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Social Work & Christianity (SWC) is a refereed journal published quarterly in March, June, September, and December by the North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NACSW) to support and encourage the growth of social workers in the ethical integration of Christian faith and professional practice. *SWC* welcomes articles, shorter contributions, book reviews, and letters which deal with issues related to the integration of faith and professional social work practice and other professional concerns which have relevance to Christianity.

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Christian Congregations as Contexts for Social Work

Gaynor Yancey & Diana Garland

Social work within a congregational context is still a developing field of practice. This analytical essay is derived from some of the results of a research study of 51 congregational social workers working in and with congregations. This article includes discussion, analysis, and implications of this research. We describe the roles and functions of these 51 congregational social workers, with whom we conducted exploratory, in-depth telephone interviews. Additionally, some of our own experiences are shared from our respective congregational social work experiences.

CONGREGATIONAL SOCIAL WORK IS A FIELD OF PRACTICE AS DIVERSE as the social work profession itself. Social work history reveals that congregations have been settings for social work practice since the beginning of the profession in the late 19th century. The ongersion's very name "social work" is derived from the religious terminology of "good works" (Specht & Courtney, 1994, p. 21). Congregational social work is not limited to Christian congregations; there are Jewish congregational social workers, including rabbis, and other congregational social workers who serve in other religious traditions as well, such as Imams in Muslim mosques and priests in Buddhist temples (Garland & Yancey, 2014, p. 22).

We define a congregation as the people who come together regularly and voluntarily for worship at a particular location (e.g., Ammerman, 1997, 2005; Chaves, 2004; Warner, 1994; Wind & Lewis, 1994). We define congregational social work as providing social work services in and through a religious congregation, whether the employer is the congregation itself or a social service or denominational agency working in collaboration with congregations (Garland & Yancey, 2014, p. 1).

This article will describe some of the roles, practices, and experiences of 51 congregational social workers with whom we conducted lengthy in-

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terviews. The congregational social workers we interviewed serve people in poverty and people who are not. They work with young children and pregnant women; they work with older adults and families grieving the death of a member; and they work with individuals and families in all the stages between birth and death. They provide crisis intervention and counseling and prevention services; they lead support and educational groups; they train volunteers; and they organize and lead community development programs in their congregations' neighborhoods and on the other side of the world. As congregational social workers, their work has taken them into the fields of health and mental health, child and family services, aging services, economic and social development, criminal justice, community development, and education.

The profession of social work emphasizes that social work takes place in an organizational context, and that context shapes and give purpose to the work done. As will be seen, congregations provide a unique shape to the social work practice of these 51 congregational social workers (Garland & Yancey, 2014, p. 19).

Methodology

The Interviewees

We conducted telephone interviews with 51 social workers who volunteered for this project and met our stated criteria of working in or with congregations. To find congregational social workers for this project, we sent information about the research project through the electronic listservs of three organizations: the North American Association of Christians in Social Work (NACSW), the National Association of Deans and Directors of Schools of Social Work (NADD), and the Baccalaureate Program Directors of Social Work (BPD). The NACSW listserv posting asked for social workers employed full-time or part-time in, or with, congregations to volunteer for the study. Using NADD and BPD listservs, we asked social work deans and directors to identify their alumni who were working with, or in, congregations. Based on these three electronic postings, we made contact with 114 self-identified congregational social workers. Some of those who did not meet the criteria for the study referred us to others whose work they knew. Our selection criteria were that interviewees (1) had professional social work degrees (BSW or MSW) and (2) were either working in a congregation or employed by an agency to work with one or more congregations.

Our sample was a convenience sample; therefore, the ongerttions of these congregational social workers should not be construed to give any quantitative profile of this field of social work. We do think we reached a wide diversity of congregational social workers, however, so that we can describe the parameters of this field of practice, at least as we know them now.

We conducted our interviews in two waves. The first wave focused on 28 interviewees. Based on the data analyzed from those initial interviewees, we wrote a book chapter “Moving Mountains” (Garland & Yancey, 2012). We also presented the data at national social work professional conferences. We used the information gleaned from the initial 28 interviews to adjust our qualitative questions, ready for the next and final group of 23 interviews. When we completed our goal of 50 interviews, we stopped, adding one more interview to make a total of 51.

Congregational Social Work Questions

The following questions were asked of each of the 51 congregational social work interviewees:

1. When did you come to your current role in working with this congregation?
2. What is your title? How does it fit you and what you do?
3. Who pays your salary?
4. Are you licensed in social work?
5. What were your major responsibilities when you first came?
6. How have your responsibilities changed over time? Pick a “typical” day during the past week and describe your day to me.
7. What are some of the things you often do in your role that you did not happen to do that day?
8. What programs and areas of responsibility do you have?
9. How does the church see you or identify you?
10. How do other social workers in the community see you?
11. What do you especially enjoy about your work? (Probe for examples.)
12. What do you like least about your work? (Probe for examples.)
13. How do you see the relationship of social work and ministry?
14. How does the concept of calling or vocation relate to your work? Tell me about an experience.
15. What kinds of professional challenges do you face? What about *ethical* challenges? Are there challenges centered on evangelism or evangelistic types of activities?
16. What are the advantages or resources for social work in a congregational setting?
17. What was especially helpful in preparing you for ongergational social work? (Probe for social work education.)
18. What preparation did you need that you did not get in your social work education?

19. What has helped you since school to have the knowledge and skills this work demands?
20. What books have you read that you find yourself applying in your work? (Probe: social work and social science literature? Religious literature? Business? Other? Probe for titles.)
21. What outcomes have you seen for your work?
22. Do you think your position would be filled again if you were to leave your present position?
23. Who else do you know who has a BSW and/or MSW degree and is professionally serving in or with congrega-tions?
24. What did you expect me to ask or did you want to tell me about that I did not ask?

The Interview

Telephone interviews ranged from 26 to 120 minutes, with an average length (mean) of 67 minutes. The two authors conducted all 51 interviews. We used a semi-structured interview format; all of the interview questions were addressed sometime during the conversational interview. *Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview* (Weiss, 1994) served as the guide for our interviews.

At the conclusion of each interview, we asked demographic questions and entered responses into a separate database. The database included the denominational affiliation of the social worker and of the congregation, the official title of the social workers, educational institutions(s), degree(s) and year(s) of graduation, licensure status, gender, ethnicity, age, the number of years the social worker had been in social work practice, the number of years the social worker has been working with or in congregations, and the number of years the social worker had been in the current position.

In order to ensure anonymity, all telephone interviews were audio recorded and transcribed, with pseudonyms replacing the actual names of the interviewees, the congregations, and the locations. The tapes were erased after the transcriptions were completed. The transcriptions were placed in an encrypted computer with names and code names in a separate file from the transcripts.

Analyzing the Data

Once the recordings were transcribed, we used the qualitative software package, Atlas.ti, to analyze the data. Grounded theory was the approach we used for data analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; LaRossa, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). As a part of analyzing the data, we developed codes that identified the themes in the interviews. We created code families from the initial code lists. Throughout the entire process, we constantly returned to the original codes; if needed, we renamed them to best reflect their meaning.

Ultimately, we created 26 code families from the data. For an extensive discussion of these code families and their meaning, please see the Appendix of the book, *Congregational Social Work* (Garland, D. R., & Yancey, 2014). The two authors did all of the coding and data analysis. It is from these codes and their code families that we have described the roles and functions of social workers in a congregational context.

The Characteristics of the Social Workers Interviewed

Gender, Age, and Ethnicity

The social workers we interviewed were predominantly female (74%), although 80% of social workers in the broader profession are female (Whitaker & Arrington, 2008), so at least among those we interviewed, men are somewhat more prevalent in congregational social work than in other fields of social work practice. The median age of these social workers is 45.

The sample is overwhelmingly White (n=47); it includes three who identify themselves as Hispanic and one as African-American. It is not clear why we reached so few non-White social workers. We can speculate that perhaps they are not connected to the organizations through which we sought volunteers, or perhaps they do not recognize their work as congregational social work. It may also be that there are proportionally fewer non-White congregational social workers for other reasons we cannot determine based on this research project.

Geographical and Denominational Locations

These 51 social workers are located in 25 of the 50 states of the United States. Two were located in other countries: Canada and South Africa. Those in the United States are widely dispersed, from California to Connecticut and from Mississippi to Michigan. Three states were represented by more than two social workers; there were 13 from Texas, six from Indiana, and three from Ohio. The larger number from Texas, and to a lesser extent, from Indiana and Ohio, is probably a result of the fact that Texas is home to many large congregations. It is also home to one of the historically Baptist schools, Baylor University, whose School of Social Work focuses on this field of practice, producing a number of alumni in this field. Nevertheless, half of the interviewees from Texas were not Baylor alumni (n=6), and most were not Baptist (n=8).

We did not set out to limit the study to Christian congregations, but only one social worker from another religious setting volunteered—Judaism. We included her in the interview, but given the overwhelmingly Christian character of the sample, we have focused our study of the findings to a Christian context. The social workers represent 16 religious groups, with the largest being Baptist (n=16), and nondenominational Christian (n=7). Other groups represented by more than one social worker include Roman Catholic (n=5), Church of God (n=4), Methodist (n=4), Presbyterian (n=3), and Church of Christ (n=3). Since Catholics, nondenominational Christians, and Baptists are the largest three religious groups in the United States (Chaves, 2004), it is not surprising that these groups were more represented than others, although Baptists clearly dominated the sample.

Multiple factors likely contribute to the dominance of Baptists in the sample. In addition to being numerically one of the largest three religious groups in the nation, Baptists have historically prepared congregational social workers in seminary and university programs (Scales, 2000, 2008; Yancey & Garland, 2014). Also, the North American Association of Christians in Social Work listserv provided a major portion of the volunteers for this project. The Association's evangelical roots include Baptists of many varieties. Other schools of social work, including public universities, are beginning to offer courses in congregational social work, and NACSW includes Christians from diverse traditions. In the future, Baptists may not be so dominant in this field of practice.

Professional Preparation

Most of these social workers had attained a master's degree in social work; their highest professional degrees are BSW (n=6), MSW (n=40), and Ph.D. (n=5). Less than half (n=21) of the respondents received their highest social work degree (BSW or MSW) in religiously-affiliated colleges or universities. Those schools represented by more than one graduate were all religiously-affiliated. They included Baylor University (n=6), Carver School of Church Social Work (The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary) (n=6), Anderson (n=2), and Boston College (n=2). One respondent each graduated from other religiously-affiliated colleges or universities: Abilene Christian, Augsburg, Aurora, Loyola, Northwest Nazarene, and Roberts Wesleyan.

The remaining 30 social workers—the majority—attended nonsectarian private and public universities. Those schools represented by more than one graduate include the University of Texas (Arlington) (n=4), Indiana University (n=3), and the University of Illinois (n=2). The listing of schools is quite diverse, including such schools as New York University, Ohio State, and North Carolina (Chapel Hill), suggesting the wide variation of social work educational experiences these social workers have had. The universities represented by one graduate each include: Alabama (Tuscaloosa), Arizona State, Aurora, Case Western, Georgia, Houston, Kansas, Kansas State, Maryland, New York, North Carolina (Chapel Hill), Ohio State , Oklahoma, Syracuse, Temple, Texas (Austin), Texas State, Toronto, Washington, Washington (George Warren Brown), Western Michigan, and Wright State. The majority did not have a course or a focus in their professional education that addressed congregations as settings for practice.

A large number, though not the majority, have degrees or certificates in religion or ministry. Fifteen have a Master of Divinity degree or master's degree in theology; three have undergraduate majors or minors in religion; three have certificates in theology or Catechetics; one has a Doctor of Ministry degree; and two are currently enrolled in divinity programs. That leaves 27, however, who did not describe any formal theological preparation.

Their Social Work Careers

These social workers tend to have established careers in congregational social work; they have been serving professionally for a median of eight years, with a range of 2 to 41 years. Most of that time (median=7 years), they have been working in a congregational setting, with a range of 1 to 35 years. Some have worked in the same congregation for most of their careers, with a mean of 3 years of service in their current congregational setting, and a range of 1 to 26 years.

Their Current Positions, Titles, and Identity

Job titles represented by the sample are diverse. Five have the title "pastor"; four have the title "associate pastor"; and another four have the term "minister" as part of their title (e.g., "Minister of Community Ministries" and "Youth Minister"). The most common title (n=22) was "director" of a program or area of responsibility, such as "Director of Community Ministries," "Director of Social Service Ministries," "Director of Senior Adult Ministries," and "Director of Children and Youth Programs." Four titles included the terms "counselor" or "therapist." Three actually had the title "Social Worker." We could find no trends in preference for one title or another either by denomination or by geographic location.

In a review of state licensure laws, we found that many current laws exempt social workers who are serving as religious leaders, so long as they use a title other than licensed social worker. We found explicit exemptions in the laws of Indiana, New Jersey, Ohio, Tennessee, Texas, and Utah. A number of other state laws simply state that persons cannot represent themselves with the title "social worker" unless they are licensed. Since social workers serving as religious leaders seldom use the actual title "social worker," they normally are exempt from licensure requirements anyway. There are still states that do not provide even this basic level of title protection at the time we are writing (e.g., California). Others protect only the title "clinical social worker"; the title "social worker" is not protected and presumably can be used by anyone. Despite the fact that most are not identified by title as social workers and consequently are not required by law to be licensed, most (n=33) are licensed as social workers.

Inez, for example, is a licensed social worker. She provides clinical services to members of her nondenominational congregation and its neighborhoods part-time and also is a full-time social work educator in the nearby university. She bears the title "church counselor" in her congregation. She noted that she displays her state social work license prominently and makes sure that clients know her professional role. The current congregation is the second in which Inez has served. Even though Inez' title is "church counselor," she said, "I want to be the church social worker." She wrote her own job description as "social worker."

Understanding the role and professional identity under which a person practices is important to the client, the social worker, and to the agency. We did not initially ask the question about licensure, and we do not have data for seven of these social workers; the remaining 11 are not licensed.

Findings

Entry into Congregational Social Work

Social work roles in a social services agency are usually clearly defined. Congregational social work, however, is still a developing field of practice; the roles of a social worker may not be as clearly defined as they are in agencies. Also, congregations are often much less formal in their organization structure than agencies. Therefore, roles and positions for some of these social workers emerged over time rather than being defined in an established position description at the outset.

Beth completed her field internship in a congregational setting as a dual M.Div./MSW degree student; she went on to become a congregational social worker after graduation. She told us, "I wouldn't be doing what I'm doing if I hadn't had that field placement." As she worked in a congregation as a student, she said she "fell in love with the church." Her field experience engaged her in the congregation's community ministries—she revised how they conducted their benevolence ministries, including using a food pantry for emergency assistance, and she involved the teenagers in mission projects in the community. She is now a Baptist pastor.

Many of those we interviewed said they had never seen or heard of "congregational social work." When they found themselves doing social work in a congregational context, they thought they were alone. Some of these social workers began in staff roles familiar in congregational life—associate pastor, youth minister, or director of a program. Over time, they shaped that role and the position descriptions based on their own professional experiences and knowledge, as well as their growing relationship with the congregation.

Lois, for example, was initially hired as Director of Senior Adult Ministries for her Presbyterian Church; she describes her initial role as "cruise director." Senior adult ministries in congregations commonly focus on taking senior adults on outings and providing recreation to encourage socialization and engagement, perceiving that senior adults are at risk of isolation. Lois took on the role of directing senior adult activities that reminded her of recreation on a cruise ship because, as she said, "That's what the person in front of me was doing." She was hired to fill a staff position, and she began by doing what the previous director had done—planning activities and outings. Over time, Lois adapted the position to fit what she perceived was a better use of her leadership and a better fit with the resources and needs of senior adults; she developed a senior adult program called Pastor Aides that trained and supported senior adults in ministry to other senior adults.

Similarly, Beth, the pastor mentioned above, was hired first as a college student minister. Gradually, she engaged the whole congregation, not just college students, in community ministry. Her position was subsequently changed to Associate Pastor before she moved to the congregation she now serves as Senior Pastor.

Others were hired to address a specific need beyond what the congregation was already doing. Lynne's congregation, a large downtown institution, added her position, Director of Community Ministries, because the new pastor wanted to communicate to the city that "the church existed." He prepared the congregation prior to her coming and then "turned her loose" to lead the congregation in ministry to their city. Although it was a new position, it was clearly seen as a specific need identified by the pastor and it related to a primary function of the church.

Distinctive Features of Congregational Social work Practice

Congregational social work requires specialized knowledge and skill for work in a congregational context, as well as for work with specific population groups. Although these social workers are engaged with population groups that are familiar in social work practice, their work has features distinctive from social work with those same population groups in social service agencies.

For example, Carl's work with persons with chronic mental illness is different on his side of the street than what social workers across the street do with the same population group in a day treatment program. The congregation he leads in an inner city neighborhood is weaving persons into the community of faith who may otherwise be isolated by an illness that affects social skills and interpersonal connections. The effect is to complement and support the clinical work of the day treatment program.

Glenda provides contractual clinical services in her Catholic parish to prepare couples for marriage. Her practice with couples referred by her priest is different from what she does with couples who come to her private practice for premarital counseling. Couples referred by her priest know that she is conducting an assessment of their readiness for marriage that she is sharing with their priest and, that she will address Catholic teachings about marriage and their connection to the church that are not necessarily part of her private practice with couples.

In another example, Lois' practice with senior adults and their families in and through her congregation has a different focus and character from her earlier practice in a geriatric wellness center. The clients may be much the same demographically, and perhaps even be the same people, but the practice context, the purpose and mission of the work, and even the clients' expectations of the services they will receive from a congregation shape what these social workers do differently in this setting.

We took several looks at the data as we analyzed it over time. In our first analysis of our interview data (Garland, & Yancey, 2012), we focused on the array of programs and services these social workers provide or direct. Our initial perspective was that social workers lead a congregation's ministry within its own community, and so we were expecting to confirm and explore that perspective here. Indeed, we learned that these social workers engage in and lead ministries that address immediate human needs (hunger, homelessness), intervene in crises, collaborate with other organizations, and provide the direct clinical services of counseling, support groups and family life educational programming—they do community ministry. However, there is evidence that all of their work does not fit into those categories.

We found that congregational social workers also engage in activities that we identified as "creating community" and as "leading spiritually"—they preach occasionally or weekly, teach Bible studies, and connect people to one another for support and community. Those tasks were square pegs that did not seem to fit our round hole of community ministry. Moreover, the social workers engaged in these activities as a part of their daily routine with all whose lives were touched in some way by the congregation and its leaders, whether within the congregation or in the neighborhoods the congregation sought to serve.

To create further confusion for our analysis, none of the categories we created to understand social work activity were mutually exclusive. For example, "education" included family life education and support groups similar to those social workers facilitate in the fields of medical social work and family and children's services, which can be considered the social service of "education and counseling." But in the congregational context, educational activities also included leading Bible studies and writing curriculum, such as a family life education curriculum based on biblical teachings. In other words, the array of programs and services that congregational social workers lead not only has a diversity of targets, but also addresses different and often multiple purposes in the life of the congregation.

We began again, therefore, to analyze our interview data and try to understand the functions of these social workers in the lives of their congregations. In other words, the focus became "what are the roles a social worker has in the life of the congregation?" rather than "what are the services and who are the clients served?" The question shifted from "What do social workers do?" to "How do social workers contribute to the mission and purposes of congregational life?" It is a short leap, then, to positing answers to the questions: "How do social workers function as congregational leaders?" and "Why do congregations choose social workers to lead them?"

Leading in the Core Functions of Congregations

Virtually every congregation engages in four core functions: worship, community, education, and missions. Stott (2007) has pointed out these four functions in the life of Christians in the first church, as described in Acts 2:42-47. They worshipped together, continuing to spend time together in the temple and praising God together as they shared meals (vs. 46). They were a community – they devoted themselves to "fellowship" (vs. 42); they were "together," and shared everything with one another (vs. 44). They engaged in education, devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching (vs. 42). And they ministered to others "as any had need" (vs. 45).

Congregational social workers provide leadership in more than one, and sometimes all, of these functions. From the data found in our research and through our long term experiences of the roles and functions of congregational social workers, we posit that the broader their work is in addressing all four functions of congregational life, the more central they are to the life of the congregation. The social worker's role and function is at the heart of congregational life.

For example, a tutoring program may be seen primarily as "missions," a way to serve neighbors. But it also can address the other four functions of a congregation. It is *education*: the social worker is preparing mentors to relate to children, particularly children from different cultural and socioeconomic groups than the mentors. So, in doing "mentor education," the social worker facilitates mentors' learning the skills of tutoring, how to engage and build a relationship with a child, and an understanding and appreciation for the cultural context of the child and the child's family.

The social worker also can connect mentoring to *worship*. We define worship as the responses people make to God (Garland & Yancey, 2014, p. 40). Jesus taught that welcoming children, those who are small and powerless, is welcoming Jesus (Mark 9:37)—"I was a stranger and you welcomed me" (Matthew 25:35). Mentors are providing care for the "stranger" who is the presence of Christ with us when they tutor a Spanish-speaking child in English or help a child who is from an impoverished community learn the skills to succeed in school. Formal services of worship begin with a prayer of "invocation," inviting God to be present or acknowledging that God is present. Service, too, is optimally framed as a way of welcoming the presence of God. Dorothy Day said that someone who cannot see the face of God in the face of someone who is poor is an atheist indeed (Forest, 1995). Just as the mentoring experience can become "worship" for mentors, so is their gathering with one another to share their experiences in mentoring. Their sharing can itself be a form of prayer, and they can also make prayer for children, teachers, families, and one another a part of their gathering. As they convene and lead groups of mentors sharing their experiences, the congregational social worker is weaving them into *community* with one another. One of the most effective ways of building community relationships is engagement in a shared task. As mentors form relationships with children, they are eager to tell their experiences with others who share their commitment to helping children succeed in school. Mentors learn from and support one another, and become friends—and community—in the process. In summary, although mentoring may be a missions project of the congregation, a congregational leader can also envision and shape that project to serve all four congregational functions, including not only missions but also an opportunity for the mentors themselves to worship, to have fellowship with one another and those they serve, and to learn more deeply about Christian faith as they serve and reflect together on their experiences.

Because congregational activities ideally serve these multiple functions, sometimes all at the same time, it is counterproductive to try to disentangle spiritual and social activities. "People pray together, study together, and worship together and are, at once, creating a community and honoring their god" (Ammerman, 2005, p. 51). We would add that they serve together, too, and that this service—missions—not only is, but also should be framed as worship, as Christian education, and as a way to build community with one another. The most central activities for a congregation are those that ultimately address several of these central congregational functions rather than just one alone.

We began our research with the assumption that social workers are engaged primarily in leading congregational mission activities in their neighborhoods and geographic region. Those activities are most like what we learned in social work education, and we are guessing that these congregational social workers also began their work with that same assumption—social workers lead in community ministries. As a consequence, although social workers are engaged in the other functions of the congregation, it feels less like what they were professionally prepared to do. In fact, there may be less certainty that those activities really *are* social work. For example, Jeanie is the Mission Outreach Coordinator for her congregation. She came to her work from a background in medical social work. She said about her work, "People call in for services. That's when I am a 'pure social worker.'" What she implies is that all the other ways she provides leadership in her congregation may be her job, but they are not really "pure" from a social work perspective.

Not seeing that it is appropriate for social workers to lead in the functions of worship, community building, and Christian education may keep social workers from engaging fully in the leadership of the congregation. Or alternatively, they engage in this leadership, but they define it as "not social work," contributing to a dual identity in their functions of social worker and religious leader.

When we talked with Beth, for example, almost a year after she became a senior pastor, she mused that she had always seen herself as a minister. In her position on the staff of her previous congregation, her job was "to connect people in the church with people in the community who were in need with ministries that could help transform lives." Now, as senior pastor, she says that focus still "colors" her preaching and the direction she is seeking to lead her congregation, but her days are now filled with worship preparation, administration, and caring for the congregation itself. As a consequence, she said:

> I have had to struggle a little with some guilt. Have I stepped away from some of my call by not being so day-to-day engaged in connecting our congregation with the community? But then, I'm still really using my social work skills, but in a pastoral care way because the pastoral care needs of the congregation are so great.

Beth feels somewhat torn; is it still her calling to social work if she is responding to the needs within the congregation—as pastor—rather than to the needs in the neighborhood? She described what she meant by "pastoral care" with two examples. She had been helping a church member, whose husband is in declining health, decide whether or not to use hospice. She had also been providing support for an adoptive family who had been caring for the infant they were adopting for a number of weeks, when, just before the adoption was finalized, the birth father came forward asking for the child and the family brokenheartedly relinquished the infant to the adoption agency. She summarized, "Before I saw my role as connecting the church with people who were low income or kids who were at-risk, and now I feel like I'm using all my social work skills with my church members." Clearly, if these two pastoral care situations had been with clients in an agency, they would unquestionably be within the realm of social work expertise.

What she and these other pioneering congregational social workers taught us is that to be most effective as congregational leaders, social workers need to be ready to be engaged in leading in all aspects of congregational life, including worship, Christian education, fellowship/community – and ministry.

Social work is a profession that emphasizes that context helps define effective practice. Not only does Jeanie's work with senior adults look different in a congregation setting from her previous work in a geriatric wellness center, but they both differ from social work with senior adults in Adult Protective Services, or from social work with senior adults in a nursing home serving seniors with Alzheimer's disease. Fundamental to the nature of social work is its adaptation to setting, bringing the knowledge, values, and skills of social work to help an organization achieve its mission as that mission is congruent with social work values.

We found that, of the four functions of congregational life, these social workers are, on average, engaged in three of the four functions (X =2.84). Only three of the interviewees described just one of these functions as their responsibility, and that function was "missions." In contrast, 33 social workers described ways in which they address three of the functions in their daily work. As we expected, almost all were providing leadership in the mission and community functions of congregational life. Worship was the least common function we identified; but then, we did not begin this project expecting social workers to be leaders in worship and Christian education in the "traditional" church understanding of what these terms mean. Therefore, we did not ask about these functions—we stumbled across them as we heard the stories of their work. If we had been looking and asking, we may have learned that far more of these interviewees are engaged in three or all four of these congregational functions.

We have each been working in the field of congregational social work for almost 40 years—80 years if you add up our two careers! We both have spoken and preached frequently in congregations. We have led Christian education and prepared Christian education literature for others to use in leading. Where Diana was invited to write curriculum and lead workshops on marriage and family life, Gaynor was invited to equip pastors for leading their congregations in responding to persons with HIV/AIDS and to the social problem of pornography. Despite our own professional leadership in worship and education, we did not think to put questions in our interview protocol about these functions of congregational life. We, too, are creatures of an environment that presumes that the focus of congregational social work is the engagement of the congregation in responding to the needs of the neighborhood and world, as though that function can be addressed separately from worship and Christian education, or from the development of the community fellowship. It cannot. If we were slow to come to that understanding as educators in this field, it is clear that these social workers have had little guidance in how to conceptualize their roles in congregational life.

If these social workers had little framework for defining their roles in congregational life, so did the congregations who engaged them as leaders. Many reported that their responsibilities changed and grew dramatically. As Lois said, "I have enlarged my responsibilities and they've come to learn what I can do for them as I've been there longer." Beth's pastor saw the potential for much more than the part-time college ministry she was hired to lead, wanting to expand the congregation's ministry in its neighborhood. Beth began that work in the community from the beginning, taking responsibility for the congregation's benevolence (emergency assistance) ministry. As she led and went from part-time to full-time, her congregation became known for its missions and ministry, and she said that the result was, "The congregation calls on me for everything." When she left to become a pastor in another state, the congregation sought to replace her with a full-time social worker.

Even Jeffrey, an employee of an agency funded by the Catholic Archdiocese with clear initial expectations, has experienced his responsibilities expanding over time as the archdiocese developed a vision for serving the "total community," not just Catholics: "We offer a vision of life as a gift to the whole community." These social workers provide clear evidence that their impact in congregations is, more often than not, one that emerges as the congregations gain clarity of the social workers' roles and purpose in the congregation. It is an emergent process of discovering together, social worker and congregation, how everything can come together in creating a shared vision. Such a shared vision cannot be imposed from outside but develops in relationship and over time.

These social workers have had the opportunity to cast a vision for their work and then pursue it, expanding and defining their roles in relationship with the congregations they lead. Often, in addition to little understanding from the congregations they serve, they have had little support from their profession; they have had to figure it out as they have found their way through the work.

Roles in Congregational Life

We define role as a particular set of behaviors enacted in relationship with other people; it is who the social workers say they are to others and live out in their actions, and it is who others would say the social workers are as they experience them. Congregations assign some roles to the social worker—e.g., minister with college students, "cruise director" for senior adults. The social worker assumes some roles—e.g., director of emergency assistance, director of ministry to the neighborhood. Most roles are shaped not by one or the other but by a combination of the expectations of others—the congregation, the profession, the larger culture—and those of the social worker. It is the interaction of these expectations over time that shapes the role of a congregational social worker.

As much as the congregations they serve shape the roles of these social workers, the roles themselves are still recognizable as "social work." Three of these 51 social workers actually bear the title "social worker;" many of their roles, however, are familiar in other social work professional contexts. In analyzing the interview transcripts, we identified several social work roles that are common in social service organizations—administrator, advocate, change agent, clinician/counselor, connector/networker, consultant, and researcher (e.g., Popple & Leighninger, 2011; Segal, Gerdes, & Steiner, 2010). Even Carl, with the title "pastor," said that "the majority of the time I am utilizing my social work skills." Jeanie says that what she is doing is "strengths-based social work; old-fashioned social work where I identify needs and find solutions."

Roles Particular to the Congregational Setting

Despite the commonalities in the roles of these social workers with social work in other settings, there are roles that seem unique to this setting or, at the very least, unusual in other professional social work contexts. These roles fall in two categories: "religious leader" and "community member/friend."

Religious Leader

Two thirds of these social workers (n=34) carry titles that contain words such as "minister," "ministries," "pastor," and "missions" rather than "social worker," replicating earlier research finding that most congregational social workers carry titles that reflect their roles as religious leaders (Garland, 1987). Their titles locate them in a position of congregational leadership the way the role designation "social worker" might not. At first blush, the use of a title appears to downplay or even sideline their roles as social workers. These titles make it hard to sort out how many social workers there really are in congregational leadership or who they are. These titles appear to ignore or even devalue their social work preparation as appropriate for the roles they fill.

Upon deeper reflection, however, titling their positions with language specific to the context for practice is not unusual for social workers. In fact, these various titles accentuate their roles as leaders. In other words, a title other than social worker may not be devaluing of the social worker or the social work profession, but quite the opposite. It is recognition that the social worker is in a position of particular responsibility or leadership, just as the leader of a social work school probably bears the title "Program Director" or "Dean;" a hospital social worker may carry the title "Discharge Planner;" a social worker in a clinic may be called "Therapist;" and a member of the state or federal legislature carries the title "Senator" or "Representative." Each of these positions carries role expectations somewhat unique from other settings in social work. For example, the Senator is a politician, a fundraiser, a political party leader. Yet, the Senator still is a social worker, bringing the knowledge, values, and skills of social work to a unique and significant setting for social work practice.

Neither legislative bodies nor hospitals nor congregations are social service agencies, yet their mission and purpose have significance for the profession of social work and the populations whom social workers serve. Social workers bring important knowledge, values, and skills to congressional bodies as well as to congregations.

Community Member/Friend

Another role common for congregational social workers is that of "community member" and even "friend" to members of the congregation. Social work is certainly relational in many settings, and congregations are hardly unique in the challenge created by dual and multiple relationships. Anytime a social worker is employed in a setting that is also the social worker's community, such relationships are possible—e.g., the school social worker whose own child is a student in the school or whose sibling is a teacher, the social worker in a mental health community center whose spouse is a community pastor or police officer, the community developer who lives in the community being served, and so forth.

In a congregation, the roles are often not only dual but often multiple. The social worker in this context, we suggest, has to adjust to this ambiguity of roles. They are like ropes of intertwined threads that include not only the professional relationship but also the *expectation* that the social worker is a member of the community. It is often assumed that social workers will join their employing congregations if they are not already members, contribute financially from personal finances, serve as a choir member and/or Sunday School teacher, be present for many congregational activities, not just those the social workers lead, and share personal life as well as professional competence with others in the congregation.

In congregational settings, multiple relationships are inevitable, unavoidable, and extremely important, if managed well, for the overall influence and effectiveness of the social worker. Sometimes they do create dilemmas that have to be addressed and, if mismanaged, dual relationships pose risk for harm. For a deeper exploration of these dual and multiple relationships, see Chapter 5 in *Congregational Social Work* (Garland & Yancey, 2014).

Professional Identity

"Professional identity" is the way individuals define themselves in their own internal dialogue, the image of themselves they hold. One's professional identity may or may not match with how others see a person. "Identity" changes over time, often in interaction with changing roles, but it is slower to change than roles may change. Professional identity includes identifying with the values, knowledge base, and colleagues of the profession (Gustafson, 1982; Netting, Kettner, & McMurtry, 2012; Sullivan, 2005).

The social worker's identity is important not only for understanding self-perceptions but also because the social worker's professional identity influences the scope and tasks of congregational leadership and service provision the social worker seeks or is willing to do. In other words, identity influences role, just as role influences identity.

Examples from three of these social workers indicated how fluid and even amorphous their initial job descriptions and responsibilities were, and how their understanding of themselves as professionals has shaped their work over time. Abigail told of how the pastor of the large Bible church where she serves, with a membership of 16,000 and a staff of 300 members, hired her to direct the social ministries of the congregation and gave her the responsibility of making a place for herself in the leadership of the congregation. Similarly, Lois said, "I have enlarged my responsibilities and they've come to learn what I can do for them as I've been there longer." For example, instead of just providing direct services to senior adults, she has equipped volunteers to be the direct service providers.

Their congregations placed a number of these social workers, like Abigail and Lois, in the role of social work they understood professionally, that of providing direct services. Although these women may have begun the work as direct service providers, *these women saw themselves* as *religious leaders* defining the work and not just accepting it as defined. They broadened their roles to that of equipping the congregation for ministry in the congregation's neighborhoods and beyond. They had built trust and shown competence within the work of the congregation so that the congregation affirmed and welcomed this expanded view of the social worker role.

In yet another example, Steven, an employee in a religiously-affiliated child welfare agency working with congregations, sees himself as a religious leader and a congregational social worker empowering and equipping congregations to collaborate with agencies who may have a shared vision for ministry/service. He is not solely a social worker using the congregation as a resource for funds and volunteers for his agency's foster care programs, as the agency initially imagined his role.

In summary, the professional identities of these 51 social workers are as diverse as their individual journeys, shaped as they are by their experiences. Those experiences include social work education and, for some, previous professional experiences, including lifelong experiences in one or more congregations in which they grew up and participated as adults. Their identity includes education in religion and theology, whether that education took place formally in a university or seminary, or in Christian education programs in the congregations of their childhood and beyond—or both. Finally, many described a profound sense of vocational calling that emerged through their spiritual experiences individually or in the context of a faith community. For some, their professional identities are singularly "social worker." For others, their dominant identity is "minister," "pastor," or even "spiritual director," and social work is a skills set that they use. Still others see themselves with a complex identity that has dual expression incorporating both religious leader and social worker. The following sections will discuss these topics in more detail.

Social Worker

The professional identity "social worker" dominates, although is not always the only identity, for most (n=40) of these social workers. Obviously, the sampling of our research leaned toward those with a social work identity, taking place as it did through professional social work and social work educational channels.

Inez exemplifies those whose professional identity is "social worker." A full-time social work faculty member, Inez is serving as a part-time social worker on her congregation's staff, providing clinical services both to congregants and to those outside the congregation. The congregation pays her salary, so there is no client fee for her services. The current congregation is the second that Inez has served. Even though Inez' title is "church counselor," she said, "I want to be the church social worker," and she wrote her own job description as "social worker."

Barry's title is Pastor of Care Ministries, the second social worker to serve his congregation in this role. His responsibility is primarily to respond to the needs of his 3,000-member congregation through visiting persons who have been hospitalized or placed in nursing homes or home health care. He also provides counseling and conducts marriages and funerals. Barry says that he identifies himself as a social worker "because of my training and the way I think about things."

Licensure is important to these social workers because being licensed underscores their identity. As Inez said:

> Other community agencies obviously have more respect for someone who has a license. It's not just some person who's doing counseling at this church. It's somebody who actually had some training, and I think that's viewed with respect.

Their identity as a social worker also means that they engage in social work continuing education and carry malpractice insurance. Conferences and workshops are particularly important since most of these social workers are professionally isolated, the only social worker in their employment setting.

Some respondents (n=40) see themselves *exclusively* as social workers, not as religious leaders, and often the congregational context contributes to that exclusive identity—they are excluded from leader roles. Alice is a social work professor who volunteers in a congregation where women cannot serve as leaders of the congregation itself. She leads a single mothers' group, however, and serves as a mentor and friend to the women in the group. Alice said, "I don't see myself as a minister; I identify as a Christian social worker." Alice does not chafe at the gender restrictions; they fit her own sense of identity as a woman and as a professional.

Because their identities are "social worker" does not mean that their identities are separate from their religious and spiritual understanding of themselves, however. Almost half (N=16) of these 40 social workers whose identity is singularly "social worker" voiced a sense of spiritual calling to social work, even though they may not have initially experienced a calling to congregational social work specifically. One said: "When I started in social work, it was a clear direction from God to go into social work." These social workers believed that God called them to be social workers and that God has directed their paths to the work they do. Lynne says that she has integrated social work into the very core of her identity: "It's a way of thinking, doing, and it works anywhere with anything; it's just the way I function."

Becky is the Director of Special Ministries for her congregation, working with the deaf congregation that is co-located there. Her parents are deaf, and she grew up in a bi-cultural world, at home in both the hearing and the deaf communities. She chose social work from a sense of calling to work with deaf congregations:

> When I went into social work it was because I knew I could be Christ to every person that came to me.... Anything that was at [the school of social work] to me was ministry. Every teacher, every professor, every practicum—everything was ministry. It isn't a program; it isn't a career, it is, simply put, full-time ministry. My calling was always to serve God, and it would be in the social work field.

Like Becky, several interviewees chose to go to social work school very deliberately as a response to their sense of spiritual calling. Abigail was one of those who experienced that calling as a teenager and pursued it into a BSW program:

> I knew I was called to be a social worker when I was a senior in high school. And really it was because I had a relationship with God; I knew I was called to be a social worker. I had no idea what I was going to do with social work. I had no idea I was going to be working in a church. Even when I graduated with my social work degree I did not have any idea I would be working in a church. But I went through the steps and did what I was supposed to do to get a degree and get a license and I said, "Okay Lord, where do I go from here?" Anytime I looked at another field, I was always

> drawn right back to social work. I knew I was supposed to be helping people and just ministering the love of God's people in whatever environment that meant.

Moreover, that sense of vocation gives ongoing determination to continue when the work is hard. Heather is the Director of the Refugee Program for her Catholic archdiocese, working with congregations to resettle international refugees in this country. She said:

> I'm happy and I feel fulfilled, but there are times when it is really tough. I don't have the energy for this work. And that's when it becomes a vocation, [and I say to myself]: "God put you here and you have to put forth the energy and complete His will."

She finds direction for her days in the words of Jesus: "I was a stranger in the land and you welcomed me."

Pastor or Minister

A smaller group of these social workers (n=16) see themselves primarily, although not always exclusively, as a pastor or religious leader. Ben is the full-time pastor of an ethnically diverse nondenominational congregation. He also is the full-time director of a university's social work program. He already has a Ph.D. in social work and is now completing a Master of Pastoral Studies degree. He told us, "The pastor piece takes precedence; it is the first thing I think about when I get up." He goes on to say that he sees both of these identities, pastor and social worker, as his "calling."

Some of the women we interviewed have chosen social work as the means by which to be "in ministry" when routes of religious leadership are open to men alone in their tradition. Haley has completed two graduate degrees, a Master of Social Work and a Master of Pastoral Ministry. She now serves as the Spiritual Director of a Catholic residential treatment center. She talks about her identity as one of "priest" in a Catholic tradition that does not allow her that role:

> As a Catholic woman, I'm not able to be a priest, so I wasn't able to even consider that option. So I basically have found the next best thing, to be leading a chapel of children is as close as I'm going to get to being a priest. That is very satisfying to me.

A few of these social workers identify themselves primarily as pastors. Carl says that he sees himself as a "pastor who uses social work skills."

Howard is the associate pastor of his large congregation. When he took on this role, unlike others who deliberately have maintained their state licensure, he relinquished his social work license. He said: "I actually don't even have my diplomas up in my office; that's been a conscious decision on my part." He received his MSW from a public university, and it is possible that he and others who have an either/or identity felt compelled to choose by a professional culture that has not recognized dual professional identities. Howard went on to say, however, "My MSW training provided a broad platform from which I work on a daily basis." It prepared him for working with folks in the congregation "with pretty regular issues in the life of any congregation, whether it's substance abuse, or marital discord, or feelings around depression or anxiety." He uses his social work education, but he does not identify himself to others—or to himself—as a social worker.

Dual Identities

A few of these social workers identify themselves both as "minister" and "social worker," yet see them as two distinct identities—intertwined, perhaps, but still a duo. David, an Associate Pastor, says, "I keep my membership in NASW; I will always think of myself as a social worker, but I also consider myself a minister." The key words are "but" and "also."

Ben, the full-time senior pastor and the full-time social work program director, illustrates this duality—he is doing two full-time jobs. He gives an example of his dual identity from the university classroom:

> Like the cartoon, "Cat-dog;" it just depends on what perspective you are looking at it at any given moment. I'm always both.... I'll give you an example. I work with a homeless shelter. In my Human Diversity class, I invite members of the homeless shelter into the class. The individuals from the shelter will refer to me as, "Pastor." In the class, the students refer to me as "Dr." It gets to be somewhat confusing.

The dual identities sometime create tensions and even conflict. Adam served as director of a denominationally affiliated inner city mission that has become a congregation. He is pastor and also directs the social ministries of the mission center. Although he sees social work and ministry as "intertwined," he also notes that the two identities are sometimes dissonant: "It is difficult and there are times that I felt pulled one direction or the other." Congregational social workers live this ambiguity of dual identities.

Adam had completed a dual master's degree program in social work and divinity. Like Adam, virtually all of those who had formal education to prepare them for social work in a congregational setting experienced their education as "dual" in focus. Dual degree programs in social work (Master of Social Work) and theology or divinity (Master of Divinity or Master of Theological Studies) are common in social work education. Not only do ten religiously-affiliated universities offer dual degrees in theology and social work, but also a dozen other universities have dual degree partnerships with other institutions, often seminaries. These include Boston, Columbia, Monmouth, Rutgers, Chicago, Connecticut, Louisville, North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Pittsburg, Texas-Austin, Virginia Commonwealth, and Washington-St. Louis. In 2013, we compiled this data available from the Council on Social Work Education's listing of accredited programs.

It would be interesting to know if social workers who have dual degrees in public health, law, and business also have dual identities; we do not know of research that has explored this issue of dual professional identities, however. For example, using the listing of all accredited programs by CSWE, both private and public, we identified 16 dual degree programs with business administration and 35 dual degree programs with law. The history of separation of social work education from a religious identity during the century that social work education was developing has perhaps contributed to a sense of duality.

An Integrated Identity

Examples are provided below of some congregational social workers we interviewed who have a professional identity that integrates the professions of social work and religious leadership as two facets of one whole, seeing them as complementary rather than in tension. We drew our sample in part by contacting social work educators to help us find their alumni. We were surprised when several of the educators we contacted themselves are serving as congregational social workers, working two jobs, like Ben, as social worker educators and congregational social workers. Working in two settings, it is understandable that they would have two identities; yet a number of them, unlike Ben, see their identities as integrated. Earl, a counselor in his congregation and a lecturer in psychology at the nearby college, illustrates:

> Sometimes I put the social work hat on the top of the minister hat and social work is at the forefront—like when I am speaking at a professional conference. But the minister hat is always a part of me. Social work gives my ministry direction, history, and connection to other people—a way to understand them and me.

Inez is also a social work lecturer who provides clinical services to persons in her congregation. She also uses "hats" as a way to describe the relationship of religious leadership and social work:

> Linking people with needs with people who have resources is the whole point of ministry—and of social work. It's the same hat, with a different flower in it. Ministers of youth

> have another flower. They're all ministers and yet have different educational training. They're all ministers' hats, but mine is citron, yellow for social work. [Citron is the color symbolizing social work in academic regalia.]

Not all of those with "integrated" identities are social work educators, however. Caleb is a member of a Roman Catholic religious order who felt drawn to work with persons in poverty. He subsequently completed his MSW and now serves a parish in a developing country. He sees the identities of religious leader and social worker as being dual, yet so integrated that he cannot pull them apart: "You can't do one without the other; you can't say you're doing the gospel without doing the social work." We heard a similar refrain from several of these social workers. Daniel, the Pastor of Care Ministries for his congregation, describes how these two identities are inseparable:

> I can't separate the two. If I tried, I couldn't get social work out of my ministry or my ministry out of my social work. I say to people that I have professional identity confusion. I'm a pastor; I'm ordained and trained to do ministry, recognized as a minister, a reverend. But I'm also a licensed social worker and I worked in counseling settings for 15 years.

The integration of these two roles does not negate the challenges—the "confusion" Daniel feels—of a congregational context for social work. Nevertheless, challenges do not mean that the two are not integral to one another, according to Gina, the national Director of Church and Community Initiatives for a large agency:

> I have not experienced incompatibility between the two. If I'm doing good social work, it's good ministry as well. And if I'm doing good ministry, there's no reason it can't be good professional social work.

Reflections

A curious question that emerged from our conversations with these social workers that has no clear answer is one that seems rather simple on the surface—Who is a social worker? Are these religious leaders we interviewed social workers because that is how they identify themselves professionally? Is it because they completed a social work degree? Is it state licensure? Is it being employed and making money as a professional, or can volunteers be practicing as social workers? If social workers serve as volunteers, are they social workers in that setting? In other words, if we are defining the field of congregational social work, what are the boundaries outside of which we would say that someone is *not* a social worker, even, perhaps, if they think of themselves as social workers? Or if some leaders think of themselves as pastors or priests and not as a social worker, if they obtained social work degrees so that they could use social work knowledge and skills but not "be" social workers—do we call them social workers anyway?

There are costs and benefits to being known as a social worker. In some communities and contexts, being known as a social worker provides professional credibility and influence, while in others, it may raise suspicions or even spark defensiveness. After talking with these 51 social workers, we concluded that the professional identity "social worker" appears to be the consequence of several factors that reach a tipping point of others' perspectives and one's self identity. There may not be agreement between the two.

The most important factor appears to be the successful completion of a social work degree, either at the baccalaureate or graduate level—the basic criterion we used for inclusion in this study. Licensure laws in many states have molded our understanding of the identity of social worker requiring that degree, even if it alone is not enough for licensure. Despite the common use of the term "social worker" for well-meaning non-professionals, social workers are, in fact, degreed professionals.

A second factor that is not quite as fail safe but still important to so many of these social workers is state licensure. "Title protection"—one cannot publically identify self as a social worker without a state license—is written into approximately 30 states' laws and so into the conscience of professionals (Association of Social Work Boards, 2013).

When one of these social workers decided to "give up" the identity of social worker to identify himself as a pastor, he gave up his state social work license. Even so, licensure laws have exception clauses that exempt religious employees from the licensure requirement, so the lack of a license does not deny the identity "social worker" to those who choose to avoid state recognition or just see it as an unnecessary cost of money and effort. Even faculties in schools of social work teaching in states with title protection laws may choose not to be licensed if they are not also engaged in direct practice with clients. Nevertheless, most of these educators who have social work degrees identify themselves as social workers.

A third factor involves the professional responsibilities that the social worker carries, whether those responsibilities are paid employment or unpaid "volunteer" work. It is this third factor that we are pondering as we explore the work of these congregational social workers. We may think we know when a social worker is "not a social worker"—when parenting a child, when shopping for groceries, when jogging in the neighborhood. Or is our professional identity something we never really lay down, but part of the fabric of our personhood? Parenting a child is a time when we attempt to live what we know about teaching self-discipline and instilling courage and compassion in a child—and many of us learned the theories of child development in social work school. When those parenting experiences and those theories become fodder for developing a parenting course for congregational families, is it then social work? Is someone with a social work degree that chooses to teach in an underserved neighborhood school a social worker or a teacher—or both?

We think of another example related to the above discussion. Shopping for groceries may be a time when we run into a congregational member whom we learn is in crisis. A chance meeting becomes a moment to express compassion and to explore what the congregation can do to be supportive. Standing in the grocery store on a Saturday morning, one is a congregant and the other may be a social worker, depending on how the person sees him or herself and how the congregant identifies the social worker. As a social worker jogs through the neighborhood, a family in the congregation passes by and waves. And the social worker as a religious leader has modeled a holistic view of the Christian life in which care for the body is a way we discipline ourselves for living into the calling on our lives. In other words, professional identity is not something we put on with our work clothes when we go to work and change out of when we come home, especially if home is in the midst of the community and neighborhood where we serve.

Conclusion

We started our research with a simple definition of who is a social worker. They were those who self-identified and volunteered to talk to us, and they were those with social work degrees. They taught us how they, as social workers, are leading congregations.

When we were finished with the manuscript, we asked the 51 social workers in our sample to tell us what we got right, and correct us where we misunderstood. For the most part, they encouraged us to add emphasis in several places, which we have done. Several wanted us to underscore the ways that innovative social work always requires making new paths where there were none. Social work education emphasizes critical thinking, but these social workers also illustrate the importance of *creative* thinking. They suggested emphasizing that congregational social work is often independent practice, with few colleagues close at hand for consultation or supervision; therefore, they suggest that novices may need to practice first in a setting that provides more boundaries, clear policies, and established roles. Alternatively or in addition, social workers need to seek out colleagues and construct the boundaries and policies we need for our work. Finally, social work in any setting has the real potential for challenging one's worldview and faith perspectives, and that is particularly the case in congregational social work. There is wisdom, then, in social workers being sure to construct access to spiritual counsel and direction, to ensure nurture of the soul and spirit as well as obtaining continuing education for professional knowledge and skills.

The Limitations of Our Work

For this study, we were limited by the fact that there is no list of social workers on congregational staffs we could use as the basis for a sample, so we drew on our professional connections to find a diverse sample. It appears that the diversity of Christian traditions represented suggests that we have drawn a good sample of congregational social workers, if not a random one. One glaring limitation to our work is the lack of many congregational social workers representing ethnicities and cultures other than Anglo-European. Future research needs to address this limitation.

Future Research

A complicated but important research endeavor will be studying the impact social workers have in this context of practice. We assume that social workers have a unique contribution to make; they told us so and we think they do. How do congregations and their people change over time as a consequence of having a social worker on staff? What is the observable, longitudinal impact of a social worker on the four functions of congregational life? If they do make a unique contribution, what is it, and how can those of us in education prepare congregational social workers to be more effective? Do they bring professional biases that bend congregations in one direction or another over time?

In addition, the following questions may be asked. Are any of the roles and functions discussed in this article filled by someone only with a theology degree and, if so, how their identity, work, approach, or perspective is the same or different from someone with a social work degree only or social work and theology degrees? Would the work of someone who has a social work degree only look different from that of someone who also has a theology degree? Would the congregation or church assign their work or describe their positions differently?

Congregational social work is a field of practice that has been largely unexplored. Yet congregations are one of the most ubiquitous institutions in virtually every American community, institutions that have a religiously based mandate to care for their neighborhoods and communities. The possibilities for providing leadership suggest that social work researchers need to be exploring answers to these questions and social work education needs to be intentional in the preparation of social workers for congregational leadership. ❖

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Urban U.S. Congregations as Resource Brokers: Measuring Social Capital with the Resource Generator–US

Kirk A. Foster

This study presents findings from the Resource Generator-US, a new instrument used to identify accessible resources necessary to build social capital among the urban poor. To evaluate policy assumptions about the capacity of religious congregations to fill gaps left by public programs, members (N=120) of two urban churches in a Midwestern Rust Belt city were surveyed to understand resource access, personal resource possession, and resource mobilization patterns. Findings indicated that both congregations had access to a diversity of resources. The study demonstrated that urban congregations are important repositories of resources and resources vary even in proximal congregations.

RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS ARE IMPORTANT NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED institutions with long histories of community engagement in the American context. From Colonial times as the primary purveyor of supportive resources to the poor, widowed, and orphaned, through the New Deal and War on Poverty, and currently in the Charitable Choice era, religious congregations have been pivotal in providing access to important resources for human and social capital development. This formal role changed over time as social services became professionalized; however, congregations continue to offer valuable informal opportunities to share resources through social relations within the congregational context and through connections congregations maintain with other organizations. As such, congregations may be considered resource brokers—institutions through whose networks congregants may access necessary resources (Small, 2006).

Yet we know little about the types of social capital resources that exist within congregations. Further, we know virtually nothing about how

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Christians might share their social capital resources with others in their faith communities. This basic and universal Christian value of providing for "the least of these" has important implications for how we consider the changing role of congregations in American civil society. While understanding better the types and amounts of social capital that inheres in congregational social networks has applicability across geographic spaces, it is increasingly salient for the urban environment where Christian churches are the most enduring and often the last remaining institutions (Foley, McCarthy, & Chaves, 2001).

Even more importantly at the practice level, I contend, shifting our assumptions about low income urban residents from needing support because of *resource depravity* to needing support for *resource mobilization* affirms the giftedness and worth of the individual while highlighting the important work that needs done in congregations to facilitate the mobilization process. It is at once the fundamental social work ethic of self-determination and the Christian ethical principle of social justice. In an effort to begin the conversation, this article notes the important role of urban churches, identifies the social capital resources present in two Christian congregations located in one high poverty U.S. neighborhood, highlights resource mobilization patterns, makes the case for urban congregations as resource brokers, and offers practice suggestions relevant for the Christian context. In the end, congregations have an important role to play in assisting the urban poor in getting by and in getting ahead.

Background

Residents of poor urban neighborhoods typically have constricted social networks and limited access to resources necessary for social and economic mobility (Gallie, Paugam, & Jacobs, 2003; Thorp, Stewart, & Heyer, 2005; Tigges, Browne, & Green, 1998). Resources that promote social and economic mobility available through network connections include employment information and job referrals (Granovetter, 1973; Mendenhall, DeLuca, & Duncan, 2006; Smith, 2005), healthcare and personal development information (Small, 2006; Small & McDermott, 2006), stable housing (Mendenhall et al., 2006), expert advice (Webber & Huxley, 2007), and social support (Small, 2006). Close kinship ties and ties to others who share a similar background, which are characteristic of the urban poor, limit the diversity of information and social connections necessary to break the bonds of poverty (Barnes, 2003; Tigges et al., 1998).

Religious congregations are important neighborhood institutions in urban poor communities because they are integrated into a variety of networks that span community boundaries (McRoberts, 2003; Nowak, 2001). They have long been at the center of community-based social services and community development activities (Chaves & Higgins, 1992; Chaves &

Tsitsos, 2001; Littlefield, 2010; McRoberts, 2003; Nowak, 2001). Beginning with Saul Alinsky's work in the 1930s and growing more organized in the 1970s, coalitions of faith-based organizations have had an important impact in the public sphere (Wood & Warren, 2002). Federal social welfare policy since 1996 has encouraged congregations to be active participants in addressing social problems. They are places where people find their most meaningful relationships (Wuthnow, 2004) and where African Americans, in particular, have found a powerful source of political engagement (Boddie, 2002; McRoberts, 2003; Putnam & Feldstein, 2003) and a supportive environment for interaction and social support. Studies have demonstrated that neighborhood-based organizations have the capacity to link the urban poor to heterogeneous resource networks (Small, 2006; Small & McDermott, 2006). In this sense, congregations may be viewed as resource brokers, providing a link between community needs and congregational resources.

Religious congregations are important sources of social capital (Lockhart, 2005; Putnam, 1993; Wuthnow, 2002b), defined here as the presence of and access to resources that are embedded within one's social networks (Burt, 1997; Portes, 2000). Putnam and Campbell (2010) noted that churchgoers were more likely to provide certain types of assistance (e.g., helping someone with housework and helping someone find a job) and were more civically engaged than their non-religious counterparts. Wood and Warren (2002) demonstrated that faith-based community organizations fostered bridging social capital between congregations and communities. What is lacking in the existing literature is an exploration of the types of specific social capital resources that inhere within the resource networks of urban Christian churches and patterns of resource mobilization among congregants. Studies have examined the role of congregations and religion in building social capital (Baggett, 2002; Barnes, 2003; Campbell, 2007; Candland, 2000; Foley, McCarthy, & Chaves, 2001; King & Furrow, 2004; Lockhart, 2005; Wuthnow, 2002b, 2004), but none have examined the presence of specific social capital resources. Research addressing this issue is an important contribution to the conversation about congregationally based social capital and a step forward in understanding its potential capitalization effects.

The social capital literature is replete with discussions of the benefits of resources accessible through personal and professional networks (Burt, 2005; Coleman, 1988; Fukuyama, 2001; Granovetter, 1973; Lin, 1999a; Small, 2006; Small & McDermott, 2006). As evident in Lin's (1999) network theory of social capital, individuals have greater social and economic mobility when they can access a diverse pool of resources through their personal and professional networks. The interaction between persons through organizational contexts creates important relationships that may be leveraged (Domínguez & Watkins, 2003; Quane & Rankin, 2006; Small, 2006). More importantly, these connections foster relationships with diverse pools of individuals that the urban poor often lack (Barnes, 2003; Tigges et al., 1998). The ability of community-based organizations to be resource brokers—to facilitate sharing resources—rests in part on their ability to provide access to heterogeneous resource networks.

This descriptive study builds upon existing social capital literature. It provides data on the specific resources available in a congregant's personal network and through the networks of other congregants, and the extent to which these resources have been mobilized on behalf of individuals within the congregation. Specifically, this study addresses the following research question: What social capital resources are available in congregations through members' social networks and have they been mobilized on behalf of church members? The purpose of this study was to document, for the first time, actual resources embedded within congregants' social networks that can be used for social and economic mobility (Littlefield, 2010). Further, this study introduces the *Resource Generator—United States* (RG-US), a new social capital measurement tool. Findings from this study are not meant to be generalizable; however, they are meant to demonstrate that urban congregations have access to a heterogeneous pool of resources.

Methods

This paper draws data from a social network study of urban churches that was funded through The Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis and conducted in 2010 over a 6-week period. The study mapped three levels of relational networks among congregants. Those networks, in increasing closeness, were *talk to regularly* for at least 5 minutes per week; *share personal problems*; and *visit outside of scheduled church events*. Additional cross-sectional data were gathered on social capital, religious engagement, and trust. This paper reports on the social capital data gathered using the Resource Generator, a survey adapted for use in the United States for the first time in this study.

Design

The study employed network and survey approaches in a synchronic comparative case study design (Gerring, 2007) to assess types of resources personally possessed and accessed among urban congregants. In this design, resource access is examined at one time point in two Christian congregations that represent different types of cases (unique churches) within the same population (urban churches) allowing for the examination of within and between case variation. The congregations were of different mainline Protestant denominations and purposively chosen to represent different types of churches typical of urban neighborhoods. One was comprised mainly of residents from the immediate geographic neighborhood (Immanuel

Church)—a "neighborhood" church that is relatively homogeneous with respect to geography of congregant place of residence and socioeconomic status. The other drew its membership from a wide geographic area (Grace Church)—a church that is "integrated" with respect to geography of residence and socioeconomic status. While each congregation represented a specific unique case that was intended to be prototypical of urban congregations, these cases were not perfectly representative of the total population of congregations or their congregants (see Cnaan & Curtis, 2013).

Social network research methods were used to determine how resources were distributed and accessible across network structures. Quantitative surveys were used to gather cross-sectional data on each respondent—each congregant, therefore, represents an observation within the case and their data are then used to draw conclusions about the cases (congregations) (Gerring, 2007)

Sample

All participants were active adult congregational members. Inclusion criteria were age 18 years or older, attended worship at least once quarterly, and inclusion on the congregation's official role of active members. Key informants generated a list of potential participants based on the general inclusion criteria of active membership. Initial recruitment methods included announcements in worship and weekly bulletins, introduction of the Principal Investigator (PI) during worship services, and newsletter articles. Key informants and the PI worked collaboratively to schedule interviews. To capture active members of the congregations who did not respond to the initial requests, we mailed direct appeal letters and made telephone contact. This method resulted in 150 eligible participants and a response rate of 80.0% (N=120). The sample was majority female, African American, and reported income less than $20,000 per year. Most congregants' highest level of education was a high school diploma or some college. (See Table 1)

While this sample is limited, individuals in this study are drawn from two different types of urban congregations (n=59, n=61). The congregations are situated in adjacent census tracts of a mid-sized Midwest "Rust Belt" city. The neighborhood, which spans the two census tracts, was largely (93.2%) African American, (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011) and of the 3,853 residents, 25.5% were unemployed and 40.2% lived in poverty (city website, 2011) at the time of the study.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Total Sample and Congregations

	Total Sample (N=120)	Immanuel Church (Neighborhood) (n=59)	Grace Church (Integrated) (n=61)
Female (%)	58.3	56.0	61.0
Average Age (years)	41.4 (19.1)	34.5 (15.5)	48 (20.0)
Race/Ethnicity (%)			
African American	85.0	88.0	82.0
White	10.0	5.0	14.8
Latino/Latina	1.7	3.4	
Multiracial	3.3	3.4	3.0
Education (%)			
< High School	13.3†	18.6†	8.0
High School	29.2	35.6	23.0
Some College	35.8	32.2	39.3
College/Graduate Degree	21.7	13.5	30.0
Marital Status (%)			
Single never married	52.5	59	46.0
Married	23.3	20	26.2
Divorced/Widowed	23.3	21	26.3
Household Size (M)	3.0 (2.0)	3 (2)	2.8 (2.0)
Number of Children	1.0 (1.5)	1.3 (1.5)	1 (1.5)
Average # Years at Church	13.6 (14.2)	9 (7.3)	18 (17.6)
Income (%)			
< $10,000	38.7	45.8	31.2
$10,000 - $19,999	17.7	20.3	14.8
$20,000 - $39,999	27.7	22	32.8
$40,000 - $59,999	11.8	10.2	13.1
$60,000 - $79,999	3.4	--	6.6
$80,000 - $99,999	0.8	1.7	
Public Assistance (%)			
Lifetime	43.3	51	38
Current (% of lifetime)	48.1	55	52
Unemployed	44.2	44	44

†includes high school seniors

Instruments

This paper reports descriptive results from the Resource Generator (RG), the first known use of the survey in the United States. The RG-US is a survey designed to gather an inventory of particular resources the average American utilizes for social and economic mobility (see Table 2). This measure gives us a detailed picture of what Americans, particularly members of urban churches, use to manage their day-to-day lives and to achieve economic advancement, and who in their social network can provide access to those necessary resources.

More generally, the RG measures resources available through network members in a diverse set of life domains that satisfy the needs of an average person in a modern, industrial society (van der Gaag & Snijders, 2005). Items theoretically salient for an urban U.S. context were abstracted from a comparison of those used to measure social capital in the Netherlands (van der Gaag & Snijders, 2005), the U.K. (Webber & Huxley, 2007), and Canada (Wellman et al., 2004). Items included resources important for human, cultural, financial, political, and physical capital development. The RG-US developed for this study was divided into two sections—one asked about resources available through one's social networks and the other about resources individuals themselves possessed. The final survey contained 24 access and 22 possession items, most closely adhering to the RG-UK (Webber & Huxley, 2007).

The RG-US asked respondents to indicate, from a list of categories, through whom they could access specific resources among individuals they knew on a first-name basis; the response choices were family, friends, acquaintances, work colleagues, neighbors, and church members. To address a limitation in prior studies (van der Gaag & Snijders, 2005), respondents endorsed all categories of individuals through whom they believed a resource could be accessed. Church-specific resource access was assessed as part of the response categories to measure the extent to which certain resources were available through congregationally-bound relationships. Because it is unknown whether resources can actually be accessed, they are noted as perceived resources.

Resource possession is operationalized as a respondent's endorsement of currently possessing a specific resource and is measured using 22 items from the resource access items. Resource mobilization was operationalized as "ever having shared" a personally held resource with another member of the respondent's congregation.

In prior studies, the RG demonstrated good psychometric qualities (van der Gaag & Snijders, 2005; Webber & Huxley, 2007). A principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted and a four-component model converged with the data, as found in prior studies (cf., Webber & Huxley). This statistical analysis allows us to understand how, based on participant responses, resources "hang" together and to develop a set of categories for further analysis. Resource items were divided into four domains with acceptable alpha coefficients: (1) expert advice ($\alpha = .76$); (2) employment support ($\alpha = .74$); (3) problem solving ($\alpha = .80$); and (4) personal support ($\alpha = .63$) (see Tables 2-5 for scale items). The subsequent data analysis presented here utilizes these four domains.

Data Collection

Nine master-level social work students trained in survey interview techniques conducted face-to-face, interviewer-administered interviews on church property during times members were onsite for other events. Interviews also took place in congregants' homes (*n*=3) when necessary. Interviews lasted ~40 minutes. All interviews occurred over the span of 6 weeks (during Lent). Recruitment and data collection procedures were approved by the university Institutional Review Board.

Data Analysis

SAS 9.3 was used to analyze the data. Resource items were dichotomized into accessible via any relationship vs. not accessible; a separate dichotomization was made for accessible vs. not accessible via someone within the congregation. Items were summed according to domains determined in the principal component analysis, allowing for a mean scale score or the average number of resources accessible in a domain. Percentages were calculated by dividing the domain mean by the total number of resource items in the domain. Separate networks were analyzed by examining variables for general access via any network or via a church-specific network. Individual possession and mobilization items were dichotomous and grouped in the same domains as access items. Means and percentages were calculated as noted above though mobilization data do not represent the total study population but only those who endorsed possessing items within the domain. Domain sample sizes are reported in Tables 2 and 5. Similarities and differences between congregations were evaluated with t-tests.

Results

Descriptive results were reported for general access, church-specific access, personal possession, and lifetime history of resource mobilization on behalf of other church members. Specific item results by scale are displayed in Tables 2-5. Statistically significant differences in mean access and mobilization scores are noted.

General Resource Access

Considering raw mean scores, problem-solving skills (M=5.91, SD=1.64) were the most accessible resources via any network. Of those, knowing someone on a first name basis who can "give advice about money problems" and who can "provide a place to stay for a week" were the most accessible with 91.8% of respondents endorsing these resources. Knowing someone who can "lend a large sum of money" was the least endorsed (65.0%), which is not surprising given the sample demographics and Putnam and Campbell's (2010) findings that churchgoers are no more likely to lend money than non-churchgoers. Comparing the two congregations yielded no statistically significant difference in mean scale scores, *t*(104.41)=1.85; *p*=.07 using unequal variances. Qualitatively, the neighborhood congregation (M=6.19, SD=1.27) endorsed a greater average number of problem-solving skills than did the integrated congregation (M=5.64, SD=1.92).

Table 2: Resource Generator Variable Means by Congregation (scale) and Percent Endorsed (scale items)—Resource Access

Do you know someone on a first name basis who…	All Congregants N=120	Immanuel Church (Neighborhood) n=59	Grace Church (Integrated) n=61
Expert Advice	4.82 (.17)	4.83 (1.63)	4.80 (2.16)
Is an alderman/woman (elected official)	51.7	44.1	59.0
Works at City Hall	42.5	39.0	45.9
Has good contacts at TV/newspaper/radio	61.7	61.0	62.3
Knows a lot about government regulations	71.7	76.3	67.2
Has a professional occupation	89.2	91.5	86.9
Give advice on using a personal computer	90.8	93.2	88.5
Can sometimes employ people	74.2	78.0	70.5
Employment Support	5.04 (1.41)	5.58 (.75)***	4.52 (1.69)
Give a good job reference	92.5	100	85.3
Give advice on problems at work	82.4	89.8	75.0
Help dispose of bulky items	87.5	89.8	85.3
Give career advice	90.8	100	82.0
Can babysit others' children	78.0†	92.7	60.0
Knows how to fix a car	86.7	91.5	81.97
Problem Solving Skills	5.91 (1.64)	6.19 (1.27)	5.64 (1.92)
Lend large sum of money	65.0	76.3	54.1
Lend a small sum of money	89.2	93.2	85.3
Help find someplace to live	92.5	93.2	91.8
Give advice about money problems	90.8	100	82.0

Provide a place to stay for a week	91.7	91.5	91.8
Give sound legal advice	81.7	84.8	78.7
Discuss politics	80.0	79.7	80.3
Personal Support	3.82 (.56)	3.90 (.35)	3.74 (.70)
Do your shopping if you are ill	96.7	98.3	95.1
Be there to talk about the day	98.3	98.3	98.4
Provide care for a serious health condition	91.7	96.6	86.9
Watch home or pets while away	95.0	96.6	93.4

(SD); †n=100; ***t-test p<.001

Of the 6 items considered resources for employment support, an average participant indicated the ability to access 5.0 (SD=1.41) or 84.0% of resources. Knowing someone who can “give a good job reference” was the most often endorsed item (92.5%), while knowing someone who “can babysit others’ children” received the fewest endorsements (78.0%) in this domain. As Cnaan, Boddie, Handy, Yancey & Schneider (2002) note, having reliable childcare is essential for maintaining employment for residents of urban neighborhoods who are typically poor, single mothers. The average number of endorsed employment support items was statistically significant ($t(83.22)=4.43$; $p<.0001$, unequal variances) with the neighborhood congregations endorsing more (M=5.58, SD=.75) than the integrated congregation (M=4.52, SD=1.69).

The expert advice domain contains the lowest endorsed items on the RG-US. On average, participants endorsed 4.8 of the 7 items representing 68.9% of the resources. Highest among these resources was knowing someone who can “give advice on using a personal computer” (90.8%) and who “has a professional occupation” (89.2%). Qualitatively, however, respondents sometimes considered relationships with physicians as knowing someone with a professional occupation. The lowest endorsed items in this resource domain and on the RG-US was knowing someone who “works at City Hall” (42.5%) and who “is an alderman/woman” (51.9%). It is also counterintuitive that knowing someone who “can sometimes employ people” would group with the items in this domain. Theoretically, this item hangs with knowing people who hold professional positions and have expert knowledge. No statistically significant difference between the congregations was present and means were identical at 4.8 items.

The personal support resource domain contains the highest endorsed items on the RG-US, with all items scoring above 91%. Of the 4 resources, participants endorsed an average of 3.8 (SD=.56) resources; said differently, 95.5% of all resources were accessible via any network. The most often endorsed resource item on the RG-US was knowing someone who could "be there to talk about the day" (98.3%), followed by knowing someone who could "do your shopping for you if you are ill" (96.7%). Mean differences between the congregations was not statistically significant; the neighborhood congregation endorsed an average of 3.9 items and the integrated congregation 3.7.

Congregationally-Embedded Resource Access

Participants were also asked whether specific resources were accessible via members of their respective churches. Given the continued public policy reliance on congregations to meet local social and economic needs (Littlefield, 2010), understanding the resources available within congregational networks remains important for policy and programmatic discussions. While the intensity of resource endorsement for congregationally accessible resources was less than that of general resource networks, the ordered magnitude is the same. That is, the rank order of mean accessibility scores for resource domains is the same for general and congregationally-embedded resources. However, the standard deviations relative to the mean scores suggest wide variability among congregants. Practically this means that resource access through congregational networks varies widely and we cannot readily assume that most congregants will be able to access the average number of resources.

Table 3: Resource Generator Variable Means by Congregation (scale) and Percent Endorsed (scale items)—Resource Access Via Church Networks Only

Do you know someone on a first name basis within your congregation who…	All Congregants	Immanuel Church (Neighborhood)	Grace Church (Integrated)
Expert Advice	2.01 (1.73)	2.20 (1.79)	1.82 (1.67)
Is an alderman/woman (elected official)	6.7	6.8	6.5
Works at City Hall	2.5	5.1	0.0
Has good contacts at TV/newspaper/radio	30.8	33.9	27.9
Knows a lot about government regulations	23.3	28.8	18.0
Has a professional occupation	58.3	61.0	55.7
Give advice on using a personal computer	47.5	49.2	45.9
Can sometimes employ people	31.7	35.6	27.9

Employment Support	2.38 (1.91)	3.03 (1.88)***	1.75 (1.73)
Give a good job reference	57.5	66.1	49.2
Give advice on problems at work	43.7	54.2	33.3
Help dispose of bulky items	40.8	49.2	32.8
Give career advice	50.8	69.5	32.8
Can babysit others' children	34.0	43.6	22.3
Knows how to fix a car	17.5	23.7	11.3
Problem Solving Skills	2.80 (2.36)	3.42 (2.39)**	2.20 (2.19)
Lend large sum of money	22.5	35.6	9.8
Lend a small sum of money	30.8	40.7	21.3
Help find someplace to live	56.7	66.1	47.5
Give advice about money problems	46.7	59.3	34.4
Provide a place to stay for a week	47.5	61.0	34.4
Give sound legal advice	32.5	37.3	27.9
Discuss politics	43.3	42.4	44.3
Personal Support	1.58 (1.46)	1.76 (1.47)	1.39 (1.45)
Do your shopping if you are ill	40.8	49.2	32.8
Be there to talk about the day	55.0	57.6	52.5
Provide care for a serious health condition	35.8	42.4	29.5
Watch home or pets while away	25.8	27.1	24.6

(SD); ***t-test p<.001; **t-test p<.01

On average, participants indicated that more problem-solving skills (M=2.80, SD=2.36) were accessible through congregational networks than any other resources, which represents 40.0% of the items in this resource domain. The most accessible resource in this domain was knowing someone who can "help you find somewhere to live if you had to move" (56.7%), followed by knowing someone who can "provide a place to stay for a week if you had to leave your house temporarily" (47.5%). The lowest endorsed resources were knowing someone who could "lend a large sum of money" (22.5%) and a "lend a small sum of money" (30.8%). The neighborhood congregation on average reported access to more problem solving skills resources within their congregational networks (M=3.42, SD=2.39) than did the integrated congregation (M=2.20, SD=2.19), *t*(118)=2.94; *p*=.004.

Employment support (M=2.38, SD=1.91) was the second most endorsed category of resources accessible through congregational networks and on average 39.7% of these resources were accessible. The most endorsed resource in this domain and the second most endorsed as accessible through congregational networks was knowing someone who can "give a good job reference" (57.5%). Knowing someone who "knows how to fix a car or truck" received the lowest endorsement (17.5%). The neighborhood congregation endorsed on average more employment support items (M=3.03, SD=1.88) than did the integrated congregation (M=1.75, SD=1.81), *t*(118)=3.88; *p*<.001.

Of the 7 items in the expert advice resource domain, respondents indicated being able to access an average of 2.0 (SD=1.73) through congregational networks. This domain has both the highest endorsed item, knowing someone who "has a professional occupation" (58.3%), and the lowest two items, knowing someone who "is an alderman/alderwoman (elected official)" (6.7%) and who "works at City Hall" (2.5%), in the RG-US. On average, participants endorsed only 28.7% of the expert advice resource items as being accessible through congregational networks. No statistically significant difference was present between the two congregations.

While, on average, participants reported the ability to access 1.58 (SD=1.46) personal support resources through congregational networks, this domain had only 4 items. The most endorsed item was knowing someone who could "be there just to talk about the day" (55.0%), which is not surprising given the nature of personal bonds formed within religious congregations. No statistically significant differences existed between the two congregations and the difference in mean scores was .37.

Personally Held Resources and Mobilization Patterns

Participants were also asked about resources they possessed and their history of mobilizing, or sharing, those resources with other members of their church. Across all scales no statistically significant differences were present between the congregations when considering the average number of individually held resources; only the mobilization of employment resources and problem solving skills were significantly different. Of six employment support items, participants indicated they possessed an average of 4.21 resources (SD=1.43) and mobilized an average of 2.44 (SD=1.73). The most commonly held resource was the ability to "babysit others' children" (84.2%) and of those who said they could provide this resource to others, 60.4% had done so for a member of their congregation. Members of the integrated congregation on average mobilized more employment support resources on behalf of other church members (M=2.83, SD=1.77) than did the integrated congregation (M=2.07, SD=1.62) though the difference is small (.76), *t*(116)=2.44; *p*< .02. (See Tables 4 and 5)

Table 4: Resource Generator Variable Means by Congregation (scale) and Percent Endorsed (scale items)—Individual Congregant Resource Possession

Can/Do you…	All Congregants	Immanuel Church (Neighborhood	Grace Church (Integrated)
Expert Advice	1.38 (1.08)	1.36 (.99)	1.41 (1.16)
Works at City Hall	.83	1.7	0
Has good contacts at TV/newspaper/radio	21.7	20.3	23.0
Knows a lot about government regulations	27.5	28.8	26.2
Give advice on using a personal computer	60.8	61.0	60.7
Can sometimes employ people	27.5	23.7	31.2
Employment Support	4.21 (1.43)	4.29 (1.38)	4.13 (1.49)
Give a good job reference	82.5	83.1	82.0
Give advice on problems at work	77.5	76.3	78.7
Help dispose of bulky items	80.8	84.1	73.8
Give career advice	69.2	64.4	73.8
Can babysit others' children	84.2	89.8	78.7
Knows how to fix a car	26.7	27.1	26.2
Problem Solving Skills	4.06 (1.61)	4.05 (1.74)	4.07 (1.48)
Lend large sum of money	15.0	18.6	11.5
Lend a small sum of money	80.0	81.4	78.7
Help find someplace to live	82.5	78.0	86.9
Give advice about money problems	65.8	64.4	67.2
Provide a place to stay for a week	73.3	74.6	72.1
Give sound legal advice	30.8	38.9	23.0
Discuss politics	58.3	49.2	67.2
Personal Support	3.17 (.92)	3.19 (.92)	3.15 (.93)
Do your shopping if you are ill	90.8	89.8	91.8
Be there to talk about the day	97.5	96.6	98.4
Provide care for a serious health condition	49.2	52.5	45.9
Watch home or pets while away	79.2	79.7	78.7

Note: Mean scores on Resource Generator scales are reported in bold and shaded. Standard deviations are reported in the parentheses. Scale items are reported as a percentage.

Participants possessed an average of 4.06 (SD=1.61) of 7 problem-solving skill resources and mobilized an average of 2.0 (SD=1.72) resources. The two most endorsed resources were the ability to "help someone find a place to live" (82.5%) and to "lend a small sum of money" (80.0%). Of those who possessed these resources, 32.7% and 51.0%, respectively, reported offering such assistance to others within their congregation. Again, the neighborhood congregation mobilized more of these resources (M=2.41, SD=1.95) than did the integrated congregation (M=1.61, 1.37), *t*(103.77)=2.59; *p*=.01 when examining unequal variances.

The most possessed resources were in the personal support domain, with an average 3.2 (SD=.92) of four items endorsed. Participants reported sharing an average of 1.6 (SD=1.07) of these resources. The most endorsed possession items in the RG-US were the ability to "be there to talk about the day" (97.5%; mobilized by 87.2%) and doing one's "shopping if they are ill" (90.8%; mobilized by 44.0%).

Expert advice resources were not highly possessed among participants in this study (M=1.38, SD=1.08), though it should be noted that two of the items—"Is an alderman/woman elected official" and "has a professional occupation"—asked about general and congregational networks were not asked of individuals because employment data were gathered elsewhere in the study as part of the participant demographic inquiry. The most commonly held item was "giving advice on using a personal computer" (60.8%) and of those, 44.4% had helped others in their congregation use a PC.

Table 5: Resource Mobilization on Behalf of Other Congregants—Percent Possessing Resource Who Have a Lifetime History of Sharing the Item with Another Church Member

Have you ever shared [resource] with someone in your congregation?	All Congregants	Immanuel Church (Neighborhood)	Grace Church (Integrated)
Expert Advice	.70 (.84) n=87	.86 (.80) n=44	.53 (.85) n=43
Works at City Hall	100	100	0
Has good contacts at TV/newspaper/radio	46.2	66.7	28.6
Knows a lot about government regulations	48.3	58.8	37.5
Give advice on using a personal computer	44.4	52.8	36.1
Can sometimes employ people	72.7	85.7	63.2
Employment Support	2.44 (1.73) n=118	2.83 (1.77)* n=58	2.07 (1.62) n=60

Give a good job reference	46.5	51.0	42.0
Give advice on problems at work	59.1	66.7	52.1
Help dispose of bulky items	62.9	73.1	51.1
Give career advice	66.3	73.7	60.0
Can babysit others' children	60.4	67.9	52.1
Knows how to fix a car	32.3	43.8	20.0
Problem Solving Skills	2.0 (1.72) n=120	2.41 (1.95)** n=59	1.61 (1.37) n=61
Lend large sum of money	33.3	54.6	0
Lend a small sum of money	51.0	66.7	35.4
Help find someplace to live	82.5	78.0	86.9
Give advice about money problems	48.1	65.8	31.7
Provide a place to stay for a week	31.8	45.5	18.2
Give sound legal advice	46.0	52.2	35.7
Discuss politics	64.3	58.6	68.3
Personal Support	1.62 (1.07) n=120	3.19 (.92) n=59	3.15 (.93) n=61
Do your shopping if you are ill	44.0	52.8	35.7
Be there to talk about the day	87.2	91.2	83.3
Provide care for a serious health condition	35.6	32.3	39.3
Watch home or pets while away	23.2	27.7	18.8

(SD); *t-test p<.05; **t-test p<.01

Discussion

Not all resources are created equally; therefore, differential access to resource domains may impact the ability of religious congregations to function as effective resource brokers in providing access to social capital. We know that gaining assistance with needs such as babysitting and providing temporary shelter are vital for daily survival among the urban poor (Cnaan, Boddie, Handy, Yancey, & Schneider, 2002). The real impact of social capital for the urban poor rests in the heterogeneity of their resource networks (see Smith, 2007a) and the question for urban congregations is to what extent they provide access to a heterogeneous pool of social capital resources. Granovetter (1973) argues that heterogeneous information economically advances individuals. Lin's (1999a) network theory of social capital posits that network access to critical resources produces instrumental gains. It is in light of these theoretical arguments that we examine the types of resources urban congregants report accessing, possessing, and mobilizing. The findings demonstrate wide access via relational networks and a heterogeneous pool of resource possession among congregants. It is important to understand these patterns if we are to consider initiating programs that tap into congregational resource structures or, more fundamentally, if we are to make any claims about the capacity of congregations to affect change beyond strict matters of faith.

At the center of the arguments about the role of urban religious congregations in building social capital that promotes social and economic mobility is their ability to bridge heterogeneous resource groups. That is, linking social capital is essential for poor urban populations since they tend to be geographically and socially dislocated from the mainstream (Jargowsky, 1997; Wilson, 1987, 1996; Yang, 2006), thus leading to homogeneous resource networks (Tigges et al., 1998). Whereas prior research assessed social capital via access to a hypothetical domain of resources (Lin, 1982, 1999a, 1999b; Lin & Dumin, 1986; Lin, Fu, & Hsung, 2001), this study examined the actual resources that inhered in these social relationships. It extended van der Gaag and Snijders (2005) by examining resources individuals personally possess. This at once speaks to the *individual level* and *organizational level* because, logically, personally held resources may be more easily mobilized within a trusting organizational context than those resources within a person's social networks not situated within an environment that naturally instills trust among each other.

With respect to the first question, using descriptive analysis, this study demonstrated that members of urban congregations have access to a wide variety of resources. Table 2 illustrates this point well—of the 24 items surveyed only 2 items were endorsed by less than 52% of respondents. Interestingly, these two items both related to knowing people who work in government. At least 80% of respondents noted access to 16 or more different resources. While additional research is needed, these data suggest the resource networks of urban residents may not be as constrained as previously believed. Instead, certain types of resources are more difficult to access (e.g., contacts at City Hall and in the media, and knowing persons who can lend large sums of money) and those most accessible resources (e.g., emotional support and personal shopping) might not promote social and economic mobility. These two ends of the spectrum do not negate the variation and access in the large majority of items between those extremes and the important finding that these urban residents have broad-based resource access.

If general resource access suggests something about individual level social capital, then personally held resources give a more accurate picture of what is actually happening within urban congregations. Overall, resource possession is substantially lower than general access, as we would expect in any population, indicating that the ability to share resources intra-congregationally may be limited. As with general access, two personal support items received the highest endorsement and were the only ones endorsed by more than 90% of the sample. In fact, most items were endorsed by less than 80% of participants, suggesting that within-organization resource access, and hence resource brokerage, is limited. Employment support resources were most often endorsed, reinforcing the belief that congregations have the capacity to link individuals with others who can support economic mobility. Yet, contrast this with the one resource that could lead directly to employment—can you sometimes employ people? Only 27.5% of participants said they either could or had the capacity within their current job to hire others. We then might begin to think of *employment support* differently; these resources are more about supporting one's existing employment than linking to new employment or a better paying job.

Examining the most often endorsed personally held resources reveals that among the highest are those that provide support in one fashion or another. It is not to discount the importance of support in its various modalities—in fact, such support is vital in environments where social networks are constrained. However, we might argue that this type of resource, while important for managing day-to-day life, does little to advance social and economic mobility. As such, the impact of intra-congregational resource networks is limited and it is unclear whether or not congregations, at least in this instance, can generate forms of social capital that support social and economic mobility.

The other piece of this social capital resource brokerage discussion is the perception of resources available via congregational networks. A disconnect exists between the social capital resources others *perceive* are available and what is *actually* available. Why is the question of perception important? It is important because social policy leveraging congregations as active agents of community support and change heretofore has been built on the belief that congregations are repositories of resources that can be harnessed (see the wide literature on Charitable Choice). This research suggests that such policies may, in fact, be built on weak assumptions, that for the average urban congregation the difference between perception and reality is sizable. Because most congregations in the United States have fewer than 100 members (Chaves, 2004), the congregations in this study are more typical than atypical, especially for urban neighborhoods. Even when considering prior research (Putnam & Campbell, 2010; Wood & Warren, 2002), the disconnect between perception and reality gives us pause to reconsider the capacity of congregations to function as resource brokers.

This does not disparage religious congregations, congregants, or the good work they do in urban neighborhoods. It does, however, lend insight into questions of capacity and how to structure public resources to leverage private resources for public good. For example, of those personally held resources the most often mobilized is emotional support ("be there to talk about the day") yet among the least often mobilized is direct employment ("can sometimes employ people"). Congregations are fundamentally about worship and education (Wuthnow, 2004), which is why the patterns of resource mobilization are not surprising. The norms within congregationally-bound social networks are constructed around personal support within the organizational context due in part because of trustful relationships (Wuthnow, 2002a).

Lastly, the mobilization question looms. Smith (2007b) insightfully notes the dilemma in determining if beneficial capitalization comes from *access* to social capital or in the *mobilization* of capital on another's behalf. The data here do not support widespread mobilization of resources on behalf of other church members. Percentages in the mobilization column of Table 5 can be deceiving—they are based on the percent of personally-held resources. With this in mind, the amount of mobilized resources is low. The reasons for this could be varied and perhaps related to traditional mechanisms of collective action—trust, reputation, and reciprocity (Ostrom, 2003). Members have the opportunity to learn more about each other in the congregational context, thus building (or damaging) trust and reputation. More research needs to be done exploring these mechanisms and the impact on social capital.

These data support the general trend in the literature that religious congregations are places where access to social capital abounds. They also suggest we need to better understand the locus of these resource networks and the accessibility both inter- and intra-organizationally. Prior research has suggested that because congregations link heterogeneous groups together (Wood & Warren, 2002), linking social capital can translate into capitalized gains. However, scant support exists for specific aspects of such capitalization. Nonetheless, these data demonstrate that members of urban congregations have access to heterogeneous resources both within and outside congregational networks. These are important resources when considering social and economic mobility among the urban poor. Therefore, we can still claim that congregations are repositories of social capital though differently than commonly assumed.

Differences among Congregations

The congregations in this study were chosen specifically because they represent two different types of urban churches—one that is comprised primarily of neighborhood residents and one that is a mix of neighborhood residents and commuters (integrated). Theoretically these would present access to different types of resource networks. Because contextual differences in residential communities provide interactions in a diverse set of social networks as opposed to one neighborhood context, it was theorized that resource access among members of the integrated congregation would be more heterogeneous. Certainly a greater percentage of members in the integrated congregation report higher incomes than at the neighborhood congregation. However, results indicated the neighborhood congregation demonstrated higher mean access whenever differences were significant.

Qualitatively, the accessible resources within these congregations vary despite their proximal relationship. Members of the neighborhood-based congregation consistently reported higher resource access than did members of the integrated congregation. It is difficult from this sample to understand why that may be when theoretically we would expect the opposite. But the variation noted is important information as we consider how to leverage urban congregations for social and economic development activities. We might assume that congregations drawing membership from a wide geography are more ideally suited for capacity building efforts than are neighborhood-bound congregations. These data suggest, in a limited fashion, that neighborhood-based congregations may be just as resource rich as other types.

Resource Generator-US

This is the first known use of the RG in the United States. The RG was developed specifically to measure actual resource access and possession among urban populations, and this research suggests the RG-US is a potentially useful tool. The Position Generator (Lin et al., 2001) has long been the gold standard in social capital research, gathering data on the types of jobs held by people in an individual's social network. These jobs, or "positions," suggested that a certain quality of social capital resources would be accessible by virtue of the social status of one's social position. However, we had no way of knowing exactly what those specific resources might be. The differences in actual accessible and possessed resources across these two congregations is more useful information than information about a hypothetical set of resources one might access as measured by the Position Generator. These data demonstrate specific types of resources available through a variety of networks without speculating on the composition of the domain of social capital resources available through connections. The RG-US may also help us better understand the relationship between social capital and social and economic mobility. Fundamentally the RG-US is a social capital measure, but it looks at the concept differently. Asking about specific resources as they relate to relationships, as opposed to connections in society, and provides a more robust picture of what is and is not available. Researchers, and practitioners, can note specific strengths and challenges in social capital by using the RG-US. When applied organizationally, the RG-US can potentially show variation both at the individual and organizational level.

Limitations

This research has several limitations. These are but two Christian congregations in one urban neighborhood of a Midwest Rust Belt city. The congregations are both mainline Protestant denominations and are primarily African American in composition. Experiences in other cities and regions of the country, and with Roman Catholic or non-denominational congregations might be different, as might congregations from other faith traditions. It is likely that resource networks and mobilization would vary by ethnic group, particularly among Latino/Latina populations (Domínguez & Watkins, 2003). The sample is relatively small and the cross-sectional design limits our ability to understand the impact of resource networks over time. This was the first application of the RG-US and it may not fully capture resources the urban poor believe are necessary for their upward mobility; additional psychometric work needs to be conducted. Future research should use a population-based approach and randomly select religious congregations that represent greater diversity. Lastly, the sample is comprised of active churchgoers; key informants may not have accurately identified active members, and the study lacks a non-church-affiliated comparison group to examine differences in resource networks.

Conclusions

This study suggests that urban congregations are places where individuals can access diverse resource networks. However, it should be stressed that the perceived potential to access is not synonymous with actual resource access and mobilization. The mobilization data were particularly problematic because they are counterintuitive to our beliefs about congregations. Social policy assumes that congregations are not only repositories of resources that assure upward social and economic mobility but are organizations whose members stand ready to share what they have with others. The argument here is not that congregants do not mobilize what resources they do posses; it is that selective mobilization occurs based on as-yet-understood decision matrices. Congregants differentially mobilize resources. This finding supports the longstanding belief that churches are places where people reach out to one another, but at the same time it suggests boundaries circumscribing one's willingness to help another congregant and whether that help, if provided, would substantially advance the situation of the other.

Congregants in this study could access a wide range of resources through their personal networks which supports prior findings (Small, 2006). Through various networks—friends, neighbors, work colleagues, and church—congregants reported the ability to access many of the resources we believe promote upward mobility. While access through church-only networks is lower than through all networks, the findings here still demonstrate that congregations are important repositories of resources. Within urban settings, congregations are loci of social support, but also potentially brokers of important resources to help the urban poor get by and get ahead. These findings help put to rest questions about the robustness of resource networks within religious congregations (Littlefield, 2010) and set the stage for additional work to be done with a larger selection of congregations.

Practice Implications

Some of the early literature on Charitable Choice suggested that the potential for congregations to effect wide-scale change was predicated on the idea that social problems involve heart and conscience necessitating interventions that transcend material goods (Donaldson & Carlson-Thies, 2003). Indeed congregations are important institutions for changing hearts; however, the social work implications here go beyond such changes. I contend that as practitioners we should focus on material resources that indeed make an impact on those living in poverty and act to change social systems.

As Sampson and Graif (2009) found, leaders of neighborhood organizations in lower income communities spend more time building relationships with organizations and individuals outside the neighborhood in an effort to bring in additional resources than do leaders of organizations in more affluent neighborhoods. Social workers particularly interested in practice with congregations should develop mechanisms that foster client relationships with people and organizations as to increase access to a heterogeneous pool of resources. Congregations provide access to linking social capital through their connections with organizations both within and beyond the neighborhood boundaries. The findings of this study suggest that resources nested within relationships among congregants are important for support and getting by; but it is those relationships beyond the congregation that have greater potential for enhancing social and economic mobility.

This leads to another important implication—congregational capacity. The capacity of congregations to broker resources is not fully understood. Congregations in the U.S. are mainly about worship and education (Wuthnow, Hackett, & Hsu, 2004), considering themselves as resource brokers and developing mechanisms for formal resource brokerage might be charting new territory. Social workers can think critically about ways to engage congregations, clergy, and church leaders in developing strategies for congregants and neighborhood residents to mix with others they might not normally meet through their usual social networks. Leveraging existing connections congregations have with other organizations and developing new ones might introduce new and important resources into communities. It is, if you will, becoming an evangelist for poor neighborhoods, their residents, and their institutions.

The RG-US can also serve as a tool to help individuals understand the diversity of their own resource base. Practitioners can use the measure to elucidate what resources an individual can access while helping them claim their own strengths. Through this, we may more strategically target resources and engage in a process of resource development. For Christians in social work this is tantamount to helping someone revision their lives as one full of "scraps from the table" to one that is rich in unique ways that can be leveraged to get by and to get ahead.

Lastly, we end where we began—shifting our focus from one of *resource depravity* to *resource mobilization*. Using the RG-US to paint a robust picture of resource access and possession among those living in poverty can reorient the discussion about poverty alleviation strategies. It is not that the poor lack social capital, it is that we have not devised good ways that capital can be converted into gain among the poor. As Christians we should speak truth to power and advocate for policies that build up and support, rather than punish and constrain. ❖

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Utilizing a Spiritual Disciplines Framework for Faith Integration in Social Work: A Competency-Based Model

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A spiritual disciplines model for faith integration utilizing a competency-based framework in social work education is presented. An eleventh competency is developed connecting the College's context as a Christian institution of higher learning with accreditation standards related to ethical and competent social work practice. Examples are provided to show how faith development principles were incorporated into specific courses and to demonstrate how related practice behaviors were connected with assignments and assessment tools. The model has implications for how both religious and secular institutions incorporate religious and spirituality content into their curriculum.

IN 2008 CSWE ADOPTED A DIFFERENT APPROACH FOR PROGRAMS TO educate social work students that involves competency attainment as the primary focus, and requires student demonstration of specific practice behaviors to operationalize each competency. This is a shift from a knowledge-based or input curriculum to a practice-based or outcomes curriculum focus (Chamiec-Case, 2013; Holloway, Black, Hoffman, & Pierce, n.d). Developing and implementing a competency-based model for faith integration in social work presents many challenges for the social work educator. Competency-based models need to overcome a significant number of challenges and concerns, develop curriculum that makes con-

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nections between the social work profession and the institution's mission, and provide methods for competency development and evaluation.

I will identify and discuss selected issues related to faith integration and practice issues in the social work curriculum. I will apply and illustrate these issues by presenting a specific model of faith integration currently being utilized by Messiah College, a private Christian college in Pennsylvania with an accredited B.S.W. program. The model follows the Counsel on Social Work Education's (CSWE) 2008 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) in that it utilizes a competency-based format that incorporates measurable practice behaviors and clear assessment components into the design. The intention is to add to the growing body of knowledge related to addressing faith integration and incorporating spirituality and religious content in social work education.

The presentation of a specific model is not intended to suggest that there is only one method for faith and spirituality integration given the reality that there are very divergent perspectives on understanding and teaching spirituality and religious issues in social work (Rothman, 2009). Additionally, the model presented may have components that are institutionally specific, and may not be practical for secular institutions or even for other faith-based social work programs. However, the hope is that this model may influence how other faith-based programs develop spirituality content within their curriculum, and may facilitate new discussions within secular institutions related to incorporating religious and spirituality content. The model presented in this article may also increase positive dialog between divergent views related to the integration of spirituality and religion since the model provides avenues for assessment of faith integration and competent practice.

A Foundation for Faith Integration

Social work educators have an ethical responsibility to assist social work students in developing professional competence, including competence in areas related to faith and spirituality issues. Additionally, educators should have an understanding of how faith may play a significant role in how spirituality is envisioned and taught within certain programs. Faith-based institutions with social work programs may, for example, integrate religious teachings within the curriculum as a resource for enhancing student commitment to specific social work principles such as social justice or the dignity and worth of the person (Brenden and Shank, 2012). This is not to suggest that one's beliefs and values only affect the development of curriculum and teaching if one is a person of faith, or that there is only one perspective on how to integrate faith and practice issues into social work education.

Although religion and spirituality are seen as important components within social work curriculum, there are no specified methods for teaching the content (Rothman, 2009). Additionally, research indicates that students may not be receiving sufficient education related to spirituality and religion, and therefore may not possess the competence to address these issues when in practice settings (Furman, Benson, & Canda, 2011). Faith integration, spirituality, and religious issues are still evolving fields within social work education, and there is need to develop and assess specific curriculum models to help determine best practices in this area (Ai, 2002).

The foundation for incorporating specific spirituality and religious content in the curriculum of schools of social work can be found in both the profession's Code of Ethics and the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) for the Council on Social Work Education, the organization holding the responsibility for accrediting social work programs. The National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics requires practitioners to understand the social diversity of clients, including issues related to spirituality and religion, and to only practice social work within the boundaries of the training and education one has received related to spirituality and religion (National Association of Social Workers, 2008). A specific principle within the Code also requires social workers to ensure that their practice should not include forms of discrimination, including discrimination on the basis of religion. In addition, the NASW Standards for Cultural Competence (2001) articulates the need to understand personal beliefs as a component of diversity.

The Code of Ethics provides guidance on how social workers should behave related to diversity and spirituality. However, it is not a guidebook on how social workers should act in every situation. Additionally, the faith or beliefs of the social worker shape how one both views and practices social work, and therefore it is unrealistic to assume that the student is able to just ignore faith issues when in practice situations (Chamiec-Case, 2012). It is important for students to understand their own personal values and beliefs and how to resolve any potential conflicts between their own beliefs and the Code of Ethics in a responsible manner (NASW, 2008). Sherwood (2012a) noted that faith integration is an issue for all social work practitioners, so it is important to create programming where students can intentionally develop a complexity of skills related to faith integration and practice.

Since ethical decision-making is a process, social work students should have ongoing opportunities to explore how personal beliefs, including faith, impacts practice and to develop a complexity of skills to address these issues in an ethical manner. Therefore, developing educational models, including explicitly Christian faith models, that intentionally address how students can explore spirituality issues will assist in developing a body of knowledge for better understanding how to effectively train students in this area.

Social work programs are required to incorporate spirituality content within educational training programs and social work practitioners are required to address spirituality issues to the extent of their education and training (NASW, 2008). For the social work educator, the development and oversight of standards to educate social work professionals is administered through the Counsel on Social Work Education. Specific policies related to curriculum content are articulated within the Educational Policy and Accreditation standards set forth by the Counsel (CSWE, 2008). In 2008 CSWE changed its focus for teaching and assessing the education of social work students from an objective centered format to a competency-based curricular design. The new standards identified ten specific competencies for students to attain and included measureable practice behaviors that operationalize the competencies which are common to the practice of social work (CSWE, 2008). Social work educators are expected to ensure that students develop these competencies through assessing student attainment of the specific competence and related practice behavior thresholds for professional practice (CSWE, 2008).

The Council on Social Work Education's educational policies broadly address issues related to spirituality and religion. Specific competencies and related practice behaviors provide a framework for programs to address content on the topic within social work educational programs. Additionally, CSWE standards include expectations that programs specifically integrate content on spiritual development within human behavior curriculum or courses (CSWE, 2008, Educational Policy, 2.1.7). However, the standards have a longstanding history of providing limited direction on what to teach related to spirituality or how to incorporate spirituality within the curriculum (Russell, 2006). Given the expectation that spirituality and religion be addressed, it is interesting that limited attention has been paid to spirituality and religion in social work education (Freeman, 2007). Scholarly research related to spirituality has tended to focus on the role of spirituality with specific client populations or issues and not on how to effectively train professionals to address spirituality with clients (Barker, 2007). Although content related to religious groups and sensitive practice with certain faith groups within social work textbooks is increasing, the content still tends to be limited (Hodge, Baughman, & Cummings, 2006). Furthermore, Streets (2009) noted a lack of specificity related to religious integration into the curriculum even though cultural competence is essential and value imposition is unethical. Educational guidelines and professional standards require social work programs to operationalize the understanding of spirituality and to include this content into the curriculum with appropriate pedagogical methods. Additionally, social workers need to have a working knowledge of their own personal values in addition to managing their own values in a way that eliminates imposing their own personal values on clients (NASW, 2001). Programs are expected to incorporate spirituality and religion within an unclear educational environment fraught with challenges.

Challenges to Integrating Faith, Religion, and Spirituality Content

Imbedding religious and spirituality content into the curriculum, identifying what information to include, and creating an atmosphere where diverse viewpoints are discussed are complex issues. Dessel, Bolen, and Shepardson (2011) note that there are many ethical issues related to religious freedom and human rights that have not been resolved within the profession and, therefore, tensions naturally exist between faith perspectives and practice issues. Additionally, Rothman (2009) acknowledges that the diversity of viewpoints related to understanding and incorporating spirituality and religious content into the curriculum makes it challenging to teach and may even require alternate methods for teaching the content. To complicate the issue further, Healy (2007) noted that opposing philosophical perspectives related to individualistic versus communal interpretations of the profession's Code of Ethics, and whether or not principles are designed to be more universally or culturally applied make resolving ethical conflicts more challenging. Ethical standards, including principles related to diversity, spirituality, and religion, are influenced by one's world view and therefore impact the interpretation and application of the ethical principles. Additionally, for the Christian social worker, the shift from values connected to an ultimate source to a more postmodern subjective and relative view may ultimately be destabilizing to the Christian social work practitioner (Sherwood, 2012b).

A potentially challenging issue for the Christian social worker is to be able to resolve conflicts between personal faith beliefs and specific client issues. Sustaining or supporting certain client behaviors may create an ethical dilemma for the social worker since within the worldview of the social worker certain behavior may be seen as harmful or wrong. Spano and Koenig (2007) argued that the Social Work Code of Ethics (2008) provided a framework for how to respond to these types of ethical dilemmas through supporting self-determination, informed consent and cultural competency when working with clients. However, Buila (2010) noted that the Code goes beyond providing a framework for ethical practice by having social and political action expectations. These expectations tend to support more progressive positions on issues like homosexuality and abortion, and therefore may create ethical issues for more conservative viewpoints. Therefore it is essential for students to be able to critically evaluate these issues within a safe and supportive environment.

To complicate the issue, there are differing views as to what may be ethical for a social worker to do when faced with faith and practice conflicts, including whether or not it is ethical to refer clients in these circumstances. Hodge (2011) addressed the need to foster frameworks that respect differing viewpoints, including more conservative faith perspectives. These frameworks may allow for more conservative perspectives on how to handle ethical situations to be considered. However, Dessel, Bolen, and Shepardson (2011) suggested that certain evangelical Christian beliefs may be oppressive and therefore potentially in violation of ethical codes. If certain beliefs are seen as oppressive, referring clients instead of providing services could also be construed as violating ethical responsibilities to client interests and wellbeing, and the social worker's responsibility to society. Additionally, emerging trends such as the legalization of gay marriage may complicate and potentially limit some Christian social worker's options related to referring clients when personal beliefs conflict with client behaviors.

The NASW (2001) Standards for Cultural Competence state that cultural competence needs to go beyond racial or ethnic issues and needs to prepare social workers to address broader categories within a pluralistic society. Students need to understand how religious and/or spiritual practices shape their own worldview and ultimately their practice of ethical social work. Likewise, social work educators need to create a curricular and pedagogical environment where commonalities and tensions between religion and social work practice can be safely discussed.

It is expected that students understand their own spiritual and religious views as a component of ethical and culturally competent social work practice. Additionally, students need to develop competency in working with religiously diverse populations. Therefore, institutions, including both religiously-affiliated programs and non-religiously affiliated programs, should thoughtfully connect competency-based social work education to spiritual and religious competency issues. Programs should also include specific content related to understanding and addressing compatibility and tension related to spiritual issues and religion within ethical practice. These competencies need to have clear practice behaviors and associated assessment measurements to insure students understand and demonstrate how spirituality and religion shapes ethical practice. Additionally, the 2008 CSWE standards that allow programs to develop specific competencies related to program context provide excellent opportunities for programs, especially religious programs, to be more intentional about the development of curriculum and the underlying pedagogy that fosters religious and spiritual competency.

Within an environment where there are so many challenges related to faith integration and practice, it is essential for programs to create spaces where students can openly discuss how faith influences and ultimately shapes practice. Programs should be encouraged to develop and incorporate models where competency development can be assessed within faith integration frameworks. Utilizing competency-based models for faith integration provides opportunities for programs to develop specific practice behaviors and assessment tools to evaluate student competency related to faith and spirituality issues. Additionally, if these models are a part of the assessment process for competency development, programs can begin to more intentionally contribute to an area in social work that is in need of additional understanding and research.

The Development of a Spiritual Disciplines Model within the Social Work Department

The beginnings of developing a model for faith integration grew out of Messiah College's strong commitment to service and reconciliation. As the social work program was developed in the 1970s there was a clear focus on both faith integration and ethical social work practice. Changes in 2008 to accreditation standards for social work programs provided an excellent opportunity for the Department to explore ways to more effectively connect faith and ethical practice issues with competency-based curriculum. New Educational Policy standards outlined how program mission and goals needed to be both connected to the purpose of the profession and to show a relationship to the Program's context (Council on Social Work Education, 2008). Since the primary competencies developed by CSWE did not specifically address program context, programs were encouraged to add competencies that addressed content related to program context (Holloway, Black, Hoffman and Pierce, n.d.).

Foundations of the Spiritual Disciplines Model

The development of a spiritual disciplines model with the social work curriculum at Messiah College originated from a strong institutional commitment to values that are in alignment with the values of the social work profession. The College has always seen its primary mission as "The education of men and women toward maturity of intellect, character, and Christian faith in preparation for lives of service, leadership, and reconciliation in church and society" (Messiah College, n.d.a). Messiah College first offered social work courses in the 1970s, viewing the profession of social work as an appropriate avenue through which graduates could be involved in the "reconciliation of church and society." There is also congruency between the College's values, which are derived from the traditions of the Brethren in Christ denomination, and the Profession's values. Messiah's values include Unity of Faith, Learning and Life, Importance of the Person, Significance of Community, Disciplined and Creative Living, Service, and Reconciliation (Messiah College, n.d.b).

As a result of the CSWE changes to the Educational Standards in 2008, the department intentionally revised and bridged the mission and values of the College with the mission and values of the profession. The departmental mission was changed in 2009 to show the interconnections and was stated as follows:

> To offer a professional degree with a strong liberal arts foundation that trains graduates for ethical and competent generalist social work practice at the entry level and/or prepares them for graduate study. Guided by the accreditation standards of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) as well as the Mission and values of Messiah College, the program integrates principles of the Christian faith with social work values, knowledge, and skill. Therefore, there is a commitment to evidence informed practice, service learning at the micro, mezzo and macro levels, a commitment to community, a respect for diversity and human rights, and support for the enhancement of social and economic justice for all people. (Messiah College, n.d.c)

The alignment of Messiah College's values with the profession's values and the department's values can be seen in the similarity of language between the three value statements. The profession's core values include Service, Social Justice, Dignity and Worth of the Person, Importance of Human Relationships, Integrity, Competence, Human Rights, and Scientific Inquiry (NASW, 2008). Table 1 provides an overview of the connections between Institutional Values, Social Work Program Values, and the Values of the Profession.

Table 1: Alignment of the Values of the College, the Values of the Social Work Program, and the Values of the Profession

Core Values of Messiah College	Social Work Program Values Explicitly Listed in the Program Mission	Values of the Profession (CSWE, NASW)
1. Unity of Faith, Learning and Life	Ethical and Competent	Integrity
2. Importance of the Person	Respect for Diversity, Human Rights	Dignity and Worth of the Person
3. Significance of Community	Commitment to Community	Importance of Human Relationships
4. Disciplined and Creative Living,	Competent, Evidence Informed	Competence, Scientific Inquiry
5. Service	Service Learning	Service
6. Reconciliation	Social/ Economic Justice for All People	Social Justice, Human Rights

To bring together the College's and Department's missions to integrate principles of Christian faith with social work competencies, specific conversations among the faculty focused on how to bring together College faith practices with CSWE expectations to train ethical social workers. Faculty focused on potential methods of faith integration that would be in alignment with the faith perspectives of the College and would be familiar with students. Previous research that was conducted with Messiah students indicated that the students had a strong commitment to spirituality and religion (Burwell, 2006). Additionally, the research noted that Messiah students tend to be open to interacting with religious practices and understand concepts related to spiritual disciplines.

Therefore, faculty explored possible resources that utilized spiritual disciplines as a framework for faith development and then decided on the book, *Celebration of Discipline,* by Richard Foster (1998). This book was chosen because the language and framework were a good fit with the faith tradition of Messiah College and would have a level of familiarity to students.

Foster described spiritual disciplines as faith practices that provide an opportunity for believers where God "can work within us and transform us" (Foster, 1998, p.7). Spiritual disciplines are specific Biblical practices designed to shape one's spiritual walk and provide a framework for maturity of faith. Foster focused on twelve disciplines including meditation, prayer, fasting, study, simplicity, solitude, submission, service, confession, worship, guidance, and celebration. Foster discussed each spiritual discipline in depth and provided a deeper understanding of how a disciplined life can be transforming. Spiritual maturity, or as Sherr (2010) described as "an orientation of faith characterized by challenges requiring re-evaluation and deeper understandings about our relationships to self, to others, and to God" (p. 34), provides the framework where students can critically evaluate competent and ethical practice within a faith perspective. Additionally, Foster provided examples of how to understand and live out each of the disciplines in practical ways. The Social Work Department at Messiah incorporated eleven of the spiritual disciplines and related Foster readings into specific courses throughout the curriculum (See Appendix A).

A Specific Competency Based Model of Faith Integration

The Department identified a specific eleventh competency, in addition to the 10 competencies required by the 2008 EPAS, as the foundation for the spiritual competency model that connected spiritual disciplines to professional and ethical practice. The eleventh competency stated that students are to "Apply Christian faith development principles to inform and guide professional and ethical practice." Within each course a specific spiritual discipline was assigned that aligned to course content and material. Then practice behaviors were developed to help students move from understanding the spiritual discipline to being able to apply the discipline in a manner that facilitates ethical and competent social work practice. Assignments and assessment tools were connected to practice behaviors to assist in measuring competence development related to utilizing faith development principles to inform and guide practice. The intention was to provide students with an understanding of how Christianity shapes their views of life and in turn facilitate student understanding of how their faith can positively impact ethical and competent social work practice (Wolfer and Hodge, 2007). To assist in developing an understanding of how the model was incorporated into specific course material I will provide two examples to help in model comprehension.

Applying the Spiritual Discipline of Study in a Human Behavior Course

In the SOWK221 Human Behavior course where theoretical perspectives on human development are learned, the spiritual discipline of study was incorporated into course content. The spiritual discipline of study requires one to intentionally develop strategies for a deeper understanding of God and human relationships (Foster, 1998). Students develop a deeper understanding of the importance of study as a foundation for learning about human behavior. Assignments focus on understanding study as a spiritual discipline, applying the discipline in concrete ways, and assessing how personally applying the discipline of study informs and guides ethical and competent practice. Additionally, students are expected to explore the consistencies and challenges of course material related to their faith. Table 2 provides an example of how Competency Eleven and the related practice behaviors are incorporated into course assignments and evaluation methods.

Table 2: Course Objective: To critically examine one's faith in the context of social work practice and human development across the lifespan constructs

Competency Assessed in This Course	Practice Behavior	Course Activity/ Assignment	Measurement
11. Apply Christian faith development principles to inform and guide professional practice	1. Understand the discipline of study including repetition, concentration, comprehension and reflection.	Read and write a one page reflection on Foster's description of the spiritual discipline of study and how the discipline of study could be intentionally incorporated into the life of the student during the semester	Grade on reflection paper (Expectation 85%)

	2. Personally apply the discipline of study based upon the student's own understanding of the discipline.	Students will participate in weekly devotionals and other course assignments that incorporate the spiritual discipline of study with human behavior across the lifespan concepts.	Participation and assessment of weekly devotional (Expectation 85%) Course assignment which requires students to outline personal faith perspectives, and identify specific sources for these perspectives (expectation 85%).
	3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of study to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice	Final class interaction/activity will focus on assessment of how students personally incorporated the spiritual discipline of study to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice	Participation in class interaction/activity that focuses on personal incorporation of spiritual discipline of study and how discipline informed and guided professional and ethical social work practice (Expectation 85%).

Students are expected to read Foster's chapter on study as a foundation for reflecting on the importance of study both as a spiritual discipline and as an ethical behavior in social work. To assist in assessing competency attainment, a grading rubric was developed to evaluate student understanding of the discipline of study, demonstrate incorporation of the discipline into the course, and to determine level of student connection of study to competency development (See Appendix B). Additionally, students reflect on scripture throughout the semester that focuses on different stages of development over the lifespan. Other course assignments during the semester assist students to connect their personal faith perspectives on human development to specific Biblical references. Students are also encouraged to connect how competency is developed both in social work and in living out their faith through research and study-based practices. Class discussions focus on the intersection of differing views of faith and theories of human development.

Student competency related to study and the connection to competent practice goes beyond course assignments and is assessed on multiple levels. For example, students complete a self-assessment of the spiritual disciplines they have studied at both the second and fourth year in the program. Students are expected to reflect on and evaluate their level of understanding and application of study and its relationship to competent practice (see Table 3). Master's level field supervisors also assess student ability to critically evaluate faith integration issues and to demonstrate appropriate faith integration into social work practice at the second and fourth year levels.

Table 3: Student Self-Assessment of Competencies: Excerpt Focusing on Spiritual Discipline of Study

Understand the discipline of study including repetition, concentration, comprehension and reflection.			
Has not attained competency in this area	Has attained partial competency in this area	Meets competency expectations in this area	Exceeds competency expectations in this area
Personally apply the discipline of study based upon the student's own understanding of the discipline.			
Has not attained competency in this area	Has attained partial competency in this area	Meets competency expectations in this area	Exceeds competency expectations in this area
Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of study to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice			
Has not attained competency in this area	Has attained partial competency in this area	Meets competency expectations in this area	Exceeds competency expectations in this area
COMMENTS:			

Applying the Spiritual Discipline of Service in a Diversity Course

In all of the courses students are required to read Foster's chapter on the spiritual discipline that pertains to that class. In the SOWK356 Engaging Diversity and Inequality class, the focus is on the spiritual discipline of service. In addition to the Foster reading, students read portions of other material such as Emerson and Smith's (2000) *Divided by Faith* and Bonheoffer's *Life Together* (1954) to connect course concepts to inequality issues within the faith community and Christian responsibilities related to social justice. Students participate in regular discussions that connect service to the Christian responsibility to address oppression and injustice (Isaiah 58:6 NIV). The final course project allows students to connect how they can personally answer God's call to address issues such as human trafficking, discrimination, or other social justice issues. Students are required to research a particular issue, identify ways the issues can be addressed, and focus on how they can be involved or are personally connected to addressing the issue. As a part of this assignment students complete a poster presentation that connects their faith to both service in addressing social justice, and competency requirements to advocate and engage in practices that address social and economic justice issues (CSWE, 2008). For students to meet competency expectations connecting the spiritual discipline of service to social justice, students must identify a specific social justice issue, connect Biblical directives to serve the population impacted by the issue, and identify tangible methods and efforts to advocate for social change. Table 4 articulates how the department connects the spiritual discipline of service to the development of competent and ethical practice.

Table 4: Course objective: To critically evaluate one's own experience of Christian faith in relation to the legacy of racism and inequality in the United States

Competency Assessed in This Course	Practice Behavior	Course Activity/ Assignment	Measurement
11. Apply Christian faith development principles to inform and guide professional practice	1. Understand the spiritual discipline of service.	Effective response and reflection to on line forums based on reading assignments are designed to equip students in developing understanding of the discipline of service and opportunity to reflect on the personal application of this discipline.	Grade on online forums based on criteria used to assess understanding and application of service (expectation of 85% or higher)
	2. Personally apply the practice of service based on the student's own understanding of the discipline.	Students will participate in weekly devotionals and other course assignments that incorporate the spiritual discipline of service with social justice concepts.	Participation and assessment of weekly devotional (Expectation 85%)
	3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of service to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice	The Social Justice Poster Presentation will provide the student with a practical way to apply service through engaging in the advancement of social and economic justice	Overall grade on the Social Justice Poster Presentation (expectation 85% or higher)

Faith Integration as a Component of Overall Curriculum on Spirituality and Religion

One of the concerns related to developing an eleventh competency based on faith development principles is that issues related to spirituality and religion are complex and need to be addressed throughout the curriculum. Although the following information does not specifically pertain to the eleventh competency, I think that it is important to show how spirituality is addressed in other areas of the curriculum. This information is intended to provide an overview of other spirituality content within the curriculum and therefore will not focus on assessment aspects. Program content must address broader issues related to ethical responsibilities for social workers to be culturally competent, including areas related to spirituality and religion.

Therefore, the Department facilitates continuous efforts at all levels of programming to provide a learning context in which there is an understanding and respect for all persons._Content related to diversity, including issues connected to religion and spirituality and cultural competence is included in some form in all courses in the social work curriculum. An overview of the course content of two of the social work courses demonstrates the intentionality of the social work department to be responsive to provide a learning context in which competency development related to spirituality and religion is identified as essential to ethical practice.

For example, in the introductory course SOWK 120 Introduction to Social Work and Social Welfare, readings and class discussions introduce students to different client populations, and focus on specific factors that contribute to populations being at risk. Additionally, strategies for providing services and advocating for diverse populations are evaluated. Classroom discussions focus on the values and ethics of the profession which require social workers to respect differences in people, respect the dignity and worth of each individual, and encourage self-determination. Issues related to spirituality and religion are introduced as part of these discussions to help students apply the foundational principles of generalist practice and to understand the roles of social workers in advocating for social and economic justice, and equality for all populations. Text readings provide students opportunities to focus on issues related to self-awareness and the importance of ethical and competent practice in working with different populations, including different religious groups. Other readings and assignments assist students in developing self-awareness related to the role of positionality with regard to race, ethnicity, class, religion, and gender within social work practice. A 16-hour volunteer experience with an agency servicing at-risk populations provides students with first hand observations and experiences with issues related to diverse populations, including diverse religious populations. Journaling exercises focus on helping students process these experiences, including potential issues related to faith and practice, and then class discussions redirect issues to social work values and ethical practice. A final course paper requires students to more closely examine a specific diverse population or agency servicing an at-risk population through researching the topic and presenting their findings to the rest of the class. As a part of this presentation students are encouraged to reflect on how their faith shapes ethical and competent practice with specific populations.

In SOWK 221 Human Behavior in the Social Environment, students are introduced to various religious traditions and practices through a specific text that addresses ethical and competent social work practice with different religious traditions. In addition, students increase self-awareness of their own cultural and spiritual lens through the development of a personal lifespan development paper which requires students to write about their life from a bio-psycho-social-spiritual perspective. Students also participate in group activities where they continue to explore their own religious traditions and how faith shapes ethical and competent practice. Students are required to participate in discussions where they are prompted to analyze their own racial/cultural identity development using racial/cultural identity development models and then they discuss the impact of understanding these models on their own practice. This course also requires a sixteen hour volunteer experience with an agency servicing at-risk populations and is intended to connect student understandings of spirituality and diversity to first hand observations and experiences with issues related to diverse populations.

Conclusion

My intention with this paper was to provide a faith integration model that has been introduced to students within the social work department at Messiah College. The model integrates an eleventh competency, in addition to the ten competencies required by the 2008 EPAS, and related practice behaviors into the curriculum that focuses on student application of Christian principles to inform and guide professional and ethical practice. Although the model may have components that are institutionally specific, the hope is that this model may facilitate new discussions within religious and secular institutions related to incorporating religious and spirituality content, and may increase positive dialog between those who hold divergent views related to the integration of spirituality and religion. This model also has implications for faculty teaching within the program in that there are expectations for faculty to model concepts related to faith development and integration, and to connect these principles to competent and ethical practice. Although the paper focused on explicit curriculum, there are implications for implicit curriculum that need further exploration.

One of the most significant challenges to developing a model of faith integration related to competency development is that there are inherent difficulties in connecting faith development to competent and ethical practice. Faith development can be seen as a very personal experience and it has different meanings even within the Christian faith community. Additionally, the model that was developed identifies multiple spiritual disciplines that have influence on faith development. The disciplines are both interconnected and they can be developed simultaneously. This creates significant issues related to valid and reliable assessment data. The hope is that developing and disseminating these types of models may increase the discussion within social work related to understanding connections between faith and practice. Additionally, the program is collecting data related the model's effectiveness in increasing social work competency related to spirituality at Messiah College and this information will ultimately be available for critique. The program is also implementing other assessment tools connected to spiritual development and will be comparing data with other departments where no model is presently being utilized. New and unique models for faith integration and spirituality are important to the practice of social work and will contribute to the limited information currently on this subject within social work education. ❖

Appendix A

Messiah College Department of Social Work Eleventh Competency and related practice behaviors:

11. Apply Christian faith development principles to inform and guide professional and ethical practice

A. Meditation (SOWK120 Introduction to Social Work)

1. Understand the spiritual discipline of meditation from a historical and cultural competency perspective.
2. Personally apply the practice of meditation based on the student's own understanding of the discipline.
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of meditation to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice.

B. Study (SOWK221 Human Behavior and SOWK250 Social Work Practice with Individuals)

1. Understand the discipline of study including repetition, concentration, comprehension and reflection.
2. Personally apply the discipline of study based upon the student's own understanding of the discipline.
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of study to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice.

C. Prayer (SOWK360 Social Work Practice with Families)

1. Understand the spiritual discipline of prayer from a historical and cultural competency perspective.
2. Personally apply the practice of prayer based on the student's own understanding of the discipline.
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of prayer to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice.

D. Service (SOWK356 Human Diversity and Social Inequality)

1. Understand the spiritual discipline of service.
2. Personally apply the practice of service based on the student's own understanding of the discipline.
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of service to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice.

E. Worship (SOWK372 Social Work Practice with Groups)

1. Understand the spiritual discipline of worship from a cultural competency perspective.
2. Personally apply the practice of worship based upon the student's own understanding of worship and the student's utilization of cultural competency
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of worship to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice.

F. Simplicity (SOWK382 Topics in Social Work)

1. Understand the spiritual discipline of simplicity.
2. Personally apply the practice of simplicity based upon the student's own understanding of simplicity and the student's utilization of cultural competency
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of simplicity to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice.

G. Confession (SOWK385 Research in Social Work)

1. Understand the spiritual discipline of confession.
2. Personally apply the practice of confession based upon the student's own understanding of confession and the student's utilization of cultural competency.
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of confession to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice.

H. Solitude (SOWK420 Social Welfare Policies and Social Change)

1. Understand the spiritual discipline of solitude.
2. Personally apply the practice of solitude based upon the student's own understanding of solitude and the student's utilization of cultural competency.
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of solitude to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice.

I. Submission (SOWK475 Social Work Practice with Communities and Organizations)

1. Understand the spiritual discipline of submission.
2. Personally apply the practice of submission based upon the student's own understanding of submission and the student's utilization of cultural competency.
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of submission to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice.

J. Guidance (SOWK484 Preparation for Social Work Practice)

1. Understand the spiritual discipline of guidance including the application of personal guidance, corporate guidance, meeting of wise counsel and divine spiritual guidance.
2. Personally apply the practice of guidance based on the student's own understanding of the discipline.
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of guidance to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice.

K. Celebration (SOWK485 Senior Seminar, SOWK490 Field Practice in Social Work)

1. Understand the spiritual discipline of celebration including the role of jubilee, joy and corporate involvement.
2. Personally apply the practice of celebration based on the student's own understanding of the discipline
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of celebration to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice.

Appendix B

Grading Rubric for Discussion/ Activity on Study and Applying Christian faith development principles to inform and guide professional practice			
	100-90%	89-83%	82% or below
1. Understand the discipline of study including repetition, concentration, comprehension and reflection.	Student clearly articulated an understanding of Foster’s view on study through critically evaluating similarities and differences between current view on subject and Foster’s view. Specific examples were provided.	Student articulated a level of understanding of Foster’s view on study and provided some evidence of comprehending specific components.	Student presented a general overview of the discipline of study and did not articulate specific components of study.
2. Personally apply the discipline of study based upon the student’s own understanding of the discipline.	Student clearly applied specific concepts of study to own understanding of the discipline. Student gave specific measurable examples of how study would be incorporated into the semester.	Student discussed/ applied concepts of study to own understanding of the discipline but examples to support application were difficult to measure.	Student provided little evidence of applying concepts and/or assessing the application of study this semester.
3. Personally incorporate the spiritual discipline of study to inform and guide professional and ethical social work practice	Student was able to provide clear examples of how study was incorporated into the semester and student clearly articulated the connection between study and competent practice through connecting study with clearer understanding and development of social work competency.	Student provided examples of how study was incorporated into the semester and was able to articulate connections between study and ethical, professional and competent practice.	Student provided some evidence of how study was incorporated into the semester and/ or was able to connect the discipline of study to competency.

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Dialogue Journals: A Supervision Tool to Enhance Reflective Practice and Faith Integration

Staci Jensen-Hart, Gina Shuttleworth, & Jodi L. Davis

Dialogue journaling is a supervision tool that has potential to transform learning within social work field education settings. Dialogue journals enhance reflective practice, critical thinking, and the integration of faith in practice. The impact of dialogue journaling within a field setting will be explored through perspectives of student, field supervisor, and field director.

SOCIAL WORK FIELD EDUCATION IS INTENDED TO CHALLENGE STUDENTS to apply classroom learning to practicum experience while simultaneously socializing students to the profession. This requires the student to engage in critical reflection in order to integrate classroom knowledge with field experience. The importance of field education is emphasized by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). The CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (2008) refers to field education as social work's "signature pedagogy" and charges field educators with the responsibility for designing educational opportunities for students (p. 8). Thus, developing field supervision methods that promote communication and critical reflection between the student and supervisor is essential to the educational experience and professional development of social work students. Dialogue journaling is a supervision method that has potential to transform learning within field settings through enhancing reflective practice, developing critical thinking skills, and providing a venue to integrate faith in practice.

Dialogue journaling is a form of interactive writing in which a student and teacher engage in written conversation on a regular basis over a designated period of time (Peyton, 2000). Traditionally the teaching strategies of dialogue and journaling provide a forum for shared learning (Bunkers, Berkland & Berkland, 2006). The experience of dialogue journaling be-

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tween a field supervisor and student simplifies this forum. As a supervision tool, dialogue journaling is designed to enhance reflective practice, critical thinking, and decision-making skills. Dialogue journaling also may be used to facilitate the integration of faith in practice ~~as~~ students have the opportunity to articulate issues related to client spirituality and explore their own faith in relationship to practice.

Good communication between the field supervisor and student becomes a vital part of the practicum experience. Thus, overcoming the communication barriers inherent in relationships of imbalanced authority is both necessary to building rapport and characteristic of good supervision (Roberts & Greene, 2002). When communication barriers are broken, the supervisor and student are freed up to engage in a dialogue of critical reflection on shared practicum experiences (Tillman, 2003). Since the frenetic pace of the social work profession does not always allow for timely, in-depth verbal conversations between student and supervisor, dialogue journaling promotes this important discussion in written format, allowing for responses to be composed at a convenient time for both parties.

In this article, we explore the process of dialogue journaling and present a case example in which a bachelor level social work student and field supervisor embark on a joint journaling effort which results in professional growth for both. The student is a senior practicum student enrolled in an accredited Social Work Program. The Program has 80 bachelor level students with approximately 25 senior practicum students each semester. The Program resides within a state university of 12,000 students. This particular student is placed in an agency for a 400-hour senior practicum experience during one semester. The field supervisor is a licensed master's level practitioner who has practiced social work for seven years and is serving as a field supervisor for the first time. The agency is a law office that employs the field supervisor to assist with life care planning needs of vulnerable, elderly clientele. Since the project was a case report originating from a regular class assignment and informed consent was procured from the supervisor and student who are co-authors, the IRB process was not necessary according to consultation with the institution's Chair of the Human Subjects Committee.

The process of dialogue journaling can be achieved through a variety of means including paper logs or encrypted email and is not tied to a particular format or software program. In this project, the joint journaling effort was facilitated electronically through utilizing weekly log forms scheduled on the Intern Placement Tracking system (Ipt) developed by Alcea Software. The password-protected system is set up to allow students to enter hours, activities, and reflections on a weekly log. The field supervisor was able to view the logs electronically and make comments. The field director was able to view both student and field supervisor entries.

Literature Review

The concept of learning through reflection is grounded in theories of adult teaching and learning as well as models of experiential education. The essential attributes of experiential learning are action and reflection (Beaudin & Quick, 1995). “Reflection involves taking the unprocessed, raw material of experience and engaging with it as a way to make sense of what has occurred” (Boud, 2001, p. 10). Field education in social work typically encompasses both active learning experiences and reflection through learning logs and supervision. The ability to reflect on experiences leading to greater self-awareness is essential to the professional growth and development of social work students (Moore, Bledsoe, Perry, & Robinson, 2011). Reflective practice serves as a bridge in linking theory to informed practice wisdom (Knott & Scragg, 2010) and assists students in developing the critical thinking skills required for complex decision-making for effective social work practice (Wilson, 2013).

Critical thinking is central to social work practice since decisions often must be made quickly, during action, and within a context of uncertainty (Miller, Tice, & Hall, 2011). The CSWE EPAS (2008) highlights the ability to “apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments” as one of the ten areas required for competent, professional practice. Specific practice behaviors covered by this competency include the ability to appraise and integrate multiple sources of knowledge, analyze models of practice, and effectively communicate professional judgments. Scriven & Paul (1987) define critical thinking as the “intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action” (Defining Critical Thinking section, para. 1). Thus, reflection contributes to the process of critical thinking. Critical thinking is facilitated through active, experiential learning in which students engage in doing and thinking about what they are doing. By reflecting-on-action, i.e., thinking about something they have already done (Schon, 1983), students develop the skill to reflect-in-action (Knott & Scragg, 2010). Reflecting-in-action involves thinking about doing something while doing it which leads to the ability to make adjustments in the action as needed (Schon, 1983).

Larkin (2010) describes a four-step process (LEDS) designed to enhance reflective experiencing in which students 1) **l**isten by observing and focusing on select field experiences, 2) **e**xplore through the critical thinking process, 3) **d**ocument by writing about the experience and process of reflection, and 4) **s**hare the reflection and learning in order to develop ethical, competent practice skills.

Consistent with this process, Grise-Owens & Crum (2012) found that reflective writing of a critical incident enhances deeper learning. This significant, deep learning occurs through the relationship between experience, reflection, and action resulting from the reflection (Knott & Scragg, 2010). For deep learning to occur, students must be able to experience what Mezirow (1991) terms "perspective transformation" (p. 167) as well as have the access to and opportunity for the "reflective space" (Knott & Scragg, 2010, p. 15) necessary for deep learning. Writing enables the development of reflective practice as students have opportunity and space to reflect-on-action. Gibb's Model of Reflective Practice is a cyclical process of reflection that lends itself to providing a framework to teach students to explore through the critical thinking process while engaged in written reflection (Payne, 2005). Following this model, a student explains an experience, analyzes feelings and thoughts, and plans for action as needed based on conclusions (Payne, 2005).

In the field practicum experience, dialogue journaling is a form of reflective writing that facilitates learning through experience and incorporates supervisory feedback. Opportunity to receive feedback in the reflective process is essential (Knott & Scragg, 2010) and contributes to the development of critical thinking and ethical awareness (Larkin, 2010) required for competent practice. In dialogue journaling, the reflection is shared and processed as the field supervisor is able to access and read each of these experiences and contribute to the learning through commenting on student reflection. The field supervisor functions as a guide for the student using reflection to process through uncertainty (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2011). Peer feedback may serve as validation or correction, and may bring depth to understanding (Van Horn & Freed, 2008). The field supervisor not only extends this valuable feedback but also offers an opportunity for mentorship in which both student and supervisor embark on a learning journey (Wong, McAlpine, Moore, Brotherton, Charter, Emgard & Buszowski, 2009). Thus, supervisory access to the student journal enables the field supervisor to serve as a model for reflective practice, and also facilitates professional learning and a mentoring relationship. Gutiérrez (2012) reported, "Students who have had positive mentors are more likely to do well in school, be more productive, have stronger professional skills, be more self-confident, and have larger professional networks" (p. 1). Student feelings of competency and competence are nurtured through a positive mentoring experience (Gutiérrez, 2012).

The reflective aspect inherent in dialogue journaling allows students to assign meaning to their learning and to identify what else they may need to know or at least alert the supervisor to gaps in knowledge. Learning logs or journals have been found to deepen the quality of learning, increase the ability to reflect, enhance problem-solving skills, allow opportunity to explore personal constructs, and facilitate understanding one's view of the world (Boud, 2001; Knott & Scragg, 2010). In addition to these general benefits, dialogue journaling specifically facilitates learning course material and language, promotes self-reflection and self-understanding, provides procedural conveniences including extended contact time and a means of expression not hindered by classroom logistics, gives students the opportunity to express ideas, encourages more participation by introverted students, allows students to receive feedback on ideas and questions, and improves the teacher-student relationship (Garmon, 2001; Peyton, 2000).

Dialogue journaling can assist in creating a learning environment that invites the transformative learning so essential to spiritual development and faith integration (Freeman, 2007). Social work students often start out in the profession "compelled by their spiritual yearning" (Freeman, 2007, p. 285). However, as Freeman (2007) points out, "our educational programs often consider spirituality as irrelevant and unprofessional, and the longer people stay in the social work educational arena, the more distant they grow from their spiritual and religious roots" (p. 285). Larson and Robertson (2007) highlight the need to actively advance the integration of spirituality and social work practice and point to the responsibility of social work education to ethically integrate spirituality and social work practice in the curriculum and in field experiences (Gilham, 2012; Hemert, 1994; Larson & Robertson, 2007). Giving "permission" for spiritual exploration within reflective logs through dialogue journaling allows the student to integrate essential faith components within their practice.

In the midst of developing a professional identity while engaged in field practice, matters of faith, family, and self-care are at the center of many students' lives (Moore et al., 2011). "Developing a healthy professional identity requires a high level of self-awareness and critical analysis of the 'thoughts and intentions of the heart' (Hebrews 4:12)" (Pooler, 2011, p. 447). For Christian students, the idea of dialogue journaling is analogous to prayer journaling in which a "disciple" engages in written prayer communication with God. In the process of journaling, themes emerge between the practice of social work and spiritual self-care (Moore et al., 2011). The journaling of challenges and prayers enables the student to reflect on God's leading in life. Through reflection, students' awareness of their purpose as a social worker is increased (Larkin, 2010). Larkin (2010) outlines a curricular module for inclusion in field education that supports reflection and the development of the professional self, including the facet of spirituality. Dialogue journaling is an additional method which can be infused within the field curriculum to support this spiritual development.

As the importance of self-care for social work students is essential, reflective journaling can prompt emotional and mental well-being by allowing students a platform in field to process stressful situations (Moore et al., 2011). Through reflective dialogue journaling, students can begin to understand the important role of supervision in allaying emotional stress associated with risk factors that may lead to secondary traumatic stress, compassion fatigue, or burn-out. Students benefit from establishing the essential habit of reflective practice which will allow social work students to continue to develop their professional selves throughout their career (Fink, 2004; Miller et al., 2011).

Project: The Process of Dialogue Journaling

Throughout the semester, the student in this project engaged in writing weekly reflective journal log entries. The assignment called for at least two "meaty" entries per week in which the student was required to 1) reflect on a challenge, 2) growing self-awareness, 3) an ethical issue, and/or 4) application of theory in practice. Neither a minimum nor maximum length was required for the entries; a general guideline for the reflective entry to be at least a paragraph in length was given. Gibb's Reflective Practice Model (discussed above) was presented in class as an example of a framework to guide reflection. The field supervisor reviewed the log at least weekly. According to program guidelines, field supervisors are free to comment in writing on student entries and/or process entries verbally with students during their weekly supervision time. This particular field supervisor chose to comment in writing in addition to verbally processing events with the student. Thus, the student and field supervisor quickly established a dialogue through journaling which captured the attention of the field director and in turn, facilitated the development of this project as the rich learning potential was recognized.

In analyzing the fifteen weekly logs post-semester, the field director, field supervisor, and student individually reviewed and thematically coded the log entries. Individual coding was then compared in order to find common themes. Since this project emerged through the process of the field supervisor/student interaction, an objective, epistemological framework was not planned prior to initiation. Thus, the rationale in having participants involved in thematically coding logs was for the purpose of further self-awareness through reflection on growth and exploration of consistency in themes rather than inter-rater reliability. This project is an initial exploration for practice considerations and the limitations posed methodologically in this approach are acknowledged.

As themes were analyzed, professional growth of both student and field supervisor could be seen. The following growth themes emerged for the student: initial self-doubt leading to greater self-awareness; overwhelmed reaction shifting to proactive application of knowledge and skills; tentative connections with personal spirituality to confident integration of faith issues within practice; natural tendencies toward a strengths-perspective reinforced by the field supervisor's modeling; hesitant use of humor to incorporation of the field supervisor's passion, joy, and sense of fun found in practicing social work. The field supervisor consistently made statements offering validation and encouragement by providing immediate feedback and normalizing experiences. The field supervisor allowed the student to be human and fallible. Throughout the strengths-oriented comments, the field supervised infused language which identified the student as part of the agency TEAM.

The excerpts below from the weekly logs demonstrate examples of these predominant themes of student growth. The professional growth in the field supervisor's skills are also evidenced as the supervisor begins with tentative comments then moves to greater comfort in utilizing appropriate self-disclosure, reference materials, and direct teaching. The log excerpts are followed by statements regarding the impact of the learning from the individual perspectives of the student, field supervisor, and field director.

Week 1

With the first entry the student focused on self and own comfort level in the field agency setting.

> Today was a good day that left me with interesting insight into my own comfort levels with different people…I came to realize I am not as comfortable with men as women.

The field supervisor, seemingly unsure of her role, seeks to establish the supervisory role, boundaries, and norms.

> Student is able to recognize her comfort zone and realize when she is uncomfortable.

By the end of the first week, the student is able to share on a feeling level.

> I feel challenged, overwhelmed, and exhausted by the complexity of the legal aspects…

Responding, the field supervisor opens the door to "use of self" and entries turn to speaking directly to the student in dialogue.

> BREATHE!!! You are what I consider to be "natural". It is clear you have a great desire to work with and improve the lives of the individuals that we have the privilege to work with as our clients…You will do great, you already have been. Please let me know when you are feeling overwhelmed and we can adjust and regroup. Thank you for taking the leap to join us.

Weeks 2 and 3

The student recognizes self-doubt, fear (Am I capable of doing this job?), and the seriousness of the profession while purposefully applying self-care strategies in response to field supervisor's prompting.

> I always feel an overwhelming sense of self-doubt. Would I know how to appropriately and professionally resolve these situations?

The field supervisor consistently responds to student doubts and questions while continually validating and encouraging.

> You are correct.
> We are lucky to have you as part of the Team.

The field supervisor also firmly establishes ethical boundaries on client respect and dignity in response to an ethical situation student observed in another agency.

> I believe in the line of work that we do there is no room for mocking, disrespecting or making clients feel as if they are 'less' than us.

Weeks 4 through 6

The student conveys a deepening of learning and understanding through honesty in exploring personal reactions and biases as well as recognizing the need for balance, being attuned to the client, and mirroring the field supervisor's modeling of a strengths orientation, passion for work, and joy in the process.

> I get a real life experience with a living, breathing client, and then, (field supervisor) helps me to interpret and understand the meaning of the experience from a social work practice perspective.

The field supervisor continues to validate and gently educate.

> I have come to learn that one of your strengths that will make you a great social worker is your courage!!! 'Courage is being scared to death-and saddling up anyway'.
> I may be sensing negative thinking here????...That stuff is hard…down right confusing with no clear answers.

During Week 4, the student also reaches out to talk about her personal spirituality.

> One of my continued prayers from my first day of college has been that God would order my steps and shine a light so bright on the path He has for me that I can't stray from it. At this point, I'm certain our paths were meant to cross!

Although the field supervisor does not yet directly respond to the student's entry, as the student continues to infuse tidbits of spiritual conversation throughout Weeks 5 and 6, the field supervisor begins to tentatively use "spiritual" language to respond.

> I have been in this situation when I can only pray that the door will open, and they (clients) will be okay.

In Week 5, the student's natural strengths-based orientation and growing passion for the elderly population and conviction in her career choice is evident:

> I am continually amazed at the wonder of the older adults we serve…The resiliency and strength I see in this generation is inspiring...More and more, I am convinced this is the population I would like to spend the next 20 years or so of my life working with.

The field supervisor encourages the student with her reply:

> I realize I am biased, but if this is the population you decide to work with, it will be better served with you in it because of your compassion, empathy, and a great ability to connect with individuals.

Weeks 7 through 9

During Week 7, the field supervisor clears the way to rich exploration of integrating faith in practice throughout the rest of the semester while also establishing ethical boundaries and reasons why exploration of the spiritual is necessary to practice particularly within this agency that deals with end of life issues.

> Faith is something that I believe is not looked at nor talked about enough in our professional realm. I would have to look up those specific boundaries as far as supervision and student, but I feel we have a pretty open relationship where you would voice your concern if I were to 'step on your toes'…It's kind of weird to me that lack of discussion around faith and prayer in our education. To be honest as a person and a social worker I have relied on both a TON to survive…To dismiss this aspect is not treating or helping our clients to the fullest of our abilities…Please review, according to our code of ethics… 1.05 Cultural Competence and Social Diversity….

The student's response, punctuated by humor, indicates reflection on the supervisor's comment in relationship to a past experience as well as understanding of the ethical code applied in practice.

> …And, I am comfortable enough with my own faith that I feel comfortable with the idea of supporting clients in the expression of their faith…when I was in my junior practicum at Hospice, the social worker and I went to visit a client…an older man, disoriented and quite frightened. The social worker left me with him to go find a nurse. He had a well-worn Bible by his chair. I didn't know what else to do, so I picked it up and started reading some of the verses that were underlined in red. Well, as it turns out, God's word is more calming than Xanax. The man and I both calmed down!

The student continues to struggle with challenges and high expectations of self in practice. In contrast to early logs in which she reacted to challenges, the student now begins to more purposefully apply theoretical concepts and frameworks as well as a spiritual lens to work through the challenge successfully.

> I think part of my stress does stem from a feeling of there being so much to take in, wanting to grab onto as much of it as possible, and being at that point in the mountain you talked about that feels like it is straight up. I've come a long way in my perfectionist struggle, but it's still painful to feel like I'm performing below the level I want to…

The field supervisor responds directly to student wrestling through use of self in sharing her own experiences.

> Our world is not controllable, our job throws stuff at us all the time, professors and education could rock our world on any given day…anything can come up and push against happiness…BUT ONLY IF ALLOWED. We will always have more dreams, more goals, and more to accomplish…However, if we reach our life in the end and look back and don't enjoy it and feel true happiness, was setting all those goals worth it in the end?...as a social worker I feel that if I myself cannot find happiness, how do I expect my clients to find it?

Weeks 10 through 12

The student has more moments of joy and satisfaction with work yet moments of feeling inadequate and crying for help seep in unexpectedly.

> ....I felt a real sense of joy rise up in me...that feeling of happiness for two clients today felt like water to a parched soul. We need to celebrate our clients' victories!
> ...Would I know where to begin? I'm afraid of this important stuff.

The field supervisor normalizes the growing process.

> It is your drive, fear, and ability to not only recognize the importance of what we do, but your ability to ask for direction that has brought this whole big picture into your lap. You have to have faith and hope that it will work out.

Weeks 13 through 15

The student demonstrates growing confidence in the integration of theory in practice and proactively applies knowledge and skills by relating specific competencies.

> It really tickles me to see how we have come to a position of trust with this man (a client who initially was distrustful of services)...So what social work competencies are we talking about? Well...[student goes on to log specific examples of demonstrating CSWE EPAS Competencies 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, and 10 in practice with this client.]

The field supervisor validates the learning and then pushes for even more depth in encouraging further assessment for this client.

Finally in Weeks 14-15, a poignant exchange occurs between student and field supervisor as they come to termination of the student-field supervisor relationship.

> Field supervisor: Again I will state that I believe you were a gift from above. There are many reasons that we could list now why our paths have crossed...I have faith that with your skills, abilities and the deep desire for this population we will grow to serve many families...
>
> Student: My time as a student has come to a close. I have a picture in my foyer that says, "When God closes one door, He opens another."

Discussion: The Impact of Dialogue Journaling

Dialogue journaling serves equally important, but distinctive, purposes for the student, field supervisor, and field director. For the student, dialogue journaling offers a venue in which to express thoughts and integrate personal views with the perspectives of others (Van Horn & Freed, 2008). For the field supervisor, dialogue journals provide a means to be "supportive, positive…and available" (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2011, p. 88) and a method to assess student needs and progress. For the field director, dialogue journals give insight as to learning and support needs for both student and field supervisor. Comments below, written by the student, the field supervisor, and the field director, illustrate these distinct purposes.

Student Perspective

As a student of social work, I spent long hours in class eager for a meaningful exchange of ideas with my classmates. I knew instinctively my classmates had rich stories of overcoming challenges, suffering, and heartache that informed their insights. While I understood and respected my classmates keeping their story safe, I was curious about their insights. Unfortunately, when prompted with a question by a professor, we often sat in awkward silence with our insights and vulnerabilities safely tucked away. From other experiences, this passive approach to learning via taking in a lecture seemed muted in comparison to engaged, interactive learning (Kirkpatrick & Brown, 2006). I wondered if this experience was typical or if it was the nature of my cohort that left me longing for dialogue.

At this point in my education, I had been required to keep a reflective journal in several social work classes. This is not to suggest I enjoyed the process, or that I fully understood its purpose. Generally, I understood it as a process that fosters reflective practice, brings a new depth of meaning to learning, and promotes integration of theoretical knowledge with personal and practice experience which leads to increased self-awareness and professional development (Gursansky, Quinn & LeSuer, 2010; Hyams, 2010; Knott & Scragg, 2010; Ritchie, 2003).

However, I also understood journals to be yet another written assignment with a due date. Journal assignments are largely viewed by students as busy work (Hubbs & Brand, 2010; Ritchie, 2003). I and other students in my cohort wagered whether or not journals were read by faculty. In testing this, we submitted some sloppy writing and concluded that some faculty members gave them a closer look than others. For some educators, journaling is a space for students to freely explore new learning through writing. Other faculty members expect formal academic writing (Gursansky et al., 2010; Hubbs & Brand, 2010). In my journal keeping, I continued to wonder about the insights of others and struggled to get outside of my own head. Perhaps this monotone prelude of reflective journals and an affinity for learning from those around me brought special significance to the dialogue journaling that evolved during my senior practicum experience.

In choosing a senior practicum agency, I prayed for a place that had good, ethical people who might enjoy a healthy exchange of ideas in the learning process. God is faithful.

The field supervisor at my practicum agency was a friendly, authentic social worker who puts the world around her at ease. However, she was also very busy. The pace of the practicum setting, meetings with clients, and managing a multiplicity of responsibilities created situations where I was bursting at the seams with questions and a desire to discuss what I was observing, but, at times, unable to ask. Hence, I looked forward to the required weekly log journaling.

As I clicked the submit button on the first entry in my reflective journal, I noticed the column titled "Field Supervisor Comments." I wondered if my field supervisor would read it (and if she did, what would she think about me?) Indeed, she did read it! Moreover, she filled the column reserved for her comments with encouragement, affirmations, questions that furthered my reflection, insights from her practice experience, and humor. With this, journaling became a process of dialogue and had added greater significance to learning (Ritchie, 2003). We entered a dialogue through reflective journaling that rounded out the monotone voice of my reflective journal and encouraged me to think more critically.

Field Supervisor Perspective

As a field supervisor, I believe my role is one of guidance and education, not intimidation. A good relationship has to be built first and worked on continually. Relationships are built not only on good communication and trust, but also by leveling out the power of authority to create an open, non-judgmental environment in which students are free to speak their mind so the instructor can understand their point of view and help guide them in the correct direction. By overcoming barriers inherent in this unbalanced relationship of authority, building rapport can help improve good supervision between the student and field supervisor (Roberts & Greene, 2002).

Field supervisors have the ability to create a fun learning environment to help students see book work come alive while working with clients. Dialogue journaling is a tool that can be utilized to help both the student and field supervisor increase learning opportunities and assist with time management. Traditional supervison requires establishing a synchronized meeting time that is often difficult to achieve within a busy practice. In contrast, dialogue journaling allows for asynchronous communication between the student and supervisor thus facilitating efficient use of time.

Journaling is an outlet to discuss our values, the way we practice, our growing self-awareness, and our personal interactions between the client, the supervisor, and the student (Billings & Kowalski, 2006). Dialogue journaling is an immediate education tool that can be effective in guiding students and reducing common self-doubt.

Dialogue journaling can help students reach the level of reflection that is needed for deeper learning if they feel safe to express themselves to their field supervisor. To promote and educate, students must be pushed beyond their own comfort zone in situations to facilitate and elicit personal reflections (Hyams, 2010). Dialogue journaling can assist the field supervisor in assessing student's need for feedback or additional guidance on how to connect the classroom education with field work. The field supervisor's role is to guide and evaluate the student while assessing the student's growth and ability to tie practice into theory (Peleg-Oren, Macgowen, & Even-Zahav, 2007).

I discovered while working with my student through dialogue journaling, the moments were clear in which additional education and guidance were needed. Themes of self-doubt, feeling overwhelmed, uncertainty, challenges, and growth could be traced and addressed when appropriate.

Dialogue journaling can be a safe place for students to express thoughts involving faith and spiritual beliefs that they may not feel comfortable exploring while sitting face to face with their supervisor. Students need to explore their own spirituality so they will feel comfortable exploring spirituality with their clients. "Clients themselves, as well as a broad body of research, tell us that spirituality is a significant dimension in health and may hold important keys in understanding healing" (Miller & Thoresen, 1999, p. 14). The NASW Code of Ethics (2008) Section 1.05 states,

> social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to race, ethnicity, national origin, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, marital status, political belief, religion, immigration status, and mental or physical disability. (p.1)

Creating a space through dialogue journaling in which the student may openly dialogue regarding practice issues, growing personal and professional self-awareness, and faith integration leads to strong rapport and a positive mentoring experience. This process not only facilitates student development, but also has potential to deepen the supervisory experience and the field supervisor's own professional growth.

Field Director Perspective

As a field director in a small to moderate-sized programs, I have the advantage of being able to place students in a field agency and also teach their corresponding senior seminar courses. My role is to oversee the process of student learning and assist students in integrating theory with practice. This is accomplished through reading and commenting on student logs weekly and processing experiences directly in senior seminar.

When a field supervisor and student choose to engage in the dialogue journaling process, my ability to monitor student learning is increased. I am is able to assess student development which enables better identification of learning needs and goals to more appropriately structure the senior seminar course. This identification of needs also contributes to the continual assessment of our program curriculum and results in changes to better prepare students for practice. In addition, by monitoring field supervisor comments, I can more effectively respond to needs for field supervisor training.

By participating in the dialogue process through journaling, I am able to engage directly in the learning process, thereby enhancing the validity of assessing student competency achievement and increasing the understanding of current issues facing students, field agencies, clients, and community.

Conclusion

The practicum experience is an impetus for the student to explore previous classroom learning and connect it to present field experience. During the field practicum, students become increasingly aware of the importance of demonstrating competency and developing professionally, which can be overwhelming (Adelson, 1995). During the senior practicum, students benefit from applying classroom learning to a specific client population, with the guidance of a professional through the process of dialogue journaling. Indeed, students want a field supervisor who is easy to talk with and supportive as the student explores new learning (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2011).

However, the very nature of social work itself presents challenges to open dialogue between students and instructors. Sometimes the presence of a client makes questions and discussion inappropriate. At other times, the constraints of time do not allow for discussion of shared practicum experiences (Moore et al., 2011; Ritchie, 2003). Thus, for students, it is important to have a venue to ask questions and engage in a dialogue of critical reflection on shared practicum experiences (Tillman, 2003).

Dialogue journaling is a supervision tool that has potential to transform learning within field settings. Students may view dialogue journals as a place to find reprieve from the overwhelming demands of balancing family, school, and faith (Moore et al., 2011). Dialogue journals promote a trust relationship between students and field supervisors. This deepening of trust and relationship in turn leads to the type of supportive environment that enables students to freely and safely explore new learning in a practicum experience (Ritchie, 2003). Engaging in critical reflective practice with a more experienced professional resolves self-doubt and assuages the overwhelming angst of students as they step boldly forward into a new profession (Tillman, 2003).

As demonstrated through literature and practice example, dialogue journals can be an effective supervision method used to enhance reflective practice, develop critical thinking skills, and create a venue to integrate faith in practice. ❖

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Bio-Psycho-Social-*Spiritual* Assessment? Teaching the Skill of Spiritual Assessment

Julie Hunt

The inclusion of spiritual assessment is vital to holistic, culturally competent work with clients and yet it is oftentimes overlooked in agency settings and in academic training. Educating students regarding how to broach the subject of faith and tactfully assess spirituality is vital to ethical and skillful practice. This process must be learned and practiced in order to do so thoughtfully, ethically, and respectfully. One approach, drawn from an undergraduate Spirituality in Social Work course, which the author teaches, is shared. The teaching strategies utilized, assignments given, and lessons learned are discussed. The aim is that students are well prepared to thoughtfully evaluate a client's identified faith significance and subsequently to meaningfully integrate spiritual content into their work.

ACKNOWLEDGING ISSUES OF FAITH WITH CLIENTS IS ESSENTIAL IN SEEKing to be culturally competent. In both domestic and international social work, addressing religious and spiritual ideologies is critical in practicing effective, ethical, and comprehensive social work. Spirituality has been acknowledged, by the social work profession, as a necessary component of social work practice for the past two decades. Within the realm of social work, knowledge of a client's spiritual beliefs is often associated with other significant areas of importance in a client's life (Hodge, 2005). In order for practitioners to become competent in addressing issues of spirituality with clients, they must be trained and equipped in this area (Hodge & Bushfield, 2007).

Determining how, when, and even *if* it is appropriate to integrate spirituality into work with clients is imperative, requiring much skill and practice. In spite of the theoretical acceptance of spirituality's potential importance in social work practice, there appears to be a deficit in the training of social

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work students on the subject. (Lennon-Dearing, Florence, Halvorson, & Pollard, 2012). Of those who do integrate faith or spiritual content into course curricula, some include it in Human Behavior courses, Practice courses, and Diversity courses, while others devote an entire class to the subject. There are benefits and deficits inherent with each approach (Bethel, 2004).

Regardless of the format in which spiritual sensitivity is taught, an essential skill that should be included in this training is spiritual assessment. Students must be taught how to broach the subject of faith with clients and tactfully assess their spirituality (Chidarikire, 2012). Since faith is a personal issue, and is at times considered taboo to discuss, the topic must be addressed with respect, open-mindedness and sensitivity. As a result of this skillful assessment, the social worker is then equipped to evaluate the client-identified significance that faith has on the presenting problem and is subsequently able to ethically and meaningfully integrate spiritual content into the work as they see fit.

When evaluating a client's family history, ethnic origin, health issues, relationships, work life, values, priorities, and areas of concern, as well as strengths and weaknesses, issues of faith are often imbedded. Many times faith determines the perception one has of these aspects of life. Religious beliefs typically impact one's conception of lifestyles and personal values, (i.e., sexual expression, marital roles, and death) (Canda & Furman, 2010). Thus, the spiritual component of a client's worldview must be acknowledged and uncovered. Just as a social worker assesses other aspects of a client's life in order to know how to approach, understand, and contract future work, the same assessment strategy applies to the spirituality of the client.

Spiritual Assessment in the Curriculum

For some students, the idea of integrating spirituality into social work practice seems frightening; to others, it feels useful; and then to some it is appealing, yet awkward and clumsy. While social work literature supports the involvement of spirituality in holistic care, and has been able to produce a good amount of data to support its importance, the question remains whether graduates of our social work programs are equipped and, frankly, feel comfortable integrating spiritual assessment into a holistic assessment of their clients, once working in the field. The students' level of comfort with their own spirituality bears greatly on this response. It is important for them to have some knowledge and conscious reflection on their own beliefs and practices (or the lack thereof) and what impact they have on them in order to engage clients about such topics.

In many agencies, client intake and assessment tools are predetermined or established by the agency, and may or may not include spirituality as a standard aspect for evaluation. Historically, students have been taught to conduct *bio-psycho-social assessments* (Austrian, 2009). They have been educated that an evaluation of a client must include the physical, psychological, behavioral, medical, familial, relational, and mental health aspects of their life. Yet, spiritual health has often not been included. With the resurfacing of spiritual sensitivity as part of cultural competence and recognition of its significance in holistic assessment, it is imperative that we include the spiritual aspect in assessment of clients. It is of note that the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) has now included spiritual assessment as an administered requirement (Hodge, 2006). The JCAHO is currently the largest accrediting body for health care in the United States, and requires three areas of exploration in any spiritual assessment: denomination or faith tradition, significant spiritual beliefs, and important spiritual practices (Hodge, 2006).

The social work profession, in seeking to comprehensively and effectively work with clients, has begun to acknowledge the link between one's faith and health (physically, mentally, and relationally). Due to the extremely personal nature of faith, it can prove to be a sensitive topic and one that elicits various feelings, defenses, fears and reactions. In order to maintain the values and ethics of the social work profession, a worker must avoid imposing his or her personal values while inquiring about the spiritual history, significance, and faith community of the individual. This is a skill that must be taught—one that students must learn and practice. Like many of the therapeutic skills required in caring for vulnerable clients and responding to emotion-laden topics, there are nuances to the work that must be learned and developed. In order to effectively "use self as a tool" one must be comfortable with issues past and present in one's own spirituality (Leseho, 2007). This self-awareness and self-acceptance is an integral aspect of spiritual sensitivity training. It is also essential that a student feels comfortable with an adaptable but authentic language of spirituality. In meeting clients *where they are*, and seeking to engage and understand them from their frame of reference, we must be able to adopt the spiritual language of our clients. We need to do this, however, in a way that is genuine and professional. Thoughtfully reflecting the faith vernacular of one's client is one way of honoring the dignity and worth of the individual. For example, using the client's own words for their clergy, higher power, and sacred concepts demonstrates care and respect.

As a social work educator, I have had the opportunity to teach a course related to these important issues, Spiritual Formation and Issues in Social Work, for over a decade. A section of the course is devoted to crafting an interview guide to use in conducting a spiritual assessment. After reviewing various interview questionnaires and methods of assessment, the class develops a guide for use in the course. Subsequently this tool is used in conducting one's own self-assessment for a class assignment.

Through the process of self-exploration, students become more adept at the skill of assessing and discussing aspects of faith development and practice. Furthermore, they become more comfortable with the topic and cognizant of their own faith journey and expression, and thus are able to more confidently and ethically integrate spirituality into practice (Leseho, 2007). By critically thinking and discussing the experience, students are able to identify benefits and themes of integrating aspects of faith into assessment. They are also able to identify with the vulnerability, and yet importance, that the role that the client's faith might play in their therapeutic work. The class process of learning the skill of spiritual assessment includes multiple stages: (1) reinforcing the values and ethics of the profession, exposing students to diverse voices and considering various methods and tools for assessment; (2) creating a spiritual assessment tool; (3) conducting student spiritual self-assessments; and (4) reflecting on the experience.

A Process for Teaching Spiritual Assessment

1. Laying the Foundation

Reinforcing the Values and Ethics of the Profession. Paramount to every class in the social work curriculum is the inclusion of NASW's Code of Ethics. A strong foundation is laid if one leads the conversation of faith with the values of our profession: Integrity, Honoring the Dignity and Worth of the Individual, The Importance of Human Relationships, Promotion of Social Justice, and Competence (NASW, 2008). When students consider using these values as guardrails for their work, the boundaries and professionalism that are necessary to address and assess spiritual content with clients become clearer. The reluctance to acknowledge the topic of faith with clients, for fear of crossing a line of privacy, can be remedied by upholding the values of the profession as guiding principles.

Exposing Students to Diverse Voices. I have found that when students encounter narratives written by a variety of authors who each reflect on his or her life and spirituality in an autobiographical manner, the students are able to hear the diversity of life and faith experiences, as well as the thread of common themes among them. Through reading from an array of topics written by a spectrum of writers, students expand their breadth of understanding and cultural competence related to spirituality.

A student's capacity for empathy, connection and human understanding is enlarged by reading, for example, a piece on mindfulness by a Buddhist Monk Thich Nhat Hanh (1992), about the spiritual beliefs regarding illness and healing from Hmong Refugees in *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down* (Fadiman, 1997), a story of forgiveness by the radical "irreverently sacred" New York Time's Bestseller Anne Lamott (1999), the perspective that inner spirituality gives meaning to life by Jewish Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl (2006), and thoughts on compassion and letting go by the introspective and vulnerable Henri Nouwen (2001). Students learn from the content as well as the tone and language of the authors as they write about their practices, beliefs, philosophies, and journeys. Rather than hearing one textbook author, or solely the voice of the instructor, the variety aids in reinforcing the individuality of spirituality and faith.

Considering Methods and Tools for Assessment. There are many approaches for discussing spirituality as a part of bio/psycho/social/spiritual assessment. These are useful to draw from in developing one's own method of assessing given the agency context and type of client with which one is working (Anandarajah & Hight, 2001; Canda & Furman, 2010; Hodge, 2005; JCAHO, 2001; Nelson-Becker, Nakashima, & Canda, 2007). In the class, students become familiar with different interview questions and approaches. As a class, we discuss strengths and weaknesses of each tool and consider what client populations and presenting issues would most benefit from each. Through an examination of various spiritual interview methods and tools, students consider which appropriately fit within the type of work being done in specific agency settings. A sampling of the tools reviewed in the course is included in Table 1.

Table 1: Examples of Spiritual Assessment Practices

Assessment Method	Source	Recommended Use
HOPE Instrument-Identifies client's sources of Hope, (meaning, comfort, strength, peace, love, and connection;) Organized religion; Personal spirituality/practices; and Effects on medical care and end-of-life issues	Anandaraja, G. & Hight, E. (2001). Spirituality and medical practice: Using the HOPE questions as a practical tool for spiritual assessment. American Family Physician, 63(1), 81-89.	Would be useful in medical settings, or could be easily adapted for use with any clients.
Graphic Assessment Tools- including Spiritual Genograms and Spiritual Life Maps	Hodge, D. (2005). Developing a spiritual assessment toolbox: A discussion of the strengths and limitations of five different assessment methods. Health & Social Work, 30(4), 314-323.	Would be useful in a variety of settings depending on the age and spiritual significance of the presenting problem.

Questions to use in an interview when assessing the client's spirituality and its bearing on their treatment – based on the JCAHO standards for spiritual assessment	Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations. (2001, July 31). Spiritual assessment. In Standards– Frequently asked questions. Retrieved May 5, 2014, from http://www.jcaho.org/standard/pharm-faq_mpfrm.html.	Would be useful in healthcare settings, yet provides adaptable language that could be used in other settings.
Eleven domains in spirituality are identified that might be assessed. Questions are presented to clients discerning whether spirituality and/or religion are important to them, and if so, what religious preferences are held.	Nelson-Becker, H., Nakashima, M., and Canda, E.R., (2007). Spiritual assessment in aging: A framework for clinicians. Journal of Gerontological Social Work, 48(3/4), 331-347.	Would be useful when working with older adults

In addition to examining these published tools, students who are serving as volunteers or field interns in agencies at the time of the course are asked to share with the class what their interview/intake assessment forms include in regard to faith and/or spirituality. This provides "real life" examples for students to explore and become acclimated. Because of the variety of milieus in the field of social work, and various types of services provided, there are a plethora of tools to consider for use.

Important factors to analyze include the length of the interview, the information to be gathered, and the depth of personal information required, the faith orientation of the agency, as well as others. The language used in spiritual assessment is an essential factor. Asking a client the question, "Do you go to church?" versus a more open and inclusive, "Are you part of a faith community?" may evoke different reactions. Asking, "Do you pray?" versus, "Do you have rituals or spiritual practices that you find helpful or comforting in your life?" can elicit different responses. Having students critically analyze the lexicon used, and the biases and inferences made in the style of interviewing helps clinicians develop empathic, ethical and useful assessment methods.

2. Creating a Spiritual Interview Guide for Use in the Class Assignment

After considering the types of questions that might be useful and appropriate for spiritual assessment, students create a Spiritual Interview Guide for the class to use. Groups of students work together to sift through samples of questions found in articles and sample intake and assessment forms garnered from local agencies to determine what might be included. Students are challenged to consider the appropriate language with which to fashion the questions for the assessment tool. Each semester, key aspects are consistently included: the faith of the family of origin, influences in one's spiritual journey, impactful life events, and the importance and usefulness of one's spirituality in daily life. Table 2 provides a sample Spiritual Self Assessment Guide used for the class assignment.

Table 2: Sample Spiritual Self-Assessment Guide

Write a narrative addressing each of the following areas of Assessment:
I. **Family of Origin** Discuss the spirituality of your family of origin. What is your spiritual and religious background? What importance did faith play in your home, and in generations past?
II. **Influences** on your Spirituality Discuss the people (friends, mentors, extended family members, authors) who have had significant impact on your spiritual formation.
III. Life **Events** Discuss events in your life that have shaped/ influenced your spirituality and what kind of impact they have made.
IV. Your **current** spiritual state Discuss key spiritual **Beliefs** that you hold about the god of your understanding. Discuss spiritual **Activities and/or Rituals** that you practice currently. What significance do they hold for you? What **Impact/ Meaning** does your faith have on your daily life? What are **spiritual struggles/ strengths/questions** that you identify in your life?
V. **Graphic Assessment Tool** Create a **Genogram or Life Map** (whichever you find more important and insightful with your spiritual journey) and include it with your narrative assessment.

Because different agency settings benefit from distinct types of interview questions in order to best meet clients' needs, it is important for students to learn how to create or adapt a spiritual interview guide. While there are some basic areas of assessment that are often discussed, the mission and purpose of the agency and the types of clients seen elicit a spectrum of spiritual questions. In a medical clinic that serves refugees, the questions pertaining to spirituality in an intake might reflect medical concerns, ethnicity, and beliefs about healing. In contrast, an elementary school setting might benefit from more of an assessment of their support systems, including their faith community and less focused on health issues. Students are encouraged to critically think about what topics of inquiry would benefit their clients as they seek to serve them sensitively.

3. Student Spiritual Self-Assessments

Once students agree upon a Spiritual Interview Guide, it is time for the important and hard work of spiritual self-assessment. Students are required to write a self-assessment of their personal spirituality. Students are exhorted that while it is a graded assignment (albeit with promise given that they will not be evaluated based on their belief system or journey), the focus and learning should be more on the process of self-assessment than on the product of the paper to be submitted. In multiple years of teaching, many students report that it is a meaningful and powerful experience to reflect on the spiritual influence and history of their family of origin and their life events and to consider their current spirituality and its implication on their work with clients. The purpose of self-assessment is two-fold: to foster empathy and to create self-awareness. It is important that students experience the exploration of spiritual assessment and consider the vulnerability and sensitivity that is required to do so. This self-assessment process is useful in developing empathy for clients and skills used in practice. In addition, self-awareness is required of social workers, given the reciprocal relationship essential in the worker/client dynamic. Clinicians must be aware of tendencies towards bias so that he or she can fight against them. In order to have strong professional boundaries and protect against countertransference, proselytizing, and/or judging, social workers must continually analyze themselves to ensure emotional and spiritual health for the continuation of professionalism and engagement (Shulman, 2012).

The CSWE Core Competencies, as outlined in the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), indicate the need to "gain self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups" (CSWE, 2008). The more aware a clinician is of their own limited life experience and *blind spots,* the more he or she is sensitive to their client's uniqueness and individual experience.

Following are some student reflections on the importance of the assignment in their development as competent practitioners. On the development of empathy through the process, one student wrote:

> Reflecting on my own history and roots gave me a deeper understanding of how crucial it is to be perceptive, sensitive, and cautious as you gather information about a client and dig up their family roots. By going through and taking a self-assessment similar to what a client would be taking, it produced an appropriate compassion and sensitivity that is crucial to working with people.

Other students spoke to the importance of the self-awareness gained through the assignment. One said:

> This assignment gives you the opportunity to stop in your tracks and take a real, raw look at where you are in the world and how you got there and where you want to go.

And another admitted:

> While the process of self-assessment is inherently difficult (and it was for me), it allows the practitioner to 'practice what they preach'.

4. Reflection on the Experience

Upon completion of the Self-Assessment, students are asked to reflect upon their learning—both about themselves and about spiritual assessment. Students are to contemplate the experience of reflecting on their spiritual history, beliefs and practices, and to consider what they will take away from this process, as a way to help encourage self-awareness and aid in identifying areas for future growth. Students also are to consider the process of spiritual evaluation from a client's perspective—reflecting on what might be useful, challenging, or especially sensitive for a client to discuss. As a result, students are better equipped to thoughtfully approach these weighty topics with clients.

Students reflect on the graphic assessment piece that they completed for the assignment (Spiritual Genogram or Spiritual Life Map) and discuss their comfort with creating it and what they learned from constructing their own genogram or life map that would inform their future utilization of this tool with clients.

Students are given a chance to voluntarily share with the class any of their key learning about themselves, the process of assessing, or any other insight from the project. In this exercise they are not sharing the *content* of their assessment, but rather the *process* of the self-assessment experience. This time of shared reflection provides a further layer of learning, as they hear from one another, practice affirming different experiences, and further their critical thinking of best assessment practices.

Students have reported that the process was challenging and emotional. Others have shared that they learned a great deal from their parents about their family of origin through this exercise that they had not known before. Students at times have a piqued interest in the pursuit of spiritual growth as a result of the project. Others have been able to understand life experiences with greater meaning upon completion of the assignment.

As my work in this course continues to evolve, I intend to develop a plan for following up with students as they continue into the field. Most students take this elective course prior to their field placements. I am interested to see how students who have taken the Spiritual Formation and Issues in Social Work course integrate spiritual assessment into their work with clients. I am curious about how (and if) their agencies are currently assessing spirituality and how students are able to apply their learning in their work with clients.

Lessons Learned

Having used this assignment for over a decade, some lessons have been learned that are worthy to note. As the title of the article indicates, assessment is a *skill* to be developed with great patience, humility, and empathy.

- It is imperative that instructors, from the outset of the semester, treat students with the openness and compassion that is expected of a clinician. In doing so, they are modeling what is essential for ethical and professional spiritually sensitive work. Additionally, they are providing a safe place in which the students feel they can honestly assess themselves, and thereafter, share this with their professor.
- It is important to stress the value of the *process* of this assignment over the *product* of the assignment. This is often a challenging barrier to overcome, as students are groomed to focus on the product and the grade attached to it. Students must be confident that their papers are not being evaluated based on doctrine, belief systems, strength of faith, wise decision making in the past, or even similar background to that of the teacher. It is imperative that this is explicitly stated and that papers are actually graded based on the fulfillment of the assignment in a timely, well-written, and thorough manner.
- Students need to hear that this is an assessment at *this point in time*, and that an individual's faith is ever evolving rather than static. It is valuable for them to know that this is not the final word on their faith journey, but rather a picture of their current spiritual status.
- The timing of this assignment is important. It is beneficial to place the self-assessment paper at week 5 or 6 in a semester-long course. This gives enough time on the front-end to develop an understanding of spiritual assessment and the language used. It also allows emotional safety and comfort to develop between the students and their teacher, which is necessary for this assignment to be most effective. Additionally, the timing allows students to engage more meaningfully with the course material in the following weeks of the term.

Implications for Social Work Education

In preparing future practitioners, the inclusion of the spiritual dimension in social work education is essential in fulfilling the CSWE Core Competencies, as outlined in the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS). Competencies calling for this include 2.1.1, "Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly"; 2.1.2, "apply social work ethical principles to guide professional practice"; 2.1.3, "apply critical thinking to inform and communicate professional judgments"; and 2.1.4, "engage diversity and difference in practice" (CSWE, 2008). Included within the description of the corresponding practice behaviors are: "analyze models of assessment," "gain sufficient self-awareness to eliminate the influence of personal biases and values in working with diverse groups," and "view themselves as learners and engage those with whom they work as informants" (CSWE, 2008). All of these noted behaviors are developed through intentional spiritual sensitivity education, for which assessment is essential.

Regardless of the format in which it is taught, successfully educating students how to broach the subject of faith and tactfully assess a client's spirituality is vital to ethical and skillful practice. These tools will enable the practitioner to evaluate the client-identified faith significance of their presenting problem(s) and subsequently to meaningfully integrate spiritual content into their work with clients. ❖

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The Locust Effect: Why the End of Poverty Requires the End of Violence.

Haugen, Gary A. & Boutros, V. (2014). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

This is an important book for anyone concerned about people who are poor in the developing world. Over the past few decades, significant progress has been made in dealing with extreme poverty (i.e., people surviving on less than $1.25 a day). Nevertheless, close to a billion people currently live in extreme poverty and another two billion live on less than $2.00 a day.

This book seeks to change the nature of conversation about how to assist these vulnerable individuals. According to the authors, the critical issue is not education, medicine, micro-loans, fresh water, shelter, or even food. Although the importance of these and other factors is acknowledged, they are not central to the long-term alleviation of poverty.

Rather, the key issue is justice. The authors argue that the poor in the developing world exist in a matrix that is largely devoid of justice. Those with power regularly prey upon those who are poor and the poor have nowhere to turn to obtain justice. The police, prosecutors, and courts are characterized by incompetence and corruption. In many cases, the police are hired by the powerful to exploit the poor. The lawless violence functions like locusts, consuming all efforts by the poor to improve their situation.

For example, in theory the education of girls helps alleviate poverty. However, in practice girls are often afraid to attend school due to fear that they will be raped, both on the way to school and in school itself. Indeed, research is cited that suggests schools are the most common setting in which sexual violence is perpetrated for large populations of girls across the developing world. Girls are regularly victimized by both peers and teachers. Parents have little recourse other than to withdraw their children from school and cope with the resulting trauma to the best of their ability.

The authors' argument is buttressed by a number of studies, including an extensive qualitative study conducted by the World Bank, titled Voices of the Poor. In this research, tens of thousands of the very poor were reportedly asked about their problems and priorities. In nation after nation around the developing world, poor men and women reported muggings, robberies, rapes, theft, and murders impeded their ability to escape poverty. In short, fear and insecurity were common features of life. Particularly striking is the fact that the police and official justice systems actively persecuted poor people and were viewed as threats and sources of insecurity.

Instead of being a force for social justice, the justice system is posited to act as an agent of oppression throughout much of the developing world. How did this occur? The authors point to two factors: the legacy of colonial justice systems that were designed to protect elites rather than the masses, and the proliferation of private justice systems that further undercut the effectiveness of corrupt public systems. They also note that dysfunctional justice systems are the norm, both historically and in the present, and that change is difficult. The book concludes by offering a few instances of positive change and call for all concerned actors to highlight this issue in their work.

This is a provocative, well-written book. The authors skillfully weave personal stories of the poor, their observations, and research into a compelling narrative that implies most projects to alleviate poverty are misguided and that current efforts should be re-purposed to promote functioning justice systems. Although I had encountered many of the issues mentioned by the authors in the course of conducting my own scholarship, I still found their arguments both enlightening and persuasive.

The subject matter is clearly relevant to the social work profession's commitments to social justice, human rights, and advocacy for people who are poor. Indeed, the text highlights just how fundamental justice is to wellness. Although the authors do not appear to be social workers, they do mention the important role that social workers play in the developing world in a number of places throughout the book.

By way of improvement, it would have been helpful if the authors had discussed the specific role that Christians can play in fostering justice. Historically, Christians have been crucial actors in the development of just societies (e.g., Huntington, 2004; Hertzke, 2004; Stark, 2003, 2005, 2014), and Haugen's International Justice Mission follows in that tradition. Given the normative status of dysfunctional justice systems throughout history, some discussion of the unique role people of faith can play in overcoming what is a widespread and frequently intractable problem might have been illuminating.

This does not, however, distract from the significance of this book. The authors do not claim to provide an authoritative overview of all relevant issues. Rather, they seek to re-orient the discussion of how best to assist people who are poor in the developing world. In service of this task, they have provided a compelling argument. Indeed, everyone who cares about those living in poverty in the developing world can benefit from reading this book. ❖

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Reflected Love: Companioning in the Way of Jesus.

Brown, C. (2012). Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock.

This is a beautifully written book that articulates the idea that, for Christians, social work is a vocation, a calling through which we are able to live out Christ's mandate to "go and do likewise." Divided into twelve chapters, followed by a conclusion, Brown's book weaves together stories of encounters Jesus had with people as presented in the Gospels, with vignettes describing "composite companioning stories" from counseling experiences. Brown uses the term "companioning" (rather than "counseling" or "therapy") to emphasize the mutuality of the helping relationship while de-emphasizing the role of professional as "expert." The use of the term "companioning" also moves beyond a textbook understanding of counseling as simply programs and/or methods. In Brown's words, "to companion is to enter the dynamics of the encounter between created beings and their Creator" (p. 5).

Chapter 1 begins with a discussion of the story of Mary and Martha; Chapter 2 presents John the Baptist and suggests that he prepared the way for Jesus by "opening a sacred relational space" (p. 10) when he asked to be baptized by Jesus. Chapters 3 and 4 utilize a case vignette to demonstrate solid counseling techniques (like reflection, focus on the here-and-now, sitting with feelings of sadness and pain, use of silence) in the context of "companioning." Chapter 5 uses the story of the Samaritan woman to demonstrate Christ's example of moving those he encountered in the direction of wholeness. Chapter 6 intertwines the story of the religious lawyer who encountered Jesus with another case vignette; the significant idea in this chapter is that when we journey with people as helping professionals, we are on sacred, holy ground. Chapter 7 reminds us that we must allow our own wounds to be transformed by Christ in order to help others, and Chapter 8 highlights the "life-giving power of human relationships" (p. 77) and the necessity of staying personally connected to the "life-giving vibrancy of God" (p. 81) in order that we maintain the primacy of relationship in our work with clients. Chapter 9, using the story of the woman caught in adultery, does an excellent job in reminding us about the importance of a non-judgmental attitude and the creation of a safe space where people can share their stories without fear of condemnation. Chapters 10 and 11 are case vignettes demonstrating "companioning." Chapter 12 focuses on Lazarus and his encounter with Jesus, and Mary who anoints Jesus' feet with expensive perfume, while bringing us back to each of the case vignettes and summarizing them here. The main idea in Chapter 12, stated in Brown's own words, is this: "To be 'in Christ' is to be embraced and enfolded in the sacrificial, self-giving and other-receiving love. As guides and companions of his way, we are to be agents of this grace to other pilgrims" (p. 111).

Christian social workers will find this book helpful and appropriate to their work in many ways. The themes of the book clearly align with social work values. Brown emphasizes the whole person as focus for the work. The "companioning" perspective can be an extremely useful tool in the process of self-care; understanding social work as a vocation and embracing our partnerships with clients as "holy ground" help us see the work we do in a way that transforms burnout. In addition, "companioning" reminds us that the helpers are also transformed in the process. Brown's emphasis on relationship as central to the change process is an important reminder about the "art of helping" in our current context of outcomes-driven practice; the importance of human relationships is a core value of the social work profession. "Companioning" is an undergirding framework that can be used with many specific clinical models since it emphasizes collaboration rather than "social worker as expert," which is congruent with the strengths perspective.

A few cautions are in order. This book is specifically written from a Christian perspective and may not resonate with people of a different religious tradition or who are not religious. In other words, it is not useful for a general audience. It also seems that Brown's specific audience is pastoral care or spiritual direction—counseling situations in which clients might present specifically looking for a faith integration piece. The book is clearly not intended to be used as an evangelistic tool, and the Christian social worker would always need to keep in mind what is most appropriate for a particular client.

In summary, I recommend use of *Reflected Love* in several ways. It could serve in a devotional capacity with practitioners or students of social work; because it contains direct references to passages of Scripture, it could be easily used for spiritual formation purposes. I could also see this book used as a supplemental resource in a social work practice classroom where students are interested in the integration of Christian faith with social work practice. The contents of the "companioning" framework offered here could be compared and contrasted with other social work practice models and could assist students in the self-awareness process. Irene Alexander, in the Afterword, summarizes the purpose of the book nicely. She says, "Companion guides are invited to look more deeply in the way Jesus is present to those he companions—accepting their fragility, reactivity, and woundedness, and opening a hospitable space which bids all of the parts of the person to come and find rest" (p. 124). ❖

*Reviewed by **Stacey L. Barker**, Ph.D., MSW, Professor and Program Director, Social Work Department, Eastern Nazarene College, 23 E. Elm Avenue, Quincy, MA 02170. E-mail: Stacey.Barker@enc.edu.*

Family Ministry: A Comprehensive Guide (2nd Ed).

Garland, D. (2012). Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

This extensive work builds on the first edition published some thirteen years earlier. To say that it is a "comprehensive guide" to family ministry is not an overstatement. Diana Garland has done a masterful job of updating this important work targeting Christians involved in family ministry whether they are professionally trained or not. Garland describes this book as "a guide for those who give vision to and lead family ministry" (p. 14). This edition has been completely reorganized, particularly in the area of integration of social science with biblical content and theological insights with practical application. Garland's excellent historical survey of the family has been improved by adding implications of that history for families today. Finally, a chapter entitled *Working Together* has been added, reflecting current thinking on the importance of families integrating service into the fabric of their life together. The book is organized into four sections which are briefly summarized below.

Section A: The Context of Family Ministry begins with a challenge to examine the contexts in which we each as readers interpret Scripture and family life. As she aptly states, "There is no way to stand above or beyond one's culture and community to interpret Scripture free of these filters, nor would it be somehow better if we could" (p. 23). The section includes an historical overview of the American Family followed by a chapter on the American family today. She clearly articulates how the purpose of family has evolved over time. From an extended system including parents, children, other family members, servants and sometimes even animals whose common purpose was to contribute to society by their common labor, the family unit now functions as a consumer-based system to provide emotional care and support for one another. In this context, Garland offers the following definition: "family is composed of those who choose to be followers of Jesus Christ and who are caregivers of one another. (Mark 3:31-35)" (p. 15). This integration of biblical and socio-behavioral-historical concepts makes this work especially valuable to Christian family life ministers.

Section B: Family Formation focuses not only how families are formed from a family systems perspective, but particularly how Christian families develop a faith identity. Faith communities sometimes struggle to support families in their faith development particularly when those families are different in structure or nontraditional. Garland asserts that the traditional nuclear family consisting of parents and children has been the norm for less than 5% of the past millennium. Therefore, looking with openness and grace at single parent families, blended families, adoptive families and extended families to name a few should be the goal of Christian family ministry. Garland next turns to an overview of theories of family development and posits that family development is best captured by looking at phases of relationships between family members.

Section C: Family Dynamics does an excellent job of looking at integrating the internal workings of family life with biblical teaching. This informs the way Christians are called to live their lives continually regardless of the challenges and stresses of life in this fallen world. This section does a wonderful job of looking at the "guts" of healthy families by discussing communication, conflict, forgiveness, parenting and a host of other essential topics, but perhaps the most exciting part of this section is the final chapter which discusses how family ministry can support families to work beyond themselves by serving in the community or abroad.

The final section, Leading Family Ministry, is a treasure trove of practical ideas about how to implement family ministry activities in a church context. Planning, leading and evaluating family ministry are all discussed, beginning with an honest look at how churches can help or hinder how the church family approaches family life. Garland challenges us to understand that congregations "are *communities* in a social world where neighborhoods are no longer communities" and that "it is helpful to consider family ministry a *perspective* we take on how we live congregational life together; it is not just a *program* or even a set of programs designed with families as the object of our focus" (p. 449).

This outstanding book should be considered as a textbook for students in theological seminaries as a part of their preparation for pastoral family ministry. Social work practitioners employed in Christian elementary or secondary schools or colleges and universities will find this book helpful in their work with students and families. Social work undergraduate or graduate programs would find this book a rich resource for their professors and students in courses teaching family content. Also, congregational social workers should use this book in designing church programs and recommend it to their clergy and church staff as they vision cast for family ministry in their churches. Social workers who volunteer as family ministry coordinators will find in this book resources to equip all members of the church family to care for one another well and to create safe places for members of the community to experience the love and embrace that they so desperately need. Finally, this book will be a treasured resource for any person, lay or professional, who has a passion for ministry to families. ❖

*Reviewed by **David Sedlacek**, Ph.D., LMSW, is Professor of Family Ministry and Discipleship, Department of Discipleship and Religious Education, Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI 49103. Email: sedlacek@andrews.edu.*

Announcing a New Book Review Editor for *Social Work & Christianity*

NACSW is pleased to announce that James R. Vanderwoerd, Ph.D., assumed the responsibilities of Book Review Editor for *Social Work & Christianity* on July 1, 2014. Jim is Professor of Social Work and Director of Faculty Mentoring at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario, Canada.

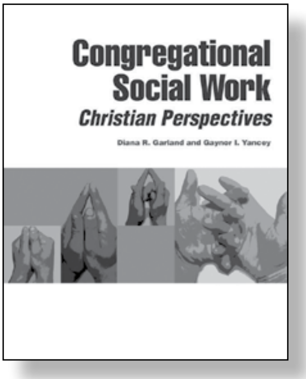
We want to express our deep appreciation and thanks to Terry Wolfer, Ph.D., for his 15 years of outstanding service and Book Review Editor. Terry is Professor of Social Work at the College of Social Work, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC. Terry was the successor of Alan Keith-Lucas in this role. We have been richly blessed by Terry's thoughtful, careful work and look forward to the strong leadership James will bring.

If you are interested in reviewing books or receiving books to be reviewed, contact Jim Vanderwoerd at jwoerd@redeemer.ca.

David A. Sherwood, Ph.D.
Editor in Chief, *Social Work & Christianity*
david@sherwoodstreet.com

(See the last page of the journal for submission guidlines.)

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM NACSW



NACSW Announces the Publication of
Congregational Social Work: Christian Perspectives

NACSW is delighted to announce the publication of ***Congregational Social Work: Christian Perspectives*** (2014) by Drs. Diana Garland and Gaynor Yancey from the Baylor School of Social Work. *Congregational Social Work* offers a compelling account of the many ways social workers serve the church as leaders of congregational life, of ministry to neighborhoods locally and globally, and of advocacy for social justice. Based on the most comprehensive study to date on social work with congregations, *Congregational Social Work* shares illuminating stories and experiences from social workers engaged in powerful and effective work within and in support of congregations throughout the US.

This important new work includes chapters on topics such as:

- What is Church Social Work?
- Congregations as Context for Social Work
- Social Workers as Congregational Leaders
- Leading from Charity to Justice
- And much more!

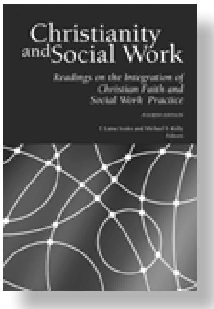
Congregational Social Work: Christian Perspectives (ISBN 978-0-9715318-8-8) is over 300 pages long and includes dozens of photos tracing the history of congregational social work. Copies are now available at the low cost of just $39.95 (or $31.95 for NACSW members or for orders of 10 or more copies). In addition, an e-version (pdf format) of Congregation Social Work is also available for $24.95.

For additional information about ***Congregational Social Work*** or to order a copy:

Email NACSW at info@nacsw.org
Visit NACSW's website bookstore at:
http://www.nacsw.org/cgi-bin/storeman.cgi
Call NACSW's tollfree number at: 888.426.4712

CHRISTIANITY AND SOCIAL WORK: READINGS ON THE INTEGRATION OF CHRISTIAN FAITH & SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE (FOURTH EDITION)

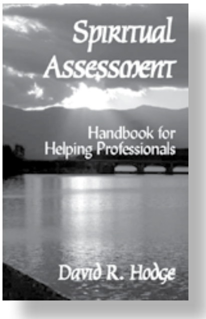
T. Laine Scales and Michael S. Kelly(Editors). (2012). Botsford, CT: NACSW $55.00 U.S., $42.99 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more copies. For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.


Christianity and Social Work
Readings on the Integration of Christian Faith and Social Work Practice

At over 400 pages and with 20 chapters, this revised fourth edition of *Christianity and Social Work* includes six new chapters in response to requests by readers of previous editions. We have included new chapters on issues of sexual orientation, Evidence-based Practice (EBP) as well as an enhanced section on the role of Christianity in social welfare history. It is written for social workers whose motivations to enter the profession are informed by their Christian faith, and who desire to develop faithfully Christian approaches to helping. The book is organized so that it can be used as a textbook or supplemental text in a social work class, or as a training or reference materials for practitioners. Readings address a breadth of curriculum areas such as social welfare history, human behavior and the social environment, social policy, and practice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels.

SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT: HELPING HANDBOOK FOR HELPING PROFESSIONALS

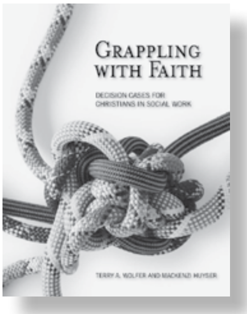
David Hodge. (2003). Botsford CT: NACSW $20.00 U.S. ($16.00 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



A growing consensus exists among helping professionals, accrediting organizations and clients regarding the importance of spiritual assessment. David Hodge's *Spiritual Assessment: Helping Handbook for Helping Professionals*, describes five complementary spiritual assessment instruments, along with an analysis of their strengths and limitations. The aim of this book is to familiarize readers with a repertoire of spiritual assessment tools to enable practitioners to select the most appropriate assessment instrument in given client/practitioner settings. By developing an assessment "toolbox" containing a variety of spiritual assessment tools, practitioners will become better equipped to provide services that address the individual needs of each of their clients.

GRAPPLING WITH FAITH: DECISION CASES FOR CHRISTIANS IN SOCIAL WORK

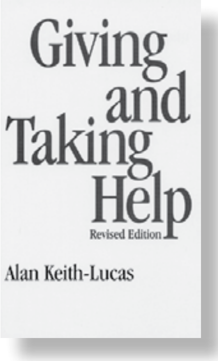
Terry A. Wolfer and Mackenzi Huyser (2010) $23.75 ($18.99 for NACSW members or for orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.


GRAPPLING WITH FAITH
DECISION CASES FOR CHRISTIANS IN SOCIAL WORK
TERRY A. WOLFER AND MACKENZI HUYSER

Grappling with Faith: Decision Cases for Christians in Social Work presents fifteen cases specifically designed to challenge and stretch Christian social work students and practitioners. Using the case method of teaching and learning, *Grappling with Faith* highlights the ambiguities and dilemmas found in a wide variety of areas of social work practice, provoking active decision making and helping develop readers' critical thinking skills. Each case provides a clear focal point for initiating stimulating, in-depth discussions for use in social work classroom or training settings. These discussions require that students use their knowledge of social work theory and research, their skills of analysis and problem solving, and their common sense and collective wisdom to identify and analyze problems, evaluate possible solutions, and decide what to do in these complex and difficult situations.

GIVING AND TAKING HELP (REVISED EDITION)

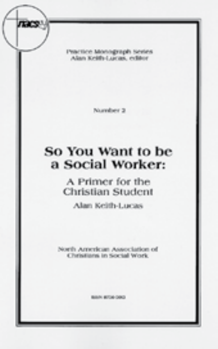
Alan Keith-Lucas. (1994). Botsford CT: North American Association of Christians in Social Work. $20.75 U.S. ($16.50 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



Alan Keith-Lucas' *Giving and Taking Help*, first published in 1972, has become a classic in the social work literature on the helping relationship. *Giving and taking help* is a uniquely clear, straightforward, sensible, and wise examination of what is involved in the helping process—the giving and taking of help. It reflects on perennial issues and themes yet is grounded in highly practice-based and pragmatic realities. It respects both the potential and limitations of social science in understanding the nature of persons and the helping process. It does not shy away from confronting issues of values, ethics, and world views. It is at the same time profoundly personal yet reaching the theoretical and generalizable. It has a point of view.

SO YOU WANT TO BE A SOCIAL WORKER: A PRIMER FOR THE CHRISTIAN STUDENT

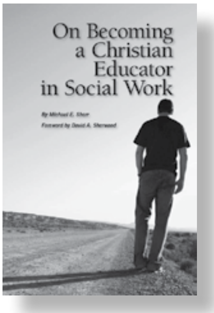
Alan Keith-Lucas. (1985). Botsford, CT: NACSW. Social Work Practice Monograph Series. $11.50 U.S. ($9.00 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.


Practice Monograph Series
Alan Keith-Lucas, editor
Number 2
So You Want to be a Social Worker:
A Primer for the Christian Student
Alan Keith-Lucas
North American Association of Christians in Social Work

So You Want to Be a Social Worker has proven itself to be an invaluable resource for both students and practitioners who are concerned about the responsible integration of their Christian faith and competent, ethical professional practice. It is a thoughtful, clear, and brief distillation of practice wisdom and responsible guidelines regarding perennial questions that arise, such as the nature of our roles, our ethical and spiritual responsibilities, the fallacy of "imposition of values," the problem of sin, and the need for both courage and humility.

ON BECOMING A CHRISTIAN EDUCATOR IN SOCIAL WORK

Michael Sherr (2010) $21.75 ($17.50 for NACSW members or for orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.


On Becoming a Christian Educator in Social Work

On Becoming a Christian Educator is a compelling invitation for social workers of faith in higher education to explore what it means to be a Christian in social work education. By highlighting seven core commitments of Christian social work educators, it offers strategies for social work educators to connect their personal faith journeys to effective teaching practices with their students. Frank B. Raymond, Dean Emeritus at the College of Social Work at the University of South Carolina suggests that "Professor Sherr's book should be on the bookshelf of every social work educator who wants to integrate the Christian faith with classroom teaching. Christian social work educators can learn much from Professor Sherr's spiritual and vocational journey as they continue their own journeys and seek to integrate faith, learning and practice in their classrooms."

HEARTS STRANGELY WARMED: REFLECTIONS ON BIBLICAL PASSAGES RELEVANT TO SOCIAL WORK

Lawrence E. Ressler (Editor). (1994). Botsford, CT: North American Association of Christians in Social Work. $9.25 U.S. ($7.50 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.

Hearts Strangely Warmed: Reflections on Biblical Passages Relevant to Social Work is a collection of devotional readings or reflective essays on 42 scriptures pertinent to social work. The passages demonstrate the ways the Bible can be a source of hope, inspiration, and conviction to social workers.

THE POOR YOU HAVE WITH YOU ALWAYS: CONCEPTS OF AID TO THE POOR IN THE WESTERN WORLD FROM BIBLICAL TIMES TO THE PRESENT

Alan Keith-Lucas. (1989). Botsford, CT: North American Association of Christians in Social Work. $20.75 U.S. ($16.50 for NACSW members). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.

ENCOUNTERS WITH CHILDREN: STORIES THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND AND HELP THEM

Alan Keith-Lucas. (1991). Botsford, CT: North American Association of Christians in Social Work. $11.50 U.S. ($9.00 for NACSW members). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.

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To order a copy of any of the above publications, please send a check for the price plus 10% shipping and handling. (A 20% discount for members or for purchases of at least 10 copies is available.) Checks should be made payable to NACSW; P.O. Box 121, Botsford, CT 06404-0121. Email: info@nacsw.org 203.270.8780.

Social Work & Christianity 2015 Graduate Student Paper Award:
Call for Proposals

The North American Association of Christians in Social Work is pleased to announce the creation of the annual Graduate Student Paper Award, with the winning paper to be published in Social Work & Christianity and the author to receive an Award Honorarium of $500.

The purpose of this Award is to encourage and recognize excellence in scholarly work by a graduate student on issues related to the integration of Christian faith and professional social work practice and other professional concerns that have relevance to Christianity.

We are issuing a call for proposals from current MSW and PhD students regarding projects for which they would like to submit papers in consideration for this Award.

Proposals must be submitted by January 31, 2015. The Student Paper Award Committee of the editorial board will review proposals and encourage authors of proposals that show significant promise of meeting the award criteria to submit completed manuscripts by July 31, 2015. Completed manuscripts will be anonymously reviewed by the Student Paper Award Committee and the Award decision and notification will by made by September 15, 2015. The winning paper will be published in the Spring 2016 issue of Social Work & Christianity. Strong papers that do not win the award will be considered for possible publication in subsequent regular issues of the journal.

Proposals should provide a concise overview of a paper and its relationship to the ethical integration of Christian faith and competent professional social work practice and scholarship. They should include a clear explanation of the proposed topic or research question, the methodology used to address the question, and the intended contribution to social work scholarship and practice. Proposals should be no longer than 400-600 words and should be submitted by email attachment to David Sherwood, Editor, Social Work & Christianity, david@sherwoodstreet.com.

Criteria by which completed manuscripts will be evaluated are:

Topic: Does the paper have relevance for the integration of Christian faith and professional social work practice or other professional concerns related to Christian faith?

Significance: Does this paper address an important issue? What is the potential contribution of this paper to the profession?

Innovation: Does the paper employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Is it original and innovative? Do findings or conclusions challenge existing paradigms or help develop new methodologies?

Approach: Are the conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate to the purposes of the paper? Does the author discuss the paper's limitations?

Implications for social work practice and/or education: Are the implications adequately articulated? Do the findings or conclusions have broad applicability?

Writing: Is the writing style concise? Are concepts, methods, and findings clearly explained? Does the submitted version of the paper suggest that the student carefully reviewed the paper (e.g., no grammatical, spelling, typographical errors) and had feedback from others to improve it?

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GUIDELINES FOR AUTHORS OF BOOK REVIEWS FOR *SWC*

NACSW's quarterly, peer-reviewed journal, *Social Work and Christianity* (*SWC*), welcomes book review manuscripts for the Reviews section of the journal. Submit book review manuscripts electronically to the Book Review Editor, James Vanderwoerd, at jwoerd@redeemer.ca.

Book review authors should follow these guidelines:

- Reviewed books should be relevant to SWC's readership and therefore should include content pertinent to Christians in social work.
- Ordinarily books should be fairly recent (published within 2 years); if later, reviewers should provide some justification for why an older book has current relevance.
- Reviews should be about 600-800 words in length.
- Reviews should include an overview of the book's main points, especially those pertaining to Christians in social work.
- In addition to a descriptive summary of the book's content, reviews should provide some assessment, critique, and analysis of the book's strengths and weaknesses, and its contribution to the field of social work practice, especially to specific audiences such as subfields of social work practice, students, academics, administrators, and church leaders.
- Reviews should adhere to general guidelines for formatting and writing described in the general Instructions for Authors.
- All submitted book review manuscripts, whether invited or not, are subject to editorial review and acceptance by the book review editor, in conjunction with the editor-in-chief, who will make final decisions regarding acceptance for publication.

Please contact James Vanderwoerd, the Book Review Editor of *Social Work and Christianity*, at jwoerd@redeemer.ca with any questions or for additional information.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR AUTHORS

Submit manuscripts to *SWC* electronically in the form of two documents: a separate title page that contains the title, a list of key words, and full author information, including names, affiliations, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses; and a document without author identification that contains the full text of the article, including an abstract of not more than 150 words, references, and any tables or appendices. Use the American Psychological Association Style Manual format (6th edition) for in-text references and reference lists. Submit manuscripts as email attachments to david@sherwoodstreet.com, using either Word or Pages.

At least three members of the editorial board will anonymously review manuscripts and recommend an acceptance decision based on the following criteria: relevance of content to major issues concerning the relationship of social work and Christianity, literary merit, conciseness, clarity, and freedom from language that conveys devaluation or stereotypes of persons or groups. The editor-in-chief will make final decisions.

Authors may also correspond with the editor-in-chief by phone, mail or email: David Sherwood, 2740 Crater Lane, Newberg, OR 97132. Telephone: (503) 537-0675 (H). Email: david@sherwoodstreet.com.

SUBSCRIPTIONS AND INDEXING

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Back orders of most issues of *SWC* (formerly *The Paraclete*) are available for $5 per copy. For more information including a list of contents by issue or questions about advertising in *SWC,* contact NACSW. *SWC* is indexed in *Social Work Abstracts, Sociological Abstracts, Social Services Abstracts, Guide to Social Science and Religion in Periodical Literature, PsycINFO* and *Christian Periodical Index*. Full text articles from *Social Work and Christianity* appear in both ProQuest as well as EBSCO's *SocINDEX with Full Text*, *Academic Search Complete*, *and Social Sciences Full Text* bibliographic research databases.

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