

Generational change

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About 15 years

ago I was a guest at the annual meeting of the [Association of Christians Teaching Sociology](#). In one session a professor reported on a student's project. Taking the *Century* as a barometer of mainline Protestantism and *Christianity Today* as a barometer of evangelicalism, his student compared the respective responses to the civil rights movement. The student found that the *Century* was very hospitable toward the movement and that CT was critical of it. (Full disclosure: At the time of this ACTS meeting, I was working for CT.)

Since ACTS is comprised

largely of evangelical scholars, there was some hanging of heads in the room. Evangelicals, they agreed, had been on the wrong side of history, not to speak of the wrong side of justice.

I thought of this after

reading about another meeting, the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities' [annual meeting of presidents](#). Not surprisingly, evangelical colleges are increasingly being pressured by students and alumni to take another look at the issue of homosexuality. A seminar on how CCCU members are handling--or should handle--this pressure was closed to reporters. But it appears that the dominant messages in this meeting were these: hold true to the traditional biblical interpretation on this issue, and demonstrate patience with students and others who challenge this.

If there were some in

the room with contrary opinions, they apparently didn't have the courage to speak up.

Time will tell whether

these evangelical colleges are on the right side of history. But I can't help

thinking that 50 years from now they will look back and wonder what the fuss was about (although there may still be a few outliers). All change, it's been said, is generational. My bet is that a new generation of evangelical college leaders will open up on the issue of same-sex orientation and say, at the least: "We can't be absolutely certain we're right on this subject. When in doubt, let grace be the default." That's progress.