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AN INTELLIGENT CRITIQUE OF MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES: A CHRISTIAN REVIEW FOR LEADERS

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Prior to Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences (MI), the prevailing view on intelligence was that each individual possessed a general intelligence guiding human behavior and cognition. Gardner's MI is based on naturalistic evolution, but his observations can be clearly observed in the human person, prompting consideration in ecclesiastical and university contexts. We trace the evidence of MI through a number of scriptural stories and characters, asserting that the Bible upholds the plausibility of Gardner's theory regarding intelligence. Finally, we provide practical applications for implementing effective teaching methods to improve the overall learning of students and parishioners alike.

I. INTRODUCTION

Ideas have consequences—for good or bad. The apostle Paul, in his letter to a group of Romans, stated that the metaphysical world could be known to humanity (Rom 1:18ff). Over 1,800 years later, Emanuel Kant, a German philosopher, challenged this view of the metaphysical world; that is, Kant claimed that God could not be known, and Western Christian philosophy has scrambled ever since to make sense of the two.[1] On a similar scale, Howard Gardner, professor at Harvard University, challenged the prevailing view of intelligence in 1983 with his book *Frames of Mind*, stating that there

[1] R. C. Sproul, *The Consequences of Ideas: Understanding the Concepts That Shaped Our World* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2009).

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were a number of different types of intelligences, as opposed to the singular form of intelligence affirmed by the Intelligence Quotient (IQ).[2]

Around 1860, after Charles Darwin had established a case for his theory of evolution, he also began research into a keen interest of his in the psychological traits of humans. His cousin, Francis Galton, developed the first laboratory where human intelligence could be empirically measured, although Alfred Binet is typically attributed with developing the first intelligence test in the early twentieth century.[3] As the development of measuring intelligence progressed, the dominant theory in the mid-twentieth century was that individuals possessed a general intelligence, which would determine those children who would succeed in school.[4] Consequently, society began to label children as "low" (an IQ < 70), "average" (an IQ between 70 and 130), and "gifted" (an IQ > 130). However, Gardner postulated a new paradigm that humans do not have just one pervasive general intelligence but rather a set of autonomous intelligences that have evolved due to adaptation necessary for the survival of the fittest.[5] Although he originally proposed seven intelligences, Gardner eventually incorporated an eighth and possibly a ninth intelligence in human cognition, with the potential for even more.[6]

Instead of accepting everything Gardner says regarding MI, namely, his postulations regarding its origins, we aim to evaluate the potential of MI through the historical figures found throughout the Bible. As opposed to being a theory rooted in evolutionary adaptation for the purposes of survival of the fittest, we show how some of Gardner's proposed intelligences, such as a musical intelligence, actually have more continuity when interpreted from a Biblical literalist's point of view, serving to support an intelligent design perspective over an evolutionary perspective.

The rest of the paper is set up as follows: After a brief summary of Gardner's original theory, we characterize various Biblical figures who would have measured very high in different forms of Gardner's intelligences. Finally, we integrate recent educational theory surrounding the application of MI in a classroom setting as well as in the pastoral and lay practices of the church.

What Is Intelligence?

Gardner's initial definition of intelligence was "the ability to solve problems or to create products that are valued within one or more cultures."[7] Twenty years after publishing his seminal work, he has tweaked his working definition to state, "a biopsychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture."[8] Thus, within a particular cultural context, certain intelligences may or may not be valuable, which

[2] Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 2011).
[3] Howard Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century* (New York: Basic Books, 1999).
[4] Gardner, *Frames of Mind,* 19.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*; Gardner, *Frames of Mind*.
[7] Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 33.
[8] Ibid., 34.

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may result in individuals not accessing particular intelligences to the same degree that other cultures deem to be more desirable. Gardner argues that intelligence itself is not a *compilation* of stored content but that it is *geared* to specific content.[9]

All eight intelligences are present within each individual due to biological and cultural influences.[10] However, according to Gardner's evolutionary perspective, as humans developed each intelligence, they have also evolved to cope with the various kinds of situations in a predictable world.[11] Consequently, these horizontal, within-species adaptations (as opposed to vertical mutations between species, as evolutionary theory would propose) have allowed humanity to survive and even thrive within a diverse array of climatic conditions around the globe. In these settings, the problems posed by the geographic, cultural, and linguistic environments are understood through the same set of universal intelligences, although particular intelligences grow stronger (in Gardner's term, "evolve") because they are being used more frequently to actively adapt. In the field of psychology, these intelligences can be likened to skills or capacities; educators have come to call them "learning styles," and laymen identify them as gifts, talents, or abilities.[12]

Gardner prefers the term *intelligences*, however, because of the inaccurate association people naturally have now to the predominant theory surrounding human intelligence.[13] Gardner questions the status quo nomenclature of "IQ," citing a number of weak foundational issues with which psychologists generally measure intelligence: (1) statistical procedures can yield different results, (2) biological and cultural settings influence the analysis, and (3) biased testing procedures skew statistical methods.[14] For example, he notes that some IQ tests demonstrate unreliability because they can exhibit a 15-point difference between certain ethnic groups.[15] He denounces this supposed gap because he believes that there are differing experiences through background and cultural events that inhibit a general IQ test from accurately capturing the true intelligence capacity each person naturally possesses. Instead, the focus of Gardner's system for MI is on the capacities that *all humans* have for learning. This position stands in opposition to the singular linguistic, Western cultural adaptation. Admittedly, these MI are difficult to measure because the measuring tool must be all-inclusive and because the extant standardized tests that are used to measure intelligence are generally designed to only capture certain intelligences while excluding others.

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[9] Ibid., 94.
[10] Kathy Koch, *How Am I Smart?: A Parent's Guide to Multiple Intelligences* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2007), 19.
[11] Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 95.
[12] Judith St. Clair Hull, "An Evaluation of the 'Learning Styles' Approach to Christian Education," *Christian Education Journal* 5NS, no. 2 (2001): 61.
[13] Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 33.
[14] Ibid., 14-16.
[15] Ibid., 16.

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How Are Individuals Intelligent?

According to Gardner, IQ tests primarily ascertain logical, mathematical, and linguistic intelligence through pen and paper test-taking to show how likely a student is to succeed in Western school settings.[16] Instead, Gardner observed a more holistic nature to human intelligence, including musical, bodily, spatial, and interpersonal intelligences, constituting a more accurate framework for human intelligence.[17] He believed individual intelligence is more complex and based upon his proposed multiple intelligences given that "an individual can participate in meaningful activities in the broader cultural milieu" even without having a high IQ, per the traditional measuring tools.[18]

The next section provides a brief synopsis of each of Gardner's proposed eight intelligences.

Linguistic intelligence

The first intelligence "involves sensitivity to spoken and written languages, the ability to learn languages, and the capacity to use languages to accomplish certain goals."[19] These individuals possess a deep understanding of words, highly developed oral and communication skills, and the musical qualities and rhythm of words. Some examples of professionals who utilize this intelligence are lawyers, orators, writers, and poets. John Milton, Abraham Lincoln, and Jane Austen are a few historical examples of individuals who would have scored high in linguistic intelligence.

Logical–mathematical intelligence

The second intelligence "involves the capacity to analyze problems logically, carry out mathematical operations, and investigate issues scientifically."[20] These would be individuals with the ability to understand numbers, logical concepts, and abstract analysis. Some examples of professionals who utilize this intelligence are scientists, mathematicians, and logicians. Bill Gates, Marie Curie, and Albert Einstein are a few historical examples of people who are gifted with this intelligence.

Musical intelligence

The third intelligence "entails skill in the performance, composition, and appreciation of musical patterns."[21] These would be individuals with the ability to express musical pitch, rhythm, meter, tone, and melody with an instrument or human

[16] Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, 27.
[17] Ibid.
[18] Howard Gardner and Seana Moran, "The Science of Multiple Intelligences Theory: A Response to Lynn Waterhouse," *Educational Psychologist* 41, no. 4 (Fall 2006): 227.
[19] Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 41.
[20] Ibid., 42.
[21] Ibid.

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voice, such as musicians, soloists, and conductors. Beethoven, Billie Holiday, and Bach are some historical examples of individuals gifted with musical intelligence.

Bodily–kinesthetic intelligence

The fourth intelligence "entails the potential of using one's whole body or parts of the body to solve problems or fashion products."[22] These would be those with highly developed coordination, balance, strength, agility, or flexibility—such as athletes, sculptors, gymnasts, or mechanics. Kobe Bryant, Elizabeth Blackwell (the first female physician), and NASA engineer Jose Hernandez are examples of individuals gifted with this intelligence.

Spatial intelligence

The fifth intelligence "features the potential to recognize and manipulate the patterns of wide space as well as the patterns of more confined areas."[23] These individuals, such as artists, sculptors, or map designers, possess the ability to distinguish between lines, shapes, and space as well as manipulate real objects. Georgia O'Keefe, Michelangelo, William Rand, and Andrew McNally are a few historical examples of individuals gifted with spatial intelligence.

Interpersonal intelligence

The sixth intelligence "denotes a person's capacity to understand the intentions, motivations, and desires of other people and, consequently, to work effectively with others."[24] People with interpersonal intelligence are those with the ability to distinguish the mood, motivations, and feelings of others, such as political leaders, public speakers, or clergy. Ronald Reagan, John F. Kennedy, Condoleezza Rice, and Martin Luther King, Jr. are some historical examples of individuals gifted with interpersonal intelligence.

Intrapersonal intelligence

The seventh intelligence "involves the capacity to understand oneself, to have an effective working model of oneself—including one's own desires, fears, and capacities—and to use such information effectively in regulating one's own life."[25] These individuals possess an accurate self-image and understanding of their own strengths and weaknesses; they also make decisions based upon what they believe to be right. Socrates, Nelson Mandela, and Mother Teresa are examples of individuals gifted with intrapersonal intelligence.

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[22] Ibid.
[23] Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed,* 42.
[24] Ibid., 43.
[25] Ibid.

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Naturalist intelligence

The eighth intelligence "demonstrates expertise in the recognition and classification of the numerous species—the flora and fauna—of his or her environment."[26] These individuals have the ability to gather data of the natural world, categorize new species, and analyze organisms, such as astronomers, paleontologists, and biologists. Drs. Georgia Purdom, Jason Lisle, and Gary Parker (all associated with Answers in Genesis) are examples of Christian individuals gifted with this intelligence.

Gardner argues that his identification of these eight intelligences provides a more in-depth account of human cognition and the intellectual potentials that each person possesses, which "can mobilize and connect according to our own inclinations and our culture's preferences."[27] According to Gardner, evolution has ensured that we are not composed of a singular general intelligence, which is very narrow in scope, but rather multiple intelligences, which help us to more efficiently adapt to our surroundings. Thus, we are capable of accurately interpreting the world through a number of diverse means depending on the array of symbols presented to us at any given point in time.

II. BIBLICAL EVALUATION OF MI

The remainder of this paper focuses upon the areas: (1) the Biblical concept of gifts, talents, and abilities granted by God for the edification of the church; (2) moral intelligence, which this paper argues is an overarching intelligence that Gardner does not recognize as an intelligence; and (3) the incompatibility of evolution with the teachings of Christian scripture. Although the focus of the paper is on MI, if an espoused view does not align with the doctrines of the Bible, then the view must be rejected as being contrary to orthodox Biblical interpretation (Col 2:8).

Concepts in MI that Align with Scripture

Has God instilled each human with eight, ten, or twelve intelligences? Scripture has not declared with clarity whether or not such intelligences are part of humanity, which allows for MI to be affirmed through scientific observation or general revelation found in God's uniform creation (i.e., creation sciences such as psychology or sociology). Again, the Bible does not address the concept of a singular intelligence the likes of which Binet conceived, so considering different theories regarding human intelligence requires a Biblical analysis to at least confirm the proposed theory as a Biblical potentiality.

The clearest teaching that a believer might find that would align with MI would be the spiritual gifts that God grants to each of his children (Rom 12, 1 Cor 12, and Eph 4), although these gifts are arguably only given to individuals at salvation and not to all of humanity (Eph 4:12). Might there be points of intersection where the Bible would confirm MI? Whether God has gifted each person with a number of intelligences might not be provable using scripture; however, scriptures do indicate that each person is

[26] Ibid., 48.
[27] Ibid., 44.

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fearfully and wonderfully made and that God has devoted innumerable thoughts toward the design of each of human person (Ps 139). Despite our fallen nature, humans are able to evaluate behaviors resulting from human cognition, such as playing the piano, singing, or sculpting, that a standardized IQ test is unable to measure qualitatively.

As a general framework, Genesis 1:26-28 communicates that all of humanity is made in the image of God. Because God designed a diverse creation with the ability to produce variation, he has also imbedded variability within humanity. It is not surprising that we see different colors of skin, different heights, different bodily features, different modes of cognition, and a variety of gifts, talents, and abilities (i.e., "intelligences") expressed throughout the human race. Romans 1 confirms that all of humanity receive cognitive ability from God. Thus, all individuals can know (i.e., learn) that God exists, and cognitive ability can be displayed through a multiplicity of avenues. Therefore, we provide a brief survey for where Gardner's categories of MI might be represented in Biblical characters.

First, in Genesis 4, we read that Cain's descendants had the ability to compose music (musical intelligence), forge metal objects (spatial and bodily–kinesthetic intelligence), and reason that a certain type of death would produce definite results (logical intelligence, although we will argue later that moral intelligence overrides these other intelligences). Gardner's theory would argue that this passage presents amoral intelligences and that these intelligences can either be used or left dormant.[28] Cain's descendants, as the wicked seed, probably used their God-given intelligences for selfish gain rather than for God's glory.

Second, in Genesis 6, Noah, along with his sons, constructed (spatial, bodily–kinesthetic, and mathematical–logical) a barge that was capable of holding 520 railroad stock cars.[29] This vessel measured approximately 450 feet long, 45 feet high, and 75 feet wide (v. 15) with a cubic foot capacity of 1,396,000.[30]

Third, God gifts Bezael and Oholiab with the ability to construct (spatial, bodily–kinesthetic, mathematical–logical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and linguistic) the tabernacle (Ex 36ff). This text highlights that God gave wisdom and understanding so that they might be able to perform all the work required for designing the tabernacle. The word *wisdom* (חכמה) is the same word used in 1 Kings 4:29 to describe the intelligence that Solomon possessed to rule the nation of Israel, and although the degree of wisdom for Solomon and Bezael and Oholiab was different, the kind was similar.[31] Both Bezael and Oholiab were the designated leaders of the project, even though God ensured that other individuals contributed to the completion of the tabernacle.

Finally, and possibly the Biblical character who demonstrated MI most fully, is King David. As the writer of a majority of the Psalms (linguistic), he played the harp (1 Sam 16:23 [musical]), was skilled as a warrior–general in military battles (2 Sam 1:1 [logical–mathematical]), he was adroit in the art of combat (1 Sam 18:30 [bodily–

[28] Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*,1999.
[29] John C. Whitcomb, *The World that Perished*, 3rd ed. rev. (BMH Books, 2009), 25.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Karl Elliger and Wilhelm Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (Stuttgart, Ger.: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1997), 568.

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kinesthetic]), dexterous with a sling and sword (1 Sam 17:49), adept at discerning the Saul's mood swings (1 Sam 16:23 [interpersonal]), and possessed an accurate self-image that reflected his real position before Yahweh (Ps 139 [intrapersonal]).

Therefore, the scriptures indicate that MI may be compatible with its teachings regarding how God instilled a MI-type cognition into the human person at creation. If, as Gardner has posited on different occasions, there are more types of intelligences than what he lists in his book, then MI is a good place to begin determining the ground work for a Biblical depiction of human understanding.

Concepts in MI that Do Not Align with Scripture

To begin, Genesis 1-11 do not affirm evolution as a process by which one species changes into another species for the purposes of advancement. Change *within* kind (i.e., finches have been observed to possess longer and shorter beaks) has been clearly evidenced and is not debatable. However, change by which mutations add information to the genetic code has never been substantiated.[32] Gardner holds to a presupposition regarding the origin of MI that cannot account for the reasons why intelligence exists. That intelligence exists is not debatable (whether general or MI), but to give an account for intelligence is problematic from a Biblical perspective.

For example, what environmental problem existed that would result in humans evolving a musical intelligence?[33] Was there a time when disjointed musical notes adversely affected the survival of humanity? The scriptures indicate that within a few generations of human procreation, music was developed (Gn 4:21), where Jubal begot players of the harp and flute. This would seem to indicate that musical intelligence was already present, albeit latent, in Adam's genetic composition at the creation event or that it was something within fallen human procreation resulted in the invention of human music. In addition, linguistic intelligence was already present at the creation event with Adam naming the animals in the garden. Survival adaptation did not necessitate name-making, but this can be seen as Adam simply imaging his creator. God named things and, thus, Adam named things (Gn 1, 3). Gardner's "discovery" of MI might be credited to him, but his ideas regarding its origins are not sustainable within a Biblical framework.

Second, when it comes to moral intelligence, Gardner rejects the idea that morality is an intrinsic intelligence because he does not affirm that moral codes are relative based on their society of origin.[34] Each society has developed its own values whether narrow or broad in scope; thus, there is no universal standard that has solidified in Gardner's mind that moral intelligence should be placed at the same level as other intelligences in his theory.

The weakness of this argument is that it is self-defeating, collapsing under his very assertion. Gardner unknowingly, or unwillingly, has presupposed that morality is

[32] Tim Chaffey and Jason Lisle, *Old Earth Creationism on Trial: The Verdict Is In* (Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Publishing Group, 2008); Jason Lisle, *Ultimate Proof of Creation* (Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Publishing Group/Master Books, 2009).

[33] Lynn Waterhouse, "Multiple Intelligences, the Mozart Effect, and Emotional Intelligences: A Critical Review," *Educational Psychologist* 41, no. 4 (Fall 2006): 207-225.

[34] Gardner, *Intelligence Reframed*, 75.

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not one of his suggested intelligences by declaring such a position because he has shown that, at least in his mind, there is an ultimate standard whereby he is able to judge—namely, whether or not a morality is a universal human intelligence. The question has yet to be fully elucidated in the hard sciences as to whether moral assertions have been passed down through evolutionary processes, but what we are able to confidently assert is that human survival can only be sustained under a universal moral system. After all, human societies disintegrate when murder, rape, and fornication go unchecked.

Gardner has asserted a universally true moral statement (i.e., that moral intelligence is not an intelligence), thus establishing the grounds for a universal moral intelligence. His reason for rejecting a moral intelligence is because there are so many cultures with differing values and morals, that to impose one standard upon all human beings is not possible. Yet he has declared the very opposite of what he claims to be true. His moral judgment is that no singular value is superior to another, nor can it be imposed—except, of course, the moral opinion that he imposes. Consequently, he has defeated his own argument by arguing for that which he claims is not universally attestable.

This paper argues that morality is an intelligence (Rom 1) and that all of humanity possesses it. Similar to all other intelligences, moral intelligence originates with God and can be fostered. The problem is that humanity tends to suppress that which it knows to be right and virtuous, and it follows that which is harmful for itself (a lá fallen human nature). Unregenerate individuals can demonstrate moral intelligence (theologically, "common grace"); in general, however, humans operate pragmatically rather than ideologically. To know God is the highest form of learning possible, and moral intelligence contributes to the broader cognitive schema.

Third, St. Clair Hull warns against giving "equal weight to all areas of instructional styles" when it comes to learning facts about the Bible.[35] She continues, "John identifies Jesus as the Word. The incarnate manifestation of God is a dialogue between God and humanity. So a linguistic approach to Christian education is most appropriate."[36] St. Clair Hull oversimplifies Jesus' human intelligence by focusing only upon his representation of linguistic intelligence, ignoring the fact that Jesus was not only brilliant linguistically, but also displayed intelligence in other ways, for example, in his family's trade growing up (Mk 6:3 [bodily–kinesthetic)], in his relationships with the 12 (interpersonal), in his singing in the upper room (Mk 14:26 [musical]), in his prayer in Gethsemane before his crucifixion (intrapersonal), and in his knowledge of the natural world through his many parables (natural).

In summary, Gardner's theory grounded in evolutionary theory is not compatible with Genesis 1-11. However, his observations regarding the theory of MI should be considered a viable theory of intelligence that the Christian educational community should recognize and try to implement into its educational practices. His assertion that morality is not a form of human intelligence is faulty because those who morally determine that morality is not universal state a universal moral truth. Scripture seems to support that humanity possesses different intelligences and that Jesus exhibited various

[35] St. Clair Hull, "An Evaluation of the 'Learning Styles,'" 66.
[36] Ibid., 65.

Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership 4, no. 1 (2012), 3-16.

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intelligences at different points throughout his life. Therefore, MI should be implemented into educational practices of Bible colleges, Christian universities and seminaries, and the church.

III. INTEGRATING MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

Does any of this matter within church practice or the academy? Christians generally tend to be leery of a theorist whose hypothesis is based upon a theory that is in conflict with the Bible. Solomon states that "there is nothing new under the sun" (Eccl 1:9), so in one sense, Gardner has not *discovered* anything new; however, in another sense, he may have *observed* something that believers have overlooked and that this way of perceiving intelligence is more holistically aligned with scripture than the prevailing general perspectives regarding human intelligence.

For educators and church ministers who are interested in incorporating Gardner's way of thinking about intelligence(s), Kathy Koch[37] has adapted Tom Armstrong's labels[38] to present more "user friendly" labels:

- Word smart = Linguistic intelligence
- Logic smart = Logical–mathematical intelligence
- Picture smart = Spatial intelligence
- Music smart = Musical intelligence
- Body smart = Bodily–kinesthetic intelligence
- Nature smart = Naturalistic intelligence
- People smart = Interpersonal intelligence
- Self-smart = Intrapersonal intelligence

Using this system mnemonically in a professional development seminar or as an education minister with Sunday school teachers might work best.

The rest of this section outlines what we recommend as best practices for implementation in church and university settings.

Benefits for the Church

Within my (McGee's) home church of approximately 6,700 members, we recently finished a one-week, six-show production of *Yes, Virginia, There Is a Savior*. I was especially attached to this play because my entire family was involved, with my wife playing the lead female role. This was no ordinary church play, rather a grand production that began the prior January with a script that had not yet been written. Over 300 people were involved in the play—from main characters; minor characters; supporting cast; choir; choir directors for adults, for teens, and for kids; set designers; set installers; those who drove the set from another state; costume designers; directors; blocking coaches; orchestra; conductor; camera men; editors; a film crew for two nights for DVD sales; pastors; ushers; parking lot workers; security; custodians; special

[37] Koch, *How Am I Smart?,* 19.
[38] Tom Armstrong, *7 Kinds of Smarts: Identifying and Developing Your Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Plume, 1999).

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assistants (for quick costume changes); information workers; DVD salespeople; and childcare for those involved in the play.

As a result of my involvement in this process, I began to think about MI and how obvious it was that those who sang and acted had a God-given capability—an undeniable human intelligence. Could a general IQ test really measure pitch, blocking, stage presence, or facial expressions? Did the audience need to fill out a form to declare that actors and actresses really possessed a musical intelligence that many of us in the audience observed? Did the women who designed over 200 costumes not have spatial and bodily–kinesthetic intelligence? Was the musical intelligence of the live orchestra and conductor not self-evident? More than anything else, the gifts, talents, and abilities of the people contributing to this great church production were what Gardner affirms through his theory of MI. Individuals who may not excel in the area of linguistic and logical intelligence, or may even score low on the Stanford-Binet intelligence scale, are still undeniably gifted from God in other, significant ways.

This does not mean that actors, musicians, and costume designers do not possess logical and mathematical intelligence, but some of these individuals might score lower on an IQ test than teachers and others from the academy but are still very capable of excelling in their work. The current American educational model, which elevates linguistic and mathematical intelligences over all others, is tantamount to rejecting a prodigious actor or musician from Julliard because he or she struggled on the geometry section of the entrance exam. Excellence in one area is certainly not dependent upon excellence in another.

Within the church, pastors, elders, and teachers are often elevated because of their gifted oratory skills, but this should not be, even though they will be held to a higher account before God for what they teach (Jas 3:1). These individuals aim to teach (*διδάσκω*), which means to "instruct, to cause to learn, or cause to know."[39] In addition to these offices within the church, however, many people who love God and desire to please him possess varying talents and abilities. A properly produced video, choreographed skit, or beautifully performed song can penetrate the emotions of congregants to quicken constructive thinking and life-style change.

We are in no way suggesting that the church devalue linguistic, logical, and mathematical intelligences. However, we do believe that it should recognize and elevate people's gifts, talents, and abilities within the body of Christ. These other intelligences have been designed by God and implemented into the make-up of each member, constituting a tapestry of intelligences that people can use to express their love for God.

Like the Christmas production at my (McGee's) home church, the focus was not exclusively upon oratory skills, but rather, it was much more so upon pitch, tone, bow movement, embrasure, and the mood set by the design and lighting on stage. This production ubiquitously utilized the MI that resulted in an effectively moving display of the gospel with an offer of salvation at the end.

Benefits for the University

[39] Johannes P. Louw and others, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains,* vol. 1, *Introduction & Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988).

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Many of the evangelical seminaries, Bible colleges, and Bible institutes have followed a model of academic–professional, rather than transformational, teaching when lecturing in their classrooms.[40] This in return has produced pastors and professors who have espoused lecture-/sermon-driven presentations, which elevate the linguistic and logical–mathematical intelligences at the demise of excluding the others.

The goal of a professor is not to simply dispense information but rather to help students learn.[41] Thus, lumping MI into categories that can be easily memorized leads to effective learning (see Kathy Koch's list). If the goal of university education was dispensing of information, the professor could tape his or her lectures and then turn his or her attention to strictly publishing and grant writing. As professors of various disciplines, however, we need to deeply understand our subject matter, but we also need to relate to our students. Students possess MI, and we have an obligation to help them develop an awareness of how God has intellectually gifted them.

The focus of an academic setting is word smart and logic smart. Tests, quizzes, papers, essays, and research all contribute to the traditional nomenclature of general IQ. However, students who have an aptitude for music, theatrical performance, bodily giftedness to perform in gymnastics, or "people skills" should feel comfortable to express themselves in these ways. As educators, we want to fan that flame of MI within our student body. These MI might not shine as brightly within the academic setting, but outside of these high walls, where life functions somewhat differently, we want to encourage our students to excel beyond the classroom in expression of their MI.

A Christian professor aims to lead his or her students towards glorifying God in their academic endeavors. Gardner criticizes modern academic institutions for ignoring the various types of intelligences that students possess. Therefore, we have highlighted academia as only emphasizing linguistic, logical–mathematical intelligences, leaving at least six other types of intelligences uncultivated by the modern academic institution. Taking these "nonacademic intelligences" seriously elevates the complexity of the image of God in humans as well as God's unfathomable creativity. There are a number of benefits to recognizing and developing these gifts, talents, and abilities in our students.

A prime example of nonacademic intelligences functioning within a classroom setting is in group projects. These projects offer opportunities for individuals to demonstrate their linguistic and logical–mathematical proclivities fluidly; however, for cooperative learning to achieve its maximum effect, group cooperation (utilizing interpersonal intelligence), visual presentations (requiring spatial intelligence), and team dynamics (using both inter- and intrapersonal intelligences) are necessary for a successful learning experience. In addition, group work offers teachers the occasion to engage the other intelligences, depending on the creativity and flexibility of the assignment. For example, singing a song that a student has written about a subject (i.e., musical intelligence), creating a work of art to illustrate a concept in the project (i.e.,

[40] John Coe, "The Seven Deadly Disconnects of Seminary Training: Theological and Spiritual Formation Reflections on a Transformation Model" (lecture, Evangelical Theological Society, Washington DC, March 2005).

[41] Howard Hendricks, *Teaching to Change Lives: Seven Proven Ways to Make Your Teaching Come Alive* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 2003), 37.

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bodily–kinesthetic intelligence), positing an apologetics approach to scientific observation (i.e., naturalistic intelligence), and acting out a skit or making a video to discuss some of the necessary concepts for the assignment (i.e., spatial, linguistic, interpersonal, and bodily–kinesthetic intelligences). These suggestions align with Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock who offer the following five defining elements of cooperative learning: (1) positive interdependence, (2) face-to-face promotive interaction, (3) individual and group accountability, (4) interpersonal and small group skills, and (5) group processing.[42] Although grading individuals on "musical ability," for instance, is not typically linked with academia's general mission, educators should be interested in engaging students and in developing the whole student; therefore, utilizing MI in the classroom is the best approach we are aware of to accomplish this end.

Academia should continue to emphasize skills utilized by the general IQ, for the main focus of education is upon the student's ability to read, retain, research, and report what has been learned during a particular semester. However, educators should incorporate modes in which the nonacademic intelligences can be concurrently used to reach the ultimate goal of *learning*. Encouraging students to showcase interpersonal, bodily–kinesthetic, spatial, naturalistic, intrapersonal, and musical intelligences may relevantly connect students with academic content, enhancing the educative experience.

IV. CONCLUSION

Paradigm shifts in thinking about a particular discipline, concept, or idea requires time to take root. Gardner's theory of MI seems to be one of these shifts that is currently being accepted within the educational community, and with time, as this current generation replaces the traditional understanding of intelligence, we predict that MI will become the dominate view within psychology, neurology, and anthropology. Although Gardner's ideas regarding the origins of MI are not the only plausible option, we defend his observations of human intelligence from a Biblical perspective, showing how integrating these concepts can be used for the admonition and edification of the church and of university classrooms. Regardless of whether six, eight, or ten intelligences actually exist, the ostensible evidence clearly validates that individuals possess more than a singular, overarching intelligence. This idea seems to resonate more with the creative nature of God revealed through the scriptures as well as with complex human beings bearing his image.

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