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SPECIAL ISSUE ON THE INTEGRATION OF FAITH AND LEARNING
A. Christson A. Adedoyin, Rachel Copeland & Sharon E. Moore

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Addressing Spirituality: Reflections on Curriculum Integration in a Christian University

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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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- 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.
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- Reviews should adhere to general guidelines for formatting and writing escribed in the general Instructions for Authors.

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ARTICLES: CONCEPTUAL

Education From a Gardener's Perspective

Stephanie Clintonia Boddie

Nature has much to teach if we will be attentive and learn from her. In Fall 2018, a school of social work professor designed a new course to teach across three schools—social work, education, and the seminary. To integrate faith and learning, this professor designed this course based on the four permaculture (permanent agriculture) design principles: care of people; care for the earth; fair share; and transitional ethic. In this class, graduate students took on community challenges—food insecurity and K-12 student disengagement from learning—to help them live out their vocation while also supporting the development of a local school garden. Ultimately, with this affective, embodied, creative, and reflective pedagogy, learning was experienced more holistically and in a more relevant manner to everyday life.

***Keywords*:** garden, education, interdisciplinary environment, resilience, ecology, permaculture

> *The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just on the body, but the soul. Alfred Austin (1894)*

THE GARDEN IS ALSO A CLASSROOM. EDUCATION IS traditionally understood to be within the context of a teacher, student, or subject-centric classroom (Palmer, 2007). Smith and Felch (2016) remind us that the language of learning "often carries a scent of gardening" (p.89). In classical times, the venues of learning actually resembled gardens. The connection between teachers and gardens

has returned to some institutions like Princeton Theological Seminary's Farminary. In such places, classrooms are gardens and teachers are gardeners (Smith & Felch, 2016). In our classroom garden, we feed the body, mind, and soul of the social worker.

In Genesis 1, God first created the garden as something good, fruitful, and even instructive (New International Version, Genesis 1). The Garden of Eden was a garden of delight. God placed the humans he had formed in the garden to care for it and to participate as dependent members of it (Ayres, 2019). Today, the gardens that we often imagine and experience have been carefully designed and cultivated as places of beauty like the well-known French garden of Monet. Though God created all things good, the natural state of beauty and abundance has been lost to man-made interventions (Smith & Felch, 2016). Such interventions like these have pushed the world out of balance. Part of this gardening is to restore the beauty and flourishing of creation. The vision of gardens presented in Genesis helps shift our imagination and practice of teaching beyond the labor of planting and pruning in anticipation of growth and toward careful attention to all of God's creation, human beings and the earth. The garden is the place where students grow with careful tending. In the garden, spiritual formation along with emotional and intellectual maturity are nourished (Gayle, 2011; Smith & Felch, 2016; Williams & Brown, 2012).

Here, we consider the garden as an andragogical site for both teachers and learners, including those from the local community. In particular, we recognize the garden as a place for moral development, spiritual wisdom, self-actualization, and community transformation. Nature inspires us to go beyond the cognitive mind and bring our entire authentic selves—body, soul, and emotions—to teaching and learning. The garden offers an ecological means of knowing that implies "a more relational and committed way of knowing" beyond the mere "knowing all the facts about another" (Ayres, 2019, p.17). According to Smith and Felch (2016), Saint Augustine translates Genesis 2:15 like this: "The Lord took the man whom he had made and placed him in Paradise to cultivate him (that is, to work in him) and to guard him." We become the ones cultivated. However, we participate in this cultivation process: "God teaches, and we work to become the kind of learners in whom truth can be truly fruitful…headful learning is connected to fruitful living" (Smith & Felch, 2016, p. 109). Ultimately, a re-orientation of identity and transformative process takes place, a "resurrection of sorts" (Ayres, 2019, p.18). Both the teacher and students are called to a process of discovery and new way of life "to accomplish purposes of good and beautiful creation" (Singletary et al., 2020, p. 188). In the garden, students shift from what they should do to what they should be (Ayres, 2019; Smith & Felch, 2016). The teacher and students begin to see ways to integrate their faith and social work practice.

In this article, I outline what the garden can offer social work professors and students in search of reconnecting their teaching to an ecological perspective, faith-integrated framework, and local community. The word "ecology" derives from the Greek terms *oikeo* and *logo*, which mean "the knowledge of inhabiting" (Ayres, 2019, p. 17). To situate both teacher and students as creatures of the earth and ones shaped by God from the earth, we draw from permaculture (permanent agriculture) principles to deepen connections with religion, spirituality, and faith. I re-imagined teaching and learning beyond common pedagogical techniques to ways of being and living together that shape how we see each other and how we grow together. Students no longer segregate their environment from learning nor put aside learning for the sake of possessing knowledge and securing a grade. Instead, they enter into a process of caring for the earth and being transformed by this new relationship with all of creation, especially each other (Ayres, 2019). Students first learn to bring their fullest self to the process of learning, discovery, and service.

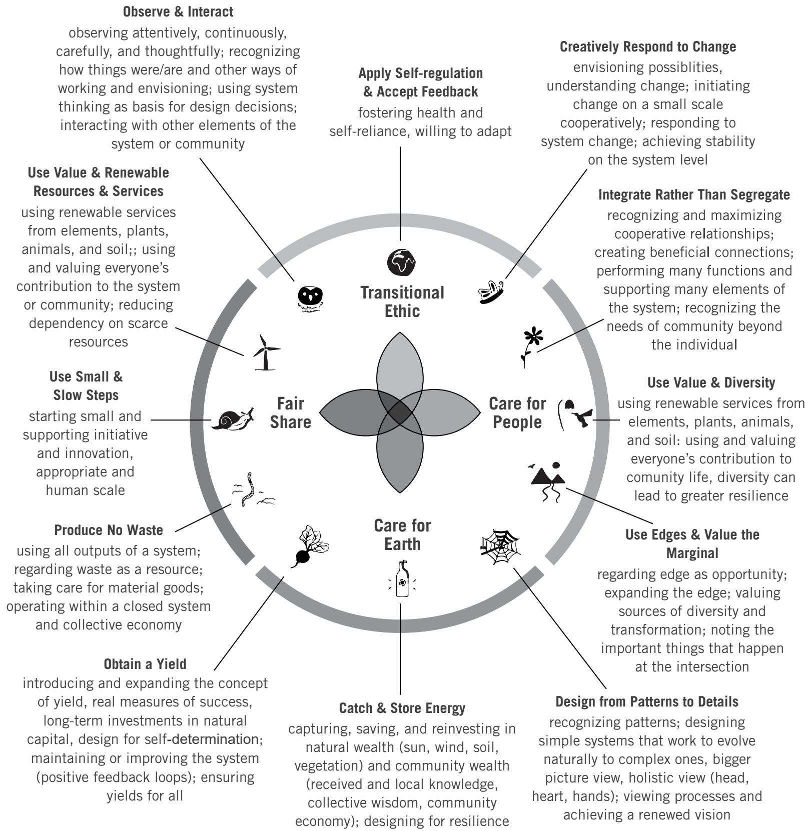
In Fall 2018, I designed this new course to teach across three schools—social work, education, and the seminary. To integrate faith and learning, I designed this course based on the four permaculture design principles. Why permaculture? These design principles help us think in ethical terms: care of people; care for the earth; fair share; and transitional ethic (Bloom & Boehnlein, 2016; Holmgren, 2002; Mollison, 1990). Permaculture offers a conceptual framework for cultivating both ecological and spiritual consciousness. Ultimately, over the course of the semester, learning was experienced more holistically and relevant to everyday life. We returned to these original design principles with reflective, relational/affective, embodied, and creative practices. We deeply engaged the broader community with garden-based activities, beginning by partnering with a local school. The garden gave the teacher, the students, and community partners metaphors, symbols, and activities to expand our imagination and direct our learning. To highlight the ethical integration of faith and social work practice, I incorporated models proposed by Chamiec-Case (2020). The related categories are the effect of integration on motivation and identity formation; understanding of religion, spirituality and faith (RSF); and the practice of RSF and social work. In this course, graduate students address the challenges taking the system out of balance—food insecurity and K-12 student disengagement—to help them live out their vocation.

Using Permaculture Design for Educational Design

A new social imagination is necessary to prepare professionals, particularly social workers, for the challenges and complexities of the changing environment in our globalized world. At this time, the new challenges to be considered are social changes (e.g. gentrification, population displacement, residential segregation, growing inequities in wealth, health, and education, and civil strife) and environmental climate changes (e.g., natural disasters, air and water pollution, basic sanitation, and threats to agriculture, fisheries, and other natural resources). I had not considered a pandemic when developing and teaching this course. To adapt and respond to these challenges, social workers are uniquely positioned to use the ecological perspective to explore the physical environment as well as the socio-cultural and economic environment (Teixeira & Kring, 2015). The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics (2017) states, "Fundamental to social work is attention to the environmental forces that create, contribute to, and address problems in living." The need for social workers to take seriously this ethic and become more ecologically conscious has never been more urgent (Kemp, 2011). Ecologically conscious learners acknowledge and nurture interdependence. Spiritually conscious learners expand their awareness of self, others, God, and all of creation while contributing to the well-being of all. As the teacher and students learn in the garden, they become both ecologically and spiritually conscious.

I used permaculture ethics and its related principles to help the students explore the lessons that the garden can teach us (See Figure 1). According to Bloom & Boehnlein (2016), permaculture design reflects four ethics and twelve principles. The first ethic is care of people, considering the needs of people as well as future generations. This ethic includes these three principles: integrate rather than segregate, use and value diversity, and use edges and value the marginal. The second ethic is care for the earth, being good stewards of the earth. The principles associated with this ethic are: obtain a yield, catch and store energy, and design from patterns to details. The third ethic is fair share, the ways we regulate consumption and growth including distribution of surplus. The three related principles are: producing no waste, using small and slow steps, and using and value renewable resources and services. The fourth ethic is a transitional ethic that emphasizes remembering to take small steps toward regenerative practices with humility. These principles highlighted here are: observe and interact, apply self-regulation and accept feedback, and creatively respond to change. In this course, I began by introducing the transitional ethic and the principle "observe and interact."

Figure 1.
Permaculture Design Principles: Applying Principles to Teaching and Learning



In this course, I connected the four permaculture ethics to key permaculture principles, four pedagogical approaches, four sets of garden activities, and categories for faith integration as presented in Table 1.

Table 1.
Integrating Permaculture Ethics, Principles, Andragogy, Gardening Practices, and Faith Integration

Permaculture Ethics	Permaculture Principles	Pedagogy	Garden Practices	Faith Integration
Transitional Ethic	Observe & Interact	Reflective	Journey through campus gardens	Faith motivation
Care for People	Use and value of the marginal	Affective/ Engaged	Home gardening projects	Spiritual identity formation
Care for Earth	Design from pattern to details	Embodied	Working in gardens	Practice of social work congruent with faith
Fair Share	Use renewable resources and services	Creative	Visiting gardens and participating in the vision for growth	Understanding social work prac-tice as congruent with faith

As we focused on each permaculture ethic with the corresponding pedagogical approach and activities, students expanded their understanding of the garden's ecosystems and imagined ways to recreate and experience new life to the education ecosystem. We aimed to deeply immerse ourselves in the permaculture principles of gardening in order to develop life-supporting and self-sustaining agricultural ecosystems. Throughout the course, we explored a variety of gardens: flower gardens, community gardens, aquaponic gardens, raised-bed gardens, shade gardens, vegetable gardens, herb gardens, and school gardens. Our exploration took different forms; in some gardens, we lingered and observed, in others we rested, and in a few we worked. Permaculture offers a framework for cultivating ecological and spiritual consciousness, with a collaborative, mutually respectful, and transformative learning process. The transformative process "seeks to change the fundamental orientation to social work to reflect a holistic understanding of the place of humans in the natural world," (Jones [2013] cited in Boetto & Bell, 2015, p. 450).

The permaculture principles call us to examine our values and reimagine systems that mirror the creative, living, and regenerative processes of the garden. This perspective moves us away from a system primarily reflecting the values of consumerism, commodification, and competition where we learn to market ourselves and rise on the ladder of social and economic mobility. We promote these values in ways that too often nurture fear, create divisions, and reinforce notions of scarcity. Things can be different. Our experience in the garden shows us the possibilities for healthy, non-hierarchical systems that embrace the natural design, patterns of creation, and abundance. It is possible to become a student of the garden and experience personal and communal transformation. This use requires shifting our language and understanding of learning and teaching from a "personal achievement" and "banking approach" (Friere, 1970) to a "communal enterprise" (sharing economies) and "design-based teaching" (whole systems teaching) and inquiry-based learning" approach (Cole et al., 1978; Mezirow, 1978; Pedaste, 2015). In this way our language, understanding, and practices align with living processes and connect us to our environment. The permaculture design principles work with nature's patterns for growth and not against them.

The learning in the garden not only opens the opportunity to see what new things can flourish in the garden, but it also opens the possibility for the teacher, students, and the community to be transformed in this learning process.

> Thinking of learning as growth can grow our minds to the need for patience and limitations of invasive interventions, to the ease with which young shoots are crushed, to the need to work with what is given and respect its rhythms" (Smith & Felch, 2016, p. 89).

Learning in the garden breaks the boundaries of disciplines and our need to be at the center of the universe, instead leading us to practice humility. As we took the next step to use permaculture design principles, each learner abandoned the practices and principles of traditional education systems and their own ambitions (Williams & Brown, 2012).

According to bell hooks (1994, p. 13):

> To educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn. That learning process comes easiest to those of us who teach who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students. To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin.

Teaching this way allows us to move with life's flow, embrace growth and natural patterns, and ultimately, through service, find our place with our students in an interconnected world. Reconnecting to the earth opens up a new world of possibility for redesigning a more hopeful future that envisions the flourishing of all of creation. During that semester, putting our heads, hearts, and hands to the garden, we began listening, renegotiating, and reassembling our lives, our relationships, and the pieces of our world that had been siloed and disconnected.

Throughout the semester, these graduate students visited several gardens, worked in one, and participated in various garden activities—caring for a plant, growing microgreens, germinating an avocado seed, and planting herbs. With each project, the students grew in confidence in their gardening skills and their understanding of permaculture principles.

We have aligned the permaculture design principles used in the garden with those that apply to specific pedagogy and learning activities. These permaculture principles helped the students to slow down and look for new learning and faith integration in every situation.

Transitional Ethic & Reflective Pedagogy: Journey Through the Campus Gardens

> In all gardens, gardeners would undertake to know responsibly where they are and to 'consult the genius of place.' They would ask what nature would be doing there if no one were farming [gardening] there. They would ask what nature would permit them to do there, and what they could do there with the least

> harm to the place and their natural and human neighbors. And they would ask what nature would *help* them do there. And after asking each, knowing that nature will respond, they would attend carefully to her response. Wendell Berry (2009)

On the first day of the course, sixteen students embarked on a non-traditional journey through four of the campus gardens. Students were asked to observe the sights, sounds, smells, and feel of each garden. This journey mirrored one I had taken with my mentor just weeks before the start of the semester on a day with temperatures peaking at 100 degrees. I moved with the students from the contemplative garden to the rose garden and ended at the garden outside the main library. The students noted these were gardens they had passed many times but they were stopping to purposefully observe them for the first time . I wanted the students to hear from nature before they had a chance to be convinced by any arguments offered in the course material, so, instead of meeting in a lecture hall or classroom on that first day, students interacted and immersed themselves in a familiar ecological environment. To their surprise, there was a great deal to observe; in their haste to get to and from classes, much of what they had experienced of the gardens in the past had been a blur.

The garden journey was unfamiliar to all and risky to some. Like many university gardens, these gardens reflect the university's care for the earth as well as the unique aesthetic of the university. Baylor University, located in central Texas, has several gardens on the main campus: some designed to be used for seating areas or to grow food and others for beauty. One garden stood out as a cooling and relaxing space with the sound of water running through a fountain. The fountain had this inscription, "Oh, world as God's garden! All is beauty. Seeing this is love and love is duty." With a variety of garden spaces, we anticipated opportunities to stay in the present moment, experience creation, take in its beauty, identify healthy garden design, and connect the lessons from the garden to insights for learning and teaching. As we walked on a bright sunny summer day, these permaculture assessments guided our thoughts as we recorded a range of sensory experiences:

> Which ecosystem existed before this human installation?
> What are the processes necessary to bring human beings back into alignment with the natural environment and the regenerative plan for this place?
> What are the ecological tasks necessary to accomplish this redemptive task?
> How did the principles of balance and diversity manifest themselves?

We were attentive to the patterns, the margins, and relationships that

constitute the various garden designs, particularly how closely these designs matched the original ecosystem which existed before this campus took over the landscape.

What were our revelations? What gifts of the gardens did we experience? What did nature teach us? As we walked, we deepened our knowledge of the land and the design of four gardens on this 1,000-acre campus. Each garden gave us a different glimpse of nature through the various types of trees and their placement around the university, the blooming of flowers, and the placement of native plants. Students noted the ecosystem of each garden—its community of trees, plants, birds, animals, and pollinator insects as well as the movement of the sun and the different types of soil. These systems work together to create a unique habitat while striving for a healthy ecological balance for the campus and the local environment.

The soil, trees, plants, and land brought forth the most profound insights and sensory responses. These reflections were possible as students shifted from simply seeing objects to observing, interacting and connecting with creation. Note key insights students shared during the course (italics added for emphasis):

> I realized that prior to our time in class going to these gardens, *I had only passively observed them*. However, by interacting with them I felt a deeper connection [with] my surroundings. Student JC

> Just like walking through a garden, I attend to the uniqueness of each individual plant. While individually they are beautiful and stand strong on their own, *the true beauty is in the garden as a whole*. I saw this as I had the opportunity to observe various gardens around the Baylor campus. Each garden was made up of a variety of plants and added something to the garden it was part of. *However, a garden is a fragile ecosystem when not tended to properly, and the same goes for students*. Just as a gardener knows its plants, a teacher must know their students. Student EC

> Through this class, I have seen firsthand that no two gardens are exactly the same, just as no two students are exactly alike. From the well-manicured garden at Founder's Mall on the Baylor campus to the wildflower garden at the Mayborn Museum, I have been exposed to many different types and uses of gardens. *In considering the purposes of diverse gardens, this class has caused me to reflect on the beauty and potential of gardens, like the one at Connelly Elementary School]*. While

> this garden may not look visually appealing on the outside, it holds so much potential and opportunity for students to grow and take ownership of their learning. Student LB

These students paused to notice the uniqueness and beauty of each garden while recognizing the care needed to maintain them. For some students it was the first time they paused to consider their surroundings as part of creation that was a cause to worship God.

> Planting seeds, taking a walk in the Mayborn Museum Garden or taking a photo of the animals near the Waco Suspension Bridge, I learn to observe, interact and appreciate. *The differences and uniqueness of the herbs, flowers and other plants make the ecosystem more functional and sustainable. This reminds me that in a classroom, the students, as human beings, have their own aspirations, needs and interests, not only intellectually, but also emotionally [and spiritually] ...* And a holistic environment for effective learning is only possible with the interaction and collaboration of teachers and students. Student YJ

> *We experienced ourselves during the garden walk*… Student LM

These students noticed not only what was present and beautiful but also recognized the purpose and possibilities yet to be unlocked from the campus gardens and in themselves. Making these new observations helped the students not only connect with these gardens but also with each other as a part of creation. Many students shifted from a head knowledge of what it means to reflect the image of the creator to a heart-felt knowledge of their connection with all that God has created, especially their peers and their fellow students, including those of different races, ethnicities and backgrounds. Experiencing the campus gardens more fully, students translated their appreciation for biodiversity to an appreciation for cultural diversity.

One student referenced a poem to highlight the consequences for students when we fail to stay in the moment, observe, and interact. She called attention to the ways the teacher failed to see the boy through the eyes of God

> The principle of observation/interaction reminds me of the poem that...KW *posted in our class page entitled, "Cause I Ain't Got a Pencil." This poem [is] about a boy who, after overcoming incredible odds to get to school, gets fussed at for not having a*

> *pencil reminds me of the importance of not making assumptions…* Student JC

Two other students applied what they learned on their campus garden journey to new connections with the community. Most notably, one student connected not only with her surrounding but recognized the ways that local residents connected to the needs of their community. Another student's new interaction reminded her of the importance of listening. This desire for connection was awakened by a deeper sense of communion with God, a God that listens well.

> In my function as teacher, I seek to emphasize a "transitional ethic," one of the four ethics of permaculture. This ethic includes "observing and interacting with community life," asking how the community itself has responded to its needs. *In this class, Urban REAP and Jubilee food market serve as an example of this, responding to the need of a community in a food desert by providing access to healthy foods.* Student RP

> The skill of listening is often an aspect of teaching that is missing from teacher education programs. My experience in this class has reminded me to take time to "listen" to the things we can learn from gardens. *When I visited the Sadie Jo Black garden on campus I sensed the peace of God that gardens often help us experience. The garden's motto, "May all who enter these gardens find inspiration and peace," summarizes the lessons I have learned in this class.* Student KW

> The story, "The Potential in Just One... One Seed, One Child", shows how an observant teacher can bring about a breakthrough in a student. *The teacher had the option in this story to tell the child exactly what to do and how to do it, but instead, she chose to observe what the child would do.* She found that the child had a greater learning experience. Student LM

I started with the transitional ethic and reflective pedagogy to model the observant teacher and invite the students to become the observant learner. After just a few weeks, they were noticing things in their surroundings, themselves, and others that had been invisible. Once the students seemed to understand the transitional ethic and reflective pedagogy, more time and attention was given to affective, embodied and creative pedagogy. According to Ayres (2019) it is this in the practice of reflection that we can pause and appreciate "an opportunity to place embodied, affective experience into the

realm of consciousness and ideas" (p.81). From embodied and affective pedagogy, we move to creative pedagogy.

Care for the People & Affective/ Engaged Pedagogy: Home Gardening

> The contemplative was invited *to notice everything and to experience all things as part of a sacred whole*. The monks believed that the encompassing, penetrating way of seeing, while possible for everyone, must be cultivated, brought into the center of consciousness through disciplined practice…One could learn to live in the world as a healing presence, attentive, and responsive to the lives of other beings and capable to reknit the torn fabric of existence. Douglas E. Christie (2013).

At the end of the first day, students were sent home with a plant to nurture and learn from throughout the semester. They were warned that perhaps it might take more time than they anticipated to get to know the plant and discern what was needed for optimal growth. I gave the students an out by telling them that if their plant did not survive, they were to ask me or another student for a clipping from their plant and to start over. As long as at least one plant was alive, no one could fail at this part of the gardening experience, so I thought. In the best-case scenario, each student would return on the last day with a lush green plant that had grown from the tiny vine-like plant to something that could be replanted and shared with our partnering school. Only half of the sixteen students returned with the plant they took home on the first day of class.

Throughout the course, the students were also sent home with seeds to grow a few plants. Each time students were provided limited instructions and asked to observe and learn from the process. The first tiny garden was a small plastic container of soil and an envelope of seeds. Much to the surprise of the students, these were micro-green seeds that grew within a week and could have all been planted in the tiny container. The students were also sent home with cilantro seeds, which took a bit longer to germinate and grow. Most students experienced another success with gardening. Each student was given an avocado about 45 days before the end of the semester. This would be one of their more challenging home gardening experiences. Many students noticed that they did not have the patience for the long germinating process of this seed. As one student admitted, he simply wanted a fast and easy process over the slow, steady pace that is often required for the deep, mature wisdom that is necessary for significant life changes and spiritual growth.

Each home gardening activity was carefully planned to help students transition from the fast knowledge they are used to consuming to slow knowledge that allowed for a deeper understanding of themselves and the

gardening process, particularly the uniqueness of each seed. In *The Nature of Design*, David Orr (2004) characterizes slow knowledge this way:

> *Wisdom not cleverness is the proper aim of all true learning.
> *The velocity of knowledge can be inversely related to the acquisition of wisdom.
> *The careless application of knowledge can destroy the condition that permits knowledge of any kind to flourish… (p.39).

Slow knowledge is deliberate, careful, intentional, and shaped by the environment. For this kind of learning to take place we must take time to pause, observe, think, and reflect. In each of the garden projects the students had significant discoveries. From the shocking one-week growth of micro-greens to the slow growth of the avocado seed. The students' learning required patience and the willingness to try again.

The students brought their observation skills from the campus gardening journey into the home gardening projects. As students grew their plants or germinated new seeds, these were the kinds of insights that they shared:

> When I first planted the plant the class received at the beginning of the semester, it did poorly and was dying. *I then repotted it in new soil and it quickly started to turn green again and eventually grow*… I must look at the fruits of my teaching to understand whether or not it produces good results and is therefore glorifying to God. Student RP

> A significant memory that I will hold from this class is caring for my plant. *My plant has taught me how to be a good caregiver, which is a major part in being a good teacher*. I have learned that persistence is key in caregiving. When I first got my plant I was excited and anxious all at the same time. I spent several nights googling how to make my plant flourish, and while it was in fact growing, I wanted more. I feel this a lot with my students, I know there is growth happening, but I am sometimes too close to tell, or it is not as big as I want. However, my plant taught me that growth is slow and steady and good, when we as caregivers are consistent. *My plant taught me patience and persistence in teaching and nurturing*. Student CK

> Just as a gardener tends to and cares for a plant, through teaching *I have the ability to invest in my students and support them as they grow into the individual they are capable of being*. Student EC

Students grew in their gardening practice as caretakers of their own souls as the seeds of patience and humility were taking root in their lives. They became more sacrificial in their investment of time and energy to support the growth of their plant and translated this insight to their care for their students.

> Specifically, I found it to be a rewarding experience to grow the herb plant, as I was able to see it change from a seed to a plant over the course of several days/weeks. During this time, I came home every day eager to check on my plant to see how it had grown from the previous day. *While this plant was unique in how quickly it grew, I realize that all plants require time, care, and proper conditions to grow, including the right amount of sunlight, water, air, nutrient-rich soil, and appropriate weather conditions. Similarly, students need proper care, love, and support in order to thrive and reach their potential*. Student LK

> This semester, I was given the opportunity to try my hand at growing several plants. While I struggled to keep the first one alive, I had much more success with the microgreen seeds I planted. *I experienced the joy of watching my plant grow rapidly over the course of a week. My roommate, not a student in our course, shared my joy as she also saw the shoots climbing higher by the day*. She later told me that the experience reminded her of what the Bible says about faith being like a mustard seed: even the tiniest bit of it can accomplish something even larger than expected (Matt. 17:20). Student AB

Students deepened their affection for their plants. Their plants were no longer objects but a part of creation to be loved and enjoyed. The process of gardening revealed glimpses of God's creational goodness and redemptive power.

> …People tend to organize around familiar ideas in a way that avoids engagement with new or different ideas. When we silo ourselves off into groups with those who share our perspective, *we end up creating echo chambers and rob ourselves of the gifts of diversity. In permaculture, the edges between two different environments are seen as an opportunity—a place where things can happen which could not happen in a homogenous environment*. Student AB

> Likewise, Lisa Delpit's "Educators as Seed People", helps inform my understanding of "using and valuing diversity." She writes about how, instead of asking how [an] educator must cease asking how they can overcome the perceived lowered capacity of low-income or minority students, *they should rather engage and utilize their unique backgrounds and counternarratives. Likewise, as I interact with those of a different cultural background, I strive to engage them not with a mind, consciously or unconsciously, seeking to transform them to my form of thinking, but trying to understand and value their unique knowledge of God and the world.* Student RP

> Fr. Richard Rohr talks about the diversity of God in his blog post, "God is Diversity." He says this, "Many teachers have made the central, but often-missed, point that unity is not the same as uniformity. *Unity, in fact, is the reconciliation of differences, and those differences must first be maintained—and then overcome by the power of love! You must actually distinguish things and separate them before you can spiritually unite them, usually at cost to yourself*" (See Ephesians 2:14-16). (Loftus, n.d.). Student LM

> As I leave this class, I will remember how observing gardens taught me about the intricacies, chaos, and harmony of plant life. *So many things grow together at once, each location unique, creating all at once something beautiful and full of life*. Student RP

One of the most powerful lessons students gleaned from the garden was the necessity and beauty of biodiversity. Before this class, most had studied multiculturalism and cultural diversity from a posture of tolerance and acceptance. Immersed in their new habitats of the garden experience, students were now in awe of both the benefits and beauty of biodiversity. Their understanding of its powerful function in the garden helped them to make deeper connections and to explore where they might find diversity in their lives. They were challenged to see themselves as a part of the body of Christ that embraces difference. How might this diversity strengthen them intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually? How might this new insight fundamentally change who they are becoming?

Care for the Earth & Embodied Pedagogy: Working in the Garden

> I notice that it is only when my mother is working in her flowers that she is radiant, almost to the point of being invisible—except as Creator: hand and eye. She is involved in work her soul must have. Ordering the universe in the image of her personal conception of Beauty (Walker, 1983).

Another journey into the garden included work days: a campus work day, a work day with our school partner, and work days within the groups. Our first work day at the Campus Kitchen garden aided in preparing the raised beds for the next season of growing. On a day nearly 100 degrees, students pulled overgrown weeds and wilted plants to make way for the next season of planting. While this was mundane work, it was necessary to ensure that the seeds planted this season would not be choked out by weeds or other things growing in the garden. So here we were in the garden tending to the earth. In gardening, many times we must do this work of clearing the ground. We would much rather choose our working conditions. Much like this day, often we are faced with extremes and must move forward with the teaching and learning needed to clear the way for new discoveries and new meaning. The garden experience became the teacher. Students got their hands dirty and were surprised by the life they found beneath the surface of the ground. There was life in the soil. As for the plants in the raised beds, nothing was left to be harvested. The sun scorched much of the vegetation. What we cleared was not wasted; it was recycled in the compost bin. This kind of experiential learning allowed students to encounter the world more holistically with all of its complexity and challenges (Dewey, 1897). In this ordinary and monotonous work, the students learn that "the true gardener, inspired by God, demonstrates the kind of curiosity, delight, and devotion in which no detail is too small to be attended to, and no life so insignificant as not to warrant celebration" (Wirzba, 2011, p. 70). In this work, these students modeled a life of greater discipline by sticking with these routine and mundane tasks. This practice provided an opportunity to humbly serve in secret.

We had planned to have more than one work day as an entire class. Another day was set aside to build an herb spiral. All of the materials had been purchased, and students studied the process and even developed lesson plans for teachers to incorporate the herb spiral into their curriculum. Each time the work day was scheduled, it had to be cancelled due to rain. Though our direct encounters were more limited than we planned, students had the opportunity to deeply engage in the garden in their small groups. Students discovered ways to offer acts of loving service to the teachers and students as they worked to complete their final project.

According to Williams and Brown (2012), "learning by doing, in place, over time, is important for nurturing an ecological balance between and among human cultures and biotic communities" (p.127). Learning by doing sparks as many questions as answers. This kind of embodied pedagogy brings body and mind together in a sensory experience to facilitate deeper learning. This way of learning recognizes that role of the body in the process of learning. Dewey (1897) suggested that engaging our body in learning helps us to overcome the disconnection that can hamper us from more profound connections to meaning and creation. He advanced his vision for students learning to live well in the world.

These graduate students immersed their minds and bodies into experiences that allowed them to gain new knowledge and insights as well as new capacities and virtues. The following were the kinds of discoveries that students gained through this embodied pedagogy in the garden:

> *Free students from the artificial constraints and rigid ways of learning and experiment with knowledge [and], learning by doing*. Student TD

> *This class has helped immensely in my ability to slow down and appreciate the details hidden within nature and see just how many possibilities there are to teach about the garden*. Student CD

Each student shared in the divine nurture by germinating their seeds. Students also participated in gardening as a communal practice. Through these group gardening activities students also served as a bridge from the school to the community.

> Philosophically speaking, *growing seeds showed me the importance of creating a nurturing and fertile environment in which "seedling" students can grow*. In order to create that fertile soil in which "aha moments" of learning may happen, I see the importance of giving students freedom in which they may safely take risks (just like the seeds are first planted in a pot to take root before they are planted out in the open)... The end goal of teaching, for me, is to cultivate in students a love for learning such that they no longer need me as their teacher/mentor. Student JC

> My experiences gardening this semester have taught me that patience and vigilance are essential in order to cultivate life. *Specifically, the activity of weeding flower beds taught me that we must be vigilant as both teachers and learners to separate truths about ourselves, God, and the world from lies*... In our positive

> efforts to plant seeds, we must not forget to invest in efforts to fight what we did not plant, lest we risk losing a healthy crop. Student JC

> Even in the beginning in the garden, God delights in His creation. The Psalms declare that the Creator is also the Sustainer. The Gospels shout that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed…*The Bible teaches us that, "As our creator, God's desire is forever that we flourish together and be well, sharing in the divine nurture that makes this world a place of so much beauty and joy."* (Wirzba, 2011). *By cultivating an environment of curiosity and providing tools to create*. Student LB

Wendell Berry (2002) would say that our spirit also participates in our gardening:

> What connection or responsibilities do we maintain between our bodies or bodies and the earth? There are religious questions, obviously, for our bodies are part of the Creation, and they involve us in all the issues of mystery…While we live, in our bodies are moving particles of the earth, joined inextricably both to the soil and to the bodies of other creatures" (p.93).

These students grew in their understanding of God's care for us as they cared for the earth. They continued to observe and engage in the disciplines of gardening.

Fair Share & Creative Pedagogy: Partnering with a Local School

> Gardening, besides being a practical, life-nurturing task, is also always a spiritual activity. In it, people attempt to make visible and tasty what is good, beautiful, and even holy. Every act of gardening presupposes and embodies a way of relating to creation, a way that invariably invokes moral and spiritual decisions. Though membership in a garden is a given, how we will take our place in the membership is not. Our aim must be to develop into good gardeners, gardeners who work harmoniously among the flows of life. This means that besides vegetables, flowers, and fruit, gardeners are themselves undergoing a spiritual cultivation into something beautiful and sympathetic and healthy. A caring, faithful, and worshipping humanity is one of the garden's most important crops. Norman Wirzba (2009).

Throughout most of the course, the sixteen graduate students explored ways to support the growth of their future students and the school with little thought of the broader community. The students had not imagined that they would be considering the ways they could go beyond teacher-centered, student-centered, or subject-centered education to consider the web of interactions needed for human and community flourishing. So often we work against the natural design of the garden and the other systems in which we are embedded. Once a passive backdrop for their busy lives, the gardens became an interactive environment for discoveries and insights about themselves, their students, the community and how they fit into the web of life. Similarly, as the students became familiar with the local community by visiting public schools, the farmer's market, the local library, community gardens, and a local church, they recognized the importance of educational ecosystems to help students to more fully interact with their world.

Using permaculture principles, the *Education from a Gardner's Perspective* course engaged students, teachers, and community members as creative beings and part of nature's system. Graduate students worked together with a 5th grade teacher from a local elementary school to develop lesson plans and garden activities. In a 15-week course, we envisioned enriching the student-teacher dynamic and cultivating the unique gifts and skills of students and teachers while participating in nature and engaging the elementary school.

In the first few classes, the students explored the design and implementation of two new elements for the elementary school garden—an herb spiral and a solar-powered geodome greenhouse. Plans included identifying the materials needed and the related cost for this project, the community stakeholders and allies desired to support and maintain the work (e.g., local farmers, librarians, master gardeners), and developing lesson plans and garden activities. A vision, informed by permaculture ethics, became patterns and actions, and ultimately brought forth a harvest. Students planted—writing a grant proposal, a few lesson plans, and garden activities. Students developed an integrated lesson plan including science, math, social studies and reading connecting to biodiversity and cultural diversity. The creation of the lesson plans and garden activities reinforced experiential learning in the garden while also embedding the essential knowledge and skills standards for the state.

The planting of the students took root and blossomed. Our yield for one year exceeded our expectations: a grant award by Whole Kids Foundation for $2000, a new partnership with the Engineering School to build the greenhouse to help extend the growing season into the winter, an herb spiral to enhance biodiversity of the garden, and lessons plans to showcase the real-world application of gardens to science, math, social

studies, language arts, and community building. The students displayed their creativity by developing the lessons plans around the country of origin and the cultures associated with the herbs being grown. One of the primary activities included submission of a family recipe to be used to create a community cookbook. Students were eager to see their learning taking shape throughout the local community. Passing on what we learned was essential for completing the cycle of learning and being a member of a community of learners.

These students were also available to assist the elementary teachers to expand their garden and engage their colleagues in this style of learning while attracting new community members like local farmers. From teachers, afterschool staff, business owners and farmers as well as faith leaders, this partnership enhanced our teaching and learning experience and built upon the garden-based work of other scholars (Gaylie, 2011; Williams & Brown, 2012) and educators (Ritz, 2017). Both university and elementary school students are no longer isolated within their own groups. We have found ways to mend the broken web of human and earth connections. Students reflected on this creative pedagogy in the following ways:

> We limit ourselves to what we see and understand in our immediate world rather than calling on the One that sees and understands the worlds He created. *What could we truly understand about the world around us if we asked him instead of "leaning on our own understanding"* (Proverb 3:5)? Student KW

> *This garden experience could help students re-imagine their discipleship efforts and the way they care for their faith.* Student RM

As students moved through the process to complete their projects, they were able to break out of the constraints that limited the possibilities they could imagine before the class.

> Paul Gautschi, the gardener featured in the film, put considerable effort into conventional methods for growing an orchard. Eventually, however, he realized that there was another method which was more effective (as well as less labor-intensive) for cultivating a fruitful orchard. Because he was willing to take the risk of abandoning the way he had always done things, he was able to experience even more success in his orchard. I hope to be the sort of teacher who, like Paul, is not afraid of trying something new and is willing to constantly reevaluate my methods. Sometimes we must

> abandon conventional and accepted methods in favor of more effective ones. Student AB

> Just as permaculture principles teach us that we must care for the land and each other in order to sustain life, *so educators must care for students in a way that sustains future generations*. Student KW

We accomplished this new vision for teaching and learning by embracing learning that is attentive, creative, iterative, interpersonal, intrinsic, and communal. Beyond the verbal-linguistic and mathematical-logical intelligences typically valued, we cultivated the other seven intelligences, including naturalist intelligence, existential intelligence, and bodily-kinesthetic intelligence (Gardner, 2011). Consistent with Dave Meier's (2000) principles for accelerated learning, we promoted these patterns:

> Learning that involves the whole mind, body, and [soul] - head, hands, and heart learning.
>
> Learning as creation and not consumption. We create connections with our existing knowledge.
>
> Learning that comes from being open to feedback as we do the work. We are trying new skills, willing to fail, and receiving feedback. In receiving feedback, we also recognize the consequences of our actions.
>
> Learning that is attentive to emotions as well as thoughts. Feeling happy and relaxed helps us to learn more.
>
> Learning that is collaborative and cooperative. Our learning speeds up when we help others to learn.

New insights, questions, and challenges to consider when taking risks with learning were dominant themes throughout the semester. Some students were much better at discerning when to ask for help and try again than were their peers. I was satisfied knowing that not all learning from the class would take place in the 15 weeks; some learning might have a cycle that does not germinate for another 15-20 weeks. To truly understand and internalize knowledge takes time, particularly if students are to ponder meaning and develop a deeper understanding of the Creator and their role in caring for creation.

Conclusion

> Whether to the Garden of the Mount of Olives or the Garden of Gethsemane, Christ regularly crept away to a garden at night to nourish himself in Creation. There he found clarity

> about his life's mission, guidance for the journey, and strength to overcome obstacles. He was transfigured in the garden—unified with our Creator and fortified by the prophets who had gone before. Let us follow Christ into the garden and be fortified (and transformed) to restore our home, the Earth. Rev Dele (2014)

Do we recognize that gardens often surround us? Do we interact with gardens? Do we allow ourselves to be fortified by the garden? Do we even know what makes a garden? A garden is a microcosm of life. My mentor, Rev Dele, shared with me after our garden journey the magnificence of a 2,000-year-old food forest in Morocco that bears witness to the positive consequences of following God's landscaping design. Just like this garden needs the different parts of the ecosystem consciously connected to flourish, we need our ecology, education, spirituality, and economy to be consciously connected.

Most of us in the United States live in a world that separates ideas, breaks up things that are whole, and flattens systems thinking into linear thoughts (Rev Dele, personal communication, August 15, 2018). As the cost of a university education continues to rise, students identify with a consumer-oriented mentality toward education. This mindset regards education as a commodified service and seeks grades and credentials over learning. Hence, perspectives like the one presented in this paper might seem irrelevant and impractical. Some students begin with the assumption that for the permaculture perspective to have value, it must have certain benefits, particularly strategic outcomes (e.g., employment opportunities), practical outcomes (e.g., transferable skills), social outcomes (e.g., social status), and personal outcomes (e.g., self-actualization; Woodall et al., 2014). There is also often some polarization among the thinkers and the doers: the former wanting more information to consume and the latter desiring to get their hands dirty but missing why we participate in this enterprise. These students are unable to see how to grasp this opportunity without significant facilitation and modeling. Like others before me, I had to become free to share my growth as both teacher and learner (hooks, 1994; Schultz, 2020). Implementing this approach is not easy, hence the immersion into the gardens from the very beginning of the course and in various ways throughout the course.

Students are also provided with an envelope in which to place letters they write to themselves about the ways they desire to grow during the semester. In these letters, they include what they are willing to sow to experience this growth and what they need from their peers and the teacher to grow. They determine from the outset the level of excellence they desire to grow into to keep the A they start with on the first day of class. On the

first day students are reminded of their uniqueness and resourcefulness and the expectation that in this season of cultivation, something new and beautiful will certainly blossom and flower. In general, students were challenged to expand the boundaries of their imaginations to create room for different ways of seeing the world and interacting with others and the earth (McNamara, 2014).

Students in the course must also break with the cultural norm to be guided primarily by a syllabus in search of a grade. Through the experience of this different course design, students come to recognize that, regardless of the venue, there are opportunities to discover and enter a new relationship with the land, each other, and all of creation. They return to the original garden design to become the humans and the community we were meant to be. They also return to the wisdom of the original garden design for metacognition—to learn how we learn. Students left the class with such profound lessons from nature:

> I have read many articles this semester that taught about the beauty of trees. These articles discussed how trees can sense when another tree is in need of nutrients and will release their nutrients through the roots to the other. This is a beautiful example of the Gospel and the Church. *To know that what we have is a gift and to freely share that with others is one of the most challenging things to teach within the church, but it is a lesson in which nature freely exhibits. How beautiful it is to realize that nature teaches us how to live and to love. How wonderful it is that God shows himself to us in the very systems that are at work within creation.* My hope is that as I continue to teach I become more and more like a tree. Student PH

We must not only open our eyes to see the gardens around us, but we must also expand our awareness to discern if the garden we see follows the original design. Does this garden nurture our spiritual formation and identity? We must strive to recognize connections we would not usually see in ourselves and in creation. This perspective will allow us to be gardeners of hand, head, heart, and community. We invite you on this journey to embrace a holistic view of teaching and learning that transforms not only the teacher and the student but also the environment and the community. Such a journey might be more beneficial in the post-COVID-19 teaching environment as we seek greater meaning in our face-to-face learning. ❖

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Stephanie Clintonia Boddie, PhD, MSW is Assistant Professor of Church and Community Ministries, Diana R. Garland School of Social Work, Baylor University, One Bear Place #97320 Waco, Texas 76798. Phone: (254) 710-4451. Email: stephanie_boddie@baylor.edu

Racial/Ethnic Socialization and Faith: Essential Ingredients for Achieving Liberation and Empowerment Among African American Youth

Eric Kyere, Stephanie C. Boddie

Although racial-ethnic socialization (RES) within the African American communities includes faith/spirituality, Christian social workers have not explored this relationship in ways that explicitly integrate the two. As a result, we have limited understanding of how Christian social workers can foster a holistic sense of self that integrates Christian and racial/ethnic identities to foster empowerment and liberation possibilities among black/African American youth. Drawing on literature related to RES and faith/spirituality, we argue that Christians social workers can integrate the process of faith development, with an explicit focus on Black liberation theology, with RES to promote psychological and spiritual liberation to foster self-worth and dignity of black youth to promote their positive development. This paper provides a review of the literature on racial/ethnic socialization. A discussion of how the Black church and liberation theology along with black history positively shapes racial identity and preparation to resist racism. We conclude with some practice and research recommendations.

***Keywords*:** African American youth; racial/ethnic socialization; racial/ethnic identity, faith; critical consciousness; racial history & heritage

THE UNITED STATES HAS A LONG AND PERSISTENT HISTORY of racism, which first manifested through the European project of colonization and enslavement of persons of color. People of African

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descent have faced centuries of racist practices and policies that have evolved through slavery, domestic terrorism advanced by lynching, Jim Crow practices, police profiling, and mass incarceration. These various forms of cultural, economic, social, and medical oppressions have continued to diminish human potential and health, often leading to avoidable deaths (Bailey et al., 2017; Washington, 2006; Williams et al., 2019). Racism—the beliefs, attitudes, practices, institutional arrangements, and acts that work to confer power on, while simultaneously stripping power from, individuals or groups based on phenotypic characteristics or racial and ethnic group affiliation (Clark et al., 1999; Virdee, 2019)— is a significant risk to development and overall well-being to African Americans and their communities. Although racism's justifying claim—the false premise that black people and other persons of color are inherently inferior in moral and intellectual endowments and therefore subhuman to whites—has been disputed, it continues unabated (Kendi, 2016). Thus, racism is a structural problem with deep roots in social institutions' foundation, including housing, education, politics, health care, and criminal justice (Bailey et al., 2017; Diamond & Lewis, 2019; Williams et al., 2019). Through these affiliated institutions and culturally reinforcing beliefs and practices, race-based policies and practices confer significant hardships on, and devalue African Americans (Bailey et al., 2017; Kyere et al., 2020; Williams et al., 2019). The disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on black communities (Fletcher, 2020a, 2020b) and the ongoing killing of black people by police are examples of the current racial contexts with which black people must contend.

Within this social context of racially subordinating and adversarial forces, black children are expected to achieve and demonstrate positive developmental competencies. Social work is called to engage in anti-racist practices that support families and communities to thrive (National Association of Social Workers [NASW, 2020]). Social workers can uniquely assist black children and their families in addressing racial hostilities from an empowerment and strengths perspective. "Social work at its best is an empowerment profession" (Lee & Hudson, 2017, p.143). Lee and Hudson (2011) suggest that three interlocking concepts inform empowerment-based social work practice: *(1) the development of a positive and potent sense of self, (2) the development of critical and comprehensive assessment of the social forces that shape one's existential experience, and (3) the development of functional competencies that necessitate liberation*. These conceptions suggest that an empowerment-based social work practice with black children should consider their racialized context, including liberatory and resilient resources within black communities. Through culturally and contextually relevant approaches (e.g., racial socialization and black religion/spirituality), social workers can connect black youth to the heroes within the black

communities and the Black church; the Biblical accounts of God as the just, conqueror, and liberator; and Jesus' social position as a minority and the social and cultural experiences that characterized his childhood (Gates Jr., 2021; Lincoln & Mamiya,1990; Stevenson, 1994; Stevenson et al., 2002; Thurman, 1975; 1976).

Racial/Ethnic Socialization

Racial/ethnic socialization (RES) refers to a process whereby African American parents/caregivers or their communities instill specific messages about racial status in children to influence personal and group identity, intergroup relationship, and adjustments in society (Hughes et al., 2006; Huguley et al., 2019; Kyere & Huguley, 2020; Stevenson, 1994; Stevenson et al., 2002). Research on best practices for optimal family functioning in African American communities has shown that RES is a set of culturally unique adaptation strategies that parents creatively integrate into their parenting practices to promote developmental competencies in black children. In general, these practices consist of 1) cultural/racial pride promotion—messages and activities that connect children to their racial heritage, culture, and history; 2) preparation for bias—practices and strategies designed to help children effectively respond to actual or potential racialized experiences; 3) egalitarianism—practices that instill the need to respect and recognize one's humanity equally; and 4) promotion of mistrust—messages that warn children to be wary of trusting individuals from other racial groups because of stereotypical narratives that racism promotes to sustain anti-black racism (Hughes et al., 2006; Huguley et al., 2019; Rodriguez et al., 2009; Stevenson, 1994). Central to RES is the critical exploration of black history where both the racial oppression and the community's cultural wealth (e.g., aspirational capital, social capital, resistant capital, linguistic capital, and spiritual capital) for navigating them are addressed (Degruy-Leary, 2005; Stevenson, 1994; Stevenson et al., 2002; Yosso, 2005). A critical feature of the community's cultural wealth embedded in black history is black religion and an intimate relationship with God, which provides the basis for self-worth and dignity (Thurman, 1975; 1976). In this paper, we draw upon Campbell and Bauer's (2021) conception of spirituality as faith practices such as prayer, scriptural contemplation, religious ritual, or intentional religious action established to maintain a divine relationship by individuals or groups with their Creator. We use the terms "faith" and "spirituality" interchangeably.

Racial/Ethnic Socialization and Positive Development

Research has associated racial/ethnic socialization (RES) with positive

developmental outcomes in several African American youth domains. These include educational outcomes (Hughes et al., 2006; Lesane-Brown, 2006; Smalls, 2010; Wang & Huguley, 2012), mental health (Fischer & Shaw, 1999; Fisher et al., 2000; Lesane-Brown, 2006), physical health (Huynh & Fuligni, 2010) and healthy racial-ethnic identity (Hughes et al., 2006; Huguley et. al., 2019). Evans and colleagues (2012) contend that positive youth's psychosocial outcomes—caring, connection, character, confidence, and competence—are linked to the racial/ethnic socialization messages and practices transmitted to African American children. For example, Murry et al. (2014) observed that RES practices fostered futuristic orientation among African American youth, which influenced positive peer affiliation. The decision to affiliate with positive peers was also associated with healthy emotional responses to stressful life events. Such positive affiliations promoted prosocial norms that discouraged youth from engaging in a range of risky behaviors such as alcohol and drug use and unsafe sexual behaviors.

As indicated above, a central goal of racial/ethnic socialization is the construction of a healthy racial/ethnic identity (Hughes et al., 2016; Huguley et. al., 2019). Racial/ethnic identity refers to the significance and subjective meaning attributed to membership in a racial/ethnic group in one's conceptualization of self (Sellers et al., 1998; Sellers et al., 1997; Huguley et. al., 2019). The construction of a healthy racial/ethnic identity is an essential developmental need, especially for African American youth. Although racism is a structural social phenomenon, it activates interpersonal relationships at micro, mezzo, and macro levels by constructing negative cultural narratives about people of color, particularly African Americans (Carter, 2018; Diamond & Lewis, 2019). Understanding the negative racialized narratives constructed about African Americans makes RES practices and strategies particularly influential in constructing healthy racial/ethnic identity among African American youth. The RES practices and strategies transmitted to African American youth, when internalized, serve to expunge and replace the negative societal stereotypes about them with positive ones through their beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors (Worrell et al., 2006).

Thus, the healthy racial/ethnic identity goal of RES suggests that effective RES practices foster critical consciousness (Mathews et al., 2019; Watts et al., 2011) to achieve a healthy racial/ethnic identity. Thus, the content of RES messages and practices provides a comprehensive knowledge of African Americans' psychohistory, a history often constituted by a loss of historical truth, concealment of historical accomplishments, and intergenerational trauma (Chapman-Hilliard & Adams-Abass, 2016; Degruy-Leary, 2005; Ferguson, 2014). Such exposure can provide the context for bolstering self-efficacy through critical consciousness to resist racism and achieve developmental goals among black youth (Chapman-

Hilliard & Adams-Abass, 2016; Hipolito-Delgado & Zion, 2015; Mathews et al., 2019). According to Karenga (1982 cited in Chapman-Hilliard & Adams-Abass, 2016, p. 486), critical consciousness of African Americans' history facilitates RES and provides a framework for both retrospective and introspective conceptualization of their humanity in others' views and their view. It helps children to unpack assumptions about their self-worth and potential.

Chapman-Hilliard and Adam-Abass (2016) argue that exposure to African Americans' historical heritage serves three functions. First, it facilitates a better self-discovery of the black racial-ethnic group members through a complete examination of their history globally. Second, it reveals the collective determination of the group in the past and future possibilities. Third, history provides a counter-narrative against the deficit-oriented myth about black people. Racial/ethnic heritage is rich in a liberation-based narrative that embodies healthy psychological development and ensures the community's continuity. Chapman-Hilliard and Adam-Abass (2016) propose that black history and heritage reflect an awareness of:

> *(1) the role African enslavement played in the structure of race and racism in the U.S.; (2) the achievement and contribution of African people before African enslavement and also the development of the United States; (3) one's positioning as it relates to capital (e.g., social, political, and economic); (4) cultural strength that fosters continuity of community and empowered action (p.486).*

Thus, RES practices within African American communities may facilitate greater historical awareness about the generative cultural, psychological, spiritual, intellectual, and navigational resources inherent in their historical narratives (Stevenson, 1994; 2002; Yosso, 2005). This understanding may catalyze healthy psychosocial functioning, which can facilitate empowerment and positive developmental outcomes and African American youth's overall well-being (Jones & Neblett, 2016; Travis Jr, & Leech, 2014). Faith/spirituality has been an integral part of RES practices within Black communities (Stevenson, 1994; Stevenson et al., 2002; Thurman, 1976). However, explicit emphasis on faith/spirituality has been less attended to as the research scholarship on RES continues to evolve, especially in the relationship between RES and the racial-ethnic identity of black youth. In the section that follows, we discuss the critical role of faith/spirituality in the healthy identity development of black youth and conclude with ways to explicitly attend to faith/spirituality and its integration with RES toward the liberation and empowerment of black youth in the context of racialized contexts.

The Power of Faith and RES

Faith/spirituality has been central to African Americans throughout slavery and after emancipation (Gates Jr., 2021; Giles, 2010). The Black church, with the history of serving the holistic (e.g., physical, emotional, social, economic, and spiritual) needs of the black families and communities (Boddie, 2004; Cnaan et al., 2006; Brice & Hardy, 2015; Gates Jr., 2021; Lincoln & Mamiya,1990) has been a central institution for the nurturance and transmission of faith/spirituality within the black communities and families. However, there is a growing decline in the post-Civil Rights era Black church, especially among the younger generation of blacks (Jordan, 2019; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Mohamed et al., 2021). Many Black churches in contemporary urban times have become more sophisticated and staider. They have adopted more of the White Christian aesthetic and focus more on adult-oriented activities with less focus on the youth's needs and interests (Gates Jr., 2021; Jordan, 2019; Lincoln & Mamiya,1990). As a result, although black youth and young adults may be interested in developing their faith/spirituality that connects to who they are and their social realities, an increasing number choose to do so outside of the Black church (Dill, 2017; Jordan, 2019). By integrating RES with faith/spirituality to foster liberation and empowerment, Christian social workers can help cultivate a healthy racial-ethnic identity of black youth in a race-conscious society.

According to Thurman (1975; 1976), faith/spirituality rooted in the teachings of Jesus and his significance to the oppressed and the socially disinherited resonates with the African Americans experience. This kind of religion can provide black youth with an alternative claim to assert their self-worth and dignity. In this regard, faith in God provides a potent life force to resolve the ambiguity of black youth's racial identity (Giles, 2010; Lincoln & Mamiya,1990; Parker, 2003; Thurman, 1976, 1975). For example, Howard Thurman's identity was constructed through the socialization provided to him by his grandmother on the navigational capital of southern Black culture. A critical component of that culture was a deep understanding of himself as a child of God. This was strengthened by a counter-narrative message his grandmother received from an "itinerant Black slave preacher" from a neighboring plantation who visited twice a year. At the end of his sermons, he reminded them that they were not niggers nor slaves, but God's children" (Giles, 2010, p.356). In his book, *Jesus and the Disinherited*, Howard Thurman (1976) established striking comparisons between the social conditions of Jesus such as his marginalized status, his community's oppression under Roman authority, discrimination, poverty, and the racialized contexts of African Americans. He argued that the religion of Jesus offers a path to liberation and empowerment for African

Americans. Jesus possessed a strong conviction of his identity as a child of God. He did not need to prove himself to those who did not accept him. Jesus did not define himself by the conditions that shaped his social reality. As he stated, "*the father who sent me has already testified of me….I do not accept glory from human beings* (*New International Version, 1973/2011*, John 5:37-41). His self-worth and respect settled his identity question and offered him the psychological equilibrium to explore creative ways of manifesting his gifts, talents, and abilities (Thurman, 1976).

Thurman (1975; 1976) contends that because of the similarity that African Americans share with Jesus' and his community's social context, faith developed in, and modeled after Jesus' kind of religion can provide a liberatory and an empowering path for African Americans to resist racism. Similarly, accounts of the Old Testament scriptures that reveal God as the deliverer, avenger, and conqueror who stands against slavery and delights in the freedom of his children strongly resonate with the African American experience of enslavement and racism (Gates Jr., 2021; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). However, white supremacy masking a Western conception of Christianity has misinterpreted the true form of Godly religion and turned it into the weapon of the socially powerful against the socially powerless (Douglass, 1845; Fanon, 1963; Gates Jr., 2021; Thurman, 1976). However, the accounts of the children of Israel in Egypt provide strategies by which African Americans and their communities help provide culturally relevant approaches to faith and spirituality that support the identity development of black youth to achieve developmental competencies. For example, although Moses was raised in Pharaoh's palace with Egyptian education to become a prince of Egypt, his Hebrew upbringing provided to him by his mother (indication of RES) helped him to negotiate his Egyptian socialization successfully and by faith lived accordingly (Exodus, 2:8-11; Hebrews 11:24-27, NIV). Moses' experience and several other accounts of Biblical heroes suggest that true faith in God is not so much about material success, but rather spiritual success, living out God's purpose (Giles, 2010; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Thurman, 1976). To achieve this success required a type of critical consciousness that drives the word of God deep into the soul (Psalm 119:11, NIV). This deep internalization of God's word can displace the possibility of being driven by emotions, fear, and negative bias that can undermine self-worth and respect and instead, function to build resiliency (Evans, 2019; Thurman, 1976).

Ethnographic works with predominantly African American youth in socially disadvantaged neighborhoods reveal the critical role of faith/spirituality in these youth's lives as they navigate their social context (Dill, 2017). Dill's participants revealed that faith/spirituality provides them the inner fortitude to navigate their social context. For example, when asked how, one participant describes it as: "By praying every time I step

out the door, wearing my spiritual jacket" (p. 699). Reviewed works by Dill (2017) linked the spirituality/faith of African American youth to an increased focus on prosocial values (e.g., empathy, justice, and cooperation) and fewer reports of criminal behaviors. Additionally, among incarcerated youth of color, faith-based talks provided an alternative lens to reframe themselves and to imagine a positive outlook within a culturally familiar and institutionally approved context (Dill, 2017). Faith in God was the "spiritual-sustaining God force used by Blacks to protect their self-worth and collective identity" (p.356). As noted, "resistant soul force is the power to create, transform, and transcend those barriers and constraints that enforce complete domestication to those values, processes, behaviors, and beliefs that reinforce human devaluation and oppression" (Stewart, 1999 cited in Giles, 2010, p. 356).

Other research corroborating the role of faith/spirituality rooted in God suggests that it fosters resiliency among adolescents, including African Americans (Campbell & Bauer, 2021; Edwards & Wilkerson, 2018; Parker, 2003). For example, reviewed work by Edwards and Wilkerson (2018) suggests that spirituality confers favorable influences on adolescents in four ways: "by helping build attachment relationships, by opening access to sources of social support, by guiding conduct and moral values, and by offering opportunities for personal growth and development" (p.49). These authors also suggest that spirituality has provided an important mechanism to foster resiliency for coping with the pain of racism.

A Biblical analysis reveals that Christians' awareness of the early apostles' and prophets' faith is vital for developing and maintaining faith, a belief system verified by actions (Evans, 2019). True Christians are called *fellow citizens with God's people and members of his [God's] household built on the foundation of both the apostles and prophets with Christ Jesus as the chief cornerstone* (Ephesians 2:19-20, NIV). A Christian and the church are established and sustained by the spiritual heritage given by the Christian church's early apostles and prophets, not on modern ideas driven by Eurocentric values. According to the holy scriptures, "it was credited to him" [Abraham] were written not for him alone, but for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the death (Romans 4:23-24, NIV).

The above text suggests that Abraham's exploits through faith are written for Christians to know that if they follow such examples and strategies, they will acquire the grace and strength Abraham gained to achieve success despite struggles and adversities. It suggests that critical awareness of historical experiences of those in the Christian faith is essential for cultivating functional faith that contemporary Christians need to thrive. Christians are encouraged and edified by the god-centered identity and godly life of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Ruth, Esther,

Mary, especially Jesus, and many others who demonstrated extraordinary courage and persistence in the face of adversity. As the eleventh chapter of Hebrews states, by learning about the resiliency of these witnesses of faith, Christians can also cultivate an inner strength through the word of God to acquire the wisdom, courage, and faith to resist injustice and oppression while persevering.

The meditation process by which faith is cultivated can be akin to the level of consciousness that researchers have associated with a critical exploration and identification with blacks' history in the United States (Chapman-Hilliard & Adam-Abass, 2016; Giles, 2010). Such consciousness reveals blacks' resilience and the subsequent accomplishment and social contributions the black race has made to society. Doing so fosters pride in their racial heritage that can make them psychologically and spiritually empowered to achieve individually and collectively (Giles, 2010; Hughes et al., 2015). Such empowerment has been shown to confer favorable effects on mental health and overall well-being on black people and their children (Hughes et al., 2015; Travis Jr, & Leech, 2014). The human experiences of social suffering and oppression as exemplified by the apostles and prophets, including Jesus himself, while painful and should not be tolerated, provide a context to carefully reframe and engage in transcendent life to effectively respond to the evils of injustice and oppression (Giles, 2010; Thurman, 1976). According to theologian James Cone, Christians from the Black church tradition like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Ida B. Wells viewed the cross and the resurrection as inspiration for hope (Cone, 2011). Both risked their lives to fight for justice and life-affirming practices and policies for African Americans. For Cone, this critical consciousness path involves empowerment through lament and forgiveness (Cone, 2011). Such understanding can foster the need to recognize the stony road walked by other black historical figures and appreciate the cross they carried. Using Cone's critical perspective, Christian social workers (African Americans in particular) who work with black youth and their families can draw parallels between the experiences of the Bible characters mentioned in Hebrews eleven (e.g., Abraham, Sarah, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and Rahab) and the accomplishments of black historical figures with enduring faith such as Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass, Booker T. Washington, Howard Thurman, Mariah Stewart, W.E. B. Dubois, Ida B. Wells, George Washington Carver, Francis Grimke, Lewis Howard Latimer, Garret Morgan, and many others. Such connection can be relied on to promote deep reflection to help black children establish a connection with these heroes, like Christians connect with the faith of the early apostles and prophets to develop and nurture faith for thriving.

In the same way that faith ignites hope and help to perceive possibilities in the context of a hopeless situation, research on possible selves suggests

that in the context of difficulties, strategies that establish a connection between youth and accomplished social identity group members help them to reframe the meaning of difficulty and engage in strategies that advance success. Oyserman and colleagues (2006) observed that black youth who are consistently exposed to historical or contemporary accomplished members of their racial-ethnic group and their resilience could reframe their difficulties and employ effective strategies to achieve developmental outcomes (e.g., improved grades and test scores, and displayed academic initiative, improved mental health, improved school attendance and positive behavior in school). Similarly, Christians seeking to follow the pattern of those living an authentic life of faith can confront the dehumanizing and oppressive forces in their lives.

Recommendations for Practice

The following practice recommendations can provide new opportunities for Christian social workers to support black youth and their families, especially concerning black children's identity development. Given the declining relevance of the Black church to black youth (Jordan, 2019; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; Mohamed et al., 2021), social workers who work with black youth should understand the racialized context's critical role of faith/spirituality within a culturally relevant framework. Family researchers have recently called for incorporating race and racism across time and space into family systems theory for practice (James et al., 2018). Social workers can help black children and talk about family history and legacy as well as their faith legacy using various innovative approaches. For example, social workers can engage black children to identify photos, drawings, and symbols to discuss their family's history and heritage. Next, help children process their feelings, think about themes emerging from the exercise, and identify actions that such feelings can motivate them to take. Second, find examples from the Bible, and help children establish a connection with their Christian faith and racial-ethnic identity. Third, identify and discuss autobiographies and biographies of accomplished, historical, or contemporary figures who are members of their racial-ethnic group with a shared Christian identity, and help children explore how these historical figures influence their lives today (See example The Ward: Race and Class in Du Bois' Seventh Ward, Oral History: Congregations, 2012). Fourth, challenge black children to consider "their possible self" as historical figures rather than the black stereotype. Connecting this vision with scripture, black children imagine how they desire to be remembered by others (e.g., family members, friends, and society). Following this, ask black children to write down at least two actions to ensure their future historical self is accomplished. Consider how black children internalize

these proactive processes and their Christian and African American history heritage to develop a powerful sense of themselves by engaging them in questioning through dialogue. Effective social workers must guard against colonialism and a distinctly white-centered perspective that can disempower youth through the white savior mentality.

Recommendation for Research

A model that helps black youth develop faith within the cultural frame by connecting them with Black church traditions birthed during the slave era can foster resilience to achieve developmental competencies and improved overall well-being. Further investigation through interviews is needed to flesh out the model with a more profound and explicit emphasis on faith/spiritual integration with RES for a more consolidated identity for black youth. Although RES within the African American communities entails spirituality, Christian social workers have not explored this relationship in ways that establish parallels with the principles and process underlying both Christian identity and racial/ethnic identity development. As a result, we have limited understanding of how Christian social workers can foster a holistic sense of self that integrates Christian and racial/ethnic identity and combine the empowerment and liberatory possibilities to support African American families and the positive developmental outcomes for African American youth. Empirical research using in-depth qualitative interviews should focus on potential mediators and moderators in understanding the mechanism by which RES and faith principles or strategies can be internalized, leading to the strengthening of identity, affecting developmental outcomes among African Americans.

Conclusion

Overall, in response to the persistent and turbulent history of racism in the United States and the developmental risks racism presents for African American youth, African American families and communities use RES to prepare their children to be psychologically, physically, socially, and spiritually healthy. In this article, we argue that a closer examination of the RES principles, strategies, and goals reveals parallels with the principles and strategies by which Christians develop and maintain their Christian identity for flourishing. We argue that Christians' awareness of the early apostles' and prophets' faith is vital to the development of a mature Christian identity. This process to mature Christian development is comparable to the critical consciousness process of African Americans' historical heritage and serves a liberatory function. This parallel suggests that Christian social workers may be well-positioned to effectively draw upon African American history and

heritage, given this group's tremendous national and global contributions, to support the healthy development of black youth. Also, because of the Christian faith's life-affirming messages, Christian social workers can draw from their clients' faith and consider the potential links to their own racial/ethnic identity. This integration of faith principles, rooted in the Jesus kind of religion, with the rich historical heritage of African Americans can facilitate anti-racist practice and promote healthy developmental outcomes of African American children and other children of color. ❖

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Eric Kyere, PhD, corresponding author, is Assistant Professor of Social Work and Adjunct Professor of Africana Studies at Indiana University, IUPUI, 902 W. New York St, Indianapolis, IN 46202. Phone: (317) 278-6516. Email: ekyere@iu.edu

Stephanie Clintonia Boddie, PhD, is Assistant Professor of Church and Community Ministries at Diana R. Garland School of Social Work, Baylor University, One Bear Place #97320, Waco, TX 7698. Phone: (254) 710-4451. Email: stephanie_boddie@baylor.edu

Addressing Spirituality: Reflections on Curriculum Integration in a Christian University

C. Jean Roberson, Rachel Hagues, Rachel Copeland

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) recognizes faith and spirituality as a dimension of individual diversity, shaping a person's identity and experiences in the world (CSWE, 2015). Social workers require an ethical integration of faith and spirituality into their professional practices. Herein, we discuss practical ways to teach students to know themselves, uncover their biases, and ethically address faith and spiritually in a way that it is less likely to be an unconscious influencer on their practice. We give examples from across our curriculum of how we are teaching students at a Christian University to wrestle with their own worldview and to recognize the choices their own worldview leads them to want to make with clients as they develop interventions.

Keywords: spirituality, faith, ethics, social work education, social work practice, competence

THE COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION (CSWE) recognizes faith and spirituality as a dimension of individual diversity, shaping a person's identity and experiences in the world (CSWE, 2015). Spirituality provides a framework for creating meaning about life experiences and translates into intentional personal practices and rituals which give rise to cultures and community (Oxhandler & Giardina, 2017). It should not be surprising, then, that approximately 74% of Americans claim that religion is somewhat important in their lives, including 53% who identify it to be very important in their lives (Pew, 2018). Spirituality is especially important among many disenfranchised populations for whom social work has traditionally been committed to

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serve (Hodge, 2000). Furthermore, clients seeking assistance with both health and mental health concerns are increasingly seeking treatment that integrates faith and spirituality (Barker & Floersch, 2010; Oxhandler & Giardina, 2017).

Senreich (2013) proposes this definition of spirituality:

> Spirituality refers to a human being's subjective relationship (cognitive, emotional, and intuitive) to what is unknowable about existence, and how a person integrates that relationship into a perspective about the universe, the world, others, self, moral values, and one's sense of meaning" (p. 553).

Moving beyond organized religious practices and dogma, this definition recognizes the broader function of spirituality in shaping one's ideas around ontology, epistemology, and axiology. Additionally, spirituality has been discussed by some as being intrinsically linked to social justice; indeed, one's spirituality may be the predominant motivator behind the desire to pursue social justice for others (Hodge, 2012). In essence, spirituality can be a key influencer of worldview, which then can give rise to an individual's religious beliefs and faith.

Social workers require an ethical integration of faith and spirituality into their professional practices. Faith integration can be defined as understanding one's beliefs and worldview as well as an awareness of its influences on professional assessment, decision making, and actions (Sherwood, 2004). One can argue that faith integration in practice is a function of metacognition. Metacognition is not only the development of knowledge, but also the ability to evaluate one's knowledge and to employ that knowledge in practice (Akyol, 2013). Having a clear understanding of one's belief system and how it shapes perceptions and internal processes is vital to appropriate and ethical integration of faith and spirituality in social work practice.

However, studies show that the majority of social workers did not receive education in their degree programs on such integration (Oxhandler & Giardina, 2017; Senreich, 2013). As a result, social workers may either avoid dealing with spiritual issues or rely on their personal spirituality to influence interventions, often without thought to ethical practice standards. This leaves clients and social workers vulnerable to unintentional ethical and boundary violations because practitioners have not had thorough training on the integration of faith into practice.

Yet according to Fowler (1979), it is usually late adolescence or early adulthood before one begins to take ownership of his or her faith along

with the lifestyle, beliefs, attitudes, and responsibilities it entails. Thus, we recognize that many of our students are still developing in their faith and worldview. For that reason, we attempt to both develop their awareness of their own worldview and their abilities to negotiate their own worldview development.

Faith Integration in Social Work Education

Much of the discussion around integrating faith and spirituality into the social work curriculum has centered either on spirituality as an aspect of client diversity or the development of direct practice skills to ethically address spirituality with social work clients (Hodge, 2000; Senreich, 2013). While some attention has been focused on student awareness of how personal spirituality impacts practice, it has not been pervasive throughout social work education. However, changes in social work education standards now make such attention imperative.

In the 2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS), the Council of Social Work Education (CSWE) defines the aim of social work education as holistic competence, knowledge, values, skills, and cognitive and affective processes (CSWE, 2015). This is a broadened scope for social work education, which previously focused on competence defined as solely knowledge, values, and skills (CSWE, 2008). The broadened scope of holistic competence sets both the more observable elements of education, such as knowledge and skills, and the less observable internal decision-making processes, such as the cognitive and affective processes, as the purview of the educator. Social work educators now are obligated to expand the curriculum and pedagogy to intentionally engage and make explicit these internal, implicit elements that influence practice. A social worker's spiritual framework is part of these internal elements that comprise holistic competence, and social work educators have a responsibility to support student development regarding awareness of how these frameworks serve as both filters and blinders when in practice.

The move to holistic competence, with the inclusion of cognitive and affective processes, encompasses professional judgement, resulting practice, and critical thinking. Efforts to examine holistic competence point to the importance of the personal internal elements that influence practice. Bogo et al., (2014) identify holistic competence as the combination of procedural competence and meta-competence. Procedural competence involves those elements that are external and observable, such as knowledge and skills. Meta-competence, they argue, includes those internal processes that influence decision-making and guide actions. Poulin and Matis (2015) argue for three levels of competence: cognitive competence, performance competence, and holistic competence. In their

framework, holistic competence builds on both cognitive and performance competence while extending to critical thinking, emotions, and self-awareness when engaged in professional decision-making. Both models underscore the move from the external implementation of knowledge and skill to the valuing of the internal processes of the student and the role these play in a social worker's professional decision-making. This includes a student's spirituality.

The heightened value of these internal processes is further validated when examining the learning process. Constructivism, a dominant paradigm in contemporary education, asserts the subjective nature of learning (Krahenbuhl, 2016). Foundational to this paradigm is the assertion that individuals create meaning from experiences, integrating new and old experiences to create new learning (Garrison, 2013). The assertion is that learning is subjective, with each student entering into the classroom with a personal level of knowledge based on past experiences with meaning ascribed to those experiences (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). This subjective meaning serves as part of the internal processes within the student, and it is these internal processes that serve as filters through which the student then interprets professional situations, impacting professional judgment and action. In the 2015 EPAS, CSWE writes that such processes "inform" behaviors (CSWE, 2015, p.7).

Given the vast scope of practice for social workers, educators must extend this holistic competence focus beyond direct practice (micro-level) content. This focus must be present across the curriculum, including content focused on policy, diversity, and research, especially given that such internal processes inform all aspects of practice behaviors, as DeCuir-Gunby and Schutz (2017) address in their discussion of how worldviews shape research methods. We recognize that worldview shapes not only research methods and processes, but how one thinks about diversity, how we advocate for specific policies, and other areas of practice.

Worldview Continuum

Oxhandler et al. (2021) assert that social work educators, particularly but not limited to those in faith-based institutions, have a unique and critical opportunity to facilitate faith and social work integration. Housed in a conservative, Christian institution, our program included a tenth competency to address the ethical integration of faith and spirituality, helping students think about themselves, their future practice, and their clients. For example, we incorporate readings on how faith acts as a filter in practice (Chamiec-Case, 2007) and how to approach spiritual assessment with clients (Hodge, 2005).

Additionally, we approach faith integration by seeking to develop student metacognition of worldview and its influence on their developing practice. Table one, first developed by Graham (1997) and modified by the authors, offers a helpful explanation of some of the most current worldview frameworks that help us to understand the world. While the authors teach at a Christian University and from a Christian perspective, we know that some of our students do not identify as Christians or even as spiritual. Using a worldview framework reaches all of our students -- those who identify with a faith tradition and those that do not. Additionally, this framework pulls students away from a focus on specific doctrines and beliefs toward an awareness of the fundamental assumptions that undergird their worldviews, unconsciously shaping values, perceptions, and reaction.

We suggest that everyone falls somewhere on this chart, though we see the chart as a continuum. Some people might find themselves straddling more than one category. The further left someone is on the chart, the more "positivist" that person likely is, meaning the student is a more objective thinker, and in regards to morality, sees things in clear absolutes. The further to the right one gets, the more grey that person sees the world, and the more comfortable that person may be with relativism (Senreich, 2013). In the first semester of the program, we ask our students to identify where they see themselves on the chart, articulating how they see these assumptions unconsciously influencing their perceptions and values. For example, one's worldview has implications for the emphasis that person places on sources of authority: objective, quantitative sources, or personal experience. One's worldview has implications for how one initially understands dysfunction, biological or relational, as well as the theories a person finds more comfortable. Students are assigned readings that describe various worldviews, and in a reflective discussion post are asked to identify where they see themselves on the chart, and why. Additionally, they are asked to discuss how this might influence their professional work. During the next class session, and in subsequent sessions, this is discussed and reinforced when opportunities arise. Each of us reinforces this by structuring our courses in a way that promotes student awareness of their worldview. This knowledge can help students to understand and manage their personal views when working with clients, no matter the scope of practice, working with more intentionality instead of reacting out of personal, unconscious preferences.

Table 1
Worldview Continuum

	Positivist	Postpositivist	Critical	Constructivist
Reality	Objective reality exists & can be known	Objective reality exists but we cannot fully understand it	Objective reality may exist but we cannot fully understand it	Objective reality does not exist, only multiple constructions of reality exist
Laws	Reality is governed by natural laws that do not change	There are natural laws that govern reality but we cannot fully understand them	Natural laws that govern reality cannot be completely understood	Constructions are experimentally based and depend on the persons
Facts	There are objective/value-free facts that can be known	Some value-free/ objective facts can be known	There are no objective/value-free facts. "Facts" exist to benefit the most powerful.	There are no objective/value-free facts. One's truth depends on where they are situated in the world.
Morality	Moral absolutism	There are some moral absolutes.	Morality is judged by those in power; those without power are considered immoral or at-fault.	Moral relativism

Adapted from Graham (1997).

Though Graham (1997) did not include morality on the original chart, we have added it because social workers are often addressing client or policy issues that can be seen as having moral weight. Regardless of the issue addressed, social workers must have an awareness that their personal beliefs could unknowingly influence professional decisions and lead to ethical violations. Social workers must be aware of areas of tension in order to effectively provide a safe, non-judgmental space for clients to make their own choices. An unaware professional can potentially impose a belief system on a client. Creating opportunities for students to examine the influence of their beliefs on social work practice in a classroom setting prepares them to appropriately handle these challenges in future social work practice.

Curriculum Examples

Human Rights and Social Justice/Ethics Course

Abortion can be a controversial and divisive topic. Depending on one's belief on the issue, they can see the "other side" as encroaching on someone's rights (e.g. the right of the woman or the right of the unborn child). Whether engaging in micro-level or macro-level practice, a social worker may be confronted with this issue. In this course, students are given case studies to contextualize a pregnant client's situation and are then asked to debate either a pro-choice or pro-life stance. Students are assigned to groups (regardless of their values), and asked to argue their assigned view on the issue. This allows students who may see abortion differently from their assigned group the opportunity to better understand the other perspective. The goal of this exercise is not to force students to change their view on the issue, but to gain more understanding and empathy for the other side, as well as consider facts or views that they may have not previously considered.

Incorporating the emphasis on worldview in this exercise, we observe the worldview assumptions informing how students form their opinions. For example, those who tend to be more positivist or postpositivist give primary attention to perceptions of right and wrong and how their sources of spiritual and moral authority deal with this issue. Those who tend to be more critical or constructivist trend towards giving primacy to the voices of those who have experienced the issue, highlighting the importance of human suffering and human flourishing. By drawing the students' attention to the internal processes and assumptions they use to form their opinions, we are creating awareness of the unconscious influence of worldview. Additionally, by highlighting the process a person uses to form value positions and attitudes on morality, students can see with greater clarity similar processes at work in those with opposing views, allowing for less demonization of those who hold different views and find common ground which leads to empathy and from which to engage in dialogue.

Diversity Course

As we are situated in a southern, conservative community and university, many of our students have a wide range of views on sexuality, and often their faith shapes their views on the issues of sexuality. In our program, we address sexuality as an issue of diversity. Our goal is to develop our students' abilities to be compassionate, while helping them understand that their personal beliefs can impact how they treat their clients. Students are asked to watch the movie *Boy Erased* at home. The movie follows the son of a conservative pastor who goes to college, wrestles with his sexuality, realizes he is gay, and comes out to his parents. His father sends

him to conversion therapy while his mother struggles to decide whether to support her son or align herself with her husband and faith. In class, students are asked to dialogue about how they could support each of the main characters to promote healthy family relationships. They are asked to utilize theories, such as family systems theory or ecological theory, to think through systematic ways they can come alongside the family without biasing the intervention with personal beliefs.

In an effort to reinforce the role of worldview, this class, which is primarily composed of white women, engages in conversations about worldview and how worldview can be the hidden driver for the development of implicit biases, systemic racism, cultural upbringing, and white privilege. Students vary in their exposure to these issues when they begin class. The students engage in substantial self-reflection, focused on the role of privilege in the development of their worldview and the students' personal beliefs. We work to create a safe place where students can share and ask questions, while also modeling that all social workers of all professional stages continuously grow and learn.

Practice Courses

In all practice courses, students engage in simulations with standardized clients. Scenarios are constructed to specifically create tension between student values and beliefs and client values and beliefs. For example, one scenario involves an adult woman from a conservative Christian home who is experiencing anxiety over her sexual orientation, facing potential conflict with her family of origin. The simulations are video-recorded and students are asked to write a paper reflecting on and evaluating their interaction with the client. Class discussion follows the written assignment, identifying how personal beliefs served as filters for what students could and could not "hear" from the client and how they positioned themselves in relation to the client.

Additionally, the students in our institution often hold beliefs formed from the teachings of others and developed through life experiences that limited their exposure to complex issues. By orchestrating direct contact with someone dealing with a complex issue, students must struggle with the tension created when beliefs and experiences collide. We find that those who identify as more positivist in worldview often react to the client from a moral understanding of right and wrong, emphasizing the need for the client to align with her stated belief system. For those who are more constructivist, the response to having a personal experience with someone dealing with conflict over sexuality produces a more emotional, advocacy response on behalf of the client. By personalizing the issue, students find themselves questioning their beliefs and values. While this simulated experience is significant in helping the student see how worldview influences responses

to clients, the ultimate goal of the exercise is to begin developing the ability to grow. This tension allows us to openly address the processes we employ as our worldviews and beliefs begin to shift. The goal is to nurture the development of strategies that enable students to consciously engage their worldviews, fostering growth and adaptability, and to struggle with aligning those changing worldviews with developing beliefs and doctrines, recognizing the interchange between faith and practice (Oxhandler et al., 2021). The ability to do so has strong implications for work with individuals and families, as well as with the development of policy and laws.

Field Education

As noted, our social work program has added a tenth competency which is "the ethical integration of faith and spirituality." As an added competency, students are expected to address this in their field education experience, in both the faith-based and non-faith-based sites. The Director of Field Education meets with all field instructors to discuss this competency and the importance of including spirituality in social work practice across all scopes of practice, as well as to identify how this competency is experienced in their individual agencies. For both kinds of sites, the conversation quickly focuses on how clients create meaning for their situations and experiences and the staff's ability to engage clients on these issues when clients raise them. The focus on worldview appeals to the sites, specifically those that are not faith-based because the focus is on the underlying assumptions that inform how one creates meaning and defines what is good, bad, valuable, and invaluable.

Students are expected to develop goals for field related to this competency, as they do with all the social work competencies. All goals are evaluated accordingly. As a goal, field instructors are also encouraged to discuss with students how personal beliefs and values are impacted by the field education experience. Even more, field instructors are empowered to discuss worldview and the underlying assumptions that shape practice, identifying the strategies the students use to negotiate the changes in those assumptions and how that influences the changes in beliefs.

Faith Integration Course

Our program requires a faith integration course during the summer semester, between the foundation and concentration years of the program. It is offered at this point in the curriculum so that advanced standing students are included. While this course reviews some theological concepts, it is taught mostly from a philosophical perspective with the goals of 1) helping students to understand how their faith or worldview influences social work practice; and 2) teaching students how to confidently use a client's faith or worldview as a source of support. The concept of promoting

human flourishing as a theological tenet, grounded in the Genesis account of creation, is used to provide guidance to students who feel that their faith may conflict with a social work issue. In this class, students are exposed to a broad spectrum of issues that social workers and conservative Christians may not typically agree on, for example corporal punishment, international adoption, and the death penalty. Students watch documentaries, listen to podcasts, and read texts that expose them to diverse views of these issues and write in discussion posts or papers about incorporating this new information into existing paradigms. This reinforces and specifically targets the use of worldview in social work practice.

Lessons Learned

In many ways, approaching faith integration from the standpoint of worldview has been beneficial. First, the approach is engaging. Students are intrigued to find themselves on the continuum. Students who vary in faith perspectives and who identify as not having a faith actively participate in these discussions. Students express both verbally and in writing their desire to learn more about how their worldview shapes their perspective and even influences their concept of helping. Often students refer to their worldview as they are moving through the program. Second, this approach also allows us to have discussions on faith integration that are non-threatening and supportive, especially in an environment where it can feel isolating if you differ from those who identify as conservative Christians. Another significant takeaway is that this inclusiveness extends into the field relationships we have with both faith-based and secular agencies. We find this as an avenue to discuss faith integration as an issue for all practitioners, regardless of the nature of the agency. This may have implications for how secular institutions can also approach faith integration.

There remain significant challenges. While we have chosen this approach, it is too easy for each of us to become siloed and see this content as a piece of what we teach rather than a developmental process that weaves throughout the curriculum. There remain opportunities for greater coordination among faculty. Additionally, we have yet to fully research the effectiveness of this approach. Future research would include tracking students over time to identify any shifts in worldview as the students move through the curriculum. Finally, because of our context, the majority of our students express a sense of calling to social work, rooted in their Christian beliefs. As a result, many struggle with the tension of the ethicality of practice and the evangelical nature of their faith. Negotiating those issues, when we deal with the same struggle as educators, can become challenging when you also recognize the power differentials at play and that we, too, have worldviews that shape our practice with students.

Conclusion

Because social workers often support clients as they struggle through challenging life issues (which tend to be informed by one's faith or spirituality), we must address spirituality and its ethical integration as we prepare social work students for competent practice. Without adequate preparation, students may develop into professional social workers who do not understand the influence of their beliefs on professional practice. This can inadvertently cause damage to already vulnerable populations. Furthermore, the appreciation and integration of spirituality may equip social workers across the world to "counter trends...of imperialism, genocide, sexism, religious persecution, environmental racism, homophobia, and other forms of alienation and oppression" (Canda, 2005, p. 103). It is incumbent upon social work programs to intentionally address spirituality in a safe and supportive environment, where students can be challenged without feeling threatened. Through social work education, students can develop the necessary self-awareness to appropriately and ethically meet clients' needs. ❖

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C. Jean Roberson, DSW, is Assistant Professor of Social Work and Director of Field Education, Samford University, 800 Lakeshore Drive, Birmingham, AL, 35229. Phone (205) 726-4669. Email: croberso@samford.edu.

Rachel Hagues, Ph.D, is Assistant Professor of Social Work, Samford University, 800 Lakeshore Drive, Birmingham, AL, 35229. Phone (205) 726-4489. Email: rhagues@samford.edu.

Rachel Copeland, Ph.D, is a private practitioner, Copeland Counseling and Consulting, 3 Office Park Circle, Suite 220, Birmingham, Al, 35223. Phone: (205) 578-2566. Email: rachelcopelandphd@gmail.com.

ARTICLE: RESEARCH

Integration of Faith and Spirituality in Social Work Education: A Systematic Review of Evidence in the Last 35 Years (1985-2020)

A. Christson A. Adedoyin, Sharon E. Moore, Rachel Copeland, Olufunmilayo O. Folaranmi

This research systematically synthesizes the conceptual understanding, guiding theological, or denominational orientations, and the most promising pedagogical models for integrating faith and spirituality into social work education curricula. Accordingly, we reviewed published peer-reviewed journals in the last 35 years (1985-2020). This systematic review answers three main research questions: 1) What is the array of conceptual definitions of faith and spirituality integration in social work education; 2) Are there theological, and or, denominational orientations influencing the definitions, and integration, of faith and spirituality in social work education? and; 3) What are the available pedagogical models for integrating faith and spirituality into social work education? A conclusion is presented with implications for pedagogy, research, and policy in Christian social work programs.

Keywords: Faith, spirituality, integrating faith and learning, pedagogical models, social work

IN THE PAST TWO DECADES THERE HAS BEEN A RENAISSANCE of the integration of faith and learning (IFL) into social work education and practice (Barker, 2013; Brenden, 2007Cecil & Stoltzfus, 2007;

Crisp, 2020; Kvarfordt et al., 2018,; Pandya, 2015; Sherr et al., 2007). Recently, a 2012 Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) data set on accredited programs indicated that of the 467 accredited BSW programs, 35% (163 programs) are situated in private religion-affiliated institutions (Barsky et al., 2015). Similarly, Moffat and Oxhandler (2018 reported that in 2016, at least 78 (30.4%) of 257 accredited or in-candidacy Master of Social Work programs in the United States included a course on religion and spirituality (RS) as part of their curricula. Sherr et al. (2006) found that a plurality of students and parents choose to pay higher tuition at Christian Universities compared to public universities in expectation of learning a Christian worldview of a profession or discipline (Sherr, et al., 2007).

Scholars have attributed this shift to the global embrace of spirituality, to a dip in neo-liberalism, and to the ascendancy of the importance of integrating spirituality into social work practice (Ai et al., 2004; Hodge, 2018; Oxhandler, 2017; Oxhandler et al., 2018). This paradigm shift has suddenly changed the hitherto oppositional and negative perceptions to a positive reception of the integration of faith and spirituality into social work education, field education, and, most importantly, clinical practice (Canda et al., 2019; Oxhandler, 2017; Oxhandler & Stanford, 2018).

Consequently, the number of accredited faith-based social work programs increased, and an attendant proliferation of publication on the integration of faith and spirituality into social work education curricula, in particular, has burgeoned (Canda et al, 2019; Crisp, 2020; Hodge 2018). In the same vein, there is an attendant proliferation of publication of the integration of faith and spirituality into social work education curricula (Cecil & Stoltzfus, 2007; Hodge & Derezotes, 2008; Moffat & Oxhandler, 2018 Sherr, et al., 2007).

Justification for the Current Study

Based on the aforementioned, we conducted a thorough literature search and examination of at least 10 major databases, and we found no aggregated, or synthesized published study that focused on the pedagogy of the integration of faith and spirituality into social work education curricula. A knowledge gap, therefore, exists in the literature on the most effective, and evidence-based pedagogy for integrating faith and learning (IFL) in social work education curricula. There is an urgent need to fill this knowledge gap to provide accessible curricula resources to the current generation, and to future generations of Christian social work professors to train and prepare the next generation of evidence-informed social workers who can ethically integrate faith into their practice after graduation (Canda et al, 2019; Cecil & Stoltzfus, 2007; Furman et al., 2011; Hodge, 2018; Oxhandler, 2017; Oxhandler et al., 2018; Seitz, 2014).

Research Purpose and Research Questions

This review presents the synthesized result of research studies which explored the conceptual understanding, guiding theological, or denominational orientations, and the most promising pedagogical models of integrating faith and spirituality into social work education curricula that have been published in peer-reviewed journals in the last 35 years (1985-2020).

Research Questions

The three major research questions that undergirded this study's purpose are:

1) What is the array of conceptual definitions of faith and spirituality integration in social work education (curriculum/courses)?

2) Are there specific theological or denominational orientations influencing the definitions, and integration, of faith and spirituality in social work education (curriculum/courses)?

3) What are the available pedagogical models for integrating faith and spirituality into social work education (curriculum/courses)?

Extant Literature on Spirituality, Religiosity, and Faith

Conceptual and Operational Definitions

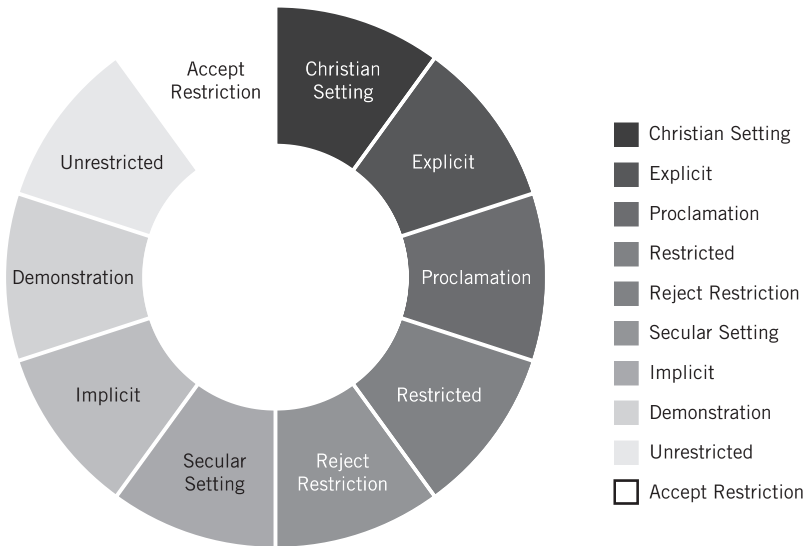
Spirituality encompasses a transcendental awareness, aspiration, and connection to the realm of the spirit (celestial) for man's deeper understanding of their role(s) here on earth (temporal and terrestrial) (Ai et al., 2004). It is also conceptualized as a relationship between humans in the temporal and realities that exist in perpetual continuity (eternal) for the service, or good of mankind in the terrestrial (Barker, 2007, 2013; Barsky et al., 2015). On the other hand, Canda et al., (2019) define religion as a group-driven aspect of spirituality which includes structurally and socially organized rituals, culture, language, and sanctions in which people collectively engage to relate with the supernatural. Similarly, faith is conceptualized as a transaction, communication, and actionable-belief in the realm of the spirit or higher power (Barsky et al., 2015). Faith also encompasses a person's belief in the spiritual, or religious realms/entities. Williams and Smolak (2007) refer to faith as an integral aspect of spirituality and religion.

Using Hasker's (1992) model, as cited by Cecil and Stoltzfus (2007, p.234), faith integration is conceptually defined as "*a scholarly project whose goal is to ascertain and to develop integral relationships which exist between the Christian faith and human knowledge, particularly as expressed in the various academic disciplines*" (Hasker, 1992, p. 234, as cited in Cecil & Stoltzfus, 2007). Furthermore, Olson (2014) operationalized the integration of faith and learning as the way students know and understand their own understanding of the world to better understand clients. In the same vein, Jensen-Hart et al., (2014) operationalized faith integration as the student's views and beliefs, as written in a reflection journal and dialogued with the field supervisor ostensibly in a social work field and supervision setting.

Conceptual Framework of IFL in Social Work Literature

Cecil and Stoltzfus (2007) offered an integrative framework that delineated the different dimensions of faith integration in social work curricula called decagon (Cecil & Stoltzfus, 2007 see Figure 1). The decagon is a comprehensive schema that enables social work professionals to integrate faith into five separate dimensions such as implicit and explicit curricula, faith-based and secular settings of practice, restricted and unrestricted environments, and demonstrable and proclamatory situations.

Figure 1:
Dimensions of Faith Integration: The Decagon



Note: Adapted from Dimensions of Faith integration Decagon Framework (Cecil & Stoltzfus, 2007)

Ethical Considerations and Faith Integration in Social Work Curricula

While emphasis is strongly laid on integration of faith in practice settings, Furman et al. (2011) were concerned that students may be insufficiently prepared conceptually, cognitively, and theoretically in class to integrate spirituality and religion into practice, and therefore, may be incompetent to address clients' needs for faith integration interventions in practice settings. To further amplify this disconnect, Rothman (2009) asserts that while much emphasis continues to be laid on the importance of integrating religion and spirituality into the broad spectrum of the social work curricula, there is the absence of a well-defined and articulated pedagogy for integrating faith into social work curricula. Consequently, Seitz (2014) asserted that there is an urgent need to develop and assess specific curriculum models to help determine best practices in the integration of faith in the curricula.

The boundaries of faith integration and practicing in social work are clearly articulated by the CSWE EPAS, NASW Code of Ethics (2017) and the 2015 NASW Standards for Cultural Competence .More specifically, Seitz (2014) cites the CSWE, 2008, Educational Policy, 2.1.7, which noted that the CSWE standards "include expectations that programs specifically integrate content on spiritual development within human behavior curriculum or courses" (pg. 337). Some literature explains that for educators to integrate faith into learning, they must first have a deep understanding and personal faith, as well as extensive knowledge of social work ethics (Sherr et al., 2007).

Furthermore, Barker (2013) advises that programs should have spiritual and religious diversity, and also writes that as social workers, educators are ethically bound to support research of integration of faith in learning and integration of faith in practice. Manfred-Gilham (2009) points out that the CSWE considers religion to be a part of diversity, and that the NASW Code of Ethics calls for all social workers to pursue justice against religious discrimination. Though Caferky (2014) does not explicitly mention any ethical considerations, he does mention the idea of having a Christian Ethics course implemented into faith-in-learning-based curriculums. It is clear from the aforementioned that there are many ethical considerations in integrating faith into learning, both on how to, and why this should be done. Milner (2014) mentions the importance of programs adhering to personal and professional ethics in practice and behaviors. Overall, the review of the literature underscores and supports the integration of faith in learning as an ethical decision in the social work profession.

The Controversies and Debates of IFL in Social Work Curricula

As with all of social work, ethics is of high importance and while integrating faith in social work education, there is no exception. Olsen (2014) discussed that no student should be excluded from a program because of their beliefs, but that integration of faith in learning should still be in curriculum consideration. As mentioned by Seitz (2014), faith is very personal and carries a different meaning for different individuals, and programs should be open to all faiths while integrating faith in learning from the beginning of the program and throughout to the program's completion.

Some programs and faculty see harm in integrating faith in learning, while others see positives, and that both of these need to be explored by programs (Barsky et al., 2015). Jensen-Hart et al., (2014) explore the subject of teaching students how sensitive the integration of faith in practice can be for clients. Meanwhile, Cecil and Stoltzfus (2007) stress the importance of not letting social work education programs lose their rigor of studies, but finding ways to integrate faith into social work education more.

Summarily, as it relates to ethical issues of integrating faith into learning in social work, our review of 16 penultimate potential studies for this study found that three programs (18.75%) mentioned the National Association of Social Work (NASW) Code of Ethics as their guideline. Similarly, 13 of 16 studies (81.25%) referred to the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards as the guideline for ethical guideline for integrating faith into learning. Each article discussed the importance of ethics and ethical considerations in different manners, but all clearly state the importance of being sensitive to, and aware of, ethical standards when integrating faith into learning in social work education (curriculum/courses).

Moreover, Seitz (2014) highlighted the limited attention to curriculum content development and inadequate pedagogical models on how to incorporate spirituality into the curriculum. One of the problems mentioned by Streets (2009) is the lack of specificity related to religious integration into the curriculum. On the other hand, Hodge et al., (2006) emphasized limited content and commitment as a pivotal reason for the overall underdevelopment of pedagogical strategies to integrate faith across the social work curricula.

Fortunately, there are some suggestions to address the aforementioned knowledge gaps. For instance, Barker (2007) highlighted the importance of classroom and internship trainings as avenues to train future professionals to address spirituality/religiosity with clients. Similarly, Sherwood (1999) accentuated the importance of faith integration and the necessity of developing a complexity of competencies related to practice in faith-based settings. Furthermore, Seitz (2014) recommends the development of explicitly, and uniquely Christian faith integration models, curricula,

and knowledge-base that professors, and field supervisors can utilize to train students. Inevitably, the knowledge-base will help students in their development and exploration of integrating faith (and spirituality/religiosity) into the needs of their clients in their future practice. Accordingly, Seitz (2014) best summarized the urgent necessity of integrating faith into learning of social work students by stating that "social work educators are expected to ensure that students develop these competencies through assessing student attainment of specific competence and related practice behaviors threshold for professional practice" (p. 337).

The Methodology

Petticrew and Roberts (2006) define systematic reviews as "Literature reviews that adhere closely to a set of scientific methods that explicitly aim to limit systemic error (bias), mainly by attempting to identify, appraise, and synthesize all relevant studies (of whatever design) in order to answer a particular question (or a set of questions)" (p.9). Similarly, the Campbell Collaboration states that the purpose of systematic reviews is to evaluate and synthesize available research evidence in order to answer certain research questions, and ultimately minimize bias (Campbell Collaboration Steering Group, 2014).

Furthermore, inclusion and exclusion criteria were stated *a priori* to identify studies or presentations that would meet the purpose of the current study as recommended by Cooper et al., (2009) and Bronson and Davis (2012). The appropriateness of systematic review as the study design for this current study is best summarized by Littell and White (2018) who affirmed that systematic reviews allow for the synthesis of different studies focused on a topical issue whilst ensuring the methodological rigor, reliability, and validity of the synthesized studies.

Variables and Units of Analysis

The main dependent variable for the current study are social work program curricula (that is, courses/modules). The independent variable is the specific pedagogy/models of integrating faith/spiritual content in social work curricula. In addition are moderator variables which include: (i) Type of program (BSW, MSW, MSW/MDiv, PhD., etc), (ii) Type of Institution (Faith/Secular institution of the social work program), (iii) Curriculum/subject specific area (e.g. Human Behavior in the Social Environment, Field education, etc.), (iv) Denominational affiliation (Catholic, Protestant, Evangelical, etc.); (v)Type of integration (Implicit/Explicit integration/Decagon dimensions), and (vi) Focus integration content was on spirituality or religion. The unit of analysis was the faith-based pedagogy/model curriculum result of an individual study that was methodologically included in this systematic review.

Database to Locate Studies

Data Source

A purposive and comprehensive database search was conducted for published and gray studies retrievable between January 1985-October 2020 on integrating faith and learning in social work programs (curricula, specifically). The 10 computerized databases searched include: PubMed, CINAHL, PsychInfo, Social Work Abstracts, Social Services Abstracts, Google Scholar, SocIndex, Applied Social Services Index and Abstracts, ProQuest Dissertation and Theses (PQDT) and Atla religion. In our commitment to ensure that unpublished dissertations were not overlooked in the eligible studies, the dissertation-based electronic database ProQuest Dissertation and Theses (PQDT) were included in our list of searched and consulted databases.

Search Strategy and Algorithm

Search terms used for this systematic review include: Social work education and faith integration, social work education and spiritual integration, faith, or spiritual, or religio* integration and social work curriculum, faith, or spiritual, or religio* integration and course module. The more specific search term was: "social work" AND "faith integration" OR "spiritual integration" AND "Curriculum" OR "course."

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

In order to minimize bias theoretically, methodologically, and conceptually in the selection of eligible studies to be included in a systematic review, Bronson and Davis (2012) recommended that inclusion and exclusion criteria should be decided in advance before conducting a systematic review. Accordingly, the inclusion and exclusion criteria serve as guardrails, and form a shopping list of studies that independent reviewers can utilize to replicate included studies in a systematic review (Bronson and Davis, 2012). To this end the inclusion criteria for eligible studies for this study are as follows:

Table 1
Inclusion Criteria for Eligible Studies

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
1. Studies or presentations focused on faith (spirituality/religion) integration in specific course/module across the social work curriculum	1. Studies or presentations that are conceptual discussions of the importance of integrating faith (spirituality/religion) but no specific course content in social work curriculum.
2. Studies or presentations focused on specific integration of faith content across the social work curriculum at the BSW/MSW/MSW-MDiv/PhD	2. Studies or presentations that investigated/surveyed students' perceptions of the importance of the integration of faith into social work education
3. Studies or presentations that investigated faith integration at secular and faith-based social work programs	3. Studies or presentations that focused on/surveyed faculty members' perceptions of the relevance of faith/spirituality in social work education
4. Studies or presentations demonstrating integration of faith either explicitly, or implicitly in a social work course/module/field practice	4. Studies or presentations focusing on the integration of faith/spirituality in social work practice (post-graduation BSW/MSW)
5. Studies or presentations on faith integration in social work curriculum published, or presented in the last 35 years (1985-2020)	5. Non-social work publications that focused on integration and learning
6. Studies published in peer-reviewed journals, books, dissertations, and/or presented at a juried conference	6. Publications/presentations that focused on the integration of faith and learning in other faith traditions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, etc
7. Studies published, or presentations done in the USA	7. Studies published, or presentations delivered outside of the USA
8. Studies published or presented only in English Language	8. Research/studies/presentations not in English Language
	9. Studies published, or presentations before 1985 (and after October 2020)

Results

Study Population and Sample

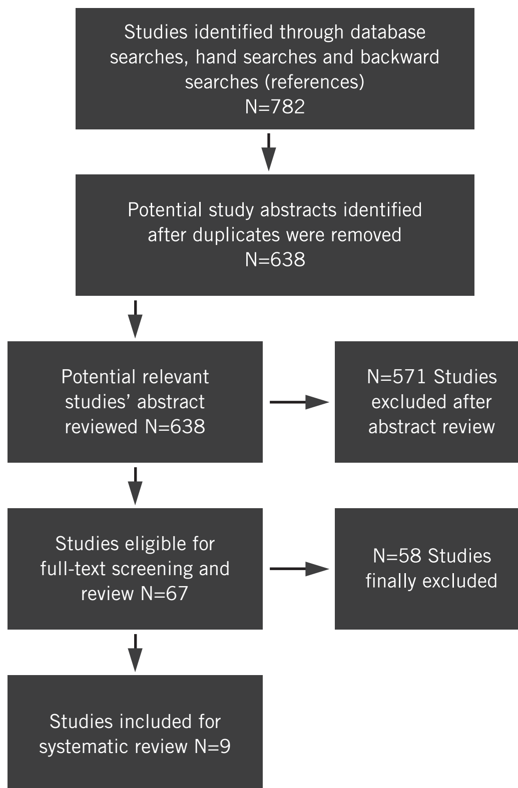
Guided by the inclusion-exclusion criteria and the search terms, the initial databases and hand searches resulted in a population of 782 eligible studies. Consequently, the authors adopted a four-step iterative process based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses (PRISMA) protocol for screening studies was developed by Littell et al., (2008), and Moher, et al., (2009). Based on the four-step

iterative process for screening studies, the following decisions were made:

1. 144 duplicated studies were removed.
2. 638 studies that remained were reviewed (title and abstracts) and re-examined for study relevance.
3. 67 studies were identified for full-text review and inclusion in the systematic review based on the *apriori* inclusion-exclusion criteria. 571 studies were eventually excluded.
4. Final study screening using inclusion-exclusion criteria resulted in 9 (1.150%) primary studies eligible for systematic review.

Consequently, the PRISMA flowchart (Littell et al., 2008; Moher et al., 2009) which is a four-phase flow diagram that delineated the studies' selection and screening processes for this current systematic review is presented as Figure 2.

Figure 2:
PRISMA Flow Diagram for Studies Screening and Inclusion Process



Data Extraction and Article Coding

Pertinent data relevant to answering the research questions for this systematic review were extracted and coded for the nine studies that met the inclusion criteria. To this end, a modified version of the data abstraction form utilized in a previously published study was used (see Adedoyin, 2013). The nine articles were coded on four major dimensions of the study's interest such as: Descriptive information of the article (author, year, source, and title); Definition of faith and spirituality/religion and integration in social work; Specific theological, and or, denominational orientations influencing the definition, and integration of faith and spirituality in social work education, and specific theological, and or, denominational orientations influencing the definition, and integration of faith and spirituality in social work education.

Discussion

Array of Conceptual Definitions of Faith and Spirituality Integration in Social Work Education

For the first research question for this study, a modified summary of finding table (used to display research findings from systematic review) as recommended by the Cochrane Collaboration (Schünemann, et al., 2008) was utilized to display the different attempts by the included studies to conceptually provide a definition of faith and spirituality integration in social work education (See Table 2). The summary of findings indicated that only two studies (Milner, 2014; Sherr, 2010;) provided a conceptual definition or framework for the definition of faith integration in social work education compared to the other seven studies (77.7%) that did not offer any conceptual or working definition of what faith integration is in their respective social work education curricula.

More specifically, Sherr (2010) defined and operationalized faith integration into the social work curricula as a Christian vocational undertaking. Similarly, Milner (2014) framed faith integration into social work curricula as the operationalization of the Judeo-Christian concept of heeding a calling. The absence of well-articulated definition or conceptual framework is not only worrisome but poses a challenge to other faith-based educators who may have the motivation but no citation or unanimous conceptual definition of the meaning of faith integration in social work curricula.

Table 2: The Array of Conceptual Definitions of Faith and Spirituality Integration In Social Work Education (Curriculum/Courses)

Publication	Definition of Faith and Spirituality Integration in Social Work Education (Curriculum/Courses)?
1. Northcut (2005)	No definition provided but an overview of the importance of spirituality/faith in the social work course.
2. Brenden (2007)	No definition offered. Instead, the importance of the role of spirituality/faith in social work curriculum.
3. Manfred-Gilham (2009)	No definition stated. Instead, the imperativeness of the nexus of spirituality/faith in social work education.
4. Sherr (2010)	Utilized the Christian Vocational Framework to conceptualize and operationalize IFL in SWK
5. Tangenberg (2011)	No definition offered, instead the importance of the role of spirituality/faith in social work curriculum.
6. Jensen-Hart, Shuttleworth & Davis (2014)	No definition provided, but an overview of the import of spirituality/faith in social work education
7. Milner (2014)	Utilized the Judeo-Christian concept of "calling" to underscore the IFL in SWK
8. Olson (2014)	No definition provided, but emphasized the importance of spirituality/faith in social work
9. Seitz (2014)	No definition provided, but an overview of the vital role of spirituality/faith in social work curriculum provided

Specific Theological and Denominational Orientations Influencing the Integration of Faith and Spirituality in Social Work Education

The second research question of this systematic review sought to identify the specific theological and denominational orientations that underline the curricula of the different program that integrate faith/spirituality in social work education. Table 3 delineates the evidence extracted from the nine studies in this systematic review. It is observable from the summary of findings table that social work programs that are situated in Catholic Universities are more intentional in integrating faith in social work curricula (Brenden, 2007; Manfred-Gilham, 2009; Northcut, 2005). Closely following are programs situated in Evangelical Universities that equally and purposefully integrate faith or spirituality into their social work courses (Milner, 2014; Sherr, 2010; Tangenberg, 2011).

One public university (University of Idaho) was found to have a social work program that integrated faith in one of its social work courses (Jensen-Hart et al., 2014). Similarly, a denomination that identifies as either an evangelical or Pentecostal also demonstrated commitment to the integration of faith in a social work course (Milner, 2014). Our finding also

revealed that another social work program that is Baptist-affiliated also has a course that integrates faith in a social work course (Olson, 2014). In the same vein, a social work program affiliated with the Brethren in Christ (that is, evangelical) also highlighted its priority and commitment to integrating faith in one of its social work courses (Seltz, 2014).

Table 3:
Specific Theological and Denominational Orientations of Programs Integrating Faith and Spirituality in Social Work Education Curricula

Publication	Specific Theological, and or, Denominational Orientations influencing the Definition, and Integration of Faith and Spirituality in Social Work Education Curricula
1. Northcut (2005)	Catholic (Loyola University of Chicago)
2. Brenden (2007)	Catholic (College of St. Catherine/University of St. Thomas)
3. Manfred-Gilham (2009)	Catholic (Franciscan University)
4. Sherr (2010)	Evangelical (Northwest Nazarene University)
5. Tangenberg (2011)	Evangelical (Azusa Pacific University)
6. Jensen-Hart, Shuttleworth & Davis (2014)	Public University (University of Idaho)
7. Milner (2014)	Evangelical/Pentecostal (Southeastern University)
8. Olson (2014)	Baptist (Baylor University)
9. Seitz (2014)	Brethren in Christ Church (Evangelical) (Messiah College)

Available Pedagogical Models for Integrating Faith and Spirituality into Social Work Curricula

For the third research question, we reviewed and sought to identify the available pedagogical models utilized by the nine program curricula included in this systematic review. Our goal in identifying these pedagogies is to present evidence-based pedagogical models that have been designed, tested, and found effective in other faith-based social work programs for adoption, replication, or innovation in other faith-based or public social work institutions that may be contemplating having a course that fully integrates faith or spirituality into a course or set of courses. Table 4 summarizes the different pedagogical models used in the nine studies included in this systematic review.

Specifically, Northcut (2005) reported that Case Study pedagogy was utilized in Human Behavior and Theory courses. The case studies used developmental models of faith in one of its Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) programs. Similarly, the Brenden (2007) study showed that Catholic Social Teaching (CST) was used in both the BSW and MSW ethics program. The pedagogical strategy was a combination and comparison of the principles

of CST with the social work code of ethics. In another program, Manfred-Gilham (2009) the pedagogical model was the utilization of an experiential approach in a group assignment for an elective course that had modules on spiritual assessment, spiritual history, and hypothetical situations in social work assessments and interventions.

The Sherr (2010) study, notes the pedagogy used in a BSW program, was called the Christian Vocational Framework. This pedagogy was described as comprising integrating personal faith experiences (PFIEs), guided contemplation with scripture infusion (GCSI), and truth in the context of appreciating complexity and diversity (TCACD). Conversely, the Tangenberg (2011) pedagogical approach in a Capstone Leadership course was to use scriptural readings focused on leadership orientations, the role of faith in challenging leadership situations, and reflection papers, to mention a few of the course contents.

Dialogue Journaling in Field Education was the pedagogical approach documented by the Jensen-Hart, et al. (2014) study. Specifically, faith-based reflective thinking, and critical thinking guided the dialogue journaling. Milner (2014) reported a unique pedagogy of intentionally cultivating Christian disciplines, or practices. These disciplines included meditations, identifying sense of personal calling, praying the scripture responsively, and community volunteerism.

Olson (2014) describes the pedagogy of choice in a Human Behavior and the Social Environment (HBSE) course. This course included the intentional use of Fowler's Theory of Faith Development in the HBSE as one of the developmental theories or models across the lifespan. Similarly, Seitz (2014) also deployed a faith-based pedagogy in a HBSE course. More specifically, Seitz (2014) utilized disciplines from Foster's *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth (1988)* which include prayer, meditation, study, and service to mention a few.

Table 4
Summary of Pedagogical Models Used for IFL in Social Work Curricula

Publication	Available Pedagogical Models For Integrating Faith And Spirituality Into Social Work Education (Curriculum/Courses)
1. Northcut (2005)	Case studies in clinical concentration (specifically in HBSE/Theory courses, uses developmental models of faith, Health and Faith textbook reviews, etc; BSW Program).
2. Brenden (2007)	Catholic Social Teaching (CST; Specifically infusion into Ethics courses by combining the NASW Code of Ethics (2017) with the principles of the CST (Massaro, 2008). The CST encompasses papal encyclicals, episcopal statements, and writings of theologians that focuses on socio-economic and political dimensions of human lives (BSW/MSW).

3. Manfred-Gilham (2009)	Experiential approach in an Elective Course (Spiritual Self-Assessment, Spiritual History, Group Assignment on a major religion, Videos, Hypothetical situations, and Student Evaluation; BSW Program.
4. Sherr (2010)	Christian Vocational Framework (Encompassing: Personal Faith Integration Experiences (PFIEs), Guided Contemplation with Scripture Infusion (GCSI), and Truth in the Context of Appreciating Complexity and Diversity (TCACD)
5. Tangenberg (2011)	Capstone Leadership Curriculum (Scriptural readings with leadership orientation, students' reflection papers on mentoring, spiritual gifts, role of faith in challenging leadership situations. Course also has book reviews, group assignments, and course work on leadership; MSW Program)
6. Jensen-Hart, et al., (2014)	Field Education (Utilizing Dialogue Journaling, which is a supervised, shared learning pedagogy that promotes reflective practice, critical thinking, and weekly journal logs with supervisor/professor; BSW Program)
7. Milner (2014)	Cultivating Christian Disciplines/Practices (For instance, prayers, meditation, alms-giving, identifying sense of personal calling. Students write personal mission statements, praying the scripture responsively in the classroom (Lectio Divina), solitude and silence, community volunteerism, etc.; BSW Program)
8. Olson (2014)	HBSE (Explicit approach of Infusion of Faith into moral development, using e.g. Fowler's Theory of Faith Development to teach HBSE and content areas such as P.I.E, Life-Span Assessment, etc.; BSW/MSW Program).
9. Seitz (2014)	HBSE (Inclusion of the 11th competency [EPAS] of the Development of 12 Disciplines of Richard Foster's *Celebration of Discipline*, (1988) (some of which include: prayer, meditation, study, service, etc.), and book reviews focusing on these disciplines; BSW Program.

In summary, we observed in this systematic review that of the available pedagogical models of integrating faith in social work curricula, BSW programs accounted for 66.66% (6 out of 9) of the programs. In addition, we found that two social work programs have their unique IFL pedagogies utilized in both the BSW and their MSW programs. This translates to 22.22% (or 2 out of 9) of the overall studies included in this systematic review. Similarly, only one program (11.11%) of the nine studies has an IFL pedagogy for the MSW level.

Study Limitations

The most salient study limitation is that the research design for this study was a systematic review. This is so because some of our search strategies may have missed some publications, or other scholarly work that could have been included in this study. In addition, we observed that most of the studies were not empirically driven research to test the

effectiveness of IFL in social work. In addition, the study population of interest were mainly and primarily Christian-based curriculum content in both faith-based and secular social work programs. Furthermore, the moderator variables also posed a limitation to this study. Heterogeneity of the included studies was also a major limitation because some articles were peer-reviewed publications, conference presentations, and at least one book. Another limitation was the number of databases searched and the search terms may not be comprehensive.

Implications for Pedagogy and Christians in Social Work

This study finding provides the opportunity for faith-based social work programs to be acquainted with, understand, and evaluate available evidence-based pedagogical models of integrating faith and spirituality into social work curricula. While there are perennial and unabated discussion at the conceptual level about IFL in social work curricula, unfortunately, little evidence exists in identifying, and showcasing curricula that integrated faith or spirituality wholly on faith-based social work programs and their course curricula.

Accordingly, some of the implication of this study's findings are discussed. First, opportunities abound for different denominational social work programs to develop unique (or customized) IFL content across social work curricula that are consistent with the CSWE 2015 EPAS and the NASW Code of Ethics. Second, faith-based social work programs have research and evaluation opportunities to investigate best pedagogical models that are most effective in integrating faith and spirituality in social work curricula. Third, more scholarship and publication are needed to build the repertoire of syllabi and knowledge base of effective pedagogies that faith-based social work programs can adopt, or use for innovating new syllabi.

Fourth, Christian Social work programs can use unique opportunities of IFL to specially brand their programs, thus creating a niche and distinguishing value for their BSW or MSW programs. Fifth, and not the least significant, IFL in faith-based social work programs in particular presents the opportunity to explore, tap into, and strategically train future Christian social work students to take professional social work career roles in newly emerging fields of congregational social work, diaconal ministries, church social work, and other church-based human services employment opportunities. ❖

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A. Christson A. Adedoyin, Ph.D., M.A.T.S., M.S.W., is Professor of Social Work, Department of Social Work, Samford University, 800 Lakeshore Drive, Birmingham, AL 35299. Phone: (205) 726 4661. Email: aadedoyi@samford.edu

Sharon E. Moore, Ph.D., M.S.W., is Professor of Social Work, Raymond A. Kent School of Social Work, 214 Oppenheimer Hall, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY 40292. Phone: (502) 852 0751. Email: sharon.moore2@louisville.edu

Rachel Copeland, Ph.D., LCSW, PIP, RPT-S., is Owner, Copeland Counseling and Consulting, 3 Office Park Circle, Suite 220, Birmingham, AL 35223.Phone: (205) 578 2566. Email: rachelcopelandphd@gmail.com

Olufunmilayo O. Folaranmi, Ph.D., M.Ed., is Associate Professor of Social Work at the Department of Social Work, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Phone: +234 (802) 369 3241. Email: oo.folaranmi@uimail1.edu.ng

ARTICLE: PRACTICE

On the Intersection of Faith Background and Mental Health Beliefs: What MSW Students Learned About Themselves

Jennifer Shepard Payne

Students enter college with pre-formed beliefs about the causes of mental health issues, from spiritual explanations (e.g., demonic possession) to biological explanations (e.g., genetics). However, they rarely have thought through how their faith backgrounds influence their beliefs about mental health. MSW students in their clinical concentration year engaged in a class-based assignment in which they explored the question, "Where are you on the spectrum of belief regarding the cause of mental illness?" A qualitative content analysis was completed on 69 student papers collected over five years. Results showed how each student's religious childhood experience shaped his or her view about mental illness causes.

Keywords: mental health, students, faith, beliefs, clinical social work

CULTURE SHAPES BELIEFS ABOUT THE CAUSES AND best treatments for mental illness. There are differences in mental health views based on culture, where culture is defined as the shared beliefs, values, and norms of a given race or ethnic group (Abdullah & Brown, 2011). Research shows that mental illness carries a negative connotation and a great degree of stigma for Asian American and African American populations (Abdullah & Brown, 2011; DeFreitas et al., 2018;

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Fripp & Carlson, 2017). For instance, one study found that Chinese students had different views than White students about the perceived causes of mental illness and help-seeking practices. (Chen & Mak, 2008).

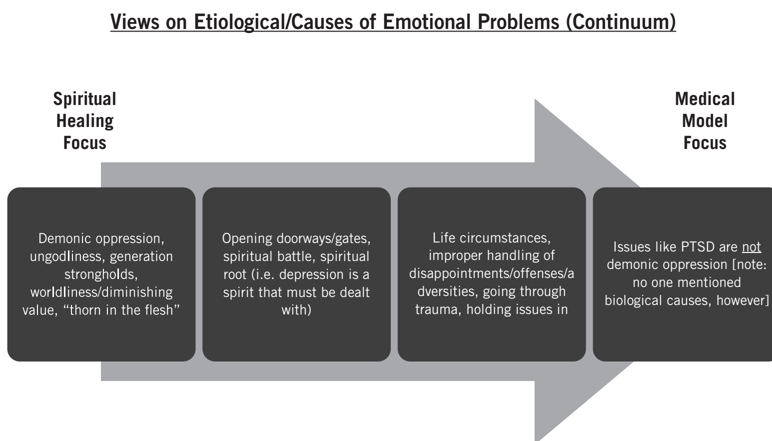
There are varied definitions of religion, spirituality, and faith and no clear consensus regarding the definitive definition (Hodge, 2015; Hodge & McGrew, 2005). However, Kenneth Pargament defines religion as a search for significance in ways related to the sacred (Pargament & Raiya, 2007). Religion and culture are interrelated, where religion can be seen as one aspect of an individual's culture. "Religion may be part of culture, constitute culture, include and transcend culture, be influenced by culture, shape culture, or interact with culture in influencing cognitions, emotions, and actions… the relations between culture and religion are complex and fascinating" (Saroglou & Cohen, 2011, p. 1309). Studies show that religion, including denominational differences, may also influence and shape beliefs about mental illness. One study of 126 Protestant Christians revealed that their religious beliefs and religious values were predictors of a leaning toward belief in a more religious cause for Major Depression and Schizophrenia (Hartog & Gow, 2005). These researchers found 38% of their participants endorsed a demonic etiology for Major Depression and 37% for schizophrenia (Hartog & Gow, 2005). In another study, 144 undergraduate psychology students at a large midwestern university self-identified as Christian. These Christian students endorsed religious beliefs about mental illness such as morality, sin, and spiritually-oriented causes, such as, "the devil is tormenting persons who have a mental illness" (Wesselmann & Grazuano, 2015). There were denominational differences as well among these Christian students. For example, Protestants and non-denominational students appeared to view mental illness as more likely to have spiritually-oriented causes and treatments than Roman Catholic students (Wesselmann & Grazuano, 2015).

Religious and race/ethnic cultural influences often intersect to impact views and beliefs about mental illness. In one study, individuals of different ethnic cultures and faiths discussed their mental illness (Cinnirella & Loewenthal, 1999). The authors discovered that all of the non-White groups had a fear of being misunderstood by mental health professionals. Also, Black Caribbean Christians and Pakistani Muslims believed that community stigma was associated with mental illness (Cinnirella & Loewenthal, 1999).

Thus, when examining mental health views, it has been noted that these views are shaped by culture in various ways. Religious, spiritual, and faith beliefs influence mental health views, as do racial, ethnic, and nationality cultural beliefs. When examining views on 1) the etiology or cause of mental illness and 2) the best mental illness treatments, views have varied. Payne and Hays (2016) proposed that views on these issues can best be described as falling on a continuum or a spectrum of belief, where strict adherence

to a spiritual healing focus is on one end of the spectrum. A strict medical or psychological focus is on the other end of the spectrum – see Figure 1 (Payne & Hays, 2016).

Figure 1:
Spectrum of Belief (taken from Payne & Hays, 2016.)



Thus, all students enter college with pre-formed beliefs, albeit perhaps tentative, about mental illness causes, on a continuum from purely spiritual explanations (e.g., demonic possession) to purely biological reasons (e.g., genetics). However, most students rarely self-reflect on how their faith backgrounds influence their mental health beliefs. As future clinical social work practitioners are prepared to go into the workforce, it is crucial for faculty to thoroughly understand the role of ethnicity and religion in students' lives. "Religion should be treated as a sociocultural factor that impacts the lives of many individuals in the same way that race, gender, and socio-economic status does" (Payne & Hays, 2016, p. 610). Mental health clinicians should strive to reflect on their own ethnic and religious positions and their perceptions of culture's role in mental health care. Quality self-reflection should begin development at the student level, hence the classroom assignment discussed in this manuscript.

This classroom assignment's objectives were: 1) For the instructor to gain greater sensitivity to the diversity of student views on mental illness and utilize it to adapt the teaching approach positively; 2) For each student to understand how their faith background may have influenced their views of mental illness; 3) For each student to become aware of the impact of faith on their clients' views of mental illness.

Methods

Participants

Master of Social Work students at a Christian university in a program chose to participate in an extra credit assignment in a course focused on learning the DSM-5. The course is an advanced clinical practice course focusing on adult behavioral health. The course's content includes knowledge of human behavior and the social environment; symptoms, diagnoses, assessment, and treatment strategies associated with psychiatric conditions; brain functioning and chemistry; psychotropic medications; and managed care expectations. Cultural (ethnic and religious) considerations are integrated throughout the course.

The students enrolled in this course included full-time and part-time students in their concentration year of classes. Additional demographics (e.g., age, sex, denomination, etc.) were not obtained from the students as a part of this extra credit assignment. This analysis examines five years of student paper entries – a total of 69 papers. The university human subjects Institutional Review Board was consulted regarding this analysis.

Procedures

Students who were interested in participating in this extra credit assignment were asked the question: *"Where are you on the spectrum of belief regarding the cause of mental illness?"* and they received the following instructions:

1.Read the following article: (Payne & Hays, 2016).

2.This assignment is a five-page reflection paper. For your discussion, please answer the following questions:

3.Identify the specific faith community (denomination) with which you (or your family) are connected. If you identify with more than one faith community, specify the most salient one, or discuss how they overlap to create your belief stance.

4.Discuss the beliefs of your faith tradition about the cause of emotional "disorder." [Note: mental health and disorder are clearly defined throughout the course, so the students understand that emotional disorder refers to mental illness]. What assumptions do members and leaders of your faith tradition make? You might find this information from your memory regarding sermons preached, discussions you may have had with fellow parishioners, conversations with family members in the same faith, etc. Give examples or analogies, if possible.

5.Discuss your present position on the spectrum of belief about the causes of mental illness. Discuss where you are on the spectrum

of belief based on your own spiritual experiences and academic experiences. Discuss if and how your opinion has shifted from the start of your educational journey until now.

Data coding and analysis

This manuscript's data comes from five years of Adult Behavioral Health and Diagnosis classes for second-year MSW clinical concentration students – a total of 69 five-page student papers.

The author uploaded verbatim PDF copies of each student paper to qualitative analysis software used as an organizational tool. Qualitative content analysis software, MaxQDA 2020, was used to explore each student's faith background and mental health beliefs following Payne and Hays' spectrum of belief continuum (Payne & Hays, 2016). Each document was coded before constructing interpretations (Graneheim et al., 2017; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Vaismoradi et al., 2016). The codes were grouped into categories, and connections were made between them. After the data were coded, comparisons and word counts were used to determine the similarities/differences of student religious experience, based on the spectrum of belief (Elo et al., 2014).

Results

Sample

To protect students' confidentiality, the instructor did not solicit detailed demographic information as a part of this assignment. However, it was noted that 79% of the assignment participants over the five years were female, and 21% were male (see Table 1). The race breakdown was 62% Hispanic, 18% white, 8% black, 6% Asian, and 6% other (see Table 2).

Based on self-report in their papers, the majority of students were Catholic (47%), followed by Apostolic/Pentecostal (14%), non-denominational (13%), other Christian (13%), Baptist (10%), and Seventh-Day Adventist (3%) (see Table 3).

Tables 1-3: Descriptive Statistics of Students (n=69)

Table 1: Student Gender (n=69)

Gender	n	%
Male	14	21
Female	55	79
Total	69	100

Table 2: Student Race/ Ethnicity (n=69))

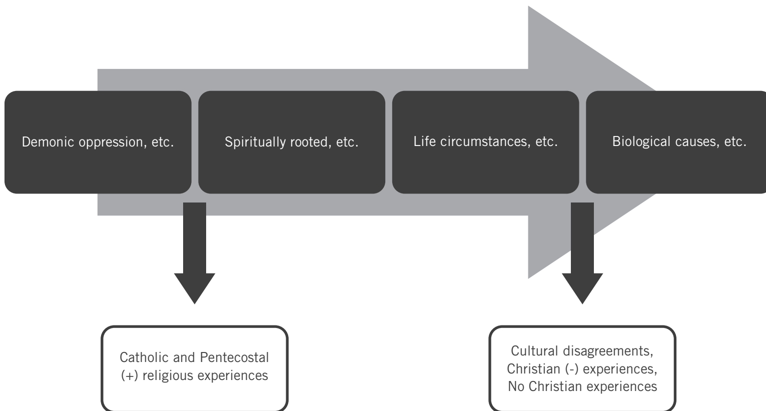
Race/ Ethnicity	N	%
Asian	4	6
Black	6	8
Hispanic	43	62
White	12	18
Other	4	6
Total	69	100

Table 3: Student Christian Denomination (n=69)

Denomination	N	%
Apostolic/ Pentecostal	10	14
Baptist	7	10
Catholic	32	47
Non-denominational	9	13
Seventh-day Adventist	2	3
Other	9	13
Total	69	100

Themes

Figure 2:
Student Spectrum Area Based on Religious Background



Favorable childhood or adult religious experiences

Students whose childhood or adult religious experiences were favorable tended to lean on the spectrum wherever their church leaned. For instance,

a black male student stated that his Christian experience has always been positive. He said that he attended church from an early age and that his experience was "great." When discussing his current personal view of emotional disorder causes, he leaned near the spectrum's spiritual side, where his Baptist church leaned. He said:

> *God didn't intend for emotional disorder ever to be an issue with us initially being perfect beings. I believe that emotional disorder is a product of total depravity. Total depravity means that sin has affected our body and soul… Being imperfect beings makes us susceptible to mental illness, along with every other negative consequence of being a sinner.*

A male Hispanic student described his childhood and stated that he did not grow up with religion, and his family did not practice religion. However, later he became active in a Pentecostal church, and he and his own family have had very positive experiences with religion during his adult years. This student's view of the causes of mental disorders agreed with his present church's view near the spiritual side of the spectrum:

> *According to one of the associate pastors at church, emotional disorders are demonic in nature and an evidence that people have fallen from God's grace as He has punished them for their sins/evil deeds. In fact, I vividly recollect my senior pastor preaching several times about the seven demonic spirits that enter a person if he/she has abandoned the Lord after being baptized in water in Jesus' name… so, I agree emotional disorder is a product of our bad behavior and that God will wisely punish us to correct our wrongdoings.*

More often than not, Catholic and Pentecostal churches leaned closer to the spiritual side of the spectrum. Some churches believed that emotional disorder was primarily or partially biological, however. For instance, one female Hispanic student stated that she presently attends (chose as an adult) a liberal non-denominational Christian church. This student discussed how this church leans near the biological end of the spectrum in their beliefs:

> *Most of the members believe the cause of emotional disorders is a chemical imbalance in the brain and genetics. The [church] community also believes disorder can be caused if someone has suffered major trauma in early childhood…The pastor has often preached about life challenges that parishioners can suffer from and where they can seek help. During his sermon, he has spoken about people suffering from mental health illnesses who are in need of medication and how people should try not to judge them.*

> *The pastor has also spoken on depression, anxiety disorders, and treatment options the parishioners can seek.*

Overall, it appeared that those students who had a positive experience with religion were heavily influenced by whatever was being taught about mental health by the church in which they were involved.

Unfavorable childhood religious experiences

Students who discussed adverse childhood religious experiences tended to believe more closely in the spectrum's medical/ biological side. Although these students chose to attend a Christian university, some freely discussed negative, confusing, or painful experiences with religion during childhood. One white female student discussed her experiences in her youth at a Baptist church:

> *I do not remember much because I was so young when we attended this church. However, I remember it being very old-fashioned... My family attended this church before and during their divorce. The church looked down on our family and almost shunned us in a way because we were living in sin and against the word of the bible [because of the divorce].*

As an adult, this student had joined a different church community (non-denominational). She said, of her present church:

> *I believe [the church] understands there are chemical imbalances in the brain that cause emotional disorders. While medications and counseling can help with those symptoms, the only true intervention is Jesus. On the continuum of causes of emotional problems and the views on treatments, I think, from my experience, they would fall right in the middle of the spectrum. They understand there are some medical or biological reasons for illness, but I think they believe there is also a spiritual aspect to it, not necessarily calling it demonic possession.*

A different student, a Hispanic female, discussed how she was raised in a strict Catholic family and was forced to attend a private Catholic school. She is now a non-denominational Christian. However, she admitted that she struggled for a while with "faith and dissociation with organized religion. I could not ask questions, and I was told what not to do. I felt negative toward Catholic school and stopped believing in Christ." This student is on the far biological end of the spectrum of belief regarding mental illness at this point in her life:

> *Emotional disorder is caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain or a trauma. There are still a few people in my family that believe the cause of [mental] disease is demonic possession… I do not believe in demonic possession, that it causes mental health disorders, or that it even exists. I typically do not believe that mental illness is caused by spirituality or can be healed by one's spirituality. Personally, I believe mental health disorders are caused by genetic, biological, psychological, and environmental factors.*

It is important to remember that Christian universities attract graduate students of all walks of faith, not just Christian. An atheist student participated willingly in this reflection, as well. This student states that they were raised in a household that included atheist grandparents and parents. Thus, the primary influences on this student's upbringing were atheist viewpoints and values. This student stated:

> *The question of how members of the atheist community view mental disorders is one of the easier questions to answer. It is commonly accepted in this community that there is a scientific explanation for mental disorders that stems from both biological and environmental causes. The scientific view of mental health essentially consists of three basic views on disorders. Some disorders are a result of a biological malfunction in anywhere from cognitive structures or hormonal imbalance. Some disorders are a mix of biology and environmental conditions, such as a biological predisposition to depression due to lower serotonin production mixed with traumatic life experiences. Some disorders may not have a biological basis but can be explained by traumatic experiences or situational causes. The assumption of most, if not all, atheists is that mental health is not caused by any fault of the individual.*

Interestingly, this student discussed that from childhood to the present, their beliefs on the spectrum had shifted slightly from the far end of the spectrum to just a little bit closer toward the middle, primarily due to certain classes the student took:

> *My views on the causes of mental health are still closely aligned with the scientific view taken by most atheists, but I can also acknowledge religion as a very legitimate biological component of mental health on an individual and society. The reason this will assist me professionally and personally is that I will not view religious views of mental health with disdain or disbelief*

> *as I might have done in the past. While my own personal views on the cause of mental illness are clearly aligned with a scientific approach, my knowledge about religion from my academic courses will assist me in treating and working with individuals who do not share this view on the causes of mental health.*

The intersection of ethnicity and faith

Many students mentioned the intersection of ethnicity and faith and how they influenced their place on the spectrum. These students had difficulty differentiating whether it was primarily religious culture or ethnic culture that affected their family's mental illness views. One female student described her upbringing in a Spanish-speaking home. She said, "Growing up in a household of first-generation Hispanics, the traditions my parents had were on completely different spectrums." This same student talked about how she grew up as a child confused by family religious traditions that were never explained.

> *While asking my mother and grandmother about the beliefs that are a part of the Roman Catholic church, they had a hard time explaining why certain saints are prayed to instead of praying directly to God… My family believed that mental illness was and is non-existent. According to my grandmother, what really happens when someone is going through something mental health-related is a disruption from the person and God.*

As the strong family matriarch, this student's grandmother had a powerful influence on how family members saw mental illness. This student discussed her disconnect with their family's beliefs about the causes of mental illness. She mentioned that the disconnect was partially generational, partially due to culture, and partly due to differences in religious views.

As another example, a black female student discussed her experiences with faith. She grew up in a church under the leadership of her grandfather, the pastor. She addressed the culture of the black church in this way:

> *I believe my church upbringing is similar to most African Americans, which consisted of going to church all day, starting with Sunday school, and ending with a 4-hour church program. To this day, my grandfather's church is very traditional, in the sense that stockings are always required to be worn by ladies, the color white is always worn on first and fifth Sundays for communion, long skirts or dresses are acceptable for ladies, and pants are always frowned upon.*

As an adult, this student began to attend a new church with her husband, who also happened to be a pastor's child. The new church (another black Baptist church) was more community and outreach-oriented and had fewer traditional practices than the churches in which she and her husband were raised. Still, the black church culture has often neglected to discuss mental health and wellness issues, and mental illness is stigmatized. This student said:

> *Growing up, issues surrounding mental illness, such as depression, suicide, schizophrenia, etc., were never discussed, especially not in the pulpit. I believe this to be partly due to the lack of knowledge that the older generation had about mental illness and the belief that any and all problems could be changed through prayer, fasting, and by 'laying hands on the sick'.*

Despite the lack of discussion about mental illness in her church experience, this student finds herself mid-spectrum regarding her beliefs. She gratefully attributes her mid-spectrum stance to what she has learned in classes through her educational process:

> *Many of our family members in the generations before us did not have the opportunity to further their education and learn about the specific illnesses, medicines, and treatments that existed within society. If I had been asked about my stance on mental illness prior to my social work education, I would have stated the same thoughts and opinions that I currently hold: mental illness can be a result of both spiritual sin and biological factors. The only difference now is that I have more knowledge, experience with the population, and have conducted the appropriate research that would support my stance.*

Discussion

Data from the analysis of this classroom assignment showed that churches providing positive experiences have a significant influence on their congregants' beliefs. This notion is supported by research, which has noted that social-ecological factors outside the individual, such as the church, influence beliefs and behavior change (Baruth et al., 2015). Clergy have been shown to influence health behavior change and beliefs among their congregants (Campbell et al., 2000). "Preliminary evidence suggests that the health, health behaviors, and health beliefs of faith leaders influence the church health environment" (Baruth et al., 2015,p. 1747).

Based upon the answers given by these students regarding where

they are on the spectrum of belief, it is clear that those who had positive religious experiences tended to have a very similar place on the spectrum of belief as their faith community. Those students who had what they perceived as positive relationships with clergy, other church members, and religious family members more readily accepted what was being taught by those individuals. If those churches taught that mental illness is primarily biologically influenced, these students more readily accepted that premise. If those churches taught that mental illness is sinful or is demonic oppression, students more readily accepted it. This finding is congruent with other studies that discuss how congregants who experience religion positively embrace their congregation's teachings about mental and emotional health topics (Sullivan et al., 2014). This data highlight the significant influence that church leaders have on their congregants. This data also leads to the recommendation that churches themselves self-assess regarding their beliefs on these topics. Social work students with a more middle ground stance on the spectrum, rather than staunchly on either end of the spectrum, are better able to work effectively with clients from all faith and cultural backgrounds.

Denominationally, it was found among these students that Catholic and Pentecostal churches leaned more closely to the spectrum's spiritual side. This denominational leaning toward the spiritual for Catholic and Pentecostal traditions has been discovered in other studies (Kane & Green, 2009; Payne, 2009).

In contrast, students who discussed adverse childhood religious experiences tended to believe closer to the spectrum's medical/ biological side. These students questioned the tenets of their childhood religious beliefs. Some did not feel that they received an adequate explanation from family members about their beliefs. Others experienced "church hurt," defined in one study as the intensity of feeling that arises from exclusion from one's faith community (Pingel & Bauermeister, 2018). Some individuals had negative experiences where they felt shunned or excommunicated from the church. Others described incidents where they saw mentally ill individuals poorly treated at church. Some students felt that their families intermingled culture with their faith to engage in traditions and beliefs that were never explained but just passed down as acceptable. Almost all of the students who described such negative experiences leaned very near the spectrum's biological side.

Thus, a student's personal experience with religion shapes their views about the causes of mental health disorders. Because childhood experiences, in particular, cannot be controlled (children cannot choose what religion they are a part of), that experience feeds into their life views, wanted or unwanted. Students come into our classrooms with beliefs that vary across the spectrum, and these beliefs can influence how they receive education and teaching on mental health topics.

The good news is that where a person is on the spectrum is not static but dynamic. Beliefs and attitudes can be changed and influenced by time, teaching, personal experience, and additional information (Johnstone & Reid, 1981). With more training, self-insight, and openness, student views on the spectrum can change.

Implications

For Social Work Mental Health Instructors

Instructors who are engaging students on the use of self in therapy and treatment should be aware that students have diverse views. These views should not be shamed or discouraged. Students at either end of the spectrum can be met where they are with openness and empathetic understanding.

Those who are mid-spectrum or balanced in their beliefs (belief in both spiritual and biological causes of mental illness) tend to be the most balanced in their response to others. They can understand and accept the research done on mental illness while being able to compassionately and effectively work with clients who are closer to the spiritual side of the spectrum in their beliefs. Where a person is on the spectrum is not static but dynamic. It can be changed and influenced by time, teaching, personal experience, and additional information.

Social work instructors should develop assignments that can help facilitate movement on the spectrum in the classroom. They should help students engage in critical thinking to examine why they believe in specific mental illness causes.

For Clergy and Church Leaders

Christian church leaders have a significant influence on their congregants' beliefs, and their mental health views matter. For example, a study was completed examining Pentecostal preachers' sermon content to discover if depression and mental health topics were preached in their sermons (Payne, 2008). One particular preacher joked about being "crazy crazy" and mentioned that psychotropic medication is not of God in their sermon, and some congregation members laughed in the background audio (Payne, 2008). What is preached from the pulpit about mental health can influence congregants, including our students.

If Christian social workers are proactively able to influence clergy and church leaders, helping them go through a critical thinking process about where their church falls on the spectrum of belief would be helpful. If we can help churches go through self-assessment, that may change how they approach mental health and wellness issues. The questions should not be

judgmental or critical but should serve as facilitation for self and group reflection. For example: "What is your church doing that influences where on the spectrum your congregants lie?" and "What can the church body do to enable movement on the spectrum?" are good starting points to address mental health stigma in church communities. ❖

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Jennifer Shepard Payne, Ph.D., LCSW is an Associate Professor of Social Work at Azusa Pacific University, 901 East Alosta Avenue, Azusa CA 91702. Phone: (323) 488-2040. Email: jennifer@drjspayne.com

Facilitating Injustice: The Complicity of Social Workers in the Forced Removal and Incarceration of Japanese Americans, 1941-1946
Yoosun Park (2020). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

A significant challenge faced by social workers is the ethical dilemma faced when choosing to act upon conflicting roles as facilitators of client self-determination and agents of social control. In Facilitating Injustice the author chronicles an historical moment in American history when this ethical dilemma bedeviled social workers attempting to expedite the internment and resettlement of Japanese Americans during World War II. From February of 1942 through March of 1946 approximately 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry were incarcerated in American internment camps. Significantly, there were no similar strictures placed upon German or Italian-Americans, whose nations-of-origin were also at war with the United States, suggesting a racialized agenda enacted by the U.S. government against Asian-Americans.

Park adopts a historical perspective, tracing the role of social workers wrestling with often ill-conceived federal policies that rapidly moved Japanese-Americans from successful businesses and established communities into hastily-constructed internment camps under the guise of national security. Chronicling the removal, incarceration and resettlement processes, Park describes social workers' complicity in the large-scale disruption of an established culture, including many who were native-born citizens, forcing the question of who was being served by their actions, their Japanese clients or a government employer. In a highly nuanced conclusion, she recognizes that social workers eased the difficulties faced by the incarcerated while suggesting more could have been done to protest the activities of a nation that was enacting racist policies directed against a marginalized yet highly successful subculture. Park points to a contemporary dilemma that hearkens back to the current American moment by calling the profession to:

> *examine how social work makes sense of its professional obligations in relation to its professional ethics; to deliberate how this value-driven profession should, today, conceptualize its role as contemporary facilitators of problematic social policies from immigration restrictions to welfare reform (p. 373).*

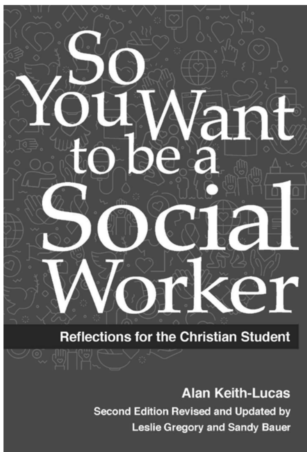
Facilitating Injustice is extensively researched and well documented. Park includes several appendices with copies of original source documents that provide readers with governmental policies creating, populating, staffing, and operating the camps. She meticulously addresses the roles of social workers,

judiciously differentiating the problematic and the successful, while helping readers understand the deleterious impact of internment upon individual lives and well-established cultural practices of a people-group that had established a self-sufficient lifestyle which significantly contributed to the overall well-being of American society prior to internment. The disruption to the lives and culture of Japanese-Americans had long-term repercussions that would ultimately wreak havoc upon the next generation as they sought to reestablish lives, homes and communities while being forcibly resettled throughout the nation. While social workers sought to ease each phase of the process, the profession was complicit at every juncture.

The United States continues to wrestle with policies that marginalize people of color. Current protest movements point us to the relevance of Park's research 75 years after the events chronicled in Facilitating Injustice. Social workers continue to face the dilemmas of our historical forebears during the period of Japanese internment. Thus, this edition has tremendous value as we address problematic national policy and practices that stigmatize and encumber our non-white clients. Our national failure to understand such lessons will indubitably result in replication of the practices of the past, at the micro, mezzo and macro practice levels.

This book is appropriate for a wide audience. Clinical practitioners will benefit from a deeper understanding of the cultural challenges faced by clients of color as they attempt to negotiate a culture that frequently marginalizes and underserves them. Macro practitioners will appreciate Park's insights, especially regarding the complex interplay between policy and practices as they conjointly replicate systemic injustices. All social work professionals would benefit from an historical perspective into our nation's history regarding the daily dilemma faced by practitioners at every level as we negotiate our dual roles as client-centric agents fostering self-determination inside a system that coerces us to be agents of social control. ❖

Reviewed by ***Kevin Brown, PhD****, LCSW, Associate Professor and Director of Prison Extension Center Education, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Email: kbrown@nobts.edu*



The 2nd edition of So You Want to Be a Social Worker: Reflections for the Christian Student

(2021) by Alan Keith-Lucas, Leslie Gregory, and Sandy Bauer

$14.95 U.S., $11.95 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more copies. For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.

The 2nd Edition of *So You Want to Be a Social Worker: Reflections for the Christian Student* was originally written by Alan Keith-Lucas, and now updated and extensively revised by Leslie Gregory and Sandy Bauer.

Being a Christian and becoming a social worker are about bringing your whole self to the helping process. *So You Want to Be a Social Worker* attempts to address key questions for embarking on this journey such as: How can I incorporate faith into my social work practice? Can I share my faith with a client? How do I work competently with a client whose choices do not align with my Christian faith and values? How do I hold onto hope when facing obstacles?

Beginning answers to these questions are explored in chapters that include insights from one's faith, how to approach suffering, and developing hope and resilience. These reflections are written for beginning social work students, while providing insights for experienced practitioners as well. It is a lifelong journey to explore these questions and the invaluable ways in which the interaction of Christian faith and social work shapes and contributes to practice.

Especially useful in the classroom or social work trainings, the 2nd edition of *So You Want to Be a Social Worker* includes most of the chapters from the original edition, though with updated language, case examples and references:

- Finding the Common Ground
- The Nature of Human Beings and Society
- Social Work Insights from the Christian Faith
- Social Work and The Bible
- Social Work and Sin
- A Christian View of Suffering
- Social Work and Witnessing
- The Spiritual and the Material

In addition, the authors of this 2nd edition have added two additional chapters:

- Hope and Resilience
- Settings for Practice

The 2nd edition of *So You Want to Be a Social Worker* is 57 pages long, has 10 chapters, and is available in both and several versions:

- Print copies of So You Want to Be (ISBN 978-1-952901-04-1) cost $14.95 - or only $11.95 for NACSW members or for orders of 12 or more copies (plus shipping).
- Electronic copies of So You Want to Be (IBSN 978-1-952901-05-8) cost $13.45 - or only $10.75 for NACSW members.
- Digital copies including rental pricing are also available on RedShelf.com

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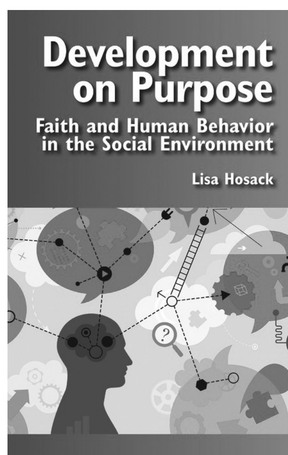


Development on Purpose: Faith and Human Behavior in the Social Environment

(2019) by Lisa Hosack , MSW, Ph.D.

NACSW. $25.50 U.S., $22.95 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more copies. For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.

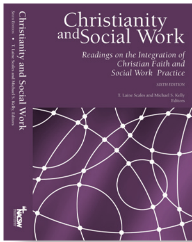
Development on Purpose provides both students and seasoned professionals with a coherent framework for considering human behavior in the social environment from a Christian perspective. It was developed to be a companion text for HBSE and related courses at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

Courses in human behavior andthe social environment raise important questions about the nature of persons and our multi-layered social world. The Christian faith offers compelling answers to these deep questions about human nature and our relationships with one another and the world by providing a defining purpose for human development. Steeped within the Reformed tradition, Development on Purpose describes how this grand purpose informs our understanding of the trajectory of our lived experience and sustains our work on behalf of those at risk in the world.

To support the use of this book in the classroom and training environments, NACSW has developed a collection of online teaching resources for your use, which can be found at: www.nacsw.org/teaching_resources/hosack_developmentonpurpose.

Christianity and Social Work: Readings on the Integration of Christian Faith & Social Work Practice (Sixth Edition)

T. Laine Scales and Michael S. Kelly (Editors). (2020). Botsford, CT:

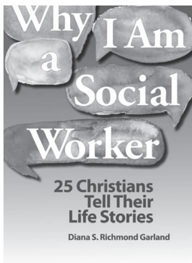


NACSW. $64.95 U.S., $51.96 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more copies. For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.

The 6th Edition of Christianity and Social Work (CSW6), edited by T. Laine Scales and Michael Kelly, and is written for social workers whose motivations to enter the profession as well as their approaches to helping have been inspired and informed by their Christian faith.

The 19 chapters and over 400 pages of CSW6 address social welfare history, human behavior and the social environment, social policy, and social work practice from a faith perspective at micro, mezzo, and macro levels. Four decision cases and an accompanying online instructor's manual provide rich teaching tools for the use of this material in a variety of social work and related classes. Especially useful in the classroom or social work trainings, CSW6 supports several major curriculum areas outlined by the Council on Social Work Education's Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards.

NACSW has also developed an extensive electronic resource tool, Instructor's Resources for Christianity and Social Work: Sixth Edition (2020) by Tammy Patton to support the use of the Christianity and Social Work in classroom and trainings environments, which can be found at: www.nacsw.org/Publications/CSW6/CSW6thInstructorsResourcesFinal.pdf.



Why I Am a Social Worker: 25 Christians Tell Their Life Stories

Diana R. Garland. (2015). Botsford, CT: NACSW. $29.95 U.S., $23.95 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more copies. For price in Canadian dolloars, use current exchange rate.

Why I Am a Social Worker describes the rich diversity and nature of the profession of social work through the 25 stories of daily lives and professional journeys chosen to represent the different people,

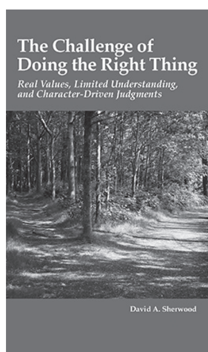
groups and human situations where social workers serve. Why I Am a Social Worker serves as a resource
for Christians in social work as they reflect on their sense of calling, and provides direction to guide them
in this process. It addresses a range of critical questions such as:

- How do social workers describe the relationship of their faith and their work?
- What was their path into social work, and more particularly, the kind of social work they chose?
- What roles do their religious beliefs and spiritual practices have in sustaining them for the work,

and how has their work, in turn, shaped their religious and spiritual life? The stories in Why I Am a Social Worker have strong themes of integration of faith and practice that will
both challenge and encourage students and seasoned practitioners alike.

The Challenge of Doing the Right Thing: Real Values, Limited Understanding, and Character-Driven Judgments

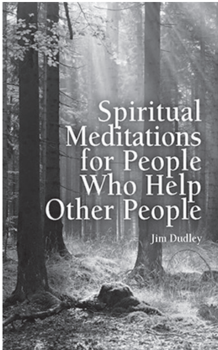
David A. Sherwood. (2018). Botsford CT: NACSW. $21.95 U.S., $17.55 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more copies. Available as an eBook only. For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



The Challenge of Doing the Right Thing: Real Values, Limited Understanding, and Character-Driven Judgments is a 450-page collection of 44 editorials and articles written by David Sherwood for *Social Work & Christianity* and for the North American Association of Christians in Social Work between 1981 and 2017 focused on integrating Christian faith, values, and ethics with competent professional social work practice. In this book. Dr. Sherwood argues that in ethical decision-making, decisions frequently involve making judgments that functionally prioritize legitimate values that are in tension with each other. He contends that the mission of NACSW and *Social Work & Christianity* has been to walk the difficult middle road—clearly committed to both Christian faith and competent social work practice, not presuming to have the final answers in either, and helping members and readers to come as close to faithfulness and competence as possible.

Spiritual Meditations for People Who Help Other People

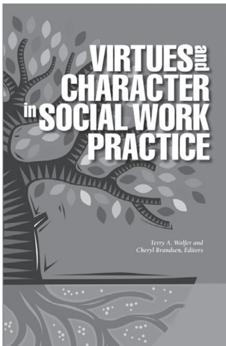
James R. Dudley (2019). Botsford, CT: NACSW. $20.75 U.S., $16.60 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more copies. Available as an eBook only. For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



Spiritual Meditations for People Who Help Other People is written for social workers and others who devote their lives to helping other people. The 25 spiritual meditations in this book are designed to nurture and strengthen caregivers, focusing on ways that we can enhance our relationship with God. Finding God in times of stillness, experimenting with different forms of prayer, and growing our patience and gratitude are examples. The meditations also focus on our relationships with the people we help. These meditations help us view our clients and our services as sacred territory, urge us to celebrate our clients, help us love our adversaries, and encourage more openness to miracles. Spiritual Meditations contains more than 25 individual meditations.

Virtue and Character in Social Work Practice

Edited by Terry A. Wolfer and Cheryl Brandsen. (2015). Botsford, CT: NACSW. $23.75 U.S., $19.00 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more copies). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.

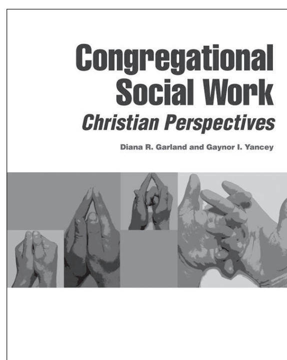


Virtues and Character in Social Work Practice offers a fresh contribution to the Christian social work literature with its emphasis on the key role of character traits and virtues in equipping Christians in social work to engage with and serve their clients and communities well.

This book is for social work practitioners who, as social change agents, spend much of their time examining social structures and advocating for policies and programs to advance justice and increase opportunity.

Congregational Social Work: Christian Perspectives

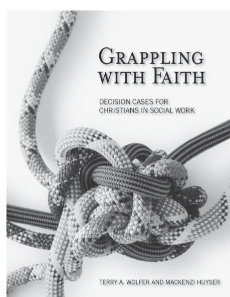
Diana Garland and Gaynor Yancey. (2014). Botsford, CT: NACSW. $39.95 U.S., $31.95 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more copies). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



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.

Grappling with Faith: Decision Cases for Christians in Social Work

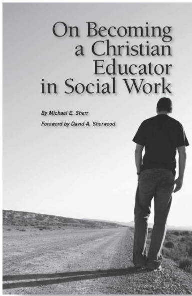
Terry A. Wolfer and Mackenzi Huyser. (2010). $23.75 ($18.99 for NACSW members or for orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



Grappling with Faith: Decision Cases for Christians in Social Work 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.

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.

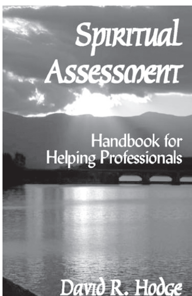


On Becoming a Christian Educator is a compelling invitation for social workers of faith in higher education to explore what it means to be a Christian in social work education. By highlighting seven core commitments of Christian social work educators, it offers strategies for social work educators to 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."

SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT: HELPING HANDBOOK FOR HELPING PROFESSIONALS

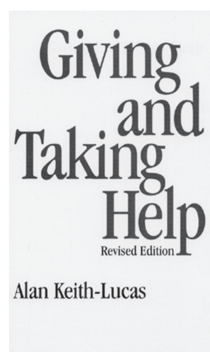
David Hodge. (2003). Botsford CT: NACSW. $20.00 U.S. ($16.00 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.

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.



Giving and Taking Help (Revised Edition)

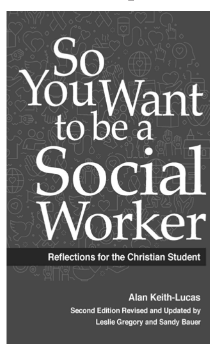
Alan Keith-Lucas. (1994). Botsford CT: North American Association of Christians in Social Work. $20.75 U.S. ($16.50 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



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: REFLECTIONS FOR THE CHRISTIAN STUDENT (2ND EDITION)

Alan Keith-Lucas, Leslie Gregory, and Sandy Bauer. (2021). Palos Heights, IL: NACSW. $14.95 U.S. ($11.95 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



So You Want to Be a Social Worker is 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.

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 or call 203.270.8780.

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71st ANNUAL CONVENTION

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Please join social workers and social service members and friends of faith to the 71st Annual NACSW Convention. Our workshop program features over 75 workshops and poster sessions.

New for this Year
NACSW will dedicate a single day with workshops, breakout sessions and speakers supporting the special tracks.

Criminal Justice and a Faith Perspective – Friday November 19th
Immigration Issues and Considerations of Faith – Saturday November 20th

NOV 18 THURSDAY

NACSW Featured speakers:
Opening Plenary Session
Fr. Greg Boyle of Homeboy Industries

NOV 19 FRIDAY

Alan Keith-Lucas Lecture
Rev. James C. Raines, PhD, MDiv., MSW professor at California State University, Monterey, CA

NOV 20 SATURDAY

Banquet Speaker
Sandy Ovalle Director of Campaigns and Mobilizing of Sojourners

For details on how to register, exhibitor or sponsor information please visit our website at nacsw.org/annual-convention/

NACSW is currently planning for an in-person convention in November. However, depending on the state of COVID-19 in the Southern California area at that time, the format of this year's conference is subject to change. NACSW will communicate with its members and friends as early as possible should the convention have to change to a virtual format to ensure the health and safety of convention participants, staff and volunteers.

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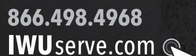

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North American Association of Christians in Social Work

NACSW's mission is to equip its members to integrate Christian faith and professional social work practice.

Its goals include:

- Supporting and encouraging members in the integration of Christian faith and professional practice through fellowship, education, and service opportunities.
- Articulating an informed Christian voice on social welfare practice and policies to the social work profession.
- Providing professional understanding and help for the social ministry of the church.
- Promoting social welfare services and policies in society which bring about greater justice and meet basic human needs.