution aware that he was considering a move to Southern Seminary.

The following Monday, Mohler and Garland met to discuss the matter. Mohler informed Garland that she must find another candidate because Sherwood was unacceptable. In response, Garland said she was considering resignation because she was not confident that she could do her job under his restraints. Additionally, she did not believe there were qualified candidates that would meet all of his requirements. Mohler asked her to not resign, as he did not believe the Carver School would survive without her leadership, given that various denominational parties were seeking its closure. Mohler assured Garland he would work to resolve the matter. Three days later, the chair of the Board of Trustees called Garland to tell her to be patient, and that they would work it out.

Late on Friday afternoon of that week, the vice president delivered a message from Mohler to Garland stating that Mohler's decision to deny the hiring of Sherwood was final and would not be changed. He offered an opportunity for her to speak to the Board of Trustees, but a committee would have to be formed at the upcoming board meeting. She could meet with this committee at their fall meeting six months later. Even if they acted favorably, eighteen months would pass before she could even consider hiring new faculty, with Mohler applying his unofficial processes and requirements freely in the meantime.

By this time, Garland had a total of four vacant faculty positions: that of the faculty member denied tenure and of the three faculty members offered retirement packages. Mohler's offers were no doubt an effort to purge the institution of senior faculty who did not support the new direction of the seminary.

When Garland received the news that Mohler would not alter his decision, Garland and her faculty agreed that she must resign. Garland called a lawyer to go over her contract and determine her options. The rest of the faculty did the same. Garland's attorney presented another option to her and her husband, encouraging her to consider the impact of her resignation. He said to her, "Why resign? That won't accomplish anything. Why not fight for what you believe in?" (Garland 1999, 65).

Garland did not sleep and barely ate over the next couple of days. She was confronting a decision that terrified her. She knew that she and her faculty could no longer effectively do their jobs under the restraints Mohler had placed on them. However, she felt she must do more than resign. The future of the Carver School depended on holding Mohler accountable. While her husband and fellow faculty supported her speaking publicly about the issue, this option felt uncomfortable and risky. She did not have a history of getting involved in the political affairs of the institution. She hated public speaking, and confronting Mohler publicly would be contrary to her reserved and shy nature. Still, she had to make a decision.

Epilogue

After hours of conversation with her husband and colleagues, Garland decided to make a public statement regarding President Mohler's abuse of power and to expose his inexplicit expectations for hiring new faculty. She considered it necessary, as she felt a responsibility to her faculty and to the future of the Carver School of Church Social Work. Garland met with her faculty on Sunday afternoon and received their approval to give a public statement. A faculty and student forum was already scheduled for the following day, and Garland decided to make her statement there. She also received permission from Dr. David Sherwood to use his name and share what had happened during his hiring process.

Garland felt that it was important for both faculty and students to hear her public statement, as both groups served on committees in the hiring process. She called the student body president Sunday afternoon to tell him about her intent to bring a report at the forum the next day. She urged him to make sure the majority of the students were present. Garland also informed the editor of the

state Baptist paper that she was issuing a statement at a forum, and that he might want to be present.

The next day, Garland had a messenger carry a letter to President Mohler's office. In the letter, Garland illustrated the ramifications of Mohler's decisions on the school. These ramifications included jeopardizing the accreditation of the Carver School resulting in seven months of confusion for faculty and students who were waiting for the Trustee Board to review the hiring decision and generating a situation that made it difficult for the school to recruit new students. Additionally, Garland included a copy of the statement she planned to give at the forum. That particular morning, President Mohler did not come into the office until later that day, so he did not receive her letter until after her address.

At the forum, Garland gave the faculty and students an account of the past few days. She communicated that, by the upcoming fall semester, she would not have enough faculty members to meet the required accreditation standards and could not find potential new faculty members who would meet President Mohler's standards. In addition, she gave examples of the ways in which President Mohler's requirements violated the institution's hiring policies. Lastly, she charged the students and faculty to join her in holding the administration accountable to institutional policies and preserving the future of their school.

Less than two hours later, Mohler's assistant summoned Garland to a meeting in his office. Carver School students stood outside of Mohler's office in a silent vigil along with newspaper reporters while Mohler expressed his dismay and uncertainty about what to do next. The tension was overwhelming for Garland, who finally said she would communicate with him by the end of the day and left. After the meeting, Mohler met with newspapers and television reporters, telling them that Garland had resigned. In response to the next morning's front-page newspaper headlines that said she had resigned, Garland called the media and told them that she had not. Instead, Mohler had essentially fired her. Later, Mohler released a letter stating that his grounds for asking Garland's resignation was due to "the irreparable breakdown of the professional trust and common vision requisite for the working relationship between the President and Dean" (Garland 1999, 67).

During the next few months, students organized prayer vigils and meetings to express concerns to the administration. The seminary faculty unanimously supported Garland and voiced their concerns to President Mohler in emotionally-heated faculty meetings. The surrounding community held prayer services for Garland and the faculty and students of the Carver School. Accounts of the unfolding events covered the pages of local newspapers and denominational publications. Less than a month later, the Board of Trustees voted to change the institutional hiring process by taking it out of the hands of the faculty completely and putting it in the hands of only the president. Additionally, the trustees constructed a special committee to determine the future of the Carver School. During this meeting, the trustees interrogated Garland for three consecutive hours on all topics pertaining to the history, current status, and perceived future of the Carver School of Church Social Work. Based on Garland's testimony to that special committee over the subsequent months, the trustees recommended the Carver School of Church Social Work be closed and sold to a Baptist university because the theological direction of Southern Seminary and of social work education were no longer compatible with each other.

In the months to follow, students demonstrated with prayer vigils outside the president's office and wrote letters to the trustees and media agencies. A major denominational agency stated that it would hire no students who participated in these demonstrations. Many students decided they could not finish their education in such a compromised program and transferred to other social work programs.

Garland held an endowed faculty position, so she returned to full-time teaching and worked with the one remaining faculty member to offer the courses students needed to graduate the following year. Moreover, she was still working to secure the future of the school. Garland agreed

to serve as Mohler's emissary to Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama, a Baptist university keen on securing the Carver School. Garland was supposed to resume her position as Dean of the Carver School as part of Samford, and Carver students made "Alabama or Bust" stickers for their book bags. In confidential negotiations over the sale of the Carver School, and presumably whether the endowment of the Carver School would go to Samford or remain at Southern Seminary, the transfer collapsed. Shortly after the deal with Samford fell apart, the Carver School was transferred to Campbellsville University in Kentucky. It remained closed for over 10 years, not reopening until the fall of 2008.

Where Are They Now?

Diana Garland went on to become the inaugural dean of Baylor School of Social Work where she has served on faculty since 1997. Her husband, David, became a professor of New Testament studies at the newly formed George W. Truett Theological Seminary of Baylor University. Truett Seminary welcomes all applicants regardless of gender into preparation for pastoral ministries. Men and women have access to the same classes and degrees. In 2007, Truett Seminary named David Garland its fourth dean. He went on to serve as interim President of Baylor University from August of 2008 to May of 2010. Through the Garlands' leadership, Baylor School of Social Work and Truett Seminary collaborated to create a dual degree Master of Social Work/Master of Divinity program, and an interdisciplinary journal, *Journal of Family and Community Ministries*. The Baylor School of Social Work has more than 20 faculty members, 260 undergraduate and graduate students, and a Ph.D. program. The school's signature is its focus on the integration of Christian faith and ethical social work practice, as well as preparation for the leadership of congregations and religiously affiliated organizations. Many Carver School alumni have become affiliated as "Alumni by Choice" with Baylor, the school that they see as carrying on the mission begun in 1907 by the WMU Training School. Garland was a leader in congregational social work and family ministry and was frequently invited to consult with and preach in congregations across denominations. Garland retired as Dean in the spring of 2015 when the Baylor University School of Social Work was re-named in her honor as The Diana R. Garland School of Social Work. Shortly after her 35th wedding anniversary, on Monday September 21, 2015, Garland passed away, after a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer. Dr. Garland's legacy will forever influence the enduring partnership between social work and church work and grace the hearts of all who shared life with her.

Paige Patterson

Paige Patterson currently serves as president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, a position he has held since 2003. To this day, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary does not permit women to study theology outside of the women's studies program. Additionally, Southwestern offers the following degrees to women: Seminary Studies for Student Wives, Leadership certificate in Women's Ministry, Homemaking Certificate, Homemaking Concentration at the College at Southwestern, Homemaking Concentration in the Terry School of Church and Family Ministries, and Women's Ministry Concentration in the Terry School of Church and Family Ministries and the School of Theology. The website for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary pertaining to the Homemakers' certificate reads as follows: "The purpose of the Homemaking Certificate program is to equip women to model the characteristics of a godly woman as outlined in Scripture by using their home for ministry to their families, churches, and communities. This subservience is accomplished through instruction in homemaking skills and developing insights into home and family, while continuing to equip women to understand and engage the culture of today."

This program includes classes like *Principles of Food Preparation* with lab, *Home and Family Management*, and *Fundamentals of Clothing Construction* with lab.

Albert Mohler

Today Albert Mohler remains the president of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Although the Carver School is no longer affiliated with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Southern Seminary still provides a place for women. The Southern Seminary Women's Programs web page reads as follows:

Wondering if Southern Seminary has a place for you?

At Southern Seminary, we recognize the vital role that women play in God's Kingdom. We believe that God is calling women unto Himself. To that end, we've created a variety of special programs and ministries to address women's needs.

Seminary Wives Institute is an innovative program designed to prepare the wives of seminary students for their role in their husband's ministry.

Great Commission Women was established to minister to women in the seminary community who are interested in future service in the areas of missions, evangelism, church growth, and church planting. Throughout each semester a variety of events and a mentoring program are offered to help inform female students and student wives as they seek to fulfill the Great Commission now and in the future.

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