I have already praised this book for its clarity, organization, and structure, as well as for its use of stories and cases. Even though I object to its use of some of its sources, there is a wealth of bibliographical information here. Such information would be more helpful if it were collected into an explicit bibliography instead of scattered about the endnotes and the index (which is thorough and useful). Typographical errors are rare, and the running heads are helpful. Both parts and chapters are introduced in the manner of Aquinas with a clear explanation of the logic for the divisions and topics. There is a recurring structure of survey, evaluation, and conclusion, including strengths and weaknesses of the various positions. All these features make this an easy text to study and a useful roadmap for exploring a complex field.

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Habits of the High-Tech Heart: Living Virtuously in the Information Age

Quentin Schultze

Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2002 (256 pages)

Much like the work of Robert Bellah, et al., which its title evokes, Quentin Schultze's *Habits of the High-Tech Heart* offers a strong critique of trends in contemporary culture that threaten to undermine the deeper, more noble capacities of the human spirit. Hearkening, as Bellah did, to de Tocqueville's observation on the significance of "habits of the heart" cultivated in community, Schultze proposes six virtuous habits to counter the particular moral challenges that we face in the twenty-first century.

As a professor of Communications at Calvin College and author of several works on high-tech communications media (*Internet for Christians*; co-author of *Dancing in the Dark: Youth, Popular Culture, and the Electronic Media*), Schultze focuses his critical eye on modern information technologies and the cyberculture that they generate. While he affirms that "there is much worth celebrating" in the cyber-world, Schultze devotes most of his analysis to the more troubling aspects of the Information Age.

The reasons for this approach become clear as Schultze sets about the task of identifying the specific moral challenges that confront us. First priority is given to "informationism," our pseudo-religious faith in the power of information technologies to solve global problems and to bring us into a new era of high-tech happiness.

Not only are information technologies incapable of ushering in this utopia, Schultze insists; they are quite capable of generating a cyber-driven dystopia. Cyberculture, as the author paints it, is shallow and vacuous, bereft of the transcendental realities of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness. Instead, the world created by high-tech information systems is filled with … *information*.

Data. Facts. Current events. Consumer trends. Late-breaking news. The world Schultze describes is filled with all things measurable but without meaning; these things represent the sheer facticity of life without the moral weight of oughtness. The

result of this ever-mounting tide of cyber-data is an increasingly shallow and moorless engagement with reality. A distant and disengaged knowing *about* replaces more intimate forms of knowing; we neglect the personal, participatory kinds of knowledge that require more of us than the click of a mouse as we sit, in mass isolation, at our computer screens. "Surfing the Web," Schultze avers, "becomes one of the most relevant metaphors for conducting our everyday lives."

To counter the threat of informationism, Schultze proposes the virtue of moral discernment. We must cultivate the habit of discernment if we are to evaluate cyberculture truthfully, recover our moral *telos*, and recognize the proper subordination of instrumental technique to authentically human ends.

Schultze goes on to identify five other problem areas in cyberculture and the specific habits of the heart that they call for. We need moderation to temper our insatiable desire for information; humility as an antidote to pride in our technological genius; wisdom—especially the wisdom of Jewish and Christian religious traditions—to counteract the shallow, cacophonous confusion of the cyberworld. Finally, we need to cultivate authenticity and "cosmic diversity," to offset the disingenuousness and elitism of cyberculture.

Schultze concludes by asserting the utter necessity of organic—as distinct from cyber—communities. Cyberculture, Schultze argues, tends toward individualism, libertinism, and commercialism. It allows us to enter and exit online communities at will, with no tie to bind us but the sheer power of our own interests.

Instead, true community requires geographic proximity, where bonds of place supersede individual interest, and face-to-face communication engenders communion. Like de Tocqueville, Schultze regards local religious associations as one of the most important institutions in American society, where genuine community develops and virtuous habits are nurtured and passed on.

The habits of the heart that Schultze commends are certainly worth cultivating, and readers who have been pulled into the cyber-undertow that he describes may find the book a prophetic wake-up call. But Shultze also indulges some of the bad habits he decries. Although well-intentioned, his one-sided focus on the negative aspects of cybertechnology belies the very quality of discernment that he calls for. His constant use of expert opinion to gauge the pulse of what "we" Americans believe is hardly consistent with his call for diversity to counter the undue (and undocumented) influence of the cyber-elite. Readers who do not subscribe to the credo of informationism may feel frustrated that Schultze did not research what "we" actually believe, as he describes in detail what "we"—the undifferentiated and undiscriminating—think and do.

Schultze's argument about real community may be compared profitably with *The City of God* (the text of which is available on-line), where Augustine writes: "A people is an assemblage of reasonable beings bound together by a common agreement as to the objects of their love … in order to discover the character of any people, we have only to observe what they love."

Here we find intimations of a deeper problem in Schultze's work. If people agree to the objects of their love, it is not the objects (cybertechnologies) that determine their

hearts, but their hearts that determine what they love. Schultze consistently confuses the order of causation, granting agency to cybertechnologies and obscuring the root of our misdirected loves.

As Jesus once said to a people confused about the source of uncleanness: "It is what comes out of a man's heart that makes him defiled." Orality, which Schultze touts as a more perfect form of communication than high-tech messaging, is no exception to this rule: *The things that come out of the mouth come from the heart.*... The mouth, no more or less than the keypad, depends on the heart.

We should be concerned, then, to cultivate virtuous habits of the heart, by *all* means—not because we think cybertechnology is leading us astray, but because we know the truth that all religious traditions teach, whether through the mouth of our wise neighbor next-door or the website of our godly neighbor in cyberspace: Both good and evil proceed from the human heart. Human technologies always have and always will reflect both tendencies, but we (a people bound together by the Most High Object of our love) believe in a God who can create in us a clean heart. And *a good person out of the store of goodness in his heart produces good*—even in cyberspace.

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Jesus and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology

Daniel Harrington, S.J. and James Keenan, S.J.
Lanham, Maryland: Sheed & Ward, 2002 (216 pages)

As a moral theologian who believes that Scripture is "the soul of theology," I am familiar with the following problem: Moral theologians would like to draw from the ethical wellsprings of the Bible, but they think either that they are not competent to do so, or that the Bible itself is incapable of giving concrete guidance. In turn, many biblical scholars want to illuminate contemporary ethical problems but do not think that they are competent to do so because their historical-critical training ill-suits them to the task.

This book—co-authored by Scripture scholar Harrington and moral theologian Keenan—responds to the Second Vatican Council's call for a biblically rooted moral theology, one which further integrates the two disciplines and moves away from the moral manuals' emphasis on (natural) law and its inattention to Scripture (except as a "proof-text"). The book's focus is to explore the ways that these two disciplines can be mutually beneficial to one another.

The authors approach their topic in each of the thirteen chapters (except the first) by discussing "Biblical Perspectives," with particular attention to a key text in the Synoptics (context, content, significance), and then to the possibilities and problems that the various biblical perspectives might contribute to moral theology. Keenan's