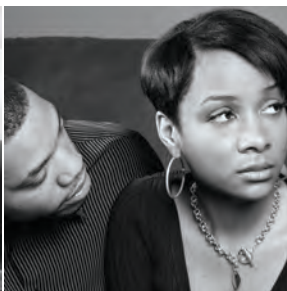


SOCIAL WORK & CHRISTIANITY

JOURNAL OF THE NORTH AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
OF CHRISTIANS IN SOCIAL WORK

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ARTICLES

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Beyond the Walls of Separation: Christian Faith and Ministry in Prisons

Conflict Management for Faith Leaders

Darkness Is My Only Companion: A Christian Response to Mental Illness

SOCIAL WORK & CHRISTIANITY

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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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An Exploratory Study of Female Korean American Church Leaders' Views on Domestic Violence

Y. Joon Choi & Elizabeth P. Cramer

This exploratory qualitative study examines the potential of Korean Protestant churches in preventing and intervening in domestic violence against women through the views of Korean Protestant female leaders. The study explores participants' understanding of their religious teachings on domestic violence, as well as how they view the role of Korean churches in addressing domestic violence against women in the Korean community. Participants considered domestic violence as something for which a marriage could rightfully be dissolved, considered abusers as sick people who need help, and advocated for domestic violence primary prevention targeting the whole community; however, they expected Korean churches to engage in preventing domestic violence instead of intervening in domestic violence cases. Based on outcomes of the study, potential avenues for change in practice, policy, and future research are discussed.

WHILE THERE IS A PAUCITY OF NATIONALLY REPRESENTATIVE prevalence studies of domestic violence among Koreans in the U.S., some studies have demonstrated higher rates of domestic violence among Koreans than other U.S. ethnic groups, with as many as 60% of women suffering from physical abuse by an intimate partner (Ahn, 2002; Lee, 2000; Rhee, 1997; Shin, 1995; Song-Kim, 1992). Research also highlights that this physical violence is often severe. As a consequence of the violence, 70% of the physically abused women suffered bruises, 19% had broken bones or teeth, 9% experienced miscarriages, and 7% were hospitalized (Song-Kim, 1992). Physical violence by the husband was the number

one cause of divorce among Korean subjects, while physical violence has been ranked number five among causes for non-Koreans (Rhee, 1997). In addition, compared to other Asian ethnic groups in the United States, the prevalence of domestic violence is higher among Koreans (Chun, 1990; Kim & Sung, 2000; Korean American Family Service Center, 1995; Rimonte, 1989). Stressful economic circumstances, adherence to Korean cultural values and norms, and changes in gender roles and relationships within the immigration process were found to be important factors contributing to the occurrence of domestic violence within Korean families (Ahn, 2002; Kim & Sung, 2000; Song & Moon, 1998; Yu, 2000).

While some national organizations have moved to the use of the phrase “intimate partner violence” to connote abuse of one’s romantic partner (Centers for Disease Control, 2016), the term domestic violence is still used in the literature and among service providers (National Network to End Domestic Violence, n.d.), and is the term that is most easily understood when translating from Korean to English. Therefore, we use domestic violence to define abuse of one’s romantic partner in this article. Furthermore, we are referring to Korean Americans, Korean American community, Korean American churches, Korean American women, and Korean American domestic violence victims when we use “Koreans,” “Korean community,” “Korean churches,” “Korean women,” and “victims” respectively in this article.

Korean victims severely underutilize formal services such as women’s shelters, hotlines, the police, and legal services, seeking professional help only when they face crisis situations (Kim, 1997; Moon, 2005). Previous studies identified unique cultural and contextual factors related to their low utilization of formal services such as their status as immigrants (e.g., language difficulty, lack of, and knowledge about, available services and resources), as well as their Korean cultural values (e.g., the priority of family interests over individual interests, the cultural expectation for women to endure hardship to preserve the family).

Instead of utilizing formal services, many Koreans turn to their respective churches to seek help (Boodman, 2007), like many other battered women. Studies indicate that religious leaders are one of the most important resources for battered women who rely on them more frequently than other professional help (Martin, 1989; Rotunda, Williamson, & Penfold, 2004). However, religious leaders’ responses to domestic violence have been found to be mostly unhelpful to battered women (Giesbrecht & Sevcik, 2000; Horne & Levitt, 2003), and many have called for more collaborative relationships between service providers and religious organizations and leaders in order to serve religious battered women (Choi, 2015a; Beaman-Hall & Nason-Clark, 1997; Korean American Family Service Center, 1995).

Boddie and Im note that “Korean immigrants who come to the U.S. know that they should seek out a Korean church regardless of whether they

are Christian or not, because they know that's where they will get help" (2008, p. 5). The desire to seek faith-based interventions rather than formal services among Koreans is similar to that of other ethnic groups, such as Arab Muslims (Aloud & Rathur, 2009) and Latinas (Brabeck & Guzman, 2008; Cuevas, Bell & Sabina, 2014; Fuchsel, 2012).

Historically in the United States, Korean religious organizations, especially Protestant churches, have become a place for social and cultural belonging, and they have often served as the center of Korean community life (Boddie & Im, 2008). Additionally, Koreans' church affiliation is exceptionally high. Approximately, 70% to 80% of Koreans regularly attend Korean Protestant churches (Kim & Kim, 2001), and regular church involvement continues with the children of Korean immigrants when they become adults (Min & Kim, 2005). A great number of clergy counsel battered women every year and they can be a help or hindrance to them (Choi, 2015a; Rotunda et al., 2004; Shannon-Lewy & Dull, 2005). As a prominent institution in the Korean community, Korean churches have the potential to be partners for social workers and other helping professionals in providing services to Korean victims and preventing domestic violence in the Korean community. However, there is a dearth of knowledge about the ways in which social workers and other formal service providers can engage Korean churches and work together to prevent and/or intervene in domestic violence cases in the Korean community (Boddie & Im, 2008).

One way to engage Korean churches may be through women in congregations, especially women who are lay leaders of congregations. While women in some immigrant communities may experience traditionally defined roles within the home, they have found ways to be involved and exert leadership within immigrant religious institutions. In immigrant religious institutions, women have primarily been involved in three areas: "by preparing and serving native ('old country') foods for social events that occur both at the central religious site and at homes for religiously connected practices; as central actors in—and often the chief organizers of—domestic religious practices; and as teachers of children in congregation-supported, ethnoreligious classes (e.g., Sunday school) and leaders of youth groups" (Ebaugh & Chafetz, 1999, p. 590). Women in these institutions are typically the ones who are also teaching the native language classes, which include other aspects of cultural heritage (Ebaugh & Chafetz). In Korean churches, there are many lay roles that can be filled by women. These positions confer status, which helps to make up for the decreased occupational status experienced by many Koreans when they migrated (Hurh & Kim, 1990). It is important to note, however, that as a whole, women are underrepresented in top leadership roles in Korean churches (Min, 2008).

Frequently, contacts between churches and domestic violence programs are facilitated by church women, with these women providing support to

domestic violence programs in various ways (Beaman-Hall, 1996; Nason-Clark & Beaman-Hall, 1993, 1994). In their research of the staff of domestic violence programs, Beaman-Hall and Nason-Clark (1997) found that Church women support the work of domestic violence programs by providing monetary and material support. But more importantly, they support the efforts of domestic violence programs by providing links to the congregation as a whole.

In this article, we begin with an overview of barriers confronting Korean victims in seeking help, shifting the focus to Korean churches. We will then report the results of an exploratory qualitative study that examined how female Korean Protestant leaders understand their religious teachings/beliefs about marital relationships and domestic violence, as well as their views on the role of Korean churches in addressing domestic violence in the community. This article presents insights from a group of lay women leaders that can stimulate additional research as well as dialogue with Protestant Korean congregations.

Barriers Confronting Korean Victims

Korean victims face numerous barriers that force them to stay in abusive relationships and make it difficult for them to seek help from outside of the Korean community. Most of all, it is due to Korean cultural values. Korean women are likely to keep domestic violence secret because revealing it outside their family would be a sign of personal failure, which would bring shame to the entire family (Moon, 2005; Tran & Jardins, 2000). Interviews with Korean victims revealed that they did not leave their abusers because of the concern that the reputation of their children would be damaged within the Korean community if they were from a family in which there was divorce, and the future of their children would be compromised by coming from a family with divorce (Shimtuh, 2000). Shame not only forces Korean victims to stay in abusive relationships but also inhibits them from seeking help even from close relatives and friends (Moon, 2005; Tran & Jardins, 2000).

Other factors contributing to low utilization of services are related to their status as immigrants, including language difficulty, lack of and knowledge about available services and resources, mistrust of and unfamiliarity with the U.S. criminal and immigrant laws and systems, and dependency on their husbands for their legal immigration status when they come to the U.S. through marriage (Moon, 2005; Tran & Jardins, 2000; Warriar, 2000). According to Song-Kim (1992), 65 percent of the participants of her study reported language difficulty as a major reason for not seeking services. The language difficulty means that most Korean victims can only receive help from services that are equipped with staff who can speak Korean, but few services are designed to address the needs of Korean victims, including staff who can speak Korean and who understand the cultural contexts of

the victims. Only seven domestic violence programs exist in the U.S. that specifically target Korean women, and only two of these programs provide emergency, transitional or permanent housing services (API Institute on Domestic Violence, 2011).

As newcomers to the U.S., many Korean victims may not be aware of available services and resources (Moon, 2005). This lack of knowledge of available services is often exacerbated by extreme isolation created by the batterers because many victims leave their families and friends in their home country and have to rely on the batterers to navigate the new country. This makes it difficult for these women to know what resources are available and what the laws regarding domestic violence are like in the U.S. (Warrier, 2000).

Finally, many Korean victims, like other immigrant victims, do not seek formal help because they are afraid of what might happen due to their immigration status, and they are unaware that provisions of the Violence Against Women Act may be able to help them (Immigration Center for Women and Children, 2016). Many immigrant victims depend on their spouses for their legal status in the U.S., and therefore the spouses have the power to jeopardize the women's immigration status. The spouses' threat of deportation, combined with lack of knowledge on the Violence Against Women Act, which in certain cases allows immigrant victims to obtain lawful permanent resident status through either self-petitioning or suspension of deportation, force many immigrant victims to remain in the abusive relationships and to be reluctant to seek formal help (Immigration Center for Women and Children, 2016; Orloff & Kelly, 1995). Korean counselors echoed a similar predicament faced by Korean victims whom they served in Huisman's study (1996).

Korean Churches

Although many new immigrant groups in the United States exhibit strong religious affiliations, Koreans show an exceptionally high rate of affiliation with the church (Kim & Kim, 2001; Min & Jang, 2005). Most Koreans are affiliated with Christian churches, predominantly in Protestant denominations (Kwon, Kim, & Warner, 2001). As Hurh and Kim put it, "church involvement is indeed a way of life" for the vast majority of Koreans (1990, p. 20). Kim (1981) described the Korean church as a "pseudo-extended family" for Koreans where they can satisfy not only their spiritual needs but also psychological, social, cultural, and practical needs that are usually taken care of by families (Boddie & Im, 2008; Kim, 1981). Korean churches are one of the few places for Koreans to meet fellow immigrants who have gone through similar experiences of isolation and alienation from the dominant society in the U.S. It is also common practice in the Korean community to seek help from a church for problems that normally require

professional help such as mental health issues and domestic violence (Boodman, 2007; New Visions, 2004).

Despite the religious and social roles played by Korean churches in the lives of Koreans, there are only a few studies that looked at the connection between Korean churches and domestic violence. Two studies looked at whether and how Korean churches were seen as a source of help or a means to coping for domestic violence victims (Kwon, 2004; New Visions, 2004). Another study (Choi, 2015b) surveyed Korean clergy as to their safety-promoting behaviors with Korean victims. Moon (2005) stated that it is useful to recognize that Korean clergy members can act as key persons in supporting battered women and addressing the spouse's abusive behaviors. However, Kim (1996) described Korean churches as patriarchal institutions that may reinforce traditional gender norms and consequently condone sexism. Kim (1997) studied the experiences of Korean women and observed that sexism is justified in Korean churches as adhering to Christian teachings of male authority and that Korean women's sacrifice is justified by equating it with Jesus' sacrifice for all human beings. In addition, Korean churches were viewed by victims and their children as places that protect and support batterers and blame the victim for the violence (Shimtuh, 2000).

Even with these conflicting aspects of Korean churches, one cannot ignore the possibilities of collaboration between helping professionals and Korean churches that truly focus on the needs and concerns of women who are victimized. However, there is a lack of understanding regarding how to engage Korean churches as partners to assist victims and work to prevent domestic violence in the Korean community. Lay leaders are respected authority figures in Korean congregations and many times have great influence within the church environment (Warner, 2001). Therefore, female lay leaders in congregations have the potential to be active partners with social workers and other formal service providers to engage Korean churches in providing prevention and intervention services regarding domestic violence. In order to gauge that potential, this study provides an opportunity for Protestant female lay leaders to share their views of domestic violence and discuss how to address domestic violence in the Korean community.

Research Methods

Design and Procedures

Radical structuralist qualitative research designs focus on change at the larger system level. The goals of this type of research are to: engage in radical change at the class or structural level, promote emancipation and consciousness-raising, illuminate contradictions in social structures, and disrupt inequitable power arrangements and unhealthy structural relation-

ships. Knowledge acquired using these types of designs could also be used to develop or advocate for a service, program, or community that would embrace social justice and fairness principles. Knowledge for change or action is the foundation of this paradigm (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Netting & O'Connor, 2005). Radical structuralists seek to "provide explanations of basic interrelationships within the context of total social formation" (Netting & O'Connor, 2005, p. 29).

In this study, the social structures of the church, religious or scriptural teachings, and the role of clergy are of particular interest. Feminist theorists and researchers have noted that religious teachings about male authority and female submission have contributed to abusive persons justifying their behavior and abused individuals remaining in abusive relationships (Ayyub, 2000; Brown & Parker, 1989). Patriarchal religious teachings have the potential to have an impact on congregants' beliefs about roles of men and women in relationships, power within relationships, and expectations about what someone should do if he or she is experiencing domestic violence (Fortune, 1987). Therefore, this study explores participants' views about these social structures within their communities as they relate to addressing domestic violence.

The focus group method was chosen because focus group methodology fits well with the radical structuralist approach to research. Focus groups permit participants to share opinions and ideas with each other, which can stimulate collective brainstorming and conversing about a topic (Berg, 2007; Krueger & Casey, 2000). Also, the interactions that occur in focus groups often promote collective understanding of the research phenomena as well as insights useful for consciousness-raising about social problems and issues (Montel, 1999; Wilkinson, 1998). The purpose of this study is to provide opportunity for female lay leaders in churches to share and discuss their views of domestic violence and ideas on how to address domestic violence in the Korean community. Therefore, the focus group could produce insights for participants on how to address domestic violence in the Korean community by offering multiple perspectives about how to change the status quo.

Participants

After receiving approval by the Institutional Review Board of our university, we recruited study participants from an urban area in the mid-Atlantic region because we knew a community informant (a Korean female minister) in this area who could help with recruiting participants for the study. With the community informant's help, the first author made a presentation about the purpose of the study and the voluntary nature of participation to an informal gathering of female Korean lay leaders, of which the community informant was a member. Nine women voluntarily agreed

to participate in the study. All the participants were Protestant because there are only Protestant Korean churches in the area.

Information on participant demographic characteristics was drawn mainly from the demographic form participants completed, but some information came from the focus group. All nine participants self-identified as Korean who are leaders in Korean American churches. Five participants were Deacons, two were Elders, one was a minister, and one was the wife of a minister. They ranged in age from 35 to 65, with five participants 56-65 years old, three participants 46-55 years old, and one participant 36-45 years old. Their educational levels ranged from high school graduation to having a master's degree, and one participant did not indicate her educational level. Seven were married and two were divorced. Out of the seven married women, three were married to Korean men and four were married to American men. The two divorced participants were divorced from Korean men. None was born in the U.S., and their years in the U.S. ranged from less than 10 to 34 years. Six of the nine participants were Presbyterian, with the other three being either Methodist or Baptist. Table 1 shows demographic characteristics of study participants.

Table 1. Participant Demographic Characteristics

Participant	Age	Marital status	U.S. born	Years of residence in U.S.	Education	Denomination	Years of attending current church	Role in the church
1	56-65	Married	No	28	College	Presbyterian	14	Wife of Minister
2	56-65	Married	No	31	Master's	Presbyterian	14	Minister
3	56-65	Married	No	34	Master's	Presbyterian	14	Elder
4	56-65	Divorce	No	N/A	College	Presbyterian	14	Deacon
5	56-65	Divorce	No	19	Master's	Presbyterian	14	Deacon
6	46-55	Married	No	N/A	Some College	Presbyterian	3	Deacon
7	56-65	Married	No	30	High School	Baptist	22	Deacon
8	46-55	Married	No	26	High School	Methodist	20	Deacon
9	46-55	Married	No	26	N/A	Methodist	15	Elder

Focus Group Questions and Data Collection A

A focus group was conducted in Korean at the church of the community informant by the first author who is also a Korean American. The focus group was conducted in Korean because this is the participants' preferred language for communication. The first author's extensive experience of working and living across languages and being involved in the dilemmas of translated worlds enabled great care to be taken in both how the focus group was conducted and the translation of the participants' comments when writing the results. Before conducting the focus group, the participants were assured of their confidentiality, signed an informed consent form describing the study, and completed a brief form that asked questions about demographic characteristics. The following questions guided the focus group:

1. What are your ideas of healthy marital relationships and domestic violence according to the Bible and Christian teachings?
2. What do you think causes domestic violence?
3. What do you think needs to be done in order to address the problem of domestic violence against women in the Korean community?

The focus group was audio-recorded with participants' permission, and field notes were also taken during the session. The focus group lasted for two-and-one-half hours.

Data Analysis

After the focus group was completed, the audiotape was transcribed from Korean to English by the first author. Thematic analysis was used through the process of open coding (Patton, 2002). We analyzed the raw data by hand. First, we read the field notes and a total of 14 single-spaced pages of verbatim transcribed focus group transcripts to develop units of analysis. Second, we read the transcripts and field notes again to start the formal coding in a systematic way. Third, we compared and contrasted the units of analysis with each other. Fourth, we identified themes. Fifth, we sorted the themes into three categories in accordance with the three research questions: healthy marital relationships; reason for men's use of violence; and strategies to address domestic violence.

Descriptions of each theme under each category were refined and elaborated through multiple readings of the transcription and the field notes. This paper includes themes expressed by three or more participants. Rigor in qualitative research is focused on the dimensions of *credibility*, the accuracy of the interpretation of the data; *transferability*, the *applicability* of

study's finding to other cases or populations; *dependability*, the transparency of the researchers and research process, especially related to the contexts in which the study took place; and *confirmability*, the results and interpretation of a study can be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

In our study, we used several strategies to enhance rigor. In the area of credibility, member checking of the findings was done with one of the participants to make sure what was constructed accurately depicted participants' experiences and perspectives. In the transferability dimension, the researchers examined the literature on other immigrant religious communities to identify similarities and differences in experiences. Dependability was addressed through the use of memoing to note emerging units and themes and their descriptions as well as to capture curiosities about the data. Lastly, related to confirmability, while researchers bring their own unique histories and perspectives to any study, we detailed our rationale for why units were coded as they were and how themes emerged from the analysis through the memoing process. This transparency in the data coding and analysis process allows for an independent researcher to verify or challenge our thought processes and decisions.

Findings

Healthy Marital Relationships

At the outset of the focus group, the participants discussed healthy marital relationships without ever referring to their religious teachings/beliefs about marital relationships, contrary to the authors' expectation that Korean Christian women's understanding of healthy marital relationships would be strongly influenced by Christian teachings/beliefs on marital relationships. However, once the participants started talking about what healthy marital relationships look like according to the Bible and the teachings of Christianity, the connection between the participants' understanding of healthy marital relationships and their religious teachings/beliefs became clear. Two themes were identified: honest and supportive relationships and rejection of women's submission to men.

Honest and supportive relationships

All the participants' perspectives on healthy marital relationships centered on honest relationships, in which partners work together to support each other, acknowledging their differences and finding compromises.

This comment illustrates the theme:

Everyone is different. So try to understand your partner's differences and be honest to each other without hiding anything from each other. Then you can really trust your spouse. I think that may be the healthy relationship.

Three participants considered supportive and loving relationships to be keeping the promise of fulfilling spousal responsibilities made at the wedding. One participant mentioned:

I think both husbands and wives fulfilling their responsibilities is a precondition for a healthy marital relationship. That is, husbands and wives love each other as they promised to do at their wedding and fulfill this responsibility of loving each other to the fullest.

Two other participants also believed that frequent communication between partners and active listening are vital to preventing misunderstandings, which consequently contributes to healthy relationships. The majority of participants tended to agree that Korean couples, compared to American couples, are not good at expressing their thoughts and wants to each other, which may contribute to conflicts between partners:

Through lots of talks and communication, we can talk about 'this is what I want and what I think.' We should talk frankly to each other about 'I don't like when you do this, I like when you do that.' But Koreans, especially Korean husbands, assume that others [spouse] will figure out what I want, instead of talking frankly to the spouse 'this is what I want.'

Rejection of women's submission to men

All the participants rejected the idea that wives should completely subject themselves to their husbands' authority. Instead, they stated that, according to Christian teaching, marriage should be reciprocal in that, although each partner may have a specified role, they are generally equal.

They viewed the women's so-called subjection clause, "Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord... as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything," (Ephesians 5: 22-24, New International Version), as something that was meant to set order in the family, generally agreeing that husbands are the heads of the families, and wives listen to husbands and follow their leads. However, they emphasized that a husband should reciprocate by loving his wife as the Lord loved His church and that the subjection clause does not command a wife to be subject to her husband when he does not fulfill his duties.

To batterers, this Bible verse also has communicated that their violence is justified because women are subject to men in all things. As stated by one participant:

It's not like a master/servant relationship. God did not teach us to endure pains and sufferings blindly. That's not what God wants. Blind subjection is a misunderstanding and misrepresentation of Christianity.

Even though all the participants advocated for couples working hard to keep families together through difficult times and considered divorce as the last resort, the majority also thought that there are situations in which divorce is warranted. For example, it was revealed that participants consider men's violence as the breaking of God's command of loving your wives, and something for which marriages could rightfully be dissolved. This sentiment is well-described by one of the participants who has been divorced:

When a man and a woman marry, they swear to be a good husband and a wife. Especially, Christians swear to God. If one party breaks that promise, the union ends. If you break the promise you made in front of God, that is the end of your union.

Six participants noted that many Korean Christians, especially men, misunderstand the subjection verse and some other verses in the Bible and use them selfishly. Three participants attributed these misinterpretations to the Korean culture's root in Confucianism, which is steeped in rigid gender roles, male authority, and women's absolute devotion to husbands. That is, Korean Christians, especially Korean men, may interpret the Bible through a lens of Confucian ideology, which tends to result in misinterpretation of the Bible, including the subjection verse's intention of reciprocal love and devotion to each other. The majority of the participants also pointed out that Korean women try to endure marital difficulties because of their upbringing based on the Confucian tradition and misunderstanding of the Bible, which compels Korean women to stay in abusive relationships. A divorced participant spoke of her dilemma of staying in a troubled marriage due to her misunderstanding of the Christian teachings:

At first, because of my misunderstanding of Christianity, I did not get a divorce for a long time. And one day, a minister at an American church told me that if one party broke the conditions of swearing to love each other, that union is already broken. I am not encouraging people to divorce through counseling with ministers, but ministers telling women to be subject to their husbands actually make things worse.

Finally, all the participants viewed Korean ministers as having the most important role in interpreting the Bible and in educating congregation members correctly since the ministers' teachings of the Bible are the most crucial factor for congregation members in obtaining correct understandings of the Bible and Christian teachings on healthy marital relationships. They noted that based on the wrong interpretation of the Bible, ministers may advise women to subject themselves completely to their husbands, thereby prolonging suffering of abused women.

Reasons for Men's Use of Violence

We identified two themes in participants' discussion regarding what they believe causes domestic violence: 1) Understanding of abusers as sick people, and 2) stressful immigrant life. A couple of participants considered men's violence against partners as a power and control issue, but this was a minority opinion.

Understanding of abusers as sick people

The predominant understanding among the participants about the reasons for men's violence was the perspective that abusers are sick people who need mental health treatment. The participants considered men who use violence against partners as mentally ill people who erupt into violence when pushed to the edge. As one participant put it:

This [domestic violence] is a mental health issue, but people don't think of this as an illness. If you feel that something is not right with you, you got to go to a counselor for help, but we [Koreans] don't do that at all, because we worry that others will think we are crazy if we seek treatment.

As evidenced from the participant's remark above, the participants believed that Koreans are not only uninformed about mental health issues, including domestic violence, but also very reluctant to seek mental health treatment out of fear of others' reaction to their families' mental health problems. They also thought that there is a tremendous need for educating the community about mental health issues and that the case of Seung-Hui Cho, a Korean Virginia Tech student who gunned down 32 others and took his own life, provided the community with a good opportunity to start taking mental health issues seriously:

We Koreans think it's a big deal to seek any treatment. People even don't go to AA meetings. A lot of Koreans are alcoholic, but they never go to AA meetings. Koreans don't seek treatment until things get out of hand, but then it may be too late, which was the case of Seung-Hui Cho.

This view of equating men's violence with mental health issues was also expressed by the participants' opinions on what needs to be done to the abusers. The two participants who believed domestic violence is about power and control, not about mental illness, suggested shaming as one of the methods to be employed to stop men's violence. For example, they felt that embarrassing abusers by making a man's violence public at church would bring collective pressure on the man to change his violent behavior. One of these two participants was the youngest participant who is the newest immigrant among the participants, and the other participant was a minister who has a bachelor's degree in social work. However, most participants thought that shaming would not be a good way to deal with abusers because abusers might stop going to the church altogether, but mainly because it is not ethically right to treat sick people (abusers) this way. This perspective was well portrayed by a participant who denounced the shaming method and advocated treatment for abusers:

I think shaming is not good for those who are already sick [abusers]. We need to find out why he is doing it [using violence] to cure him because I think shaming him will actually make these sick people explode. I think we need to take care of the abusers as well as victims. These are sick people. We need to encourage them to get treatment.

This sentiment was echoed by a call for "a clinic for the abusive men in the Korean community," where abusers would go to the clinic, "like alcoholics do." Another participant emphasized the need for abusers' treatment this way:

Of course, not every one of them will get treatment just because you encourage them to, but we should try if we can help at least one person. There are some men who know they are doing something wrong or want to stop but can't. They have the possibility to change.

Stressful immigrant life

In addition to viewing abusers as having mental illness, many participants considered the difficulty of immigrant life as a factor contributing to men's marital violence. Downward socio-economic mobility is particularly painful for Korean men who come from a society where males are valued and expected to govern the family. One participant put it this way:

When Korean men come to America, they feel like they are nobody. With limited English and economic opportunities, they feel like they are not respected by anyone. When a wife does not acknowledge this feeling, they get angry and explode.

Loss of roles and status due to downward socio-economic mobility, in addition to women's labor participation, can cause Korean men, who still yearn for and adhere to their traditional Korean family system, to doubt their self-worth and feel that their authority in the family is being challenged. Another participant discussed how she witnessed several Korean men's emotional wounds from difficult immigration affect their relationships with their family. She commented about one particular person she knows:

I know this man who worked really hard to make a decent living in America, but he didn't speak English well and could not get decent jobs. I saw how he changed from this confident and outgoing guy to a withdrawn and angry man. I learned from his wife that he started beating her up a few years after their immigration to America and always blamed her for his problems because she was the one who wanted to immigrate to America.

Participants discussed how important this immigrant context is in understanding Korean men's use of violence against their partners. This is consistent with research findings on domestic violence in the Korean community, which supports stressful immigrant life as a contributing factor to domestic violence (Song & Moon, 1998; Yu, 2000). The perception of participants seems to be that stressful immigrant life, combined with Koreans' reluctance to seek treatment, pushes men who are already sick to the edge of using violence.

Strategies to Address Domestic Violence

In answering what needs to be done to address domestic violence in the Korean community, participants' answers centered on three themes: 1) Seriousness of domestic violence, 2) The Korean Church as a place for prevention, and 3) Community-wide domestic violence interventions.

Seriousness of domestic violence

Overall, participants agreed that the Korean community (including civic organizations and churches) is not doing much to intervene with respect to domestic violence, even though the need for community-wide interventions is extremely urgent. Participants agreed that the problem is serious, with all nine participants personally knowing many Korean women who have been abused by partners, and many talking about their experiences of intervening in those cases:

When I saw the [Korean] newspaper the other day, it says that among all the cases this Korean counseling center in Washington, D. C. has, most cases are about domestic violence.

It says that the situation is serious. And I believe it, because I can write a book about stories of abused Korean women whom I have known for the past thirty years.

Even though the participants did not mention that they think the problem is more prevalent with these women, all the cases they talked about involved women who married American men. Additionally, participants pointed out that these women face more barriers than other Korean women in that they tend to be more isolated and that the language barrier is a more salient issue with these women. One of the participants, who is married to an American man, offered some insight into why Korean women married to American men are at increased risk for abuse:

Those women who married American men have more barriers than other women. They are really isolated. They don't meet other people or go to any kind of meeting. And many of them can't speak much English, so they can't even go outside by themselves. I try to help them whenever I find out about them [the abuse], but it is hard because they are so isolated.

The Korean church as a place for prevention

Lack of resources in the Korean community for domestic violence victims was pointed out by four participants. They asserted that because there are no resources in the Korean community and many Korean Americans cannot use resources outside the Korean community due to language barriers, people come to church for help with all sorts of problems, including domestic violence.

The majority of the participants did not think that ministers could directly intervene in cases of domestic violence in the congregations. They expressed concern about confidentiality when ministers intervene, saying that "soon everybody in the whole church knows what is going on with so and so because somehow words go around so fast in the church." In addition, participants stated that it is hard for ministers to do counseling or intervene in cases of domestic violence because ministers worry about the congregation's reaction to the intervention and possibly losing congregation members:

If a minister tells an abused woman to get a divorce and she tells other people in the church about the minister's advice, some people will criticize the minister for his advice of getting a divorce. And when the husband and wife go to the same church, it is hard for a minister to intervene, because they worry they are going to lose the husband as a congregation member if they side with the abused woman.

Several participants also agreed that ministers are not equipped to intervene in cases of domestic violence even if they would like to, due to their lack of training on these issues. Instead, participants thought that ministers should be knowledgeable about available resources and act as resource persons who could refer couples in trouble to service organizations. But even then a problem may arise:

The dilemma is that Korean ministers want to refer abused women to some place that deals with spirituality, because they think it is about spiritual issues. And therefore, they are not going to refer to social service agencies.

This brings attention to the dire situation of Korean victims of abuse. There is no resource in the Korean community for them, so they seek help from ministers, who are ambivalent about intervening in cases of domestic violence and not equipped to deal with the problem, but do not refer them to service organizations, because they believe that domestic violence is about spirituality and that the service organizations do not deal with spirituality.

Finally, even though participants thought that ministers cannot intervene in the cases of domestic violence directly, all of them thought that ministers should play an important role in preventing domestic violence. They criticized Korean churches in their communities that have not been doing much to provide opportunities for couples to learn how to be better spouses and how to have healthy marital relationships. They stated that ministers could take the first step in preventing domestic violence by educating congregation members about healthy marital relationships through sermons with correct interpretation of the Bible and providing other educational opportunities on healthy families, such as couples' seminars.

Community-wide domestic violence interventions

Discussion about what to do with domestic violence in the Korean community centered on participants strongly preferring community-wide interventions (those that target the entire population or community rather than only the sub-group at risk or those already engaging in domestic violence), instead of focusing only on abused women and abusers. They all agreed that targeting only abused women and abusers would actually discourage these people from seeking help, especially in the Korean community where stigma and shame are the main reasons for people not seeking help for mental health issues and domestic violence. In terms of community-wide intervention, participants emphasized that educating Koreans in general about domestic violence issues should be the priority. They thought that education on the issue would reduce stigma attached to domestic violence and encourage victims to seek help.

Participants agreed that local Korean civic organizations such as Korean societies (Korean societies are voluntary organizations that host Korean holiday celebrations and occasionally hold events related to community issues, and areas with large Korean populations have these organizations), Korean business associations, and Korean women's associations should lead the community efforts to deal with domestic violence issues and promote healthy marital relationships because they have legitimacy in representing the Korean community. They proposed that these organizations should create programs, such as seminars or workshops, to educate the whole community about domestic violence and healthy marital relationships. A participant who is the president of a Korean civic organization put it this way:

I think these organizations should have some kind of seminars on domestic violence. Because that will send a message to Koreans here that domestic violence is an important issue we care about and that it is important to live like a human being without abuse.

Several participants also suggested concrete ways to help victims by assisting them with practical support, as illustrated by one participant:

I think these women don't make a decision to leave their abusive husbands because they don't have economic capacity to support themselves. So I think community organizations should support these women financially, so these women can support themselves and their kids. We need to support them, so they could be independent.

Moreover, participants seemed to consider domestic violence too serious an issue for non-professionals to handle alone. They acknowledged that there is a tremendous need for Korean professionals, such as social workers with expertise on domestic violence, to take charge of this important and serious issue. They recommended that these professionals, in collaboration with the community organizations, make educational movies/documentaries about domestic violence to be placed at each Korean church for people to borrow, which can be done individually. One participant described it this way:

I think having educational tapes for everyone would work, because you can use it on your own without other people suspecting that you have a problem.

Discussion

We will first describe the limitations and strengths of this study and then discuss the implications of the study's results for direct and macro practitioners.

Limitations

The fundamental limitation of this exploratory qualitative study using the focus group approach is its very small and non-representative sample. We have collected data from only nine participants from three churches (with six of the nine being from a single church) in one urban area in the mid-Atlantic region. This limits the “trustworthiness” (Roswell, 1998) of the study and introduces a possibility that leaders from other Korean churches could have offered different perspectives. Although member checking was done to establish trustworthiness of the findings, it was done with only one participant. Qualitative researchers suggest triangulation of data as one way to enhance the trustworthiness, which includes gathering data using different methods or from different informants, as well as using the same methods and informants over time (Padgett, 2008). With follow-up interviews with the same participants, we may be able to double-check themes or discover new themes that were not found in the initial focus group. In addition, gathering data from other informants such as Korean clergy, Korean leaders of civic organizations, Korean victims, as well as Korean Christian female leaders in other areas, should be carried out in future studies to enhance the trustworthiness of this study and bring in-depth understanding of the topic.

Another limitation of the study is that no male leaders were included in the study population. Male leaders may have different opinions than the female leaders. On the other hand, inclusion of only female leaders can be considered a strength of this study. Inclusion of only female leaders was done purposefully from the feminist perspective and radical structuralist paradigm. We hoped to provide opportunities for Korean women to express their opinions and discuss their experiences of coming into contact with domestic violence cases. Korean women’s views about domestic violence have not received much attention in the literature. Therefore we wanted to engage a focus group of Korean Christian female leaders in discussion about what strategies might work in the Korean community to address domestic violence. Finally, we believed that consciousness-raising of female leaders from being involved in a study like this is critical in exploring potential actions that could have an impact on addressing domestic violence and assessing whether female Christian leaders could be partners for social workers and other helping professionals in engaging Korean churches to provide prevention and intervention services around domestic violence.

We also believe a strength of this study is that the focus group was conducted in the participants’ native language by a Korean immigrant woman who has lived experience in biculturalism and who has worked in the domestic violence field for a number of years. The second author also has extensive experience in the domestic violence field and has served

numerous Asian immigrant and Asian American clients. The transparency in the researchers' experiences and perspectives, as well as careful memoing of coding and analytic decisions, increases the rigor of this study.

Reflections on Findings

The results of our study reinforced some previous studies about why domestic violence is a problem in the Korean community and illuminated new perspectives on Korean women's understanding of domestic violence. Participants agreed that many Korean Christians, especially men, misunderstand the Bible as prescribing women's subjection to men, in part due to Korean culture's roots in Confucianism, which in turn contributes to Korean churches' patriarchal character. This finding is similar to the previous research findings (Kim, 1996; Kim, 1997) that illustrate Korean churches as patriarchal institutions.

However, the patriarchal characteristics of Korean churches seem to be not entirely due to the traditional Confucian norms that adhere to strict gender roles; it seems to be also due to the evangelical character of Korean theology. Min (2010) discusses the growing evangelical orientation of second-generation Korean churches. In his study of gender and family norms of second-generation Koreans, Alumkal (1999) found that respondents adhered to patriarchal gender norms and spoke about these norms using discourse from American evangelicalism rather than through references to Korean culture. Alumkal argues that the patriarchal nature of Korean churches is influenced by the male-centeredness of Korean culture combined with the patriarchal norms of some forms of American evangelical theology.

In our study, the participants' progressive ideas about gender roles may have been because they do not adhere to evangelical theology. This points to the need for future research that examines the evangelical trait of Korean theology as well as Korean Confucian culture in explaining gender role attitudes and domestic violence in the Korean community (Yun, 2013). Additionally, this serves as a reminder that the presence of female leaders in Korean churches does not obviate the patriarchal attitudes and behaviors in these churches.

Participants in this study considered men's violence against their partners as the breaking of God's command of loving their spouses, and something for which marriages could rightfully be dissolved. The participants critically examined the Bible verse that has been used by clergy to advise women to stay with abusive partners. The verse has raised controversy, because it has been interpreted as a call for women's submission and obedience to men. Its use in this way has been criticized as a misuse when clergy suggest the problem of domestic violence would be alleviated if the abused woman displayed obedient submission to her husband (Giesbrecht & Sevcik, 2000). We

did not expect this progressive interpretation of the Bible regarding marital relationships and divorce. In addition to being elders of their respective churches, five out of the nine participants were the current and past leaders of local Korean civic organizations. With the exception of Korean women's organizations, it is extremely rare for Korean American women to be leaders of Korean civic organizations in the U.S. As women who became leaders of the church and the community, these women have defied the traditional Korean cultural norms of strict gender roles and male authority, and it could be assumed that the study participants have progressive ideas about gender roles and responsibilities.

The majority of participants viewed abusers as sick people who are overstressed by a difficult immigrant life, resulting in angry outbursts. They equated abusers with alcoholics and other mentally ill people who need mental health treatment, not punishment. Feminist theologians and critical theory proponents tend to be situated in the radical structuralist paradigm (Singletary, 2008). Similarly, the common explanation for domestic violence in many domestic violence programs (i.e., the power and control model, which acknowledges that social structures and cultural beliefs and attitudes support perpetrators in their battering behavior) fits into a radical structuralist paradigm (Kessler, Molnar, Feurer, & Appelbaum, 2001).

Yet interestingly, many of the participants rejected the power and control model in favor of individual explanations of abusive behavior (i.e., the abuser is sick). While theorists and researchers informed by feminist and critical theory may be tuned into the social structures that perpetuate battering, members of different communities (including Korean churches) may be more focused on the internal limitations or deficits of individuals, which they believe contribute to battering behaviors. This presents some challenges in dialoguing across paradigms so that theorists, researchers, practitioners, community members, churches and other institutions, and those affected by abuse, can understand each other and work toward solutions to the problem of domestic violence.

According to the participants' anecdotal experiences, domestic violence seems to be more prevalent among Korean women who are married to American men, with these women facing unique challenges. Four of the nine participants were married to American men, and this may have given them some unique insights into the particular challenges of Korean women who are being abused by American men. For some of the abused women who are married to American men, the language barrier may mean not only a barrier to accessing services but also total dependence on their partners for everyday activities. For example, because of the language barrier these women cannot even go outside by themselves and have to be accompanied by their abusers wherever they go. Some of the abusers use this against the victims by not letting the women get driver's licenses, attend Korean

churches, or file for her immigration application. Their isolation from the Korean community leaves these women without any support networks on which most Koreans rely, namely the church and congregation members. What was interesting about this seemingly more serious domestic violence problem among these women is that this goes against what participants discussed as the two most important contributing factors to domestic violence in the Korean community—Confucian tradition and immigrant life. If one accepts the participants' explanations of domestic violence, then shouldn't there be fewer problems with American men who are not influenced by Confucian culture and stresses from immigrant life?

We did not find any studies that focused on the experiences of Korean women married to American men in the literature, and therefore it is difficult to definitively determine whether domestic violence is more serious among Korean women married to American men. However, the fact that all the domestic violence cases the participants discussed involved these women could be interpreted as follows. Unlike what the participants believed to be reasons for domestic violence in the Korean community, most feminist theorists on the subject would argue that domestic violence is about preserving patriarchy (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). We believe that the examples the women in our study presented exemplify feminist explanations of violence that focus on the relationship between the cultural ideology of male dominance and structural forces that limit women's access to resources. Compared to other Korean women, those married to American men may stand out more because they face additional barriers, namely isolation and language issues, which can produce more serious circumstances that grab people's attention. Alternatively, these examples may have been raised by participants simply because four out of nine participants are married to American men, and therefore they may be more attuned to these situations.

What is certain is that the experiences of abuse victims in which where the perpetrator is an American husband are different from other Korean women in that they may have additional and/or different barriers, compared to other Korean women. Therefore, there is a need to investigate whether these women experience abuse more, what these women's experiences are like, what unique barriers they encounter, and how they cope with domestic violence.

Implications for Direct Practice and Community-Level Prevention

Influenced by the change and action orientation of the radical structuralist paradigm that framed this study, we would like to discuss findings in light of potential actions that could effect change in the structures and beliefs that participants believed had an impact on Korean Protestant churches' response to domestic violence. Potential avenues for change exist at numerous intersections, including direct or clinical interventions with

survivors and perpetrators of domestic violence as well as community-level prevention and intervention initiatives.

Korean battered women have had difficulties receiving support from their respective churches regarding their decisions to seek divorce (Shimtu, 2000). As the leaders in their churches, women could play an instrumental role in bringing awareness of healthy marital relationships and domestic violence to their churches and in supporting abused women's decisions to obtain necessary services, including seeking divorce. Thus, Korean Christian female leaders are potential allies for social workers and other helping professionals who want to provide services to battered Korean women and reach out to the Korean community for domestic violence education and prevention.

Many helping professionals we have encountered over the years expressed their frustration with not knowing how to reach out to the Korean community. Korean Christian female leaders should be the logical first choice for helping professionals to develop collaborative working relationships to engage Korean churches and ultimately the Korean community in addressing domestic violence. Korean women have been leaders in providing social services within their communities, including assistance for families experiencing domestic violence (for example, Korean Women's Association, 2013). The participants' recommendation regarding the role of the community and civic organizations in preventing and intervening in domestic violence is consistent with M. Kim's work (2010), which noted that community-based (non-shelter) programs are critical for Asian and Pacific Islander domestic violence victims who may be reluctant to enter or unable to access shelters (Dabby, 2007).

Participants advocated regarding the need to educate the whole Korean community about mental health issues, including domestic violence, so that Koreans could break the taboo surrounding treatment for mental health problems. This could provide helping professionals with a rare opportunity to rally the community with the help of Korean Christian female leaders to openly discuss taboo subjects such as domestic violence and mental health problems in the Korean community.

Participants agreed that the Korean community is doing little to intervene with respect to domestic violence and there are few resources in the Korean community for victims. Participants did not expect Korean churches to play an important role in directly intervening in domestic violence cases, citing confidentiality issues and a lack of training of ministers to deal with domestic violence cases. This is disappointing, considering the centrality of Korean churches in the lives of Koreans. However, participants stated that Korean churches could be involved in preventing domestic violence by educating congregation members about healthy marital relationships through sermons and other educational opportunities with "correct" interpretation of the Bible. Furthermore, they advocated for a universal approach

to domestic violence education instead of targeting only abused women or abusers, which would reduce stigma attached to domestic violence and encourage victims to seek help. This suggests a preference for primary prevention targeting the whole community.

The participants' preference for targeting the whole community is an exciting finding and in accord with the current emphasis on primary prevention among practitioners and researchers in the domestic violence field (Gundersen, 2002). In addition, the participants' hope for Korean churches' involvement in preventing domestic violence is also compatible with the latest developments in the domestic violence field. Since the late 1990s, the potential roles that the clergy could play in changing the climate of public acceptance of battering has become increasingly recognized by domestic violence service providers and researchers (Brade & Bent-Goodley, 2009; Centers for Disease Control, 2006; Homiak & Singletary, 2007). These findings provide hope that future primary prevention work in the Korean community, with emphasis on the roles of ministers, will receive support from Korean community members. It would be vital for helping professionals to take advantage of the preference for primary prevention and engage ministers in the early stage of developing prevention strategies in the Korean community. Organizations such as the Faith Trust Institute, have developed materials specifically geared toward engaging clergy in awareness and prevention efforts in their congregations (Faith Trust Institute, 2009).

From whom can victims seek help? With raised awareness of the issue and reduced stigma attached to domestic violence through community education, more victims will hopefully seek help. Ministers are often ill-equipped to deal with domestic violence cases. However, they may be reluctant to refer victims to service organizations because they believe service organizations are going to encourage domestic violence victims to leave their abusers without addressing women's religious beliefs (Nason-Clark, 1996). Certainly, primary prevention is important to reduce domestic violence, and the participants advocated this idea; however, this does not address the help that domestic violence victims need. Even though the participants blamed stigma attached to domestic violence as the culprit for abused women remaining silent about their abuse, it seems that the same stigma influences how they think the Korean community should approach the issue. That is, their approach suggests that they would rather deal with the issue in an indirect way, rather than directly intervening in domestic violence cases when they occur.

Considering that more victims may come to Korean churches for help, there is a tremendous need to improve the actual resources for them, even while implementing community-wide prevention strategies. It is very important for helping professionals to educate ministers about the research on domestic violence and best practices in the field. In addition, it is very important to help ministers establish working relationships with service

organizations, so that ministers can feel comfortable referring victims to those organizations. Finally, the language barrier for many Korean battered women needs to be addressed when accessing service organizations.

This 'access to service' issue for immigrant women is a challenging problem, since there are many languages used by different immigrant groups. One way to address this issue is to utilize volunteers from immigrant communities. More concerted efforts from service organizations should be made to recruit volunteers from diverse immigrant communities. One caution should be noted when utilizing volunteers from immigrant communities. An issue of confidentiality may arise by utilizing volunteers from immigrant communities since many immigrant communities tend to be small and close-knit (Guruge & Humphreys, 2009). Therefore, the importance of training volunteer translators in confidentiality and other ethical issues cannot be over-emphasized.

Areas for Further Research

Our study's findings suggest several areas for future research. The belief of some of the participants that abusers are sick people and need mental health treatment is an area to further explore, particularly how this belief may influence Korean victims' help-seeking decisions and their decisions about leaving the relationship. A study that explores Korean batterers' perceptions about why they abuse their partners, and whether their perceptions are in line with our participants, would also be of interest.

Because clergy play such an important role in communicating values and expectations to their congregations, building on Choi's work (2015a; 2015b), further study of Korean clergy's views about domestic violence victims and perpetrators and their responses to congregants who are victims or perpetrators, would be beneficial. Exploration of how specifically lay leaders have intervened in domestic violence cases in their congregations would also be of interest.

Lastly, based on the participants' anecdotes, taking a deeper look into the domestic violence dynamics when Korean women are married to American men would be beneficial. While we offered potential reasons for why these partnerships may create greater risk for female victims, a study of these dynamics and risks would contribute to the literature.

Conclusion

The findings of this study provide limited but essential understanding of the potential for helping professionals to collaborate with Korean Christian female leaders and Korean churches to address domestic violence. Professionals who are in the business of helping domestic violence victims are often suspicious of advice given by clergy and churches to battered women,

which is understandable considering numerous studies illustrating how clergy have often provided advice that supports batterers and silences battered women (Giesbrecht & Sevcik, 2000; Horne & Levitt, 2003; Shimtuh, 2000). However, supporting battered women with religious faith in a meaningful way and ending domestic violence require coordination and collaboration between practitioners and religious organizations. This is especially true for immigrant battered women, including Korean battered women, whose support systems mainly reside within their religious organizations and their religious and lay leaders. ❖

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Y. Joon Choi, Ph.D., MSW, Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, University of Georgia, 279 Williams Street, Athens, GA 30602-7016. Phone: (706) 542-0844; Email: choiyj@uga.edu

Elizabeth P. Cramer, Ph.D., MSW, LCSW, Professor, School of Social Work, Virginia Commonwealth University, 1000 Floyd Avenue, PO Box 842027, Richmond, VA 23284-2027. Phone: (804) 828-9029. Email: ecramer@vcu.edu

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Just Social Work? Collaborating with African American Clergy to Address Intimate Partner Violence in Churches

Jacqueline T. Dyer

This article explores clergy perspectives about building community partnerships and discusses the significant qualities of such partnerships for affecting change in the arena of intimate partner violence in the African American church. The article uses a subset of findings from a broader qualitative research project and then discusses the benefits of improved collaboration. Social work partnerships with African American Protestant Christian churches are an effective tactic in this regard. This article includes cultural competence and social justice concerns in relation to such partnerships. Additionally, it explores strategies for resolving some conflicts affecting social work-church partnerships.

HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES FROM THE DOMINANT culture generate unique needs within the African American population that call for the tailored approaches expected by the social justice mandates in the social work profession. Furthermore, the centrality of the African American church and clergy for the African American community has implications for culturally competent and just social work. This article presents relevant findings and discussion from a more comprehensive qualitative research project on clergy practices regarding intimate partner violence (IPV) in their churches. The focus here is about tailoring approaches used in church-social work partnerships to build more effective collaborations in relation to the African American church.

Moreover, this article adds to the literature the 'voice' of the clergy, who are frequently invited to the table as unequal contributors to a proposed project instead of as full collaborators included from project conception. The goal here is to improve understanding about effective collaborations

between African American clergy and social workers. The data is generated by Protestant African American clergy. They share their concerns about collaboration with social workers toward addressing IPV in African American churches. The information discussed here is part of a more comprehensive study that explored the perspectives of African American clergy regarding this type of violence in their churches.

There is an inherent contradiction in a field like social work that advocates just and strengths-based approaches on one hand, yet on the other often fails to employ these approaches through equitable partnerships. Lack of parity in community partnership is a social justice concern for the field of social work in the African American Christian community. As such, it becomes important to find ways to partner equally with clergy for supporting victims of IPV (Intimate Partner Violence) within the contexts of their beliefs.

African Americans are roughly 13% of the U. S. population (Rastogi, Johnson, Hoeffel, & Drewery Jr., 2011), yet 70 % of African Americans identify strongly with religion, and approximately 60% of this group attend predominantly Black churches (*U. S. Religious Landscape Survey*, 2008). In African American communities, the church still plays a central role and its clergy are a powerful influence for social change (Chatters & Taylor, 2003; W. L. Collins, 2015; Hays, 2015; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990; R. J. Taylor, Ellison, Chatters, Levin, & Lincoln, 2000; VanderWaal, Hernandez, & Sandman, 2012).

The African American church emerged out of the African American experience. Though the tenets of Christian belief were the same for African and Euro-Americans, there are essentially different enduring theological emphases (Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). Those differences included a “formation of a theology of defiance that at its foundations frequently offered criticisms of the cultural, political, and socioeconomic policies dictated to the Black community by the larger white elite,” (Clardy, 2011, p. 205).

This distinctive institution is integral to the shaping of African American culture and has its own distinct cultural features. Some of the cultural elements of the African American church include the reliance on volunteers for most projects, especially in smaller churches, packed church-event schedules, and a strong preference for following protocol such as the use of titles (Adksion-Bradley, Johnson, Sanders, Duncan, & Holcomb-McCoy, 2005; Austin & Claiborne, 2011; Scheie, Markham, Mayer, Slettom, & Williams, 1991). Other characteristics of the African American church include the need for longer processing times at project informational meetings, especially for projects initiated from outside the church, as well as the distinctive combined role of worship and prayer in maintaining the vitality and well-being of the members in African American churches (Adksion-Bradley et al., 2005; Scheie et al., 1991). Adksion-Bradley et al. (2005) discuss other important aspects of African American church culture that are important to recognize and possibly incorporate when developing strong collaboration with the church,

but do not address qualities important to building relationships with clergy.

The developing body of research literature that addresses collaboration or networking with African American churches explores issues such as at-risk youth, African American homosexuals, diabetes, community development, and victim services, (Austin & Claiborne, 2011; W. L. Collins, 2006; DeHart, 2010; Hudson & Robinson, 2001; Scheie et al., 1991). VanderWaal et al. (2012) delve into the issue of referrals and collaboration with clergy but do not specifically address this of African American clergy, nor of the characteristics of collaboration I have already noted. Most recommend the need for collaboration; none address the issues of collaboration from the perspectives of clergy. Bent-Goodley & Fowler (2006) examine the response of African American churches to IPV but not clergy perspectives. Bent-Goodley, St. Vil, and Hubbert (2012) discuss collaboration issues such as the power of the African American church in working to address domestic violence, and that such partnerships expand the church capabilities related to this issue. Bent-Goodley and associates (2012) also advocate for development of meaningful partnerships, but do not provide additional details about the qualities that make the partnership meaningful.

This article increases understanding about how building social work-church collaborations may provide effective strategies to counter IPV in the church. Moreover, the preferred partnership characteristics are drawn from the perspectives of African American clergy. Characteristics that enhance these types of partnerships, especially from clergy viewpoints, are important but they are not readily found in the literature. Since the context that generated these strategies is domestic violence, the pastors' comments turn toward that concern. However, some comments may also be more broadly applicable to other issues for which church-social work collaborations are beneficial, and to interactions with clergy regardless of ethnicity.

Context

The definition of IPV that I use is that from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which states that it is "physical, sexual, or psychological harm by a current or former partner or spouse. This type of violence can occur among heterosexual or same-sex couples and does not require sexual intimacy... IPV can vary in frequency and severity. It occurs on a continuum, ranging from one hit that may or may not impact the victim to chronic, severe battering" (2013, para. 1, & Definitions section, para. 1). These behaviors are weapons in "one person's abusive use of power to control another" (Bent-Goodley & Fowler, 2006, p. 282).

Factors that contribute to IPV can occur in any group. However, they tend to occur notably in those experiencing the stresses of marginalization. In turn, the social dynamics of racism exacerbate those stresses. Racism is simply defined as the combination of race prejudice and power (Cramer

& McElveen, 2003). When racism is enacted at the community level, it is “the systematic deprivation of equal access to opportunity” (Oliver, 2001, p. 4). The history of racist practices on institutional and individual levels that occur in the U.S. relegates the life of those affected to the margins, resulting in a lesser quality of life. This systematic deprivation results in the issues attendant with disenfranchised groups, issues such as under-employment, high rates of unemployment and crime, and substance and alcohol use and abuse. These social ills are correlated in research with intimate partner violence (Caetano, Field, Ramisetty-Mikler, & McGrath, 2005; Cunradi, 2007; Jordan, 2005; Oliver, 2001). African American communities, in comparison to other communities, also disproportionately experience another factor that contributes to IPV, higher rates of male unemployment as compared to female unemployment (Bent-Goodley & Fowler, 2006; Jordan, 2005; Oliver, 2001). And though any form of IPV is no respecter of any community, the reports of intimate violence are consistently higher for African Americans and Native Americans than for white Americans (Black et al., 2011; Catalano, 2007; Tjaden & Thonnes, 2000).

As social workers, we are frequently not actively trained to include spirituality and faith as central elements of our assessments (Hodge & Bushfield, 2006). Faith can be demoted to the status of after-thought. As a result, the natural resource of religion and spirituality in the African American community is sometimes overlooked. This is of significant concern for work connected to the African American community because of the central role of religion and spirituality. African Americans often have higher levels of religious involvement than other groups and hold the church in central importance (Chatters & Taylor, 2003; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). African Americans tend to utilize faith-based organizations to address various concerns, including partner and marital issues and IPV, and in churches a significant portion of clergy time is consumed with this type of support (Brade, Fischle, Bent-Goodley, Purnell, & Williams, 2015; Dyer, 2010; R. J. Taylor et al., 2000). These facts make religion and spirituality, notably Christianity, a key resource in the community. That understanding adds to the knowledge about the influence of clergy in the African American community. Taken together, all underscore the importance for social workers of building effective collaborations with African American clergy.

Perspective

The data in this study are presented and discussed from a womanist perspective. Womanism is not a Euro-centric theory, but rather a theoretical perspective generated by African American women, though it has evolved to include the diverse voices of men and other ethnic groups. It validates and promotes the cultural knowledge and strengths of the African Ameri-

can community. The term “womanist” emerged out of the writing of Alice Walker (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2005; Littlefield, 2003; Perry & Davis-Maye, 2007). The term womanist is used interchangeably with womanism, expressing the same philosophy. The primary discussions of womanism focus on the world of African American women, but being womanist is not restricted to female members of the African American community. According to Gary L. Lemons, the whole-race approach of womanism permits “[focus] on the historical impact castration and lynching have had on the black male psyche and on ways [men] construct [their] identity as men” (Lemons, 2006, p. 97). Grant (1989) also identifies the intertwined concern for the welfare of Black men in understanding that the womanist discourse on struggle encompasses the entire community.

Womanism is not synonymous with (White) feminism. White feminism claims to reference the concerns of all women. However, it hails from the contexts of White women and does not adequately account for some of the ways oppressions are multiplied in the lives of women of color (Mojica, 2011; Phillips, 2006). For example, an African American woman will experience oppression because she is a person of color, and a woman. She will also experience oppression related to any other identities she holds which are not congruous with the dominant culture in American society. While any of these non-dominant identities—independently and together—negatively affect her quality of life, this layered experience multiplies the life stress she experiences (Hamilton-Mason, 2014). “Intersectional subordination need not be intentionally produced; in fact, it is frequently the consequence of the imposition of one burden that interacts with preexisting vulnerabilities to create yet another dimension of disempowerment” (Crenshaw, 1991). Womanism acknowledges multiple oppressions in the lives of African American women and their male counterparts in the broader life struggle (Mojica, 2011; Phillips, 2006). It invokes the unified breadth of African American women’s experiences and their survival strategies, relationships, and community (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2005; Littlefield, 2003). Furthermore, it is a collective philosophy based on African American values, and it recognizes women and men as partnered in the human struggle. Womanism acknowledges faith as integral to understanding the human condition, values-generation of knowledge through the collective conversation, and attempts to identify and counter oppression (P. H. Collins, 2003; Gilkes, 2000; J. Y. Taylor, 1998, 2005). The multi-faceted foci of womanism created space for, and gave name to, the development of ‘womanist theology,’ which theologically examines the intersections of gender, race, class, and resistance to oppressions (Clardy, 2011; Gilkes, 2000; Lincoln & Mamiya, 1990). Black feminism extends the examination of gender politics while accounting for the impact of racism and specifically looking at the patriarchal attitudes of Black men toward Black women (P. H. Collins, 2003; Crenshaw, 1991;

Mojica, 2011; Phillips, 2006). Womanism is not necessarily Black feminism, but there is less distinction between womanism and Black feminism. Some women refer to themselves as both womanist and Black feminist. I will not enter into an extended discussion to parse out the nuances between the two terms. For the purposes of this article, they can be considered synonymous. In womanist fashion, I retain the 'voice' of the speakers as much as possible through their comments about this issue of collaborating with African American churches. The interview is a conversation, and conversation is a collaborative process. The speakers in turn are giving testimony to their experience. In a womanist context, the voices have a shared space with the writer rather than solely as an extension of the writer's interpretation of the data. A womanist researcher is a "participant observer" and "considerations should be given to the way we report the data as well as whose voice is given primacy in the text" (J. Y. Taylor, 2005, p. 1476). The importance of this understanding is that the voices of the African American clergy are included with as much primacy as the voice of the researcher to discuss issues affecting collaborations between social workers and African American clergy as all work to address IPV in African American churches.

Procedures

The portion of the data presented here, which is a subset from the parent study, provides information from clergy about what they believe helps or gets in the way of social work collaborations with African American churches. The research question relevant to this article was: "What do you believe would facilitate better partnerships between African American clergy and professional mental health service providers?" The findings and discussion follow.

The research design addressed cultural competence through incorporating a collaborative process with two African American clergy consultants. They provided feedback on interview content and process leading to viable protocols for working within clergy culture. They also contributed to addressing ethnic considerations for the culture of church-going African Americans. The reason for this is that the African American community is very diverse, including U. S. born individuals, Caribbean immigrants, continental African immigrants, and those from various locations worldwide, including Europe. After the Institutional Review Board research approval process, eight New England African American clergy participated. This portion of the study used the single interview question, identified above, that explored what clergy believed would facilitate better partnerships between them and professional mental health service providers. Additional research questions used in the parent study can be found in a prior publication by Dyer (2010).

Post-interview follow-up meetings extended contact with the participants in order to review accuracy of transcription and clarify comments as needed. The post-interview contact gave opportunity for additional participant member feedback on the data analysis. The length of the interview varied from approximately forty-five to ninety minutes. I conducted and transcribed the audiotaped interviews.

Sample

The sample of eight clergy emerged out of a purposive snowball process. This method of identification was used solely to ensure that the participants were all African American clergy due to the research focus of exploring issues within this population. There were no other predeterminations identified for this study, such as gender or denomination. I invited participation from some African American clergy acquaintances and then asked if they knew of anyone who would sit for an interview. The resulting sample consisted of six men and two women from Protestant Christian denominations. The denominations of the participants were African Methodist Episcopal, Baptist, Seventh Day Adventist, Presbyterian and Full Gospel Church of God. The churches ranged in size from approximately 60 members to over 5000 members. The participants predominantly self-identified as theologically conservative to moderate. Only one participant identified as being theologically moderate to liberal. Seven of the eight participants had graduate degrees. The remaining participant had a bachelor's degree and additional training related to the clerical field and pastoral counseling. Though specific degrees were not identified by all, one participant had an MSW and another had an M.Ed. in Counseling Psychology.

Data Analysis

Reflexive examination (Milne & Oberle, 2005) guided the development of the research design, which stemmed from discussions with Protestant Christian friends who survived intimate partner violence. My desire to work within the African American community regarding IPV in churches is generated by my being a social worker of African descent. As a Protestant Christian, I am familiar with this religious group. Moreover, I realized that my desire to share from their perspective rather than as "object" was important to my womanist approach.

Rigor was established by use of field notes and an audit trail during data gathering, lengthened contact with participants post-interview through follow-up contacts, and member checking of the transcription and the findings (Milne & Oberle, 2005; Seale, 2002). The template analysis was an iterative or repetitive process using several rounds. First in vivo codes,

which are descriptive phrases, topics, and issues using the participants' words, were identified from the interview transcripts to form the coding template (King, 2014). Then as the data were reviewed again, different codes and quotes were grouped according to similar ideas and practices and relabeled as categories. In the third round, the categories were further examined to identify concepts and themes emerging from the data.

These themes were then grouped based on concept and/or practice similarity (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; King, 2014; Milne & Oberle, 2005). The list of concepts and codes, and the coding process were discussed in consultations with interviewees for agreement through the analysis (Lietz, Langer, & Furman, 2006; Seale, 2002). The representative comments noted in the Findings section are kept as intact as possible to retain the voice of the participants and allow them to tell their perspectives.

Findings

Three primary categories of themes emerged from the data. One category was a description of the landscape of issues that impact the work of the church in relation to IPV. A second category is the question, "what does not work?" The third category of themes addressed another question, "what does facilitate partnerships?"

The Landscape

What I identify as 'the landscape' is a combination of issues discussed by the clergy that complicate efforts to address IPV in African American churches. One of the issues in 'the landscape' is that of silence. Another is related to leadership. Dyer (2010) found ambivalence among clergy regarding two areas: (a) whether to address IPV from the pulpit, and (b) if the pulpit was used, whether to address IPV using targeted or indirect messages. The concern about addressing IPV from the pulpit stemmed from concern that some church members might think their privacy was being violated. The choice to use direct versus indirect messages seems based on clergy preference. That preference may be influenced by a vague sense of IPV being a distasteful topic in the Christian context: certain things don't "come up" between Christians (Dyer, 2010, p. 40). Participant identity is protected by use of pseudonyms.

We don't run from it. We confront it when it's there. But... it's like sex in the church, you know. You talk about it. You can preach about it. It's not on the forefront...of your agenda every week.... There are some churches where you can't even *bring up* something like that (Speaker emphasis).
(Pastor Hesh)

Silence in the Church

This distaste in turn seems to fuel the ambivalence. Ambivalence was often manifested as silence or inaction, whether that was in the general culture of the church or in the leadership. Some participants spontaneously spoke about awareness of silence or inaction existing in the church and the church leadership. Moreover, a lot of silence and resistance to addressing intimate partner violence exists generally and in the African American church (Dyer, 2010).

I think, in *general*, minus a few churches that we know about, I think that there's a silence about many of the issues of the day that affect people (Speaker emphasis). (Pastor Hesh)

So the notion of silence [about IPV is] in the larger society. So, clearly, it's going to be present in the church. (Pastor Gene)

Inaction from Church Leadership

The ambivalence in the pews may be both a reflection of the leadership and reflected in the leadership. The clergy embody the same struggles found in the pews and, beyond the doors of the church, in the world. A kind of leadership paralysis is manifest.

The same way, I think, in the larger society, the idea of not getting involved; you also have that parallel in the church sometimes, until things get really bad and then we [say something]. (Pastor Fenn)

I believe that pastors need to really make a conscious effort to deal with those secret sins in their churches. I think that they don't want to see it, and therefore they fail to address it. (Pastor Aise)

I think you do the people a disservice, because people look to get their marching orders from [clergy], especially Black people that are involved in church.... I think you do the people a disservice when you don't speak or devise/develop a policy, and a point of view about the issues of the day. Why don't [the clergy]? Oh, I just think they're not in the habit of doing it. Those aren't pleasant topics. (Pastor Hesh)

Transformative Leadership Needed

At the same time, the clergy also recognized the need for transformative leadership to counter these injustices, and freely spoke on this matter. They noted that any prompts to change how the church generally addresses IPV require changes for the leadership as well. Clergy extended a call to accountability to clergy; this and related issues are discussed in the following quotes.

If we as leaders don't give the congregants the opportunity to feel safe when we share, then we silence them. From the way that [we] share the Gospel, the way [we] communicate the Gospel; by how we share, how we teach the Word, how we teach the scriptures. Pastors have influence over their congregants... Those of us in leadership have got to set our face like flint, and speak about sin as God does. If God calls something 'black,' we should not call it 'gray' (Speaker emphasis). (Pastor Aise)

Church *has* to *break* the silence. ... If the leader does not break the silence, nobody else will be able to break it (Speaker emphasis). (Pastor Ben)

I think that [in] the church we are so close. It's OK for us to talk about stuff happening out in the community, but [we need] to then say it's happening right here. It means too, then, that we have to be open to say, "And we haven't done anything about it." And that's an indictment that clergy and officers and church members don't want to admit. (Pastor Fenn)

What Doesn't Work: Concerns Related to Community Mental Health Agencies

First, the ministers clearly acknowledged that community social service agencies are actively engaging in outreach efforts:

I see the community and these organizations that are there [at these meetings]; they are *willing* to work with the clergy. They are more willing to work with the clergy; I see them more coming *in* to work with the clergy, than the clergy going [to the agencies] (Speaker emphases). (Pastor Aise)

Mental health organizations, in my opinion, reach out all the time to develop these partnerships. They reach out frequently. (Pastor Dean)

A lot of times those people are already on your side. They're there, you know. They know about the needs, and are trying to provide for them. (Pastor Hesh)

Additionally, the clergy both recognize the need for further training to help them address the mental health concerns in their churches, and they want the kind of training support that might include:

What stops the church from breaking the silence? Our leaders are not well trained to break the silence... And that is why training should be in place, to help ministers who don't have the skills, in those areas for them to break the silence. (Pastor Ben)

Introducing me to an appropriate therapeutic counseling mode—teaching me about boundaries, giving me some exposure to some of the various ways that, ah, emotional health issues would present themselves, teaching more about knowing how to refer—[there was] nothing around sexual abuse, molestation, nothing around domestic violence, ah, nothing around intervention, ah, addictions—the recovery process. So, that's what was absent that would be critical to have, *being* a pastor, looking back (Speaker emphasis). (Pastor Gene)

However, there seemed to be some aspects of the outreach efforts that did not help the social workers to partner effectively with clergy. Regarding practice, clergy noted that there seems to be a sense of interaction without relationship. African American clergy also want to know that interventions respectful of their beliefs are being provided for those they refer. They were concerned that outreach to the churches was crisis-driven, and seemed to feel they were not partnered with as equal participants.

From where I stand, there's not a stronger connection, but all the pastors use [that agency]. But there's no direct relationship between [our church] and [the local Christian counseling center]. There's none really, but the *pastors* have a connection with them, so if we need to talk with anybody from there, we just call them (Speaker emphasis). (Pastor Aise)

No. You don't *expect* the health agency or the health management facility to have a biblical basis at all; most of them do *not* for the sake of their own funding. They don't. So that's a *main stumbling block* in developing stronger linkages and better bridges (Speaker emphases). (Pastor Dean)

I think Black pastors and community health centers and hospitals and the larger programmatic structures that provide support to people who are either victims or perpetrators have to sit down. They actually have to start talking. They have to show up *in the same room* sometimes... I don't think there is—there's not a regional approach to making this happen—there's not a national strategy, or state strategy to bring *pastors* together with—or *church staff* together with... therapeutic programs (Speaker emphases). (Pastor Gene)

I think, well, obviously, communication—before there's an incident. I think it's important for people to get together to decide how they're gonna handle certain situations... You get everyone to the table and you sort of do a roundtable, 'this is—this is what we're seeing as we go on the ground with the folks, and this is—what can you do,' and... 'when we see this, what should we do. What should the procedures be?' ... [G]etting together with folks and setting it up ahead of time. Everybody has needs... it's important to listen to what the need of the provider is too, as well as tell them what you need... A lot of times those people are already on your side. They're there. They know about the needs, and are trying to provide for them. So it's really communicating this to realize the fact that you *are* on a team (Speaker emphasis). (Pastor Hesh)

What Doesn't Work: Complications from Clergy

Disparate worldviews may be one of the factors that complicate the efforts of social workers seeking partnership among African American clergy. For instance, though they will make referrals to social workers as well as other mental health providers, they tend to look first for providers within the church because of aligned perspectives influenced by shared theology. Two additional issues affecting collaborative processes are whether a given minister is committed to addressing intimate partner violence, and, for some clergy, the possibility of feeling threatened by the knowledge and expertise of others.

There are cases that you have to say, 'well, there are things I cannot do,'—you have to refer to a professional. ... The problem [is], 'if I don't trust this person's faith' or 'if that person is lying' or '[the] thinking is contrary to *mine*, so therefore, I'm not going to let that person come to my church.' ... (Speaker emphasis). (Pastor Ceal)

A church is a world within itself... [Clergy] usually look for answers within the resources of the church *first*, and then *second* they'll look for resources outside of the church; and the *main* reason for this is the biblical and theological foundation through which the church operates, which is *not* the case with a social service agency or health facility outside of the church (Speaker emphases). (Pastor Dean)

Collaborating outside the church, I still think that that relates to the pastor's availability of time, their priorities, their interests, those kinds of things. A large number of us, especially those who have smaller churches, are bi-vocational—working a full-time job and doing the pastorate. A large number of pastors do that so we may not have that time to connect with resources like this. (Pastor Ead)

Some people are already trained in the church, but they don't utilize their expertise; because [of] the leader... many people get threatened. They don't use—they don't even want to use their training. It doesn't mean that every minister should have expertise in this area, but I feel like if you have people who are well-skilled, you need to use them. (Pastor Ben)

Strategies that Work

Beyond their desire to have social work partners who are sensitive to their faith traditions, the African American clergy in this study want to have productive partnerships. They want support through getting access to resources and resource development, as well as training to manage some of the issues they encounter in their churches. In light of the concerns noted, the clergy are interested in building the church-social work relationship outside of crises. Such relationships need maintenance over time. At informational community meetings, resource materials that are distributed should be in easily accessible language, with fact sheets and other handouts formatted for easy reproduction and for insertion into church service bulletins. The pastor's approval enhances

any general communication shared in such ways, made implicit in the manner of distribution.

I believe that as these groups come in and *make*—and they do, come in from time to time—to *make* the clergy *aware* of the *resources* that are available out there; and they are *willing*, these different organizations. They will come in to these larger gatherings. And they make presentations, and they'll also hand out *resources* that are available for the churches; and if anyone from the—if any of the pastors would like for *these* representatives from these organizations to come in, and to speak to the people [at their church], then they are *wide open*, so the community is wide open (Speaker emphases). (Pastor Aise)

I want to talk to someone about—to my congregation about domestic violence, I can call [Ms. Social Worker and say] 'can you call me?' Because I feel that we can have a dialogue and there is some kind of connection that needs to be established. By what you did [indicating researcher], you come and we talked. I didn't know you three months ago, and you didn't know me, but we come and we can dialogue. We can, we can talk, and by sometimes inviting the pastors to meetings about—and sometimes inviting—it's not only inviting, you come to that person and say, 'you know what?' There's a lot of change that can happen. It's a long process. (Pastor Ceal)

Professional providers inviting clergy to small, short-term, concise meetings.... In a two-hour setting, give me 20 minutes; video that [briefly reviews] the issue—and then saying to me 'alright, these are the resources in the community...'; a quick list of how to be alert to the violence; and then things that we can easily put in our bulletin with a space where the church name can easily be added to it, so that it says we [clergy] approve of this and [it] then can easily be mass-produced through [church]. (Pastor Fenn)

Discussion

The clergy identified the issues that seem to interfere with effective collaborations for addressing intimate partner violence in African American churches above.

Community MH agencies

Between the professional groups of clergy and social workers, some paradoxes emerge. One paradox is that relationships need quality interactions to build strong collaborations, but divergent allegiances or obligations can derail those exchanges. In the womanist spirit of collaboration, one pastor commented, about this concern. “The conversations need to hold more significant content with honest discussion about limitations that may affect partnering. ‘Cause a lot of times doing this work, you tend to feel you are out there by yourself and nobody, you know, nobody quite understands.... It’s almost like an adversarial-type relationship. Why—it’s like, ‘so you don’t really care?’ [And the social worker says,] ‘well, I do care, but there are some restrictions over here’” (Pastor Hesh). Most of the clergy acknowledged that social service agencies are making outreach efforts. However, sometimes unintended messages of disrespect and power inequities are communicated; those are times that outreach efforts will be repeatedly unsuccessful. Addressing power inequities in collaboration strategies is no less important.

Another paradox can be found where social workers try to build quick relationships with clergy, when relational trust needs time to develop. Social workers may move too quickly and be impatient in their outreach efforts for various reasons. The clergy desire ongoing dialogue about issues, preferring that the exchange extend temporally. Making time to process things is an important element of interaction in the Black church (Austin & Claiborne, 2011; Scheie et al., 1991).

These clergy are also interested in the implementation of outreach to them that includes social workers providing detail about available resources, preferably at community meetings that clergy attend. They would like presentation handouts using short accessible formats, such as an annotated outline. If a flyer can reach the most people when distributed at a church on a Sunday, that flyer could be given to the church for pastor approval and should fit on a sheet the size of letter-sized paper folded in half. Once approved, more readily done in the context of a trusting relationship, the flyer could be reproduced and easily inserted in the church Sunday bulletin that is often printed in this ‘half-page’ format. A request like this would be even better received with the promise of providing the required number of flyers once approved for the church to use so that the church resources aren’t stretched by the request.

Complications from clergy

However, there are ways in which practice in the religious and clinical arenas generates divergent and sometimes conflicting agendas. The clergy

themselves, as well as church culture, play roles in confounding partnership efforts to address IPV in African American churches. Within their own professional group, for instance, clergy acknowledge that more training is needed about how to address mental health issues.

Nevertheless, here are some questions to consider: Are the conversations between social workers and clergy, regardless of who opens them, initiated before a pending crisis? Is there an emphasis on respecting the belief systems represented in the partnership? Did we assess the power dynamics in the relationship? Answering these questions would enhance any assessment of church-social worker collaboration.

Transferability

It is important to understand that this study has limited transferability because it may be more applicable to African American clergy than to all clergy. Issues not investigated include the regional diverse differences among African American clergy opinion. However, this study identifies the perspectives of some African American clergy and their concerns regarding collaborations, which stems from their religious-cultural contexts. Moreover, it provides some useful insights for collaborating with African American clergy. It is these insights that may be transferable to the broader African American Christian community and to other faith-oriented communities as well.

Recommendations

In addition to the ideas the clergy have expressed specifically, I suggest the following recommendations based on further reflection:

1. Don't stop the conversations. Conversations with the ministry leaders among African American Christian clergy contain discussion of practices that are unpopular with social workers because they are infused with religious references or appear not to be clinically recommended. For example, clergy may meet with the partners of a couple together though one has disclosed issues of partner violence in the relationship, and this is not a recommended clinical practice (Dyer, 2010). However, social workers need to stay in the collaborative relationship. If recommendations identified by clergy are incompatible with social work, they need to be discussed in ways that respect the worldview and caretaking position of those leaders. Social workers should actively engage the clergy and church leaders to find resolutions mutually acceptable to the sensibilities and ethics of the different professions. Devise strategies with a two-pronged approach wherein each collaborator

understands the roles and limitations of the other, for the benefit of those wanting to exit violent relationships.

2. Address partnership equality in collaborative efforts. Social workers should consider the possibility that clergy are not invited 'to the table' as full partners with equal authority in the conversation to address domestic violence. The clergy indicated that in some ways social workers and other mental health providers connect with churches as a means to an end.
3. Work to reduce any manifestations of territoriality or possible apprehension in collaborative interactions. For example, aside from power issues as noted above, undisclosed philosophical differences regarding implementation or desired outcomes of a project can stir tensions. Conversations that anticipate such possible concerns or that identify a process to resolve emergent conflicts may benefit the collaboration.
4. Social workers should identify and validate interventions employed through church efforts. Discuss with the clergy how the clinical interventions and faith interventions complement, at times overlap, and possibly diverge from each other. Something else to keep in mind when inviting African American clergy to informational community meetings is that they are extremely busy with their own work, which is layered by the challenges of their communities.
5. Language can get in the way of mutual understanding. Clinical language is not common language, and every profession has its own jargon. Because of this, there will need to be an active translating process. Social workers may need to explain behavioral processes to clergy. They may need to be translated into the language used by clergy. It may be a great help for the social worker to be able to incorporate the church's faith symbols in conversation correctly, remembering that there are variations in denominational beliefs. Keeping communications mutually understandable builds trust and peer relationships.
6. Invite clergy into a social work setting. Consider inviting clergy or their representatives to informational meetings. Then provide follow up contact in the churches that include those representatives and the clergy.
7. Social workers can attend ministerial alliance meetings; they can consider going to the meetings that clergy attend to begin building relationships.

Implications and Conclusion

Based on the information above, social workers cannot take the lead in changing how to address IPV in African American churches, but perhaps they can lead the way in building supportive collaborations with clergy toward that end. To support and enhance the work of clergy in their churches, it is important for social workers to ensure that the clergy 'voice' and expertise is a part of any planning, any provided resources, and any interventions. In the African American Protestant Christian community, religious leaders are key individuals for provision of and access to services. Those leaders may not be social workers, nor do they seek to become mental health experts (Dyer 2010), but they do seek to connect with social workers for supportive services, referrals, and other resources. This creates an imperative, based on the cultural competence and social justice mandates of the social worker, to understand the concerns of African American clergy about building successful collaborations from their perspectives.

However, clergy may often be invited into collaborations to address domestic violence where their expertise is not fully acknowledged. The expertise of the social worker can be esteemed as greater than that of the clergy; therefore, the wisdom that clergy could otherwise contribute may remain unexplored. Such an approach follows the medical model of the expert presenting to those less informed. Within the medical model, we do not work actively to create an experience of shared power, especially in regard to identifying solutions and planning for them. The clergy bring a contextual history of interventions, both successful and not, that must be considered in developing culturally appropriate solutions to the issue of domestic violence in churches.

Social worker resistance to equitably partnered work with clergy and to more pointedly faith-oriented interventions may prompt distancing and/or silence from African American clergy. This is because disrespect may be perceived in the interactions. Yet, clergy have knowledge about approaches that work best in their clerical contexts and knowledge that can be frequently overlooked or minimized. As a result, service provision congruent with best social work practice becomes needlessly complicated. Such complications can result in inadequate community access to much needed services and perpetuates existing social injustices.

A goal for social workers continues to be that of targeting harmful social and emotional issues without compromising the spiritual health of the individual. Therefore, it is important to explore the potential conflicts between the two in order to determine what assumptions, if any, are valid and to find appropriate ways to address them. Being intentional in addressing these concerns then causes social workers to practice 'just' social work in this arena.

Further research in this area can also serve to promote 'just' practice. It helps to increase the alignment of faith interventions with best social work practice and to improve the quality of collaborations developed. Researchers also need to disseminate the knowledge generated from such studies back to this community in accessible and understandable forms that are culturally congruent.

Just practice includes maintaining respect, practicing cultural competence, and valuing relationships. These principles are elemental to social work practice. However, conflicts emerge at the nexus of blending religious and clinical arenas of practice. Culturally competent and just social work practice requires including the voices of those with whom we partner, in addition to the voices of those with whom we provide service. Social work is inherently collaborative, and this makes it a distinctive conduit for social justice. In social work, there is a desire to deepen the efficacy of social work practice regarding IPV in the African American Christian community. Clergy are key stakeholders and powerful allies. Their recommendations can provide insight about connecting with a population in critical need of culturally sensitive support. ❖

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Jacqueline T. Dyer, Ph.D., MSW, LICSW, Director of In-Ministry Programs, Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary—Boston, Center for Urban Ministerial Education, 90 Warren Street, Boston, MA 02119. Phone: (617) 318-1659. Email: jdyer@gordonconwell.edu.

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Bridging Worldviews Through Phenomenology

Bryan C. Duckham & Jill C. Schreiber

Social workers work with clients whose worldviews differ from their own, sometimes in radical ways. Phenomenology is a philosophical tradition that focuses on understanding essential features of the world. The two distinct branches of phenomenology established by Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger can provide language and concepts about how to bridge differing worldviews. Clarity about these concepts can help minimize empathic failures due to disparate worldviews.

Case Scenario

The man describes himself and his wife as people who used to drink heavily but were ‘delivered’ from their drinking at a revival meeting where they met. He states that, although they used to attend a Pentecostal church regularly, he has recently been ‘backsliding’ (not always attending church services) and drinking again. He explains that his backsliding is due to losing his job and the financial stress. He has been losing weight, feeling hopeless with suicidal thoughts, crying uncontrollably, and having difficulty sleeping. Additionally, he describes his ‘demon possession’ (mental illness) and his releases from Satan’s grasp that occur after altar calls. He explains that he is at the mental health agency at the request of a counselor from the church-based job-training program, but is skeptical of mental health treatment. He asks the social worker point blank at the first meeting if she is ‘born again.’

What the female social worker sees is a 30-something white male client with major depression with psychotic features, alcoholism, and marital problems. She believes that a combination of medication, Cognitive Behavior Therapy and marital counseling will be the appropriate combination of treatments based on current research (evidence based practice).

The social worker has a worldview primarily influenced by logical positivism and postmodern thought acquired through her education. She has been trained to understand theories of development, social policy, and research methods (both qualitative and quantitative). She has a clear understanding of the Code of Ethics (NASW, 2008), client self-

determination and of the DSM 5 (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Her agency is a public mental health center and her coworkers and clinical supervisor have similar training and perspectives. She may be atheist, secular humanist, "spiritual but not religious," or a person who is from a non-Christian religious tradition. If she happens to be Christian, it is likely that she is a member of a mainline denomination rather than an evangelical or fundamentalist denomination (Hodge, 2003). She believes that mental illness is not caused by demon possession and that you can't be delivered from alcohol addiction. Additionally, the social worker is concerned about answering the client's question about her being born again. If she discloses that she isn't born again, she fears it would detrimentally impact the client's perception of her credibility. On the other hand, the worker may see the disclosure as a violation of therapeutic neutrality.

Belcher, a social work professor at the University of Maryland, described his response to a similar client. His client talked about praying to God daily for a miracle. Belcher responded that the client should "pay more attention to the medicine [prescribed by the psychiatrist] and not wait for a miracle." The client was devastated and quit taking the medication (Belcher & Cascio, 2001). Belcher and Cascio describe that it is normative for Pentecostals to define their problems in religious terms as opposed to using mental-health definitions.

It is also possible for a religious social worker to have a client with a different worldview. Religious individuals may exhibit "religious ethnocentrism" (Altemeyer, 2003). This cultural mindset consists of an attitude of "Us versus Them, In-group versus Out-group" (Altemeyer, 2003, p. 20). A social worker with this outlook may exhibit prejudice, lack of empathy, and unethical behavior with those who hold a different religious or scientific worldview. And, while it has been argued that social work education and the NASW Code of Ethics can mitigate this risk (Dessel, Bolen, & Shepardson, 2011) the potential for these interpersonal problems persists for those who rigidly hold to their religious beliefs. For example, one of the authors had a conversation with a student in a counseling program who saw psychology as a "false God". As it relates to practice intervention, one holding this attitude may devalue the potential help derived from psychological explanations and treatments.

Social workers of faith need to find ways to integrate paradigms and their religious worldview internally. Additionally, social workers with a primarily scientific or postmodern worldview will interact with clients who have a primarily faith-based worldview (as was the case with our example above). Consequently, all social workers need to bridge religious and other worldviews to lessen the tension and empathic failures. In this paper we will discuss non-religious (scientific) and religious worldviews. First, we will clarify these two concepts and then we will explore the philosophical

construct of phenomenology, a framework that can be used to provide language and concepts about how to bridge differing worldviews.

Worldviews

Worldviews are mediated by beliefs, and specifically by what one believes is true (ontology). One's ontology leads to specific ways of going about knowing and perceiving the world (epistemology). What is believed to be true and how one goes about knowing the world has changed through history. These historical changes are known as "paradigm shifts" (Kuhn, 1970). For example, Thomas Kuhn is credited with ushering in the postmodern era (Kuhn, 1970). The Postmodern paradigm has heavily influenced social work theory and practice. In addition, logical empiricism (also called logical positivism), the predominant scientific paradigm prior to the postmodern era, also heavily influenced social work theory and practice. While work has been done to integrate logical positivism and postmodern paradigms with religious worldviews, significant differences exist.

Scientific worldview

Social work has traditionally valued several different paradigms. Heineman-Pieper and colleagues describe three of these paradigms for social work which include: 1) logical empiricism, which assumes that there is truth to be uncovered, 2) relativism (or constructivism), that assumes all truth is dependent on context, and 3) heuristics, which is described as "ways of perceiving, knowing and solving problems" (Heineman-Pieper, Tyson, & Heineman-Pieper, 2002, p. 15). Additionally, social workers have incorporated critical realism, a paradigm that posits three levels: the real, the actual, and the empirical. The real is what exists in the world, the actual is what is knowable, and the empirical is what has been scientifically described (Anastas, 2012).

Some of these paradigms are flexible and would easily accommodate religious perspectives. For example, Northcut (2000) used constructivism to justify the integration of religion with social work practice. But even positivists and post-positivists can and do address religious beliefs and their effects. For example, Froese & Bader (2007) studied religious beliefs and how they relate to each other using standard quantitative methods (such as OLS) to consider correlations and included a variety of demographic factors. They used data from a large nationally representative sample and found that different perceptions of God's character (measured by two concepts: God's engagement and God's judgment) were connected to different facets of conservative religious beliefs in the US.

Religious Worldviews

Similar to paradigms, religious worldviews are theory-laden, mediated by underlying beliefs that spawn ontology and epistemology. Religious worldviews are shaped by the understanding we gain from our communities, through our relationships with significant others, and direct experience. Indeed, our language and beliefs shape our perceptions and experiences of God. As Phillip and Burbules (2000) suggest in two statements deduced from Locke: 1) our ideas originate from experience; 2) our ideas or knowledge claims have to be justified or warranted in terms of our experience (Phillips and Burbules, 2000, p. 7). There is bidirectional influence; religious communities hold beliefs, which shape our experiences, which inform the community.

A religious tradition is not just a set of intellectual beliefs or abstract ideas. It is a way of life for its members. Every religious community has its distinctive forms of individual experience, communal ritual, and ethical particularity by liberation from self-centeredness through commitment to a more inclusive center of devotion. Yet each of these patterns of life and practice presupposes a structure of shared beliefs (Barbour, 1990, p. xiii).

Along with the formation that occurs through our involvement with our religious communities, our ideas about God are formed through our early, and subsequent, experiences (Jones, 1997; Rizzuto, 1979; Spero, 1998). Children experience successes and failures along developmental lines with regard to their personality. While, in part, intra-psychic and interpersonal functioning is impacted by these successes and failures, so is religious belief.

Along with religious experience and community influence, there are three other common paths for God's revelation in Christianity: the Bible, Christian tradition, and Rationality. The four dimensions of revelation, according to theologian Albert Outler (1964) are referred to as the Wesleyan Quadrilateral, which is a methodology for theological reflection, credited to John Wesley, a leader of the Methodist movement in the late 18th century. Different people or denominations order these sources of revelation by importance. Mennonites perceive the order of God's revelation to be in the Scripture, the Christian tradition, reason and, finally experience. Catholics rely heavily on tradition, doctrine as mediated by authority, and Scripture. However, it is clear that the Pentecostal client from the first example would place the highest value on experience. Revelation could be understood to be the data of religion. It can be approached with the same spirit of inquiry found in science. Underlying both are the values of

coherence, comprehensiveness, and fruitfulness (Barbour, 1990, p. 21). Whereas these values are met by techniques such as external validity or thick description in science, they are evaluated via scripture, community, reason, and experience in religion.

Both paradigms and religious worldviews are contextually bound. In other words, individual worldviews are influenced by the values embedded within the historical and cultural context (Gergen, 1985). This is particularly important for social workers. For example, a Christian worldview can provide a framework for social work values such as the inherent value of people and client self-determination (Sherwood, 2012). The evolving philosophy and methods of phenomenology can be a powerful tool in bridging paradigms and religious worldviews. An appreciation of its evolving tenets and methods may lead to a fuller appreciation of different worldviews, whether this fuller appreciation occurs between different religious worldviews or between paradigms and religious worldviews.

Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a philosophy that focuses on how one gains knowledge of the essential features of the world (epistemology) as one experiences concrete realities (Grenz, Guretzki, & Nordling, 1999). Initial work in the development of phenomenology led to the belief that understanding of phenomena was derived through a conscious use of one's mind to allow the essence of the phenomenon to present. Subsequently, phenomenology evolved to include another approach to epistemology. Within this approach, one would not use conscious intention to gain understanding but instead would focus on lived experience as a path to understanding phenomena. Consequently, two very different approaches to ascertain concrete realities coexist in phenomenology. These different approaches are exemplified by two philosophers, Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger.

Phenomenology and Husserl

Edmund Husserl is generally credited with the development of phenomenology and formalizing the philosophy into an epistemology (Husserl, 1970a, 1970b; Moran, 2000). Fundamentally, Husserl suggested that the mind could be intentionally used to understand phenomena in the world. For Husserl, intention is primary and can be understood as a conscious function used to understand phenomena. In describing intention, Husserl states, "every mental phenomenon is characterized by what the mediaeval schoolmen called the intentional (or mental) inexistence of an object, and by what we, not without ambiguity, call the relation to a content, the direction to an object" (Husserl, 1970b, p. 554).

Using the mind in this intentional way, based on empirical observation, one could come to understand the essence or meaning associated with any phenomena. This process is one in which the observer distills observation to gain universal meaning. Osborne explains this process as “bracketing” or putting aside one’s presuppositions about any inquiry into phenomena, to eliminate its “non-essential elements”. This may lead one to understand the true essence of the phenomenon, or “things as they are” (Osborne, 1994, p. 170). For example, if I am listening to a symphony and want to understand the true essence of the sound of the violin, I must intentionally turn my mind to the violin section and isolate either the section or a particular violin. All other aspects of the symphony, such as other instruments, harmony, audience and architecture of the hall must be ignored, or bracketed. Once I do this, I must continue to focus on the violin and bracket any previous beliefs I have about violins. As I continue to bracket and watch for how the true essence of the violin presents to my consciousness, I come to understand the universal structure of a violin.

A Husserlian approach to the example at the beginning of the paper, would suggest that the worker should suspend both her understanding of demon possession and her scientific framing of the client’s presenting behavior and symptoms. Through this exercise, the worker would gain new understanding of the client and his experience that would be closer to the true essence of what the client is experiencing.

From Husserl to Heidegger

The work of Martin Heidegger ushered in a new approach to phenomenology and attempted to revise the basic tenets of Western philosophy (Heidegger, 2010; Moran, 2000). Heidegger suggested in his work “Being and Time” (2010) that the assumptions behind Enlightenment Philosophy are fundamentally incorrect. He suggested that in contrast to the notion of gaining understanding or truth through conscious bracketing to gain an objective understanding of a phenomenon, one can only really understand a phenomenon by engaging in, or understanding, one’s true interests in the world. Heidegger called this immersion with the world “Dasein” (Heidegger, 2010, p. 11). Dasein is one’s existence or presence in the world. For Heidegger, existence and the world are inextricably tied (Heidegger, 2010; Valle & King, 1978). So while Husserl explained that intention to consciously bracket was the best way to find truth, Heidegger perceived bracketing to limit truth and that truth or meaning is best found in existence. These different philosophical approaches have implications for practice and research.

A social worker who is following Heideggerian philosophy and what is termed interpretive or existential phenomenology will, value their own subjective understanding of a phenomenon while looking for themes within

stories about lived experience. Through people's stories the social worker comes to understand what is meaningful. In our example, a social worker using the Heideggerian approach would focus on the lived experience of the client and attempt to understand what is meaningful or true in existence for the individual.

Extension of Husserlian Phenomenology to Accommodate Religious Experience

In Husserl's phenomenology all experience, including religious experience, is understood through intention. It focuses only on the use of the human will and reason. However, Jean-Luc Marion suggests that religious experience occurs in its fullest through intuition, not intention. This is important because intuition is necessary to move beyond the limitations of human reason and will to experience God. Further Marion suggests that intuition, as it receives God, "provokes intention" (Purcell, 2010, p. 127). In other words, God can provide experience through intuition that may lead to a call to act. Intuition is the conduit to experience God that can lead one to His will and the good Christian life. His emphasis on the limits of human reason and will and the importance of intuition align with the Scripture, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55: 8-9, New Revised Standard Version).

Marion is reminding us that an overemphasis on human reasoning may block religious experience and revelation (Marion, 2008). This lack of balance may lead to an improper use of the will by giving too much weight to human will. Making room for the reading of, and grappling with, Scripture, along with prayer and listening for, or experiencing, God's presence or will are all considered imperative to the full and good Christian life.

Purcell (2010) believes that there is an aspect of intention (which he calls access) that is essential for religious experience. Purcell explains that access is a "particular intentional attitude or stance towards an object—that is, a particular mode of intentionality" (Purcell, 2010, p. 125). Prayer, hope, and charity are each a kind of religious access. Expanding Husserl's ideas through a greater emphasis on intuition, or through religious access, accommodates a variety of worldviews. A social worker who augments Husserlian phenomenology with essential religious functioning can better understand a client's intuitive or emotional experiences such as prayer, while concurrently appreciating her presuppositions based on her own worldview. This can also help social workers of one faith work with clients who have a different faith perspective.

Extension of Heidegger's Phenomenology to Accommodate Religious Experience

Heidegger's phenomenology has been applied to religious experience (Nuyen, 2001; Purcell, 2010; Smith, 1999). This line of thought understands religious experience as a "pretheoretical mode of existence" (Smith, 1999, p. 18). It is a "primitive mentality" (Westerink, 2010, p. 188) that has been lost or devalued as a result of the subject-object split brought about through Enlightenment Philosophy. For the young Heidegger and those who have built upon his attempts to integrate religion with phenomenology, religion is a part of Dasein, one's existence or presence in the world. As opposed to what can be seen as a Cartesian approach in Marion where the subject (the experiencing individual) is detached from the object of religious experience (God or the Infinite), Heidegger and Smith (who builds upon his work) understand religious experience as "experience and constructions of meaning within religious communities" (Smith, 1999, p. 19). Religious meaning is made through Dasein as it exists in the world through religious communities. So, in contrast to Marion's subject-object dialectic, Heideggerian phenomenology makes no such distinction. Again, returning to our clinical example, a social worker educated on the interplay of Heideggerian phenomenology and religion could better appreciate the religious meanings for the client derived from his faith community, while concurrently valuing the meaning she has derived from the communities that have informed her own worldview.

Limitations of using Phenomenology to Bridge Worldviews

There is a fundamental limitation, or double-bind, in using phenomenology for religious experience (Marion, 2008; Nuyen, 2001; Purcell, 2010; Smith, 1999). Even though the use of intuition, or a greater appreciation of lived experience, may facilitate religious experience, it still involves a human function. Any time human experience is involved with religious experience it necessarily limits the experience. One of the authors, who conducted research on counselors' religious experiences, recounts one counselor explaining a religious experience of God's donation as "drinking out of a fire hose". He described this intense and profound moment as wonderful but only partial experience of receiving what God could give him. We as finite creations, made in the image of God, but obviously not God, can never fully experience the magnitude of God's love and mercy. Any experience of God is only partial—our experience necessitates a reduction of God's donation. However, some objective measures are needed to understand and describe religious experience. Marion discussed this double bind; "it (phenomenology) would then find itself confronted with a disastrous alternative: either it would be a question of phenomena that

are objectively definable but lose their religious specificity, or it would be a question of phenomena that are specifically religious but cannot be described objectively (as cited in Smith, 1999, p. 17).

So, the problem could be stated in this way: any attempt one makes at understanding one's own, or another's, religious experience (through epistemology and methods) necessarily reduces the experience. Conversely, not using some method or epistemology potentially relegates religious experience to the unknowable.

Although phenomenology can help the social worker gain a better understanding of a client's religious or scientific experience, it may be only partial, still running the risk of empathic failure. In our practice example, while the worker may gain a better understanding of the positive religious coping in the client's experience, she may concurrently not be able to appreciate it fully and in some way communicate a dismissal or devaluation of the client's experience. This could also be the case for a social worker of one faith working with a client of a different faith.

Implications for Social Work Practice

The two distinct branches of phenomenology established by Husserl and Heidegger can provide language and concepts about how to bridge differing worldviews. A Husserlian approach would suggest that a social worker should suspend her understanding in order to gain a new understanding of the client and his experience that would be closer to the true essence of what the client is experiencing. Husserlian phenomenology promotes a better understanding of a client's intuitive or emotional experiences (including religious experiences, such as prayer) based on the client's worldview.

Using a traditional Husserlian approach in practice would mean that the social worker, when trying to understand a client's experience or communication, stop and use her intention to bracket previous understanding to allow a fuller understanding to emerge. One of the authors recalls in early practice days, prior to becoming a Christian or learning about phenomenology, straining to understand clients, and struggling to put aside quick judgments to better understand what clients were expressing.

Expanding Husserl's ideas to include religious experience would add the idea that the worker can access God through the use of prayer, or allow an experience of God to be given through intuition. One of the authors was working with a couple in therapy in which the husband was complaining that his wife was spending too much time going to masses and involved in church. Initially, the author understood the husband's complaint as a desire for greater intimacy with his wife, who, in part, was using religion defensively to cope with unresolved issues related to her past and the marriage. Through use of prayer and reception of God's presence the author was able

to understand the additional piece of the husband's own relationship to God. The husband had experienced a significant amount of failure in receiving emotional attunement as a child and subsequently experienced additional loss. He, in part, resented his wife's religious commitment due to his own unresolved feelings of hurt and anger with God, whom he held responsible for his suffering.

Heideggerian phenomenology values both the worker and client's subjective understanding of a phenomenon while looking for themes within stories about lived experience. Heideggerian phenomenology can be used to discuss religious meanings for the client derived from his faith community, while concurrently valuing the meaning the social worker derives from the communities that have informed her own worldview.

One of the authors treated a middle-aged man, suffering from depression, who belonged to a denomination with doctrine and practices very different from his own. Among other things, the client was struggling with guilt because he did not feel moved to speak in tongues as many of his fellow parishioners. Learning more about the client's community led the worker to understand that speaking in tongues was one of many valued gifts within the denomination, and to communicate this to the client, that perhaps he had other gifts. At the same time, the worker was able to recognize the client as attempting to mold himself to practices that did not fit, and how this behavior related to an overall personality configuration of adapting to others at the expense of his feelings or needs, and God's will. His current religious community accentuated this tendency. The worker was able to understand and value the client's experience of his faith community while retaining his understanding of what some of this experience meant for the client's overall functioning.

Phenomenology can elucidate religious experience but also minimize or misunderstand it. Phenomenology can do the same with experience gained through postmodern and logical positivist worldviews. Because human experience is finite, we run the risk of misunderstanding, or only partially understanding, our own or our clients' religious experiences. In our example of the husband and wife, the worker may minimize or misunderstand the amount of hurt, anger, or need related to the marriage, their past, or God. Similarly, in our example of the depressed client, we run the risk of minimizing or misunderstanding valued practices and his personality. In other words, what if it is a matter of the client having obstacles in his personality to using the gift of speaking in tongues?

The discipline of ethics has been suggested as a way to help extend the use of phenomenology to integrate human and religious experience and mitigate the potential for gaps in understanding (Nuyen, 2001; Purcell, 2010). Ethics is a natural extension of Heidegger's *Dasein* or being in the world (Purcell, 2010). Appreciating one's own existence, can lead to an ethical responsibility for others and a fuller appreciation of others and

God. Although social work ethics has typically been based on actions (deontological ethics) or outcomes (consequentialist ethics), phenomenology is particularly appropriate to look at the role of the agent (virtue ethics).

Virtues can be understood as intentionally developed character traits that lead to ethical behaviors and the development of the self. They have long been understood to be valued patterns of behavior that can be developed within a religious worldview and religious experience. Fundamental to virtue ethics are the concepts of practice, tradition, narrative, and the good life. Recently the virtue perspective has been applied to social work ethics (Wolfer & Brandsen, 2015). "Faith, hope, and charity do not replace a rigorous phenomenology, but press phenomenology and theology to consider further modalities of access." (Purcell, 2010, p. 135). In other words, virtues can be another form of religious experience (like prayer) that allow us to experience God.

Ethics are also understood as essential to practice and can lead to enhanced well-being of individuals and society. The NASW Code of Ethics outlines the social work profession's mission and core values, the main functions of the code, broad ethical principles, based on social work's core values, and specific ethical standards to guide social practice (NASW, 2015). These guidelines mandate behaviors designed to create ideals related to the treatment of clients and a good life. In order to be ethical within social work, one must be indoctrinated into social work knowledge. This body of knowledge includes theory and practice techniques that evolve over time. Ideally, the social worker both integrates evolving understandings and develops new theory and practice skills. Often, these innovations within the profession occur through collaborative efforts. One's understanding and use of foundational social work knowledge, as it is supplemented by new ideas, all occurring within collaboration, should lead to excellence in practice and practice wisdom. Phenomenology can be an addition to foundational social work knowledge in order to improve practice. Incorporating concepts such as, bracketing, religious modes of access, the reception of God through intuition, and the appreciation of the meaning people derive from life as well as life in religious communities can improve treatment relationships and outcomes. Social workers need to be aware of their own traditions and orienting narratives through self-awareness and appreciate the same in the client in order to reduce tension and help with conflict (MacIntyre, 1990).

If the worker in our initial case scenario could stretch into the client's world and appreciate the importance of the client's conversion and religious and spiritual perception (meaning from lived experience) while putting aside (bracketing) any previous understanding of being "born again" or "demon possession" she might find a way of seeing the value in the client's worldview while at the same time appreciating the value of her own worldview, one that views the client's experience through her social work training in the DSM and various theory and practice models, usually

underpinned by the paradigms we covered. A religious social worker who has integrated phenomenology and understands how it facilitates religious experience would have the added benefit of using prayer and receiving God's grace and direction. ❖

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Bryan C. Duckham, Ph.D., Associate Professor and MSW Program Director, Department of Social Work, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Edwardsville, IL 62026-1459. Phone (618) 650-3104. Email: bduckha@siue.edu.

Jill C. Schreiber, Ph. D., Assistant Professor, Department of Social Work, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville Edwardsville, IL 62026-1459. Phone: (618) 650-5758. Email: jischre@siue.edu.

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How College Students View the Church's Responsibility for the Homeless 1.5 Years after a College Poverty Immersion Experience

Michael W. Firmin, Ruth Lowrie Markum, Kurt J. Stultz, Heidi J. Johnson, & Elizabeth P. Garland

This qualitative study examines residual shifts of student perceptions of Christian and church responses to the homeless 1.5 years after involvement in a weekend poverty immersion experience. Three overall results were evident from the common themes that emerged from student interviews. First, participants reported believing that, generally, the church is ignorant regarding the needs of the poor and impoverished people around them. Second, students generally did not believe that the church was doing enough in order to combat poverty and/or homelessness, mentioning that the church's outreach ministries are often ineffective. Third, students reported believing that the church is responsible to care for the poor and that Christians as a whole should be more involved than they are presently. Overall, we found students to have reported maintaining a relatively consistent and stable perspective regarding Christian approaches to poverty since the time they completed an urban ministry course.

THE GOAL OF HIGHER EDUCATION REQUIRES MUCH MORE THAN A SIMPLE impartment of knowledge (Holmes, Zayas, & Koyfman, 2012). While knowledge is of utmost importance to the educational process, it is only one piece in a much larger framework. Engaging in the material of each course is the job of the student, while the professor's role is to teach course material with the hope of making life-altering, thought-provoking impressions on their respective students. Those changes may be cognitive or behavioral and sometimes might provoke the development of new skills or modified cognitive perceptions (Nevid & McClelland, 2013; Sellari,

2015). Professors tend to approach their college classes with the goal of accomplishing much more than increasing a student's knowledge base.

This study fits into the larger context of higher education's aims and goals as many models have been suggested for accomplishing the objective of student learning (Boud & Molloy, 2013). Apart from latent learning that may occur without the learner's awareness but shows itself in various forms later (Gutstein, Fuentes, & Freudenthal, 2011), if change does not occur in a student's knowledge base and understanding, then the chances of making long-term impressions diminishes. In order to determine whether learning has occurred, a host of potential assessments exist for knowledge appraisal. Such assessments range from quantitative or numeric ratings to subjective interviews or self-reported narratives. As a result of engaging in course content, students can be cognitively assessed by professors in order to determine depth of understanding of material, course engagement, and life modifications (Denson, Loveday, & Dalton, 2010; Strage & Merdinger, 2015). Midterm and final exams, as well as student evaluations, are two very popular methods of gauging course outcomes.

Fuder (1999) explains that the logical consequence of compassion, following a transition from seeing to engaging, is action. Immersion experiences exist, not only to impart knowledge, but also to increase compassion and empathy. Therefore, professors offering classes with immersion experiences attempt to move past only creating a stated belief, as college students are at an age in which passions are strong, intense pathos is felt for those to whom they are exposed to, and the expression of utmost commitment to various ideals is common (Hunter, Dik, & Banning, 2010).

Batson (2011) noted that, because of our self-centered nature, people are most likely to be more prone to enhanced empathy and identification through personal experience, in this case an immersion experience. Also, people often do not notice the homeless unless they are looking for them or are actively seeking them out (Gunn, Rikabi, & Huebner, 2013). Therefore, the professor of an urban ministry course decided to require students to participate in and engage in a poverty immersion simulation so that they could not only better relate to individuals living in homelessness, but also view the church's action (or inaction) to combat homelessness. In this study, we sought to identify students' perceptions regarding the church's involvement in ministry to the homeless community 1.5 years after completing the urban ministry course.

Like any organization, the church is limited in its ability to care for the poor. As such, the church often fails to address the structural causes of homelessness and poverty, while sometimes reinforcing assumptions about poverty that keep church members from effectively addressing the causes of homelessness in the first place (Glennon, 2013). While many churches and Christian individuals are involved in charitable approaches that address the issue of poverty (and some have taken action), Stivers (2011)

argues that the overt responses have been insufficient. In particular, Stivers believes that the church has not sufficiently sought to combat various etiologies behind homelessness and, as a result, Christians too often fail to do what they have set out to do in this regard. In sum, Stivers believes that the church's ministry should seek to end the causes of homelessness, rather than just treating it.

Various demographic factors determining church involvement and church social circles play a major role regarding where a church or members in a church will serve (Defrancesca & Horton, 2007). When people feel stuck in the realms of their personal comfort, segregation can naturally follow. Martin Luther King Jr. (1958) stated: "It is appalling that the most segregated hour of Christian America is 11 o'clock on Sunday morning, the same hour when many are standing to sing."

In this study, we sought to push past a design pertaining to course appraisal. In previously published research (Tse, Firmin, Johnson, Vorobyov, & McKeon, 2006; Tse, Firmin, Johnson, Vorobyov, & McKeon, 2010), we studied how a weekend poverty immersion experience impacted students' perceptions of persons living in homelessness or poverty. In each of those studies, we conducted in-depth interviews before and after students spent time acting as individuals in homelessness. Overall, students reported having undergone significant perceived cognitive shifts and students believed that their futures would be altered as a result of the experience.

This study is independent of our previously published research—but it extends the research design in a more progressive manner. Here, we interviewed a group of students who had previously completed the urban ministry course 1.5 years prior to the time that we conducted the interviews with them. We report here how students came to frame their understandings of the church's responsibility to the poor/homeless and how they believed Christians in general were faring in helping such individuals.

The purpose of this study was to better understand what students believe about the church's involvement with individuals who are poor and/or homeless. For example, 1.5 years following the urban ministry course, would they frame the church's role in terms of insufficiency, moral responsibility, complacency—or other similar paradigms to which the students were introduced as part of the class curriculum? Or would they possess more "tempered" views, now that they had spent time outside of the professor's influence and his strongly-held advocacy views? In prior studies, we examined the direct impact of the professor's course on various students, after they finished a poverty weekend experience. But now we desired to go further and ask students about their perspectives after they had been away from direct, weekly didactic teaching regarding the homeless.

We chose qualitative methodology, using a phenomenological approach (Creswell, 2012a), specifically as being the best research design for investigating students' views regarding the Christian church's response

to poverty. In studies where little is known and detailed hypotheses are hard to generate because of a scarce amount of available literature and previous research, Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggest qualitative research approaches. Additionally, qualitative research best provides the type of insight, thick descriptions, and how-people-view-phenomena that often is overly-challenging to capture via quantitative approaches—particularly relating to perceived spiritual dynamics (Babbie, 2015). We report here the students' spiritual perspectives regarding how the church engages homeless individuals.

The professor who taught the urban ministry course that included the weekend immersion did not conduct this study--nor did the course instructor have any knowledge of the study. The researchers had no connection with teaching the urban outreach course, as we are in different departments at the university where the course was offered. This element is revealed in order to help the reader rule-out potential interviewer positivity bias (Salkind, 2011) as a possible confounding variable in the current research design. In particular, if the course professor had been involved in or had knowledge of the present study, then students [the research participants] potentially may have been swayed by their desires to oblige him and/or their answers and responses to questions may have also been positively skewed, rather than genuine replies.

Method

Participants

We utilized a strategy known as purposeful sampling (Suri, 2011) to select participants, enlisting particular students who met the condition of interest to the study. Our interviewees consisted of 20 American students from a comprehensive Midwestern university who had each experienced a poverty immersion weekend as part of an urban ministry elective course. This sample of students who had taken the course had an almost even gender split (11 males and 9 females), and included one graduate, twelve seniors, and seven juniors. A wide range of states and majors was represented by these students. Specifically, Florida, Indiana, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin were all home states for at least one participant, and 13 different majors were represented. One student self-identified as being African-American, while the other 19 identified as Caucasian. At the point of data collection, this 19:1 ratio represented the university's student minority population. Each participant had participated in the immersion experience 18 months prior to their interview, and was a current student of the university at the time of data collection. To protect the confidentiality of the participants, all names used in this article are pseudonyms.

Saturation (Silverman, 2011) was reached in the data collection process at about 16 interviews, meaning in a qualitative research context that adding more participants no longer led to new codes that could become themes in the present article. Despite saturation, we continued to interview the contacted participants since they were anticipating further involvement, and stopped our data collection after 20 interviews. Said differently, for the purposes of giving participants a chance to be heard on this topic and to support our conclusion of saturation, we interviewed the remaining participants.

Procedure

Amid various qualitative research paradigms, our study is most similar to the phenomenological approach of Creswell (2012a). In this study, we report the participants' perspectives and life-behaviors after having previously participated in the immersion experience. To accomplish this goal, we endeavored to understand the participants' belief sets regarding poverty as revealed through their reported perspectives (Marshall & Rossman, 2010) as well as the communication of their own behavioral habits 1.5 years after their immersion experience. Differences exist (Frost, et al., 2010) as to the correct role that should be assigned to theory in the research design and interpretation phases of qualitative research. MacFarlane and O'Reilly-de Brun (2012), for instance, assert that theory should be integrated into the design and interpretation of qualitative research studies. However, more traditional views of qualitative research that use phenomenological or grounded theory methods call for theoretical interpretation to be bracketed (Chan, Fung, & Chien, 2013). This protocol gives the reader the responsibility of applying theory to the findings rather than the writer. We have chosen to take the second, atheoretical position; although respectable arguments can be made for both approaches, our team has decided to report our findings without theoretical interpretations and note Creswell's (2012a) support for the validity of this protocol.

In order to obtain rich descriptions of participants' thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions, we utilized semi-structured interviews (Alvesson, 2011). This means that we did not ask each participant a prescribed set of questions. Rather, all interviews were tailored to the respective participants and we allowed the participants to take the interviews in the direction they believed best in order to convey their perceptions. Within that context, following are some of the re-occurring questions that we asked a number of participants: How would you define homelessness? What needs do homeless people have? What are some reasons for homelessness? Should publicly funded, public services be provided to the homeless? If so or not, then who should provide these? What types of services should be provided? Did your immersion experience change any of your perceptions of the homeless?

Have your opinions about what you “need” in your life changed? How do you view middle-class Americans? How aware are suburban people of homelessness? How do churches handle homelessness? Do they differentiate suburban/urban? Do you think churches are handling the homelessness properly? How do churches react to homeless people? Have any of your views regarding poverty changed since going on the weekend?

Our team agreed upon general constructs that were relevant for us to know, but did not allow these constructs to dictate the direction of the interview. Instead we allowed each interviewee to share their relevant perspectives and experiences in ways they felt most important. This method enabled interviewers to receive thick descriptions (Sergi & Hallin, 2011) and depth-of-outlook, as oppose to only an overview or nonspecific understandings of the participants’ thoughts and perspectives. Interviews with each participant were tape recorded and then later transcribed for the purpose of analysis.

We used an open coding procedure (Maxwell, 2012) for analyzing the interview data. In keeping with an inductive methodology, we did not have prearranged categories as axial or deductive coding typically possesses. Instead, we inductively coded for commonly used words, phrases, and concepts as Chenail’s (2012a) line-by-line procedure dictates. As we were searching for commonalities among participants, our focus was on the most frequently appearing constructs. A constant-comparison method of relating each new transcript’s data with the previous ones’ was utilized (Berg, 2012). Each of the three data collectors completed this process with our own respective interviews, and then we compared our independently developed codes with those found by the other researchers. This system of coding was consistent throughout the data collection process with several possible themes emerging. After the interviews were complete, each potential theme was evaluated regarding its consistency throughout all the interviews, and themes that lacked adequate support were removed from consideration. Other codes possessed sufficient general similarity in order to be combined, at points, into a single code as Creswell (2012b) describes. Following Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2011), we also utilized procedures such as consideration of negative case samples, organizing reviews, asking key questions, and concept mapping.

Our design decisions relied on a number of internal validity considerations (Sin, 2010; Tracy, 2010). The research team met throughout the coding and analysis processes so that internal validity could continually be evaluated (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The findings reported here do not reflect the interpretation of a lone researcher but, rather, a team approach, which increases the likelihood of an accurate reflection of the participants’ stated views and opinions. These interactions helped to ensure that multiple perspectives were incorporated in the data interpretation, as opposed to only one. Working as a team also allowed a range of possible themes to

emerge, in addition to multiple counter explanations so that the conclusions reported here are the result of substantial deliberation (Chenail, 2012b).

We also followed Johnson and Christensen's (2010) direction, consulting an expert qualitative researcher who did not participate in the data collection or analysis processes as a way to increase internal validity. The objective expert provided an additional check that procedures were correctly followed throughout the study, and stimulated further discussion between researchers. Additionally, the expert checked our conclusions by listening to our discussion of the results to assure that all of our conclusions possessed sufficient evidence from the interview transcripts in order to be considered adequate. As a third validity component, our team shared the study's results with the respective participants and gave them the opportunity to advise us whether or not they felt that the conclusions misrepresented their intended message. This is known as member checking (Mero-Jaffe, 2011) protocol and the students indicated that our reported results aptly reflected their sentiments.

Another step to enhance validity was the construction of a data trail (Rodgers, 2008). This is a document that contains each pertinent or supporting participant quotation for every reported theme, and a compilation of the codes from which each theme was generated. This process enables researchers to tangibly see how much evidence exists to support each respective theme and to then evaluate whether or not it is appropriate to report that theme as reflecting the majority of the participants' views. Additionally, this document provides accountability for involved researchers, because it creates an avenue for other researchers to evaluate whether there truly is strong enough evidence in order to justify each reported theme (helping to prevent researcher fraud). The expert consultant for our study scrutinized our data trail, which increased the likelihood that the reported findings are an accurate representation of the participant's expressed views. Last, we wrote this article reflecting the phrases and tone of the participants whenever possible. In other words, we utilized low inference descriptions (Chenail, 2012b). Using the participants' words and manner helps protect against inserting explicit and tacit researcher biases into reported findings.

Results

Elsewhere (Firmin, Tse, Johnson, Vorobyov, & McKeon, 2014), we reported two results from the present data set, indicating the students' overall perceptions of the poor to have cognitively changed 1.5 years following their initial poverty immersion experience. That is, students communicated that they possessed different perceptions at the time of having been interviewed than they did at the point when they initially took the poverty immersion class. These cognitive changes included views of the

American middle class, circumstantial views of poverty, and the holistic nature of poverty. We also reported that the students themselves were doing relatively little to actually help those in poverty.

In this article, we report the three findings regarding students' spiritual perceptions regarding the church's response to poverty and homelessness in America, based on the interviews conducted 1.5 years after their poverty immersion experience. Three negative viewpoints were prominent regarding the students' perceptions regarding how the church has addressed poverty. These include (a) they view the church generally as being ignorant to the homeless, their situation, and the needs possessed by persons in poverty, (b) many of the outreach methods to the homeless are viewed as being misguided or ineffective, and (c) students believe the church must be more involved in reaching out to the homeless in their community.

Perception of Ignorance

The analysis of the interviews revealed that most students perceive Christians not understanding homelessness or poverty well enough in order to be appropriately involved or effective in ministering to impoverished communities. Most of the students expressed that, prior to their class weekend poverty immersion experience, they had never previously been in a personalized situation of poverty and most explained that their experience profoundly affected their current comprehension of homelessness and poverty. In particular, with one exception, the participants expressed their lack of experience with being homeless, and they stated that, beyond the experience in a homeless immersion situation, they knew very few homeless people. Seemingly, they generalized this perception to the church as a widespread problem. That is, while students expressed enduring altered perceptions regarding the reasons for homelessness and perceptions of the middle class, most explicitly also expressed their beliefs that the church as a whole possesses a misconstrued view of the homeless. With two exceptions, the students were raised in middle class, Caucasian homes, and had little previous involvement with the impoverished. One-and-a-half years later, after participating in the poverty immersion experience, they expressed how disconnected they had previously been from poverty. Many students expressed that the suburban, middle class protective-cocoon has created a detachment between much of the American church and homelessness.

Just the culture of suburbia you have this little bubble like that doesn't get disturbed.... And we just stay in the building and you know what I'm saying? I think that's just the way the culture of suburbia operates. And because of that, they don't go out as much, they don't bring people in as much, and so I think that makes them less effective.

There were different reasons that students offered as attempts to explain why the church appears ignorant regarding the homeless. Some were specific to only a minority of the participants, but two existed in greater frequency. First, many students perceived that the middle class did not want to reach out to the homeless because it was difficult. Students believe that when people are outside of their natural socioeconomic realm, salient challenges exist. In particular, students believe that the church saw reaching out to the homeless as being a difficult or even dangerous task and that the church has not adequately met the responsibility. Second, many participants expressed that lack of involvement and exposure to the homeless leads to a diminished sense of need among the homeless. The majority of students had little first-hand exposure prior to the immersion experience, so their perceptions-of-the-needs (and their perceived previous ignorance) of the homeless were realized. A year-and-a-half later, these constructs still existed in the students' minds. Andrew expressed his realization and represented aptly the sentiments of the other students on this point:

So like as long as you don't know anybody who's homeless or you don't have a relationship with anybody who's homeless, it's never going to be important, regardless of if you're giving money to a ministry, whatever you're doing. Like, it will never really be important until like you're actually in it.

Perception of Ineffectiveness

Second, most students in the study also believed that the church is ineffective in the outreaches that do exist (attributing their beliefs to their poverty immersion experience). Virtually every student expressed that most churches could be doing a better job in how they reach out to the needs of the homeless. It follows logically, then, that when people are ignorant of a situation, their attempts to help might not be effective in the particular situation. The course professor who oversaw the students' immersion experience reportedly often expressed to them the concept: "Zeal to help without the understanding of how to help is dangerous." Evidently, the instructor achieved his objective, as students resoundingly expressed belief in this sentiment—at least 1.5 years after the course was completed.

The overwhelming majority of students we interviewed in the present study expressed their sentiments that the church did not at all handle well reaching out to the homeless and impoverished. Throughout various interviews, most students stated that their respective churches might serve, say, once a month or so in the local soup kitchen or homeless shelter, but that (more or less) was the extent of the churches' involvement. Students further indicated that this represented the extent of most churches of which they were aware. They expressed with pathos, feeling as though

the involvements were both inadequate and minimal. There were not any students in our sample who expressed or implied that the methods or levels of involvement were effective or sufficient. Tom illustrated the participants' sentiments on this point:

There's very little we are doing, at least—doing something is better than nothing, in many cases, and so, it's either like, “Oh, let's go work at a soup kitchen,” and they might do that with the youth group once or twice, and then we did, we did homeless ministry [*implying that that is doing homeless ministry*], that is how it's infused a lot.

Connected to the lack of understanding regarding how to properly minister to homeless communities, many students identified varying needs that the homeless possess that the church fails to meet. For example, most students emphasized that Christians need to personally connect with the individuals in the homeless communities. Most ministry towards the homeless mentioned in the interviews occurred through churches on a once-per-month or bi-monthly basis, and reportedly there was usually little or no connection between any of the homeless in the times between the dedicated outreaches. The students in our sample resoundingly expressed their sentiments that these limited efforts were not satisfactorily effective for the homeless community. Reflecting the views of most participants, Jerry said:

When I was in high school I did this helping hands thing where we would go across the river into the city that was next to us, and feed people every like...fourth Monday of the month or something like that, and I mean that's the only time my church ever talked about it. I come from a very like conservative, traditional, suburban church and...I think that we wouldn't have liked it if they would have come in [the church building/for church], because we were real clean and stuff, and we wouldn't have known how to handle them ... or even like relate to them.

Need for Greater Church Involvement

With near unanimity, the participants in the study expressed their perceptions (again, attributed to their prior immersion experiences) that the church needed to be more involved in serving the homeless, and also that the church should be responsible for helping those in need. When students related these sentiments, we followed-up further and asked them more about their perceived needs of the homeless; the participants provided various views. Most identified the basic physiological needs such as shelter,

food, and water, but most also expressed that the church should address social and psychological needs. The ministries which were identified by the students as those in which their own churches (and church ministries of which they were aware) were involved only focused on the physiological needs of the homeless. Participants believed that the church needed to be involved in deeper levels of need hierarchies, such as that of Maslow (1943), which includes the safety and belonging needs of the homeless.

Additional ministry outreaches were noted by students, but many also expressed the need of churches in particular to be more welcoming to the homeless. Multiple students expressed that inside the church is often uncomfortable for individuals in poverty. Most societies usually polarize towards a specific group of people, but students expressed that churches should be welcoming to the homeless because they believe the church should be hospitable to all people. Anna reflected how students generally felt along this line:

I think the church many times emphasizes as, as a whole that “we should, accept these people” but, at the end...it hasn’t trained its individuals in how to accept these people and how to welcome them ... and so it really comes down to an individual level, on that one and...the way the church has to address it is by educating and having a plan for “how do we address this?”

Carla similarly reinforced the idea that churches must be more effective in redoubling efforts toward tangible outreaches—beyond what students perceive as being current surface Christian attempts to help:

Suburban churches just struggle more to see where the needs are because I think, as a whole, churches can do better.... I think churches could do a much better job of being more welcoming, of being aware of some of those differences and I’m not exactly sure what that would look like, but work with their congregation and just the practical stuff of being more welcoming and figuring out, kind of, the needs of the homeless people there in the community and being able to reach out.

Finally, the interview data showed participants in this sample to express their beliefs that the burden of responsibility relies mainly on the church when addressing the needs of the impoverished. Nearly every student stated that the church has the major (in only a few cases did students say “partial”) responsibility to help the poor in the community, in comparison to governmental support. There was no one who expressed that it was solely the government’s responsibility to care for the homeless, but a few expressed that it should be a combination of church and governmental

support. The majority, in contrast, expressed that the cardinal responsibility for providing assistance to the impoverished falls to the church, either solely or supplemented by the government. Some students specifically expressed that the government is needed to help support the homeless because the church is not doing enough in order to meet the immediate needs of the homeless. For example, Sarah stated: "I believe that it's the role of the church to do it but, because of the church's unwillingness to be alert about it, that's where the government has to step in and do what the church isn't doing." In short, students expressed their beliefs that helping the poor should not be an ancillary aspect of the church. Rather, outreach to the homeless and people in poverty ought to be central to the church's mission. The American church, from the vantage point of the students who underwent a poverty immersion experience, should engage in much more outreach than what occurs presently.

Discussion

Students consistently expressed their desires to help the poor as well as their respective burdens to see such individuals' needs met. Cognitively, students said they shifted the thinking that they previously possessed, having been reared mostly in suburban homes and Middle class families. Eighteen months following the urban ministry course, students appeared to be resolute in their respective perspectives, viewing assistance to the homeless as being a critical need, thinking the church is not fulfilling its God-given role, and convinced that individual Christians should be doing more to help individuals in poverty. Nobody among the students we interviewed related contra-perspectives. They related that their personal involvement with the poverty immersion experience to have been central to solidifying their current perspectives. Additionally, none of the students indicated having "rebooted" their cognitive perceptions.

Views expressed by students regarding their perceptions of how the church frames poverty appeared to be relatively consistent with what they had been taught in class. From our previous study that involved the course professor (Tse, et al., 2006), we learned that the instructor utilized a relatively aggressive approach to advocating for how poverty should be addressed by local churches and Christianity in general. Although students' behaviors reportedly were said to be non-activist (i.e., incongruent with the professor's espousal), their stated perceptions regarding how the church should view poverty showed more constancy.

The students universally condemned the American middle class for its ignorance and inaction toward helping the poor. We find it interesting that, in so doing, the students essentially censured their own socio-economic group. In particular, none of the students in our sample laid blame at the feet of wealthy Americans. Rather, they unanimously viewed middle-class Chris-

tians as being particularly delinquent in not following biblical mandates to help those with needs. Naturally, it would be interesting to conduct the same study with a group of Christian students from an upper-socioeconomic group, rather than the current middle-class Christian group. It is worth asking whether the rich students would be more likely to blame other rich Christians for the current plight of the poor (and blame the rich for doing so little)—or would they also condemn the middle-class? We are unaware of any published research studies that would potentially guide answers to the question, so such a study could prove to be relatively insightful.

And finally, we find it noteworthy that none of the participants had adopted a moralistic view toward the homeless. That is, they never spoke of individuals in poverty in terms of natural consequences for poor life choices. Rather, students framed homelessness from circumstantial viewpoints (e.g., bad luck, tragedies, illnesses, mental problems, and the like). Students did not cite Scriptures such as Proverbs 10:4: “He becomes poor who deals with a slack hand, but the hand of the diligent becomes rich” (MEV). This is not to suggest that students should have spoken of homeless individuals in moralistic terms.

There is significant debate in Christendom regarding this topic (Lee, Jones, & Lewis, 2015) and interjecting substantial discussion regarding moralistic/circumstantial perspectives in the present article is beyond its intended scope. Rather, we make note that students in our present sample universally described the poor from solely circumstantial paradigms, rather than from characterological or moralist ones, which is consistent with the perspective of the course professor who supervised the poverty immersion experience. Although none of the authors have previously taught the urban ministry course, we learned about the professor’s perspective from our previously published research study (Tse, et al., 2006). From the prior data collection, we came to understand that the professor approached Christian poverty issues from a circumstantial—not moralist—viewpoint and we suspect that the instructor was successful in passing on his own paradigm regarding the causes of poverty. This dynamic naturally has direct bearings on how Christians should come to view the church’s role in helping such individuals. This conclusion is based on our own perceptions as well as on the course’s reputation, personal conversations with the course professor outside of his class context, and the results of our previously conducted research study when students related what they understood the course professor to have taught in the urban ministry class.

Limitations and Future Research

As a limited qualitative exploration, our study can only provide a beginning level of data from one group of students and raise some possible questions. As the methods section reveals, the majority of our participants

were Caucasian, which is a proportional reflection of the participants' university's demographic makeup. Additionally, as is typical with qualitative research studies, our sample size was relatively small. An area for further research includes the replication of the present study with minority students who similarly underwent a poverty immersion experience. Such follow-up research potentially might help further illuminate and advance the findings reported in the present study. Additionally, the university in this study exists in a rural area. A replication of this study in an urban setting, where poverty is within walking distance from the campus, would be very interesting and insightful to compare with the current one.

We believe that this study will be relevant to researchers exploring the potential long-term effect of immersion experiences on college students. Additionally, if a large-sample study (such as a national survey) is conducted in the future, then the results from this study will be useful in formulating potential quantitative research questions. Finally, the results reported here reflect participants' attitudes and behaviors at one particular moment after their immersion experience. Additional longitudinal research would be valuable to discern any potential patterns or evolution of perceptions and behavior. As a concrete example, future researchers might interview participants prior to their poverty immersion experience, right after their experience, and then again at various future intervals after the experience. It is possible that curvilinear relationships may be revealed between participants' views of poverty and behavioral responses to these views. ❖

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Michael W. Firmin, Ph.D., Professor of Psychology Cedarville University, 251 N. Main Street, Cedarville, OH 45314. Phone: (937) 766-3242. Email: firmi@cedarville.edu.

Ruth Lowrie Markum, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Psychology Cedarville University, 251 N. Main Street, Cedarville, Ohio 45314. Phone: (937)-766-3439. Email: rlmarkham@cedarville.edu.

Kurt J. Stultz, B.A., Doctoral student University of Connecticut Storrs, CT 06269. Phone: (888) 382-7835. Email: Kurt@springpt.com

Heidi J. Johnson, B.A. Kids Alive International 2507 Cumerland Drive PO Box 2117 Valparaiso, Indiana 46384 2. Email: hjjohnson93@gmail.com.

Elizabeth P. Garland, B.A., Doctoral student, Biola University, 13800 Biola Ave, La Mirada, CA 90639. Phone: (562) 903-6000. Email: egarland@cedarville.edu.

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Supporting Caregivers Who Care for African American Elders: A Pastoral Perspective

Wanda L. Collins & Altonette D. Hawkins

This article focuses on how social workers and African American congregations could respond to the increased needs of informal caregivers (e.g., family, neighbors, or friends) to provide care to elderly African Americans. With support from aging and caregiver literature, two pastors offer reflections regarding the challenges of caregiving based on their perspectives from providing pastoral care in a rural and an urban setting. A case scenario is included that illustrates the increasing need of caregivers for physical and emotional support as elder care needs increase, both in the number of hours required and in the demands of providing daily care. The authors discuss barriers that may hinder access to caregiving resources and offer suggestions regarding activities that African American churches and pastors can incorporate to reduce caregivers' burdens.

ACCORDING TO AGING RESEARCH, THE PROPORTION OF OLDER PEOPLE (65+) in society continues to increase (Administration on Aging, 2014; U.S. Census Bureau, 2014). The U. S. Census Bureau (2014) reports, "The percentage of the population aged 65 and over among the total population increased from 4.1 percent in 1900 to 13.0 percent in 2010 and is projected to reach 20.9 percent by 2050" (p. 3). African American elders reached 4 million in 2014 and the number is projected to grow to 12 million by 2060. In 2014, African Americans made up 9% of the older population. By 2060, the percentage of the older population that is African American is projected to grow to 12% (Administration on Aging, 2014). Parallel to this population increase, African American elders are expected

to be in poorer health due to chronic illnesses related to arthritis, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, and other diseases (Administration on Aging, 2014; U. S. Census Bureau, 2014). The most frequently occurring conditions among older African Americans in 2011-2013 were: hypertension (85% in 2009-2012), diagnosed arthritis (51%), diagnosed diabetes (39% in 2009-2012), all types of heart disease (27%), and cancer (17%). The comparable figures for all older persons were: hypertension (71% in 2009-2012), diagnosed arthritis (49%), all types of heart disease (31%), diagnosed diabetes (21% in 2009-2012), and cancer (25%) (Administration on Aging, 2014; U. S. Census Bureau, 2014).

The societal challenge to meet the physical, mental, spiritual, and social needs of older adults underscores the need for social work professionals to not only understand factors that affect aging and living but the needs of the primary caregivers as well. The role of a caregiver to the elderly can be burdensome and debilitating to one's own well-being if intentional self-care and support from other sources are not accessible and utilized. The caregiver has greater physical and mental strain due to caring for an elder (Bauer, & Sousa-poza, 2015) who in most cases has lost or is losing functionality in some activities of daily living (ADLs) and instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs) (Kim, Chang, Rose, & Kim, 2012). In addition to caring for the elder, caregivers tend to experience stress and strain from functioning in multiple roles such as spouse or partner, parent, working professional or business owner, and community leader while providing caregiving to elderly parents or a family member.

With support from aging and caregiver literature, the purpose of this article, is to offer the pastoral perspectives of two Central Kentucky pastors regarding formal providers (e.g., professional helpers) and informal support and care relationships (e.g., family, neighbors, or friends) that African American churches could utilize to lessen the burden of African American caregivers. One contributor is a senior pastor in an urban metropolitan setting and the other is a social work educator and an associate pastor in a rural location. We share caregiver barriers from the literature and offer reflections regarding the challenges of caregiving based on our experience in pastoral care. The illustration of a married female age 55 years old who provides the majority of the caregiving to her elderly parents is included as a case study. The urban-based case scenario that follows highlights the increasing need of caregivers for physical and emotional support that often goes unrecognized as elder care needs increase, both in the number of hours required and in the demands of providing daily care.

The Case of Mrs. C

Mrs. C is a 55-year-old African American woman who is the primary caregiver for her two elderly middle-class parents. She lives within five

minutes of their home. Her 90 year-old father, Mr. B., is married to his wife of more than 60 years. Mr. B is diagnosed with prostate cancer and has other health problems. Mrs. B., her mother, is 92 years of age and has been living with Parkinson's disease for more than 20 years. In addition to Parkinson's, Mrs. B was recently diagnosed with liver cancer. She tries to be supportive of her husband while addressing her own health challenges. Living also in the home with both parents is Mrs. C's 59-year-old brother. His health conditions, resulting from several major surgeries, prevent him from being able to provide adequate caregiving support to his parents. Therefore, Mrs. C is faced with being the primary caregiver for her father. At the same time, she gingerly cares for her mother but tries not to take away her independence since she is still able to perform daily life activities.

Mrs. C is a high-profile public servant who has been married for 23 years and has two young adult sons. In addition to her roles as wife, mother, and caregiver, she also served in lay leadership positions in her church for more than 15 years (i.e., in a metropolitan setting). She attends Bible study, worship services, and church meetings. She was reared and married in the same Christian church in which her parents were married, and has brought her children up in this religious setting as well. Their family represent several generations that have attended the church even prior to Mrs. C's birth. For example, as a couple, Mr. and Mrs. B were actively involved in the church for many years, holding various leadership positions. Despite being homebound for more than 10 years, Mr. B, a devout man of faith, remains an avid reader of the scriptures. With this strong religious influence, religion and spirituality play important roles in Mrs. C's life and daily orientation. For example, it is her religious and spiritual belief that as a Christian it is her moral responsibility to take care of her parents since they cared for her when she was young.

Mrs. C maintains a full plate as a church leader, wife, mother, professional worker, and caregiver. Her caregiving responsibilities include ensuring that her father goes to doctors' appointments, obtains and takes medications as prescribed, eats healthy meals, and receives follow-up care, as required. Over time, Mrs. C's caregiving responsibilities increased and spilled over to caring for her mother as her health began to deteriorate. For Mrs. C, the load was too great and ultimately affected her health. Due to the strain of serving as her parents' caregiver and a number of other stressors, Mrs. C began to encounter major health challenges, which resulted in a heart attack. Additionally, she dealt with marital issues, the hospitalization of her oldest son due to serious injuries from an assault, participation in college tours for her youngest son as a part of his college selection process, and requests from her nieces and nephews for financial assistance with legal issues related to family conflict. The heart attack and other family stressors signaled for Mrs. C the importance of having support in the caregiving process and making time for her own self-care and renewal. The urban

pastor made an intentional connection with Mrs. C in the space and time of each worship service by asking her to verbalize her weekly self-care plan.

However, during pastoral visitations, the church's support of this family was primarily directed toward Mr. B, with the permission and oversight of Mrs. C. The only people who had direct contact with Mr. B were his wife, Mrs. C., other family members, the pastor, and deacons of the church. The deacons visited once a month to serve communion until the family requested only the pastor for visitations. It was the family's wishes to maintain the total responsibility of caregiving and not subject their loved one to service providers or visitors who caused Mr. B to become weary and possibly overwhelmed. As Mr. B's health challenges escalated to multiple surgeries and hospitalizations, the family made the decision to use formal support services. Eventually, the family accepted the reality that Mr. B required more skilled and attentive care than they could provide at home. As a last resort, Mr. B was admitted to a long-term nursing care facility. In this case, the family also followed through with doctors' appointments, physician referrals to specialists, and hospitalization. They were not receptive to community resources that gerontology or generalist social workers would recommend to minimize their caregiving burden and stress. The strain on the caregiver, Mrs. C, did not become easier because it required her to make frequent visits to the nursing home. The weight of caregiving, combined with her other roles, eventually gave way to other unforeseen consequences. The marital problems eventually led to Mrs. C's divorce. While Mrs. C carried most of the caregiving load for her father, she received some assistance from her two young adult sons and adult niece but little to no support from her brother, who lived in the parents' home.

The church's support of the caregiver during her own health challenges was limited to the pastor and members of the family who were also church members. Due to stress and chronic overload, Mrs. C became the care recipient needing care and support. The pastor offered pastoral care to the caregiver/care recipient through hospital visits, prayers, and gentle reminders of personal stewardship to make self-care a priority so that she could effectively care for others.

Shortly after Mrs. C's discharge from the hospital, she established a walking routine as a part of her self-care. The urban pastor went on walks with her to model the principles of self-care, to be a source of encouragement and offer the ministry of presence in a non-traditional way that met Mrs. C's needs. In addition, the pastor continued to attend to the pastoral needs of her father, Mr. B, up until his death in the hospital. Although Mrs. C no longer had the demands of caring for her father, shortly after his death her brother died unexpectedly. Mrs. C made the decision to relocate her mother to a long-term assisted living facility to address her need for ongoing caregiving support in a more stable environment. Placing her mother

in a facility was a weight off her shoulders because she could share the caregiving responsibilities with trained professionals. This arrangement allowed her more flexibility to take care of herself and to remain a loyal and supportive daughter to her mother.

Challenges of Caregiving

According to National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) and AARP Public Policy Institute (2015), nearly half of caregivers care for someone age 75 years or older and 39 percent care for someone age 50 to 74 years old. The typical care recipient is female (65%) and 69.4 years of age. The report reveals that a large majority of caregivers provide care for a relative (85%), with 49 percent caring for a parent or parent-in-law (NAC/AARP Public Policy Institute, 2015). Additionally, on average, caregivers spend 24.4 hours a week providing care to their loved one. While nearly one-quarter provide 41 or more hours of care a week (23%) caregiving for a spouse/partner averages 44.6 hours a week (NAC/AARP Public Policy Institute, 2015). The data show that among employed caregivers, six in ten who provide care to someone 50+ work full time (57%), and another 15% work between 30 and 39 hours. On average, employed caregivers work 34.8 hours a week (NAC/AARP Public Policy Institute, 2015, p. 37).

Furthermore, because of time spent on caregiving, more than half of employed women caregivers have made changes at work, such as going in late, leaving early, or working fewer hours (Family Caregiver Alliance, 2015; Office on Women's Health, 2012). Caring for older adults who are often chronically ill or disabled can be demanding and emotionally and physically tiring (Litzelman, Skinner, Gangnon, Nieto, Malecki, & Witt, 2014). Research indicates that caregivers often experience negative physical, financial, and psychological stress, including anxiety, depression, and worry (Foley, Tung, & Mutran, 2002; Garlo, O'Learly, Van Ness, & Fried, 2010). With a greater percentage of the population living longer and managing chronic ailments (U. S. Census Bureau, 2014), more families will be faced with decisions to provide care for elderly family members. Outside help may or may not be available due to economic constraints, eligibility requirements for services, or the degree of functional disability of the older adult (Bullock, Crawford, & Tennstedt, 2003).

Stress and decreased time for personal needs are two major challenges that caregivers face. Stress may be constant as caregivers adjust to frequent or sudden changes in meeting their caregiver responsibilities that can cause them to sacrifice vacations, hobbies, or other activities (Epstein-Lubow, 2014). Primary caregivers frequently must balance providing care under complex circumstances that can result in the lack of a routine schedule, long drives to and from medical facilities, juggling doctors' appointments,

or devoting less time to their own personal needs, which can leave them feeling, physically exhausted and emotionally drained (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012).

Cultural Influence on Caregiving

As the United States population becomes increasingly more ethnically and culturally diverse, there is a greater need to understand the cultural determinants of caregiving responsibilities (Scharlach, Kellam, Ong, Baskin, Goldstein, & Fox, 2006). Despite the increased demand for caregiving, minority caregivers tend to use informal support services more than their non-Hispanic White counterparts (Dilworth-Anderson, Williams, & Gibson, 2002; Dunlop, Manheim, Song, & Chang, 2002). The difference is largely due to longstanding cultural traditions that define family obligations such as mutual support and reciprocity that is expressed in giving back love and support to family members who have given the same (Bennett, Sheridan, & Richardson, 2014; Gallant, Spitze, & Grove, 2010; Lindauer, Harvath, Berry, & Wros, 2015; Scharlach et al., 2006). This cultural tradition is also made known by honoring filial obligations and showing respect for an older relative's worthiness and authority.

Ethnographic research documents that, as a group, African American cultural norms are family-centered with defined roles for the caregivers (Pharr, Francis, Terry, & Clark, 2014; Taylor & Chatters, 1986). The communal aspect of caregiving in African American families is traditionally ascribed to the cultural precept of "caring for their own" rather than placing elderly family members in alternative care facilities (Anderson & Turner, 2010; Pharr, Francis, Terry, & Clark, 2014). Caring for their own or a family first mentality is the premise by which African American caregivers operate to make the sacrifice of time, resources, and self before considering any other options (Lindauer, Harvath, Berry, & Wros, 2015; Pharr, Francis, Terry, & Clark, 2014). Rather than seeing caregiving as a burden, African American caregivers most often describe caregiving as a source of personal satisfaction and emotional fulfillment (Bennett, Sheridan, & Richardson, 2014; Hargrave, 2006). This outlook often results in helping family members in their time of need, fulfilling cultural norms, and bringing family members closer together (Scharlach et al., 2006). Despite the fact that family-centered norms strengthen the bond between the caregiver, family members, and the elder caregiving recipient, these cultural norms act as a boundary for keeping outsiders at bay. Thus, the cultural norms of African American caregivers can impact their attitudes and the caregiving process (Gallant, Spitze, & Grove, 2010; Scharlach et al., 2006; Qualls & Zarit, 2009).

For instance, sometimes those outside the sanctity of the family might include the pastor and church members. This dilemma may create undue

stress and strain on the caregiver who is trapped between honoring the traditions of the family and maintaining a sense of connectedness to the beloved church community (Bennett, Sheridan, & Richardson, 2014). The hospitalization of an elderly care recipient provides an example of this type of caregiving process.

It is our observation as pastors, that when an elderly care recipient is hospitalized, whether for a short- or long-term stay, family members are designated to cover the morning, afternoon, and evening shifts. Other family members are expected to perform supplementary activities such as preparing meals, doing laundry, or cooking meals, as needed (Carlton-LaNey, Hamilton, & Alexander, 2001). This practice is meant to ensure the care recipient is never left alone solely in the care of the hospital personnel and enables the primary caregiver to continue to work and maintain a work/life balance as long as possible. Sometimes this caregiving network may extend beyond the family under special circumstances. Those special circumstances may be due to the unavailability of a family member, but the 'family first' rules of engagement are usually in play. The caregiver acts on behalf of the care recipient and serves as a gatekeeper to ensure the wishes of the care recipient are not violated. Overseeing the rotational schedule of responsibilities and honoring the traditions of the family can produce undue stress and strain on the caregiver.

However, in the informal support network of caregiving to elderly African Americans, the church is often involved in the provision of emotional support and comfort by arranging pastoral visits, praying for prayer concerns, providing tapes of sermons or special musical events, and hospital visits. Though atypical, in the case of Mrs. C, the urban pastor arranged brief walks at a nearby park following Mrs. C's heart attack. It was a way for the pastor to model her own method to reduce stress and to provide gentle motivation and encouragement to raise Mrs. C's awareness of self-care.

Barriers that Hinder Access to Caregiving Resources

In the African American culture, as in other ethnic groups, there are service barriers, cultural norms, attitudes, and beliefs that may impact African American caregivers and thwart access to beneficial caregiving resources. A few of these barriers, supported by the literature, are included in the paragraphs below and observed from our pastoral experiences.

Reliance on Informal Support Networks Rather Than Formal Services

Care and support from family members, friends, and neighbors during times of need or crisis is typically referred to as informal social support. Formal support is caregiving help provided by professionals, paid helpers, or companies and is not characterized by social and emotional bonds

(Williams & Dilworth-Anderson, 2002). Although formal services and resources are available, African American families can be reluctant or wary about utilizing community services (Ayalon & Young, 2005). This stance is frequently due to perceptions that service providers are biased, insensitive, or will minimize their cultural experiences. In reality, both are losers since there is a disconnection from the intended recipients, African American caregivers. Consequently, reliance on an informal support network of family, who are primarily women, close friends, and the African American church tends to be more valued than formal support within the African American culture (Pickard, Inoue, Chadiha, & Johnson, 2011; Williams & Dilworth-Anderson, 2002).

Some formal caregiver services may include long-term care, home health, adult day care, referral services, support groups, transportation services, community services, and even caregiver defined church supported ministries. Although African American caregivers tend to use informal support networks, they consistently express a greater need for formal support services and higher levels of unmet social and mental health needs than do non-Hispanic White caregivers (Chadiha, Portia, Biegel, Auslander, & Gutierrez, 2004; Ho, Weitzman, Cui, & Levkoff, 2000; National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) and the AARP Public Policy Institute (2015). There appears to be a disconnect between the use of informal support networks, the expressed need for formal support, and the actual use of formal support to more effectively meet the needs of African American caregivers.

Historically, the African American church has been responsive to the needs of its community members, whose access to traditional social institutions and services has been restricted (Pickard, Inoue, Chadiha, & Johnson, 2011; Samuels, 2011; Taylor & Chatters, 1988). Hence, limited access to formal services may have altered help seeking patterns over time and contributed to African Americans becoming more self-reliant and intentional about utilizing informal support services (Williams & Dilworth-Anderson, 2002).

Mistrust of Formal Service Providers

On the flip side, African-American caregivers may be knowledgeable about available services but may elect not to use them due to social factors that may influence disparities or issues related to mistrust (Barnes & Bennett, 2014; Buser, 2009; Chatters, Mattis, Woodward, Taylor, Neighbors, & Grayman, 2011). Due to the communal nature of the African American culture, the key to accomplishing anything is through relationship building. Relationships build trust and trust builds involvement. The African American church is a trusted source of support in the African American culture. It is both community and spiritually based (Hardy, 2014). For some African American caregivers, it is often difficult to trust agencies and service

providers who request personal information regarding finances, the names of relatives who have used similar services, and the disclosure of personal assets during the initial intervention.

As a result, families can be opposed to utilizing formal interventions when agencies or organizations fail to understand the value in first cultivating genuine relationships during the helping process or lack sensitivity to structural barriers to service utilization such as lack of transportation, negative prior experiences, language barriers, or culturally sensitive-services (Scharlach et al., 2006).

For example, in the case of Mrs. C, the family relied on limited formal service providers initially because of a perception that these types of services are intrusive. Mrs. C's family was more open to the pastoral visits and occasional visits from the deacons to serve communion because they had established commonality. The development of culturally appropriate services can only be achieved through knowledge of the culture and the involvement of culturally competent social or human service professionals who understand the nuances of the culture (Briscoe, 2000; Hardy, 2014).

Spiritual Implications of Faith Beliefs

African Americans have relied on the centrality of their religious faith as a source of support; it is also a resource and a source of coping when providing elder care (Dilworth-Anderson, Boswell, Cohen, 2007; Dilworth-Anderson & et al., 2002; Sheridan, Burley, Hendricks, & Rose, 2014). In the caregiving role, some caregivers see God in the image of healer, provider, and sustainer (Gibson & Hendricks, 2006; Mast, 2014). From a theological perspective, one's personal spirituality is connected to one's faith (Bennett, Sheridan, & Richardson, (2014; Chaney, 2008). James 2:14-17, one of the well-known passages regarding the lifelessness of claimed faith unsubstantiated by works, says, "faith without works is dead" (NKJV). In essence, it means that people act in accordance to their faith. For some African American caregivers this scripture may mean that faith is demonstrated by their actions, not the actions or support of others (Jang & Johnson, 2004; Wittnik, Joo, Lewis, & Barg, 2009). Unfortunately, as caregiving demands increase, attendance at religious services often decreases. Nonetheless, many African American caregivers seem strengthened by their belief that God is in control (Bennett, Sheridan, & Richardson, 2014; Thornton & Hopp, 2011).

Religion and spirituality, faith in God, and prayer are honored and important religious practices within African American families (Coogle, 2004; Hamilton, Sandelowski, Moore, Agarwal, & Koenig, 2013; Neal, 2004; Sheridan, Burley, Hendricks, & Rose, 2014). Historically, these elements of faith have served as a source of support when African American families faced various challenges ranging from the adversity of systemic oppression

and racism to familial stressors. Jones-Cannon and Davis (2005) point out that religion, faith, and prayer helped African American daughters involved in caregiving roles to cope. These researchers report that spirituality was a theme that predominated throughout focus group discussions in their study. It was also the belief of many in the focus group that without prayer and God they would not have had the strength to continue their caregiving role. In addition, taking care of an aging parent was for most a commitment to the commandment in the Scripture to honor one's father and mother (Ephesians, 6:2-3, NIV).

Our experience attests that whether caregivers draw on organized religion, spiritual resources, or develop their own practices, some form of religious (e.g., organized religion) or spiritual (e.g., connection to a higher power) support is beneficial. This support might be in the form of clergy or others within the religious institution connecting with caregivers, encouraging the practice of Christian meditation, engaging in prayer, reading scriptures (demonstrated in the rural church), or creatively embracing journaling (practiced in the urban church). Actions such as these are positive coping practices that help caregivers manage challenges in their lives. Prayers were positively received by caregivers in the rural pastor's church and often elicited feelings of hope, gratitude, and compassion. Conversely, journaling classes in the urban pastor's church helped caregivers to find meaning in their hardship and become resilient in spite of their caregiver burden or associated responsibilities.

African American churches, in collaboration with social workers, are in prime positions to tap into the spiritual practices of some caregivers to reduce the psychosocial burden experienced from caring for elderly adults. For instance, in the rural congregation served by the social worker/pastor, caregivers are comfortable using the telephone for devotional and prayer support. A number of congregational members report calling various 1-800 numbers for diabetes and cancer advice. Adopting a similar approach, social workers connected with faith communities can use organizational skills to set up 1-800 caregiver hotlines to help caregivers to feel connected during difficult times. A 1-800 number would offer confidentiality, a convenient and timely resource, and most likely an opportunity to reduce immediate stress (Ramsay, Reisinger, Ramsay, Compton, & Thompson, 2012). Implementation of this suggestion might support caregivers in providing care a little longer based on their faith in God and access to another form of supportive care.

African American congregations could also work in partnership with social workers to provide brochures regarding services in the community to increase congregants' awareness of, and links to, community resources. The informational pamphlets could be located in a centralized area of the church close to religious literature for easy access and increased visibility. Therefore, when devotional literature, prayer booklets, and other forms of

religious or spiritual materials are retrieved, community information would be available and accessible in a familiar place.

The Church's Role in Lessening Caregiver Burden

The real challenge for the church is to identify creative ways to support the caregiver that does not violate the familial norms and offer care recipients and their family members a sense of rest and comfort. Ultimately, the church's goal is to be a trusted source of healing and care for both the caregiver and the care recipient that creates a renewed sense of vitality, strength, and community.

With a greater percentage of the population living longer and managing chronic ailments, more families will be faced with decisions to provide care for elderly family members. Given the many demands and responsibilities that caregivers must face, support from congregational church members who share a common faith would be a real benefit. For example, the African American church and the pastor together form a sustaining source of support and strength for those who practice and share their faith. The congregational support could undergird the caregiver, the care recipient, and affirm the congregational/pastoral mission of being a life-giving transformational resource. In this light, the African American church is a place of community that embraces wholeness through inspired faith, ongoing support, and spiritual direction that may possibly champion the caregiving journey of its worshippers.

The church's ministry of service to caregivers within the congregation can be both spiritual and practical (Underwood & Powell, 2006) and it can be conducted either at church or as a special ministry in the residences of elderly adults receiving care. In its historical role as a kind of extended family, the African American church is in a unique position to play a vital role in mitigating caregiving stress due to the emphasis on Christian faith and service (Coogler, 2004; Underwood & Powell, 2006). African American churches can support congregational caregivers in their need for information, resources, and assistance in several areas that may include both formal (e.g., professional helpers) and informal social support (e.g., friends, neighbors, family) (Avent, Cashwell, & Brown-Jeffy, 2015; Williams & Dilworth-Anderson, 2002).

Organize Pre-Arranged Visits or Calls to Reduce Social Isolation

The challenges of caregiving are often compounded by caregivers' tendencies to become isolated and experience lack of emotional and social support. Both the urban and rural pastors organized pre-arranged visits to the homes of caregivers to ensure some sort of contact from the church and to break social isolation. Various church members participated in visiting

on a rotating basis to minimize burnout and overload of a few congregants. The courtesy of arriving at times recommended by the caregiver, respecting boundaries by not asking invasive medical or personal questions, and giving attention to not staying too long, were behaviors appreciated by those engaged in caregiving activities.

Additionally, putting together a caregiver phone support group (Smith, Toseland, Rizzo, & Zinoman, 2005) or e-mail list to establish ongoing contact with church members who have minimum opportunity to worship regularly is an alternative way that these pastors expressed care and concern. Building on the importance of spirituality and religion among African Americans in general, caregivers from the rural church received taped sermons, Bible Study lessons, inspirational e-mails, devotionals, or other contacts via social media to enhance spiritual uplift.

Church members can further take advantage of the communal nature of African American families by intentionally offering help to caregivers by sitting with the sick, shopping, visiting during deaths, bringing food, giving financial assistance, cooking, cleaning, or offering other types of social support (Carlton-LaNey, 2006; Carlton-LaNey, Hamilton, & Alexander, 2001; Williams & Dilworth-Anderson, 2002). These are acts of service that congregational members, missionary groups, or Family Care Ministers could offer caregivers as an outworking of their faith beliefs of giving and helping others without the expectation of pay (1 Peter 4:10, NLT). By continuing with these forms of informal helping practices, African American congregations can become significant and essential sources of help for caregivers experiencing social isolation as well as promote community uplift (Carlton-LaNey, 2006).

Promote the Utilization of Community-Based Service

As the elderly increase in numbers, reliance on caregivers (Family Caregiver Alliance, 2015) will most likely increase due to chronic illnesses related to arthritis, diabetes, stroke, heart disease, and other diseases (Family Caregiver Alliance, 2015; National Council on Aging, 2014). Additionally, many elderly adults might find it gradually more difficult to maintain their independence and to keep up with everyday tasks such as shopping, preparing meals, cleaning the house, doing laundry, paying bills, or keeping up with the maintenance of a house and yard. Increasing difficulty with daily activities such as eating, taking a bath, or driving to appointments are yet other issues that might interfere with independent living that could be addressed by greater use of community-based services. While there are agencies that offer excellent services, frequently they are not well-known by caregivers. Therefore, many times, community agencies such as the Visiting Nurses Association, United Way, or Meals on Wheels have expanded-based services for the elderly that are underused.

One study shows that a typical church provides financial support, volunteers, space, and in-kind donations to six community programs each year (Ammerman, 2001). Adult day care is an example of a community-based program that provides a beneficial service to caregivers. It is considered as an important community-based service for adults who need supervision and assistance with basic needs. In an ethnographic study exploring day care centers, Nelson (2002) states that such service provision is particularly important for African American families in whom the placement of family members in institutions has traditionally been viewed as an unacceptable option. Nelson (2002) reports that actual utilization of adult day care services depends on the creation of a caring milieu in the centers, and one important element is the opportunity for spiritual expression.

African American churches are then ideal culturally sensitive settings that could offer contractual or in-house services to caregivers and their families seeking quality care that is adaptable to ethnic and cultural frameworks. Outreach programs that partner with helping professionals (e.g., area neighborhood clergy, community nurses, psychologists, social workers, mental health practitioners, universities, etc.) to train volunteers who can provide respite care while a caregiver takes a needed break away from the home are another vitally important response to community needs (Rizzo, Gomes, & Chalfy, 2013; Coogle, 2004).

Similarly, short-term nursing homes or day hospitals could provide medical care for care receivers when caregivers need overnight or weekend assistance when they must leave town (U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012).

Moreover, an added benefit would entail either generalist social workers on staff or on-site licensed or clinical social workers serving neighborhoods on designated days at select African American churches to provide brief solution-focused counseling to help caregivers resolve family conflicts or unresolved feelings of anger and resentment they might experience related to lack of support from other family members.

African American churches could also be valuable neighborhood resources for congregational caregivers desiring to use computer labs to research medical, community, and organizational services to reduce the time and cost of actually traveling to agencies to seek information. Access to high-speed Internet and computer access in this digital age is especially critical to households in rural areas and blighted urban neighborhoods unable to afford a computer or computer services. Using church computers with Internet access, social workers could teach individual volunteers within congregations who express a degree of comfort or computer savvy how to research agency criteria for service eligibility, investigate the types of insurance doctors accept, or to look up confusing medical terms. Once trained, a core group of church volunteers could be attuned to the ongoing needs of caregivers and care receivers and assist with information sharing as an act

of service and kindness to bolster congregants' sense of connectedness with church members.

Identifying community geriatric social workers who are specially trained professionals skilled in working with older adults and caregivers can provide a tremendous service to congregants experiencing caregiver fatigue. Geriatric social workers are proficient in working with family members to find long-term care plans and other appropriate services (Tompkins & Rosen, 2007). Such networking could allow congregational members to discuss potential city resources and options within the familiar and comfortable environment of the church. Working with a community-oriented focus, geriatric or generalist social workers could pool their expertise with doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, and other helping professionals to link caregivers to people with skills to help lessen their caregiver burden (Young, Griffith, & Williams, 2003). Since social workers are experienced as resource brokers (Hepworth, Rooney, Rooney, & Gottfried, 2013) they could play a vital role in facilitating the identification of a range of service providers such as Area Agencies on Aging, Alzheimer's Associations, Diabetes Self-Management Programs, Health Promotion Programs, or fall prevention and physical activity programs for instance.

Provide Space for Professional and Lay Volunteers to Conduct Support Groups

Support groups are perceived as benefits to caregiving families by enhancing caregivers' coping mechanisms (Biegel, Shafran, & Johnsen, 2004; Jones-Cannon & Davis, 2005; Ramsay, Reisinger, Ramsay, Compton, & Thompson (2012). Congregations can form caregiver support groups for caregivers as a form of help and type of social support. A caregiver's support group could provide opportunities for caregivers to have a safe and caring place to get counsel, receive feedback, listen for helpful tips, and to share experiences with other caregivers in the congregation (Toseland, 2004). Social workers could volunteer to either lead groups or provide general coaching to promote and schedule support group meetings. Understanding the erratic schedule and time-consuming demands of some caregivers, group leaders should demonstrate sensitivity to time restraints by offering flexible times to host meetings.

Religious, spiritual, and faith-based venues could consider creative ways to initiate and mitigate caregiver burden by promoting partnerships with social workers, social service agencies, or mental health providers to conduct support groups. Social workers and mental health professionals are both adept at offering emotional and practical support to caregivers and their families in addition to helping caregivers cope with feelings of stress. However, social workers offer complementary skills and knowledge in understanding community resources and the referral process to assist

individuals in qualifying for appropriate social services (Hepworth, Rooney, Rooney, & Gottfried, 2013).

Within religious and spiritual settings, support groups are viewed as extensions of caring ministries that provide comfort, compassion, and support for people dealing with a wide range of life situations. In support groups, family caregivers of older adults can reduce stress and anxiety by sharing their experiences with others in similar situations where people giving care can feel connected, understood, and sustained. Jones-Cannon and Davis (2005) noted that African American caregiving daughters felt that attending support groups and knowing that their parents needed them influenced their caregiving experiences in positive ways.

In addition to social workers, African American churches could utilize lay people to provide one-on-one support to individuals dealing with various caregiving issues by using the training recommendations of Stephen's Ministry. Based in St. Louis, Stephen's Ministry equips church members to provide one-to-one Christian care to people who are hurting (Stephen's Ministry, 2015). For example, the social worker/pastor serving in the rural church participated with lay leaders in the congregation in starting a support group for caregivers. Utilizing Stephen's Ministry training as a foundation, the pastor and lay members provided a safe and caring space for those giving care to meet socially and to learn ways to cope with stressful situations.

Conclusion

Cultural attitudes, mistrust of formal organizations, and religious or spiritual beliefs, often result in reduced utilization of formal supports and services that could help to lessen the demands of elderly caregiving among African American families. The reflections noted in this article can help equip African American congregations and social workers to provide an empowerment approach to minimize caregiver stress and burden (Bennett, Sheridan, & Richardson, 2014). African American religious organizations and pastors are positioned to be catalysts for increasing involvement, acceptance, and utilization of formal services (Chaney, 2008; Samuels, 2011) to lessen caregiver strain. Additionally, the generalist practice of social work provides practitioners with ways of thinking critically about the client's identified concerns and placing those issues in the context of the client's environment. Hence, social workers' skill-sets and generalist knowledge allow them to refer, assist, and coordinate community resources with congregations. Therefore, alliances between African American pastors, social workers, and other human service professionals could allow for easier and more supported dissemination of services to care recipients and caregivers. ❖

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Wanda L. Collins, Ph.D., ACSW, Professor and Distinguished Teaching Scholar, is Director of the BSW Program, University of Louisville, Louisville, KY. Phone: (502) 852-0428. Email: wanda.collins@louisville.edu.

Altonnette D. Hawkins, D. Min., CPC, Senior Pastor, Open Door Christian Church, Louisville, KY. Phone: (502) 366-6306. Email: drtoni@takecarewith-selfcare.com.

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Virtues and Character in Social Work Practice

Cheryl Brandsen & Terry A. Wolfer (Eds.). (2015). Botsford, CT: North American Association of Christians in Social Work.

Virtues and Character in Social Work Practice is a re-publication of the combined Summer and Fall 2014 special issue of *Social Work & Christianity*. Terry A. Wolfer and Cheryl Brandsen served as the editors for this collection of articles by many Christian social work educators. The work is set up first to assist the reader in understanding virtue ethics. It then goes on to analyze various virtues and how each virtue fits with nurturing the development of a social work student or practitioner. The final two chapters are resources to the Christian social work educator with practical uses of virtue ethics in teaching and further resources for continued study regarding this topic.

The first article, written by Jill C. Schreiber, Ruth E. Groenhout and Cheryl Brandsen, dives into the framework for virtue ethics and how it can be utilized in Christian social work education. The authors compare various ethical theories and ultimately provide a case for utilizing virtue-based ethical theories. Virtue-based ethical theories pay attention to the person, or agent, and what type of person that he or she is. All actions are viewed in light of the character of that person. "The evaluation of character and an account of actions derived from character traits that are conducive to being a good social worker or to living an emotional and social healthy life forms the centerpiece of virtue ethics approach" (p. 9).

The authors discuss how the social work profession is rooted in a code of ethics with clear values, but currently the competency-based education does not provide a framework for how one would build or nurture those values within a social worker. The authors argue, "Paying attention to virtue has the potential to enrich and deepen social work practice" (p. 10). Additionally, virtue ethics provides a more holistic approach to social work education and is more true to our role as Christian social work educators. The implication is that there is a void created by solely focusing on competencies and behaviors.

The five virtues that are explored by the individual chapter authors in chapters two through six are charity, faith, gratitude, generosity, and justice. The editors do not claim these are the only five virtues that can be explored, nor do they argue that they are the most important. But rather, these virtues were of interest to the authors and fit with social work values.

Of practical use to the social work educator is the seventh chapter, which consists of strategies for Christian social work educators to develop

character in their students. This chapter challenges social work educators to provide more to students than a “do no harm” approach to integration faith and practices. Rather, Christian social workers should work to utilize faith as an asset. For example, they should utilize contemplative practice together with mindfulness, meditation, and other spiritual practices that would enhance the students’ self-care skills.

One potential critique of this anthology is that the discussion of competency-based education is based on the 2008 Council on Social Work Education standards, and since the edited volume was published, there are revised educational policy and accreditation standards. While the new standards resemble the 2008 standards, there are some notable additions. One change from 2008 to 2015 is the expansion of identified skills from being solely knowledge, values, and skills. In the 2015 standards, a holistic view of competence is more prevalent, with knowledge, values, and skills being supplemented with cognitive and affective processes that include the social worker’s critical thinking, affective reactions, and exercise of judgment (2015 Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards). The reader may question whether there is still a void, when accounting for the expanded 2015 standards. However, because the 2015 standards still focus heavily on student learning outcomes and do not provide guidance on how to provide a more holistic view of competence, one could argue that a focus on virtues is still warranted.

Ultimately this analysis and discussion of what role virtue ethics should play in social work education is an important addition to Christian social work education. It assists the reader in critiquing the void that a competency-based only education would provide and gives practical ideas for supplementing that education to include a more holistic view of educating and nurturing Christian social work individuals that go beyond simply evaluating learning outcomes. ❖

Reviewed by **Lisa Doot Abinoja**, MA, LCSW, Assistant Professor of Social Work, Director of Field Education at Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, IL. Email: Lisa.Abinoja@trnty.edu.

Faith-Rooted Organizing: Mobilizing the Church in Service to the World

Alexia Salvatierra, & Peter Heltzel. (2014). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

Faith-Rooted Organizing contributes to the burgeoning knowledge base of faith-based community organizing with a fresh spiritual paradigm. The authors of the book, Pastor Salvatierra and Professor Heltzel, present

a crystal-clear distinction between Saul Alinsky's model of community organizing (which has been perennially used by faith-based organizations), and a new paradigm of faith-rooted community organizing. Faith-rooted community organizing is succinctly defined as organizing based "on the belief that many aspects of spirituality, faith traditions, faith practices, and faith communities can contribute in unique ways to the creation of just communities and societies" (p. 9).

Chapter 1 unveils the nucleus of faith-rooted organizing as a personal relationship with God, and a commitment to be a prophetic witness of love. The concept of shalom justice is also explained as our love for God and manifested as love for others, love for justice, and caring for the marginalized in the community. Chapter 2 uncovers the process of dreaming, setting clear goals, equitable power redistribution, and organizing around God's dream for beloved community. Chapter 3 spotlights reading the Bible from below in the context of socioeconomic issues and having a perspective of the oppressed. Chapter 4 focuses on the importance of *kairos*, which is a Greek term for momentous timing "... in history when God intervenes and change dramatically occurs" (p. 65). The authors offered an example of the *kairos* moment in the civil rights movement history in America as "the moment Rosa Parks refused to move to the back of the bus, in defiance of a racist laws in Montgomery, Alabama" (p.66). The *kairos* also challenges long-held and deeply rooted lies that justify years of oppression and practices of injustice, replacing these lies with truth.

Chapter 5 discusses the issue of power, and defines it "as the capacity to act or to influence others to act" (p.73). Sub-concepts of power such as the types of powers (serpent and dove), power mapping, and hope are identified and discussed. Chapter 6 highlights the meaning of biblically-based public policy advocacy through the institution of a Christ-centered community. Resources used in biblically-based public policy advocacy include love, family, liturgies, music, prayer, fasting, confession, repentance, moral dialogue, circle of love, and hospitality. The focal point of Chapter 7 is on the dual responsibility of faith-rooted organizers as chaplains to the poor and the powerful. Chapter 8 covers the roles of faith-rooted organizers as prophetic advocates, and public witnesses. Faith-rooted organizers as prophetic advocates "reveal the ways that societies institutionalize sin, and the sweeping changes necessary to cleanse and heal our institutions, so that people are free to become all God intended them to be" (p. 123). The use of religious symbols, rituals, music, experiences, and other means of communication is extensively discussed.

The focus of Chapter 9 is on recruitment strategies. More specifically, Salvatierra and Heltzel propose that recruitment into faith-rooted organizing should be driven by response to two major calls. First is responding to God's call to serve. Second is response to "the cry of Scripture", and

participating in “scriptural reasoning” (p.135). Both calls are in response to “... God’s desire for us to be compassionate, to awaken to the cries of the oppressed, and the cries within our own soul” (p. 135). Furthermore, five spiritual motivators are identified for recruitment. These include compassion, gratitude, joy, legacy, and divine mandates. Chapter 10 is about developing effective leaders in the body of Christ using a faith-rooted approach that maximizes and celebrates the uniqueness of each member of the body of Christ. This is in contrast to a conventional approach that specifies certain characteristics expected from potential leaders. Chapter 11 is the final chapter and the central focus is prophetic spirituality, a concept that captures sustainable inspirations on how to overcome discouragement, burn-out, and failures that sometimes assail faith-rooted organizing.

This book is an excellent one-of-a-kind tool-kit for Christians in social work who are called into faith-based community organizing. Moreover, the cardinal points of each chapter resonate with social work values. However, a cautionary note is that Christians in social work who want to use this book for their own organizing need to be cautious about using the tools and suggestions in working with non-Christian persons, groups, or organizations. Few to no research references are made to support some assertions made in the book. Nevertheless, the authors intentionally attempt to make the book useful to other faiths and denominations by copiously citing faith-rooted organizing examples from the Jewish and Muslim faiths, to mention a few.

The authors also use real life examples from both the global north and south, which make the book accessible and useful to a wide audience. The book will serve as an excellent supplemental text in community development courses, and social work practice courses for programs interested in integrating Christian faith with social work at the mezzo and macro levels. The book is also likely to be an outstanding resource for congregational social workers, as well social workers interested in international social work practice. The book also has some recommended lists of books and resources for further reading. Overall, the book is a valuable resource for faith-based community organizing across the local and global spectrums. ❖

Reviewed by **A. Christson Adedoyin**, MSW, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Social Work, College of Health Sciences, Samford University, 800 Lakeshore Drive, Birmingham, AL 35229. Phone: (205) 726-4661; Email: aadedoyi@samford.edu.

Church, State, and Society: An Introduction to Catholic Social Doctrine Reclaiming Catholic Social Teaching: A Defense of the Church's True Teachings on Marriage, Family, and the State

J. Brian Benestad. (2010). Washington, DC: Catholic University of America.

Reclaiming Catholic Social Teaching: A Defense of the Church's True Teachings on Marriage, Family, and the State

Anthony Esolen. (2014). Manchester, NH: Sophia Institute Press.

These two books on Catholic social teaching (CST) depart from the tendency to treat the Catholic Church's teaching on social questions as an innovation or exception to, or as separable from the Gospel as a whole, including its sexual morality, teaching on the nature and destiny of the human person, marriage and family, the nature of the Eucharist, sacred liturgy and the sacraments, sin, repentance, and salvation. Neither book treats CST as a utopian, statist conception of social justice or as an all-purpose justification for new social programs or increased public spending on old ones.

These works, nevertheless, are very different in approach and style. Benestad draws on a wide range of Church documents (social encyclicals, bishops' statements) as well as philosophical and theological writings such as those of Plato and Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas, Locke and Rawls. He also engages contemporary scholars, Christian and secular, and the range of issues addressed by CST. The book has four sections, of which the first two are the most substantial. They deal with 1) the human person, political community, and the common good; 2) the central importance of civil society and mediating institutions like church, family, and liberal education in their relation to the common good; 3) private property and the so-called (by CST) "universal destination of goods" and 4) justice in the international community and just war principles. The Conclusion provides an important timely discussion and antidote to the "proponents of religion as a private affair" like Rawls, that is, of the secular liberal movement to drive religion out of the public square.

Esolen is much more sharply focused. He provides a thorough review of Leo XIII's writings, both what many consider – erroneously as he argues – the founding document of CST, Leo's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and his many other works that address the fundamental principles of Catholic teaching on the nature and destiny of the human person, marriage and its indissolubility, family, and the state in reference to the social and economic developments of modern times. His concern is frankly polemical, to reclaim CST from secularizing liberal tendencies that detach aspects of it from the Gospel as a whole—from what Jesus taught his Apostles and what they

taught their successors in a unified worldview—and turn it into a rationale for a vast welfare state. If Benestad's style is soberly academic and careful to avoid tendentious formulations, Esolen is robustly Chestertonian and witty in his creative use of striking analogies to demolish platitudes and clichés that abound in this field. As Esolen puts it with characteristic forcefulness:

...[I]magine anything most absurd, and you have not yet approached the absurdity of those who claim that Catholic social teaching implies the existence of a vast welfare state, utterly secular, materialist in all its assumptions about a good life, bureaucratically organized, unanswerable to the people, undermining families, rewarding lust and sloth and envy, acknowledging no virtue, providing no personal care, punishing women who take care of their children at home, whisking the same children into vice-ridden schools designed to separate them from their parents' views of the world, and for all that, keeping whole segments of the population mired in generations of dysfunction, moral squalor, and poverty, while purchasing their votes with money extorted from their neighbors (pp. 8-9).

For both writers, it is of first importance to get the nature of man right. We are made by God in his image for God, fallen but rational and with the capacity for free choice, not mere products of heredity and/or environment. Both reject the kind of utopian elitist statism according to which if we (the elite, state) put in place the right social structures, social problems such as poverty and inequality and oppression will disappear. They share the view that just structures depend on a moral consensus and lives lived according to the virtues.

Benestad deploys Pius XI (author of *Quadragesimo Anno* (QA), the encyclical issued in 1931 to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*) to argue that when souls are in ruin “all efforts to regenerate society will be ineffective” (QA #36). The vices and souls in ruin are the main cause of societal injustice. For example, greed leads to breaking God's laws and harming neighbors. It inclines people to omit almsgiving, beneficence, and munificence, as argued by Augustine, Aquinas, and More. This is not a problem only of the miserly rich man (Luke 16, 19-31) or the extreme libertarian individualist. Socialism, insofar as its moral basis is envy and greed, does the same, abdicating personal responsibility in favor of the state and its programs and diminishing individual giving of time, treasure, and talent (The unreformed Scrooge was an early example of this kind of liberalism in social policy and personal life.) CST, both books show, is diametrically opposed in important respects to the quasi-Marxist liberation theology that recently flourished in its name.

The heart of CST, as both books emphasize, is civil society, the structures or institutions that mediate between individual and state, like church, family, education, and market. Both works reject what CST has identified as the twin evils of individualism and collectivism. By the same token, they recognize that CST also rejects the kind of clericalism that wants the pope or the bishops to identify parties, programs, or policies that the faithful should support. It is not up to the Church to specify particular measures or programs to achieve justice. The principles, such as our duty to the poor, are universal and timeless, but the application of such principles depends on practical judgments about what actually helps the poor as opposed to harming them by promoting dependency and perpetuating poverty. Clergy should not usurp the role of the informed laity in addressing these issues, and both clergy and laity should refrain from identifying their particular opinions on policy issues or programs (say, the minimum wage, which did not exist anywhere until quite recently and the effects of which are disputed by specialists) with the Gospel.

Here then are two outstanding books on CST. They are very different in scope and style, but both are far superior to the vast majority of literature on the topic. Strongly recommended. ❖

Paul Adams, Ph.D., professor emeritus of social work at the University of Hawai'i, is co-author with Michael Novak of the new book, Social Justice Isn't What You Think It Is, published by Encounter Books, November 2015. Email: pladams@hawaii.edu.

Beyond the Walls of Separation: Christian Faith and Ministry in Prisons

Tobias Brandner. (2013). Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock/Cascade.

I chose this book for review because in addition to my official duties as department chair for a social work program I have been a church volunteer in our local state prison for several years. Prison ministry is not a glamorous activity, but it is an important ministry for churches as well as a setting for social work professionals. My prison experience is as a volunteer and not as a social work professional. Brandner has written a fine book on the subject. I began the book wondering how it would parallel my own experience. My first surprise was that the author's experience is outside the U.S., mostly in Hong Kong. I wondered if the title should indicate some international perspective. But my second surprise was how little difference there was between my U.S. experience and Brandner's Hong Kong experience. The only cultural difference I found

was his explanation that prisoners in Hong Kong have a cultural respect for authority and are relatively submissive. Contrast this to a culture of distrust and disrespect found for law enforcement in the U.S.; but in spite of this major difference, the book is entirely relevant and helpful for prison ministry here in the United States.

The author gives a helpful roadmap to the book in the introduction, highlighting the topic of each chapter for those who might not be inclined to read the whole book. I think this is very considerate of the author in that busy professionals can pick and choose based on the author's advice. He even offers groups of chapters for those with specific purposes. For instance, Brandner directs those interested more in the spiritual aspects of prison ministry to chapters 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Those interested more in theology of prison ministry he directs to chapters 1, 4, and 6-9. Chapter 8 focuses on concerns for justice. The author does a nice job of making this book practical and useful for working people, although it is probably best to read it cover to cover to see how it all fits together.

I found chapter 3, "Religion and Spirituality in the Context of Imprisonment," to be of interest to those interested in the social science of prison life. He covers topics like "why do inmates participate in religious activities?" There are both religious and nonreligious reasons, both of which are valid. He covers another topic asked by all but the most naïve prison workers, "how genuine are conversions in prison?" It is easy to become cynical working with inmates, and common for prison workers to assume the worst in an inmate's motives. I have personally known inmates of great faith and others of dubious character, but I have also been surprised a few times about which was which. It remains true that humans look on the outside and God looks on the inside. Brandner provides wise insight into the matter. He also deals with the problem of many inmates being susceptible to more radical faith expressions, both Christian and non-Christian. Perhaps most important to social scientists and the public at large is his dealing with whether religious programs affect rehabilitation. He does not just make a knee-jerk claim, but deals with the topic thoughtfully, including ideas from social-attachment theory and social-learning theory. Brandner makes an important point in clarifying that rehabilitation, social adjustment, and moral development are not the end to which prison ministry strives. Rather, these are the desired by-products of carrying out one's calling for God's glory. Chapter 4 goes into more detail on spiritual transformation in prison.

I looked forward to the final chapter, "Towards a Theology of Prison Ministry," but to be honest he lost me a few times. Perhaps others will find it helpful, but I found myself questioning some connections to Liberation Theology, for example. There was one point that I did find very helpful, however. Based on the Matthew 25 passage with Jesus making statements

including “I was hungry and you gave me food...” Brandner points out that it is not so much a matter of religious volunteers “bringing Christ into the prison,” But rather, He is already there, waiting for us to visit. Brandner distinguishes between crime and sin, but I did not follow his argument. Perhaps it is because I already have a well-developed experiential knowledge that the difference between inmates and volunteers is miniscule in comparison to the difference between each of us as sinners and a perfect and holy God. The difference is negligible, but for the grace of God.

All in all I highly recommend the book to volunteers and social work professionals interested in prison ministry. All might not agree on the theology, but perhaps all will agree on the spiritual and practical benefits of ministering to those behind bars. ❖

Reviewed by Terry Russell, Ph.D., MSW, MA, Professor of Social Work and Department Chair for the Department of Social Work for Frostburg State University. Phone: (201) 687-4691. Email: trussell@frostburg.edu.

Conflict Management for Faith Leaders

Thompson, H. E. (2014). Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press.

Conflict Management for Faith Leaders provides a comprehensive overview of conflict in churches and faith-based organizations and presents perspectives and practices for leaders within those institutions for conflict management. The author uses real-life examples and stories from Scripture, and provides contexts for understanding, assessing, and framing conflict using theories from both ecological and systems perspectives.

Critical to this understanding and framework, the book highlights that leaders need to be keenly adept and aware of their organization’s values, mission, policies and protocols while also being attuned to the relationships and culture dynamics of the individuals and groups within each environment. For leaders in faith-based organizations, this book seems to reflect examples of leaders mainly in executive positions such as senior managers or board members.

The author is perceptive in naming that, while from a systems and ecological perspective conflict is created by dissenting values or beliefs, there can be a multiplicity of other contributors. And before a conflict management technique is chosen, leaders should gather as much information to understand the contributors to any conflict situation as best as possible.

Moving from the first four chapters that focus on perceptions and perspectives of understanding conflict, the author presents a model of conflict management, using six “C’s” for techniques to address conflict.

These six techniques include managing conflict with (1) complacency, (2) confrontation, (3) communication, (4) coordination, (5) cooperation, and (6) collaboration.

For each technique the author presents a conflict scenario from an example of leadership in either a church or a faith-based organization. Moreover, each technique is explained and connected to stories from Scripture and the work of Jesus and his disciples as an exemplar for Christian conflict management. Although the author presents the strengths and weaknesses of each technique, the emphasis on a systems perspective of conflict management seems to suggest that leaders should prioritize the technique that best protects the reputation and integrity of their organization, no matter the cost.

For Christians in social work, whether leaders in faith-based or secular organizations, this can create tension or unease due to ethical dilemmas around exercising authority and power in the name of organizational mandates. Executive decision-making based from a systems perspective of conflict management may perpetuate oppression and create more barriers for the most vulnerable and marginal populations.

This book gives very helpful and practical techniques for social work leaders in conflict management, namely within the models of communication, coordination, cooperation, and collaboration. But it is when leaders exercise executive power in the name of the organization (which this book briefly highlights as a warning) that conflict management can become a tool for suppression. This suppression is of subordinates, who may be expressing concerns with deep-rooted values that, although with the best intentions of being Christ-minded, actually create a deeper divide and isolate workers and service-users alike.

This book could have been more helpful if it gave readers a caveat that it presents an understanding of conflict and conflict management techniques focused solely within churches and faith-based organizations. This perspective, which it clearly articulates, ultimately uses ideologies and values which reflect those of the Christian faith, but it might have been useful to provide realistic and perceptive theories and tools for faith leaders within non-faith-based organizational settings as well. In this way this book has the potential to isolate these Christian social work leaders in secular settings because these organizations may be assumed to adopt a secular perspective of conflict, which the author states is rooted in division and a threat to the homeostasis and unity of faith-based communities and organizations. Although both environments of churches and not-for-profits organizations are presented, the book is geared more toward leaders within churches and strictly faith-based or doctrine-oriented organizations.

For many Christians in social work, this book provides a good understanding of procedures and policies that are sometimes very hard to understand as a subordinate, but which ultimately protect the integrity and well-being of structural organizations. Or in other words, a perception that can be concluded from this book is that those at the frontlines might not always understand the bigger picture about what is best for their organization, unlike the leaders. This perception can help enable social workers to emphasize a communicative and collaborative process to help guide and promote healthy development of their perceived conflict, whether it be aligned with their organizational culture or not.

This book also lacks an emphasis on reflexivity and use of self as a faith leader in any context. Being charged as leaders means that the script or technique for conflict management cannot just be assumed to always reflect Christ's example; rather it is in the deep awareness of our self and how we reflect on our successes and failures that we promote the best environment for a critical perspective whilst maintaining the integrity of a humble servant. ❖

Reviewed by **Chad Bouma**, MSW, RSW, Mental Health Clinician for Qualia Counselling Services in Kitchener, Ontario. Email: chad.bouma@gmail.com.

Darkness Is My Only Companion: A Christian Response to Mental Illness

Kathryn Greene-McCreight. (2015). Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2015.

In this book, author Kathryn Greene-McCreight gives the reader first person insight into living with bipolar disorder. Through a transparent account of her struggles, the reader discovers how to best love, befriend, and help someone who faces a “major mental illness” (p. 25). The book is organized into three sections. The first, “Facing Mental Illness”, conveys symptoms, treatment, and social interaction in a personal and experiential manner. The author's presentation of her personal experience of symptoms is explicit and graphic. Some with similar experiences may find the descriptions unsettling and traumatic while others may find comfort in the congruity.

Dr. Greene-McCreight provides accurate information regarding treatment issues and modalities. Her personal narrative is descriptive and moving, leaving the reader with a clear picture of her support of ongoing treatment. Issues of faith versus illness are discussed openly and clearly. Christian worldview is expressed as the author shares her ability to integrate her faith with her acceptance of an illness that has no cure. Her

story provides encouragement for those suffering with mental illness as they rely on God. The first section also includes an excellent chapter on suicide. Through a personal account one is rarely privy to, the author brings a refreshing approach to the topic of compassion.

The second section, titled "Faith and Mental Illness", takes a more academic tone compared to the first section. It is oriented towards the philosophy of religion and grounded in Christian theology. This section provides hope and stresses the importance of community. Dr. Greene-McCreight is an accomplished scholar whose journey encapsulates the truth that mental illness is "an illness that can be managed with the proper care" (p. 88).

Section three, titled "Living with Mental Illness" is a good guide for families and others wishing to provide support to people who live with major depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia. The author provides a realistic discussion of the importance of psychotherapy and a personal assessment of her own treatment. She debunks the notion that a need for treatment is a result of a lack of faith. She advocates for "psychotherapists, medications, and hospitals", describing them as three of the many tools God provides. (p 152).

This revised and expanded edition of Dr. Greene-McCreight's book includes changes in the way we treat and diagnose mental illness. She addresses readers' questions and includes an appendix on scripture, symptoms, and group discussion questions.

This book should be a required reading for Christian social workers and counselors who need to address issues of faith and mental illness. It is also recommended for practitioners outside of the Christian faith who are open to a Christian worldview or want to know more about how such a worldview approaches mental illness. It is a recommended reading for anyone with questions about mental illness and the role of faith in the lives of those who experience it. This book would be a valuable resource for college students in Christian universities, particularly at the master's level. Prior to recommending this to a patient, it is suggested that an assessment be done to determine readiness. Preparation and support during the process may be needed. Dr. Greene-McCreight specifically identifies the value of skilled social workers as being especially helpful in her own journey of managing mental illness. Social workers in education and in practice can benefit from the unique perspective the author brings as both a patient and a professional.

Dr. Greene-McCreight is a skilled author who is to be highly commended. Her book brings to light the struggles of Christians who trust God wholeheartedly as they face a mental illness. ❖

*Reviewed by **Lori Goss-Reaves**, Ph.D., LCSW, Associate Professor and Director of Field Placement, Indiana Wesleyan University, Marion, IN.
Email: lori.reaves@indwes.edu.*

Voices from the Margins – Contemplations on Diversity and Christianity in Social Work

SPECIAL ISSUE OF SOCIAL WORK & CHRISTIANITY:

GUEST EDITOR: KESSLYN BRADE STENNIS, PhD, MDiv, MSW

In a dated article entitled “Social Justice and Social Work” (JSWE, Fall 2001), Scanlon and Longres suggested that “some groups are more disadvantaged than others” (p. 443). These disadvantaged groups include, but are not limited to, people from diverse populations like those of color, those who do not identify as heterosexual, those who may face physical and mental health issues, those who face communication barriers, and even those with religious beliefs and practices which may not fall within the broadest span of Christianity. Often times members of these populations are oppressed, victimized, marginalized, disenfranchised and underserved, even by those within the profession of social work as well as those within the community of Christian believers.

As Christians and Social Workers, our theological and professional values call us to carefully engage in a process that involves listening to their voices, speaking truth to power on their behalf and addressing the needs of members of the aforementioned groups. Our Christian values, which can be found in various places through the Bible, are summarized in Luke 10:27, when Jesus said that our law requires us to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. Micah 6:8 suggests notes that, as believers in God, we are required to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with our God. These spiritual values coincide with those of our social work professional values: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. The preamble to the NASW Code of Ethics states that the mission of the profession is to “enhance human wellbeing and

help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty.”

Yet, the existence of oppressive policies and practices in contemporary American society which negatively impact persons from diverse backgrounds suggests that we have yet to fulfill our mission in this area. Furthermore, and at the very least, the presence of such atrocities like hate crimes against certain groups challenges social workers to engage dialogues amongst ourselves with members of these groups in an effort to gain greater insight into their experiences, perspectives and needs. Finally, there is the specific challenge for Christian social workers to consider the similarities and intersections between one’s personal and professional journeys and those of others in the aforementioned groups.

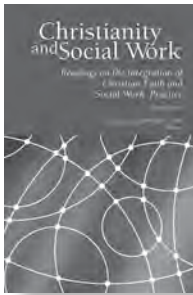
This special reflective issue of *Social Work & Christianity* seeks to expand the dialogue about diversity by considering relevant conceptual articles and narratives on the issues below: personal experiences related to “difference” and its impact on personal and/or professional growth; personal thoughts of how one’s Christian faith informs one’s advocacy-oriented practice on behalf of specific populations; one’s evolution in thinking surrounding diversity and difference; experientially-based recommendations on how Christians could address the needs of a specific, diverse population.

Papers for this special issue are encouraged to take a reflective, narrative, editorial-like writing approach that connects to personal and professional experiences; however, an approach that is primarily narrative but also integrates formal APA writing, theoretical frameworks and traditional research will also be considered, especially for longer articles. This meta-special issue on diversity seeks to include a large number of entries that represent diversity in personal backgrounds and thoughts; therefore, papers can be 3-10 pages. Prospective writers are encouraged to submit a prospectus to the guest editor, Kesslyn Brade Stennis (kbradestennis@coppin.edu) by February 1, 2017. The submission date for the completed article is June 1, 2017. ❖

PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM NACSW

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

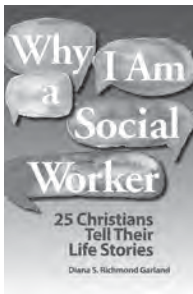
T. Laine Scales and Michael S. Kelly (Editors). (2016). Botsford, CT: NACSW. \$55.00 U.S., \$42.99 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more copies. For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



At over 400 pages and with 19 chapters, this extensively-revised fifth edition of *Christianity and Social Work* includes six new chapters and six significantly revised chapters in response to requests by readers of previous editions including chapters on evidence based practice (EBP), congregational Social Work, military social work, working with clients from the LGBT community, human trafficking – and much more! The fifth edition of *Christianity and Social Work* is written for social workers whose motivations to enter the profession are informed by their Christian faith, and who desire to develop faithfully Christian approaches to helping. It addresses a breadth of curriculum areas such as social welfare history, human behavior and the social environment, social policy, and practice at micro, mezzo, and macro levels. *Christianity and Social Work* is organized so that it can be used as a textbook or supplemental text in a social work class, or as a training or reference materials for practitioners and has an online companion volume of teaching tools entitled *Instructor's Resources*.

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 dollars, 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.

Many social workers of faith express that they feel “called” to help people – sometimes a specific population of people such as abused children or people who live in poverty. Often they describe this calling as a way of living out their faith. *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.

Why I Am a Social Worker addresses a range of critical questions such as:

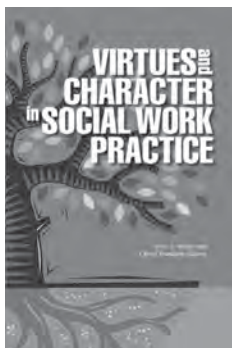
- How do social workers describe the relationship of their faith and their work?
- What is their daily work-life like, with its challenges, frustrations, joys and triumphs?
- What was their path into social work, and more particularly, the kind of social work they chose?
- What roles do their religious beliefs and spiritual practices have in sustaining them for the work, and how has their work, in turn, shaped their religious and spiritual life?

Dr. David Sherwood, Editor-in-Chief of *Social Work & Christianity*, says about *Why I Am a Social Worker* that:

I think this book will make a very important contribution. ... The diversity of settings, populations, and roles illustrated by the personal stories of the social workers interviewed will bring the possibilities of social work to life in ways that standard introductory books can never do. The stories also have strong themes of integration of faith and practice that will both challenge and encourage students and seasoned practitioners alike.

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.

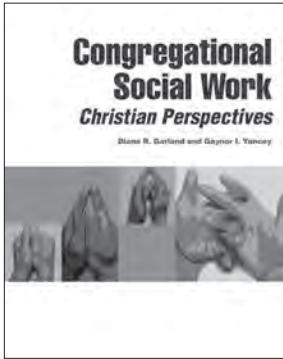


Virtues and Character in Social Work Practice offers a fresh contribution to the Christian social work literature with its emphasis on the key role of character traits and virtues in equipping Christians in social work to engage with and serve their clients and communities well.

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

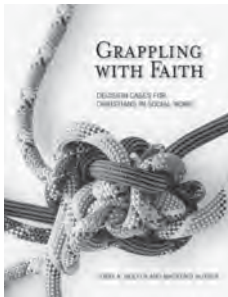
Diana Garland and Gaynor Yancey. (2014). Botsford, CT: NACSW. \$39.95 U.S., \$31.95 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more copies). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



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

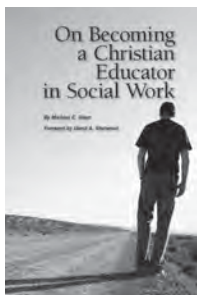
Terry A. Wolfer and Mackenzi Huyser. (2010). \$23.75 (\$18.99 for NACSW members or for orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



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.

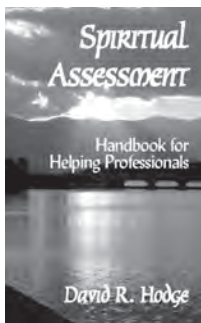


On Becoming a Christian Educator is a compelling invitation for social workers of faith in higher education to explore what it means to be a Christian in social work education. By highlighting seven core commitments of Christian social work educators, it offers strategies for social work educators to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

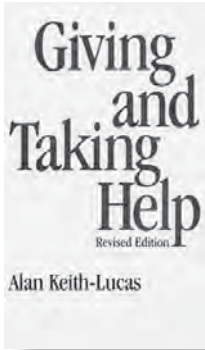
David Hodge. (2003). Botsford CT: NACSW. \$20.00 U.S. (\$16.00 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.

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)

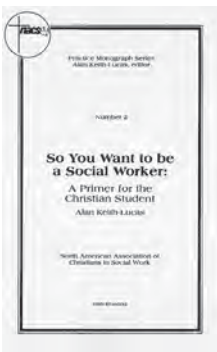
Alan Keith-Lucas. (1994). Botsford CT: North American Association of Christians in Social Work. \$20.75 U.S. (\$16.50 for NACSW members or orders of 10 or more). For price in Canadian dollars, use current exchange rate.



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: A PRIMER FOR THE CHRISTIAN STUDENT

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



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