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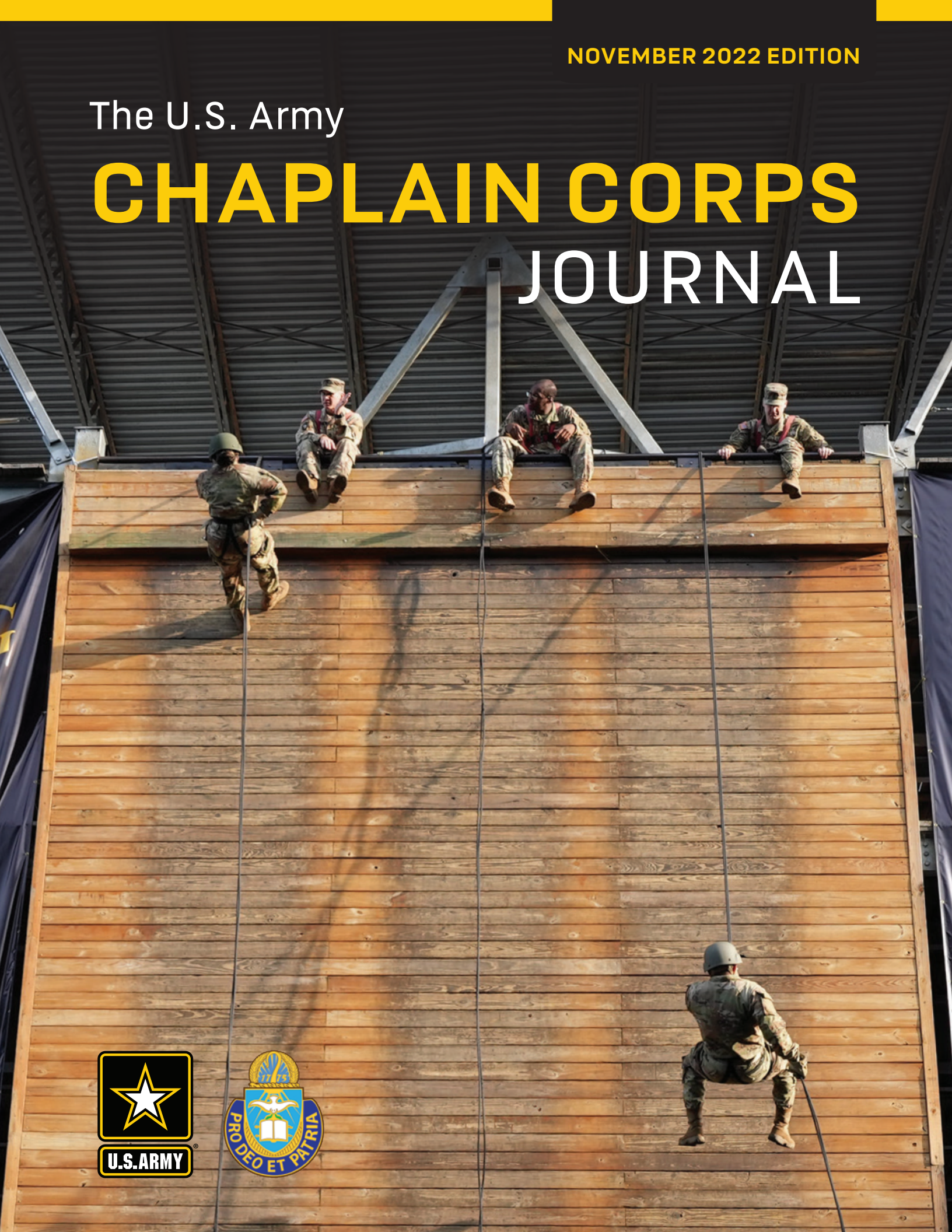

U.S. Army Chaplain Corps Journal

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It is my distinct pleasure to commend to you this newest issue of the *U.S. Army Chaplain Corps Journal*. This is the *Journal's* second regular issue in 2022, in its first year of twice-yearly publication. I am truly proud of the *Journal* staff, of all of you who are contributing content, and of those of you who are participating in the *Journal's* new reader-review process. Each issue of the *Journal* is delivering high-quality resources of value to all our Chaplain Corps personnel, as well as to those working in chaplaincy, and chaplaincy education and training more broadly.

Much is happening in our Corps, in our Army, across our Nation, and around our world. This *Journal* issue reflects those realities, with resources that range from research articles about how Unit Ministry Teams can address complicated and shifting dynamics affecting the provision of religious support, to a Forum on the First Amendment, to a book review about the ethical implications of warfare in the digital domain.

The breadth and range of articles and contributors in this issue highlight the realities of the complex and evolving operating environments in which we "Care for the Soul of the Army." These realities underscore the importance of our ongoing work to elevate our Corps to ever higher levels of professionalization. The *Journal* publishes articles from both theoretical and practical perspectives that enrich our sacred work in service to our Army, our military partners, and our Nation.

Please engage with the content in this issue individually and together, as you continue to "Invest in PEOPLE, Connect them in SPIRIT, and Cultivate COMMUNITY" in creative ways.

For God and Country - Live the Call!

Chaplain Corps Regimental Sergeant Major

Sergeant Major Elian Strachan

It is an honor and a pleasure to address you in this distinguished venue for the first time. Training and education are critically important to our Chaplain Corps, and the *U.S. Army Chaplain Corps Journal* is a key way in which we develop talent, in support of our "Lead" Line of Effort. Junior and senior leaders have much to gain personally and for their organizations from the *Journal*. It is a fantastic resource that supports readiness by providing space for rigorous academic engagement on theoretical and practical issues related to conducting and supporting our sacred work at every echelon.

Reading and contributing to our *Journal* is an important self-development activity that has tangible benefits for those of us working in the operational Army, as well as for those of us who work in Army training and education, and at our garrisons and headquarters. Even as our Army prepares for an era of Great Power competition and potential Large-Scale Combat Operations, the threats we face remain varied, multi-faceted, and complex. As our Chief of Chaplains has emphasized, building Army spiritual readiness in such an environment requires us to continue our work to elevate our Corps to ever higher levels of professionalization. Use the *Journal* to help you do that work for yourself, with your Chaplain Corps colleagues, and with the partners who assist and support us in "Caring for the Soul of the Army."

Pro Deo et Patria!

"Showing the Work" in Army Chaplaincy: An Approach to Religious Support Needs Assessment

By Chaplain (Colonel) Roy Myers

A high school physics student completed a laboratory report that involved mapping the trajectory of a ball in flight, including mapping the arc of flight, its acceleration, and finally identifying the distance before the ball hit the ground. He proudly turned in the assignment, confident that the assignment was complete and correct. He was dashed to discover that the assignment received a "D." Feeling frustrated, the student asked the teacher, "Why did I get a D?" The teacher, also somewhat frustrated, explained that the student had failed to follow the rules of the assignment. "I told the class, you must 'Show your work.'" The teacher went on to explain that he could not follow the logic of the student's work in the laboratory report. Admittedly, the work was hard to follow. However, the teacher allowed the student to show him the work, talking through each step of the assignment. The teacher agreed that the work had been done, and the student was able to show how the correct answers were obtained. The assignment was upgraded to an "A-," and the student felt vindicated.

Physics, at least in this sense, is similar with the work of religious support assessment. In important ways, providing religious support is akin to completing the lab report, but engaging in religious support assessment is akin to showing the work that went into producing the lab report. Both physics and religious support assessment share a general logic, or process, that aids in more reliably producing effective outcomes. That logic follows a progression of observation, information processing, and creating meaningful assessments. Physics involves observation of data points like mass, force, velocity, and time. This data is processed through the use of theorem and equations to produce a mathematical description of some event, like a ball in flight. The resulting mathematical description of the event is a meaningful outcome that can be used to anticipate what will happen in similar events.

Religious support, at least on the surface though, is quite different than physics. The subject matter varies between these two realms as does the nature of the people who practice it and their level of expertise and professionalism. These two disciplines of course deal with vastly different subject matter, but even more to the point, they are practiced by people with varying degrees of expertise and professionalism as obtained through education, training, and professional appointment. In the Chaplain Corps, religious support is practiced by professionals, who in the Army come to the work with advanced education and often with advanced certifications. This advanced background represented in Army chaplaincy also speaks to the complex, changing, and highly nuanced environment in which religious support occurs. Unlike the more straightforward process for a high school physics experiment, religious support deals with whole people—the thoughts, experiences, feelings, and incongruities that go along with being human.

The image drawn from a high school physics experiment, however, offers a helpful way to view religious support. Like the high school physics experiment, there is a logic to religious support: a process which can serve to frame what can be otherwise challenging work. Army religious support professionals make observations within the complex

environment of an Army organization. Observation often involves the compilation of information about the organization and its people, its culture, and events impacting the organization. Some of this information is factual (data), while some is existential. Army Chaplain Corps policy suggests two key sources for this kind of information: the specific needs expressed by Soldiers and Family members, and the Chaplain's own understanding of people's religious support needs.[1] Religious support professionals process their observations using various methods that should take into account complexities of human relationships and Army missions. Religious support professionals create a meaningful running assessment of organizational and individual needs, which can inform advisement and delivery of religious support.

One of the benefits around this idea of showing our work is that it can provide a way to expand the range of religious support we offer to those we serve. I rarely need to show my work in areas where I have demonstrated competency. Showing my work helps me in areas where I am unfamiliar, or areas of ministry that are for some reason uncertain, or touch areas of professional weakness. I assess that the Chaplain Corps is in many ways struggling to develop competency around our religious support for some groups. For this paper, I will address religious support that supports LGBTQ Soldiers and their Families. Regardless of how individual religious support professionals view LBGTQ orientations, LGBTQ personnel are present in our organizations, and are fully entitled to spiritual and religious care from their Unit Ministry Team. I hope that this paper will encourage religious support professionals to consider how they might expand their ability to care for all the people in the Army.

Spiritual and Religious Needs as Expressed by Soldiers and Family Members

Showing the work begins with an awareness of what work needs to be shown. In the high school physics lab report, showing the work included intentional gathering of data, and demonstrating how the data was used to describe the flight of the ball. Showing the work in religious support also involves gathering and processing data. This section and the next cover what Army policy says about two key sources of data for spiritual and religious support assessment. First, the needs expressed directly and indirectly by Soldiers and Family Members are a source of data. Second, the Chaplain's own understanding of spirituality, religion, and human nature provide a rich resource for determining what might be observed, how the observations might be processed, and how meaningful feedback might be obtained about the needs of the people served. This article concludes with a discussion around how this data can be used to coalesce understandings of the spiritual and religious needs present among those being served. The approach taken in this article is primarily drawn from the spirit of Army policy. Army Regulation 165-1 does not expressly identify these two sources or proscribe a process for building spiritual and religious needs assessments. These concepts are present in the regulation, by implication, and are assumed as necessary inputs in religious support assessments. This section addresses the requirement that religious support activities, including assessment, include a robust awareness of the needs being expressed by those being served.

Showing the work can enable religious support professionals to increase their competencies in the two religious support capabilities: "provide" and "advise." The first capability is outlined in AR 165-1: "All Army Chaplains provide for the nurture and practice of religious beliefs, traditions, and customs in a pluralistic environment to strengthen the religious lives of Soldiers and their Families."[2] Providing religious support is oriented to the entire organization, and specifically addresses the ways religious support professionals enhance the spiritual and moral wellbeing of all personnel in the organization. Providing religious support incudes "performing" religious programs and activities within the aegis of their endorsement. This purview for religious support acknowledges that the endorsement of a Chaplain may be limiting. For example, a Protestant Christian Chaplain cannot provide a Roman Catholic Mass and should not lead Friday Jumma Prayer for a Muslim service.

This acknowledgement, however, does not relieve religious support professionals from making assessment of religious needs and creating meaningful religious support outcomes for all Soldiers and Families. Religious support professionals are expected to develop assessments of spiritual and religious needs of the entire formation.[3] Based on this assessment, they proceed to perform, through direct support, or to provide, by arranging for access to appropriate religious programs and activities. Despite the personal convictions of individual Chaplains and Endorsers, a Chaplain's spiritual and religious need assessment must, by definition, include LGBTQ personnel present in their formation. Intentionally showing the work in creating assessments and programs involves observation, processing

those observations, and creation of meaningful outcomes. We hope that readers consider how showing the work can include Soldiers and Families of an LGBTQ orientation.

Army policy is anchored in the First Amendment's Free Exercise Clause, and fully affirms that all Soldiers and Family members have the right to exercise their personal faith to the greatest extent possible. Awareness of the spiritual/religious needs of Soldiers and Families is strongly implied by the regulations' emphasis on Free Exercise.[4] Army Regulation 600-20 states, "The Army places a high value on the rights of its Soldiers to observe tenets of their respective religions or to observe no religion at all."[5] Chaplain Corps policy echoes this sentiment, adding responsibilities regarding the role of religious support professionals in this effort. It reads, "Commanders provide for the free exercise of religion through assigned chaplains, religious affairs specialists, and other religious support personnel."[6] Religious support professionals are placed in the formation specifically to enable Army Commanders to meet their requirements to provide for free exercise. It is the directly stated role of religious support professionals, especially Chaplains, to meet "the religious needs of assigned personnel."[7] Soldiers and Family members determine how they choose to practice their faith, or to practice no faith. Moreover, Army policy assumes that meeting spiritual and religious needs is critical to the Army mission because spiritually fit Soldiers and Families increase the overall readiness of the Army.[8] Army policy strongly suggests that religious support professionals must seek to understand the needs of the personnel they serve.

The processes that Chaplains use to assess the spiritual/religious needs of their Soldiers and Families may vary. On the one hand, a personnel system ad hoc query can provide the Unit Ministry Team (UMT) an idea of the stated religious preferences present in their organization. The ad hoc query is at best a minimalist approach to spiritual/religious needs assessment, and has likely become, over time, a less meaningful way to gauge religious and spiritual need. A deeper approach to ascertaining Soldier and Family religious needs is necessary. The mandates described in Army policy strongly indicate that religious support professionals must engage in unit-wide efforts to discover the spiritual/religious needs of all members of the team. Provision of religious support, from the perspective of Army policy, is strongly active in nature rather than passive. Army religious supporters have a long history of leaning forward to get religious support and spiritual care to the Soldiers, wherever they are. The tone of Army policy strongly suggests that Army religious support professionals are expected to reach out, to actively seek to know the expressed needs of all members of their formation. In the simplest construction, Army religious support professionals should be actively asking, "What do you need from your UMT/Chaplain?"

This approach, applied to all personnel, means that religious support professionals have an obligation to do the same for their LGBTQ Soldiers and Families. This obligation may be an uncomfortable reality for some religious support professionals. Amidst the strong potential for anxiety around restrictions based on personal beliefs and the stated policies and practices of Endorsers, each professional should be clear about two points. First, Army Regulations do not make a distinction about religious Endorser restriction in the area of providing religious support assessments. Asking LGBTQ Soldiers and Families about their spiritual/religious needs, as a part of conducting a spiritual/religious support assessment, is a requirement for all Army religious support professionals. Second, assessing need does not necessarily require the religious support professional also to perform all the required services. Chaplains are encouraged to make honest assessments of the needs presented and actively determine what courses of action best meet the needs of those they serve. No Chaplain will be able to fully, and personally, meet the religious needs of every Soldier and Family member in their formation. On the other hand, it is equally true that simply ignoring populations because they do not fit into the religious support professional's personal worldview is completely out of step with the spirit of Army policy.

Spiritual and Religious Needs as Understood in the Light of the Professional's Own Religious Tradition

It follows that Army policy also implies that the religious support professional's personal faith plays an important part in the process of spiritual and religious needs assessment. Army Chaplains serve as religious leaders, endorsed by a particular religious organization, and are expected to practice religious leadership in keeping with their tradition and worldview.[9] Army Regulation 165-1 instructs Chaplains to serve as religious leaders: "Chaplains conduct the religious programs and activities for the command and provide professional advice, counsel, and instruction on religious, moral, and ethical issues."[10] Chaplains are expected to "perform their professional military religious leader ministrations in accordance with the

tenets or religious requirements of the RO that certifies and endorses them."[11]

The religious tradition of the Chaplain is central to the Chaplain's professional identity and is valued by the Army. Chaplain's religious tradition is recognized by the Army. The effectiveness of the Army organization and the wellbeing of the Soldiers and Families served by each Chaplain are, in part, made possible by the Chaplain's specific tradition, to include specific religious offerings, and religious practices.[12] Each tradition offers sacred wisdom that can be helpful in the formation of resilient and ready Soldiers, Families, and organizations. In general, religious traditions offer their adherents values, support healthy meaning making, and powerfully inform the Soldier's and Families' sense of duty and commitment to the Army Mission. Religious practice can also support and undergird those who experience hardship, and offer hope amidst the particular traumas associated with service in the Army. Implied in the role of the Chaplain as religious leader is a positive affirmation of the richness of religious faith and practice that each Chaplain brings to the Army.

Part of the richness of a Chaplain's religious tradition lies in the perspectives each offers on life, spiritualty, and service. Each Chaplain comes with a perspective on the religious needs of the Soldiers and Families they serve, as well as a sense of how people can form a solid spiritual core. Each also offers sacred wisdom that can guide and define the good life, as well as help seek out that good life. Chaplaincy Policy implies that Chaplains are expected to make use of their religious wisdom, both in the ways that they provide religious support and in the ways that they advise organizational leaders. AR 165-1 clearly assumes that the religious expertise of Chaplains should inform professional function: "Chaplains conduct the religious programs and activities for the command and provide professional advice, counsel, and instruction on religious, moral, and ethical issues."[13] As Chaplains engage with Soldiers and Families in the Army context, they are expected to speak prophetically, and to make good use of the rich insights offered through the sacred wisdom of their tradition. This includes areas wherein various religious traditions might disagree. In this sense, the religious perspectives of the religious support professional shape spiritual and religious needs assessments.

Although I've been speaking about the role of doctrine in forming Army Chaplains, I want now to speak from my own professional experiences and observations. Armed with an understanding of human need and spiritual formation, I can begin the work of observation. I'm looking for the needs, especially those that cannot be explicitly expressed by the person who may be in need of religious provision or spiritual care. I find that recipients of religious and spiritual care often have a lot of energy around those areas of unmet need. Observing emotions can be of great help; strong negative emotions can signal unmet needs, and strong positive emotions can signal met need (joy can be the most painful emotion, because it is both tentative and highly desirable). Even if the Soldier or Family member is unaware of their need in the moment, the religious support provider can provide helpful feedback: "It sounds like you're angry. Any sense of what that anger might tell you about what you need?"

Showing the work involves both data collection and self-awareness; in important ways it happens at the dynamic intersection of these two endeavors. As data about a person's religious and spiritual needs emerges, indicators of need become apparent to both the religious support religious professional and the person who stands in need of support. As the person in need's self-awareness increases the religious support professional can begin the work of processing data. Often, we as human beings can struggle to name our needs or ask for what we need because we are not able to connect what's happening and what we're feeling. In other words, the ability to articulate need and ask for help often requires an ability to interpret feeling and events, and what meaning they hold for the person experiencing them. So, a Soldier may be experiencing a lot of conflict in their primary relationship. They might even be able to articulate their strong emotions about this experience. Often, it is hard to see, both for the Chaplain and for the person being cared for by the Chaplain, how life events and strong feelings can come together to create meaning. In the particular case of the Chaplain, however: the Chaplain's curiosity—understanding of people, and struggle to make ourselves aware of what we need—is a rich resource, especially when applied with deep empathy.

Assessment, especially assessment of religious and spiritual needs, is the Chaplain's understanding of what the person served might need currently and in the future. Chaplains always meet people in process. Some may be able to ask for what they need, and simply need encouragement in the process of asking. On the other extreme, the person served may be having trouble naming their emotions at all. The assessment articulates the Chaplain's perception of where the person is, and what might be their next step. It is at this point, and not before, that some Chaplains may feel they cannot support an LBGTQ Soldier

or Family member to get what they need. This is the point at which referral seems appropriate to me. The goal, however, is meeting the need of the person served, less than affording the Chaplain the ability to avoid their discomfort around the persons they serve. The Chaplain is responsible to facilitate the wellbeing of all their Soldiers, either by extending direct care, or more indirectly, by connecting them with resources that fully meet their needs.

This application of "showing my work" can provide a helpful picture of how Chaplains can speak in a prophetic voice, can be part of creating meaningful outcomes for the Soldiers and Families served. The prophetic voice of the Chaplain often arises from the Chaplain's own religious convictions. Showing the work invites chaplains to examine how their religious perspective might inform their observations. Ideally, these professionals attend to moments of contact with the people they serve with a keen eye to observe, and a gentle curiosity as they gather information. In showing the work, there is also an invitation to consider how the Chaplain is processing observations. Chaplains can set conditions for meaningful outcomes by making good use of their religious perspective and understanding of human nature to inform assessments and religious support planning. Meaningful outcomes occur when the Chaplain is able to apply their voice in a way that facilitates the identification of spiritual and religious needs and sets conditions for those needs to be met.

Showing the work can be an exercise in helping Chaplains grow in self-awareness. It can also help Chaplains assess the extent to which they are imposing their convictions. Imposing a particular religious perspective is very different from using that religious perspective to inform spiritual and religious needs assessment or to inform religious support planning. All too often, what might seem like a straightforward, even simple, reliance on sacred wisdom ends up coming off as an imposition of religious tenets on others. Showing the work is an exercise in awareness. Savvy religious support professionals make themselves aware of the various intersections of the expressed needs of their personnel and their own worldview and theology. Ultimately, the critical check is this: Each Soldier and Family member has the right to free exercise of their religious convictions, and the right to have no religious convictions at all. Religious support professionals are always on solid ground when they intentionally create space for people to choose how they will proceed to meet religious need, even if that does not always square with the sacred wisdom offered by the religious support professional.

The Religious Support Professional as Religious Community Leader and Advisor

The Army Chaplaincy's approach to religious support creates an elegant paradox when it comes to spiritual and religious needs assessment. On the one hand, policy clearly implies that religious and spiritual needs are defined by the humans in need. On the other hand, policy implies with equal force that the religious support professional must understand the needs of the personnel they serve—a task that requires the religious support professional to inhabit their own theological traditions and beliefs. At first blush this dynamic would seem to create an either-or dilemma: Whose assessment of need is preeminent? Are the needs as expressed by Soldiers and Families more persuasive, or the needs as understood by the professional more compelling? Succumbing to the temptation to force the two sources of needs into a binary, either-or choice risks losing the elegant wisdom at the heart of Army Chaplaincy policy and practice over the past 240 years. Integration of two sets of needs in assessment ensures that religious support professionals can set conditions for meaningful outcomes for Soldiers and Families. This kind of integration that is implied by Army policy is not easy; it is the result of intentional professional development. Showing the work can enable religious support professionals to increase their competencies around spiritual care religious needs assessment. Increasing this competence will have a discernably positive impact on the effectiveness of spiritual and religious support programs and plans.

Showing the work is an essential part of being a religious support professional. But it becomes, if possible, even more essential in certain circumstances and contexts; perhaps it will be helpful to offer an application of showing my work in the context of a care relationship with an LGBTQ Soldier or Family member: I'll offer how I might approach observation, process the meaningful information and create an assessment. To do that, I often find it most helpful to begin with some clarity around need, since ultimately my assessment will focus on articulating the need of the Soldier or Family member. I assume that we all have needs, and our needs range from security/safety, to significance, to validation, and even to love. Sometimes, the need is simple and easily articulated. More often, however, needs are very difficult for us to articulate. In my mind, articulating our own needs is very difficult for most of us. Even more difficult than that, is the matter of asking for what we need.

Discovering what we need, and learning to ask for is, is for me a way to describe the process of spiritual formation. This is a process that feel very human. Spiritual care counseling often is simple the process of coming alongside people and facilitating their ability to ask for what they need.

Capable religious support advisement, likewise, requires that professionals make spiritual and religious needs assessments including all personnel. Religious support advisement includes providing unit commanders with an understanding of the organization and advice on how to create meaningful outcomes, including the areas of "morals, morale, ethical issues, and the impact of religion on all aspects of military operations."[14] The advisement function of religious support professionals greatly depends on spiritual care religious needs assessment. These needs assessments are by nature broad. They bring together the richness of the Chaplain's sacred tradition and a wide knowledge of people, as well as the Chaplain's religious practices, spiritual practices, and other factors that can impact individual and organizational wellbeing. Conducting assessments, in the spirit of showing the work, includes observations, processing of those observations and providing advisement that set conditions for meaningful outcomes.

Like the 'provide' capability, advisement contains an implied mandate to include all members of the unit in spiritual are religious needs assessment. Limiting the scope of assessment, discounting particular groups or part of the organization will limit the impact of religious support advisement, and make any outcome less meaningful. Moreover, excluding a group from spiritual and religious assessment, including LGBTQ Soldiers and Families, is incongruent with the mission and mandate of Army policy. Religious support professionals make themselves aware of the spiritual and religious needs of all personnel through intentional assessments. To achieve that goal, we recommend some practice showing the work, especially around how LGBTQ can be included in spiritual and religious needs assessments.

Religious support professionals are leaders with well-defined roles that include community leadership and advisement. Conducting spiritual and religious needs assessments is a necessary, and often difficult part of the religious support professional's work. Developing proficiency in this capability requires intentional effort. Showing the work is a way to develop our capabilities around assessment. We put forth this article to invite all Army religious support professionals to reflect more broadly about the steps involved in religious support and consider how those steps might be used to increase the inclusion of LGBTQ Soldiers and Families in religious support care.

Chaplain (Colonel) Roy M. Myers currently serves as the Dean of the U.S. Army Institute for Religious Leadership–Graduate School. He holds a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Oblate School of theology, San Antonio Texas, is an ACPE Certified Educator and Member of the National Faculty, and he is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. Chaplain Myers currently resides in Columbia, South Carolina with his spouse Dana G. Myers.

NOTES

1 Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, June 2015).

2 Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, June 2015),3-2.

3 Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, June 2015).

4 Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, June 2015).

5 Army Regulation (AR) 600-20, *Army Command Policy* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, July, 2020), 5-6.

6 Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, June 2015), 2-1.

7 Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, June 2015), 3-3.

8 Field Manual (FM) 7-22, *Holistic Health and Fitness* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, October, 2020), 10-48.

9 Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 1304.28, *The Appointment and Service of Chaplains* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, May, 2021).

10 Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, June 2015), 3-2.

11 Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, June 2015), 3-1, 4.

12 Field Manual (FM) 7-22, *Holistic Health and Fitness*, (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, October, 2020), 10-14, 10-15.

13 Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, June 2015), 3A.

14 Army Regulation (AR) 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, June 2015), 2-3.

Preaching to the Seventh Circle[1]: Retooling Homiletical Approaches in Light of the Crisis of Suicide

By Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Craig Johnson

This article was first published in the online journal *Homiletic* (Journal of the Academy of Homiletics), Summer Issue 2021. A revised version of it is reprinted here with the author's permission.

Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in deep mire, where there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters, and the flood sweeps over me. I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched. My eyes grow dim with waiting for my God. (Psalm 69:1-3, NRSV)

The dramatic attacks on New York and Washington D.C. on September 11, 2001 brought about a host of radical changes to the United States military. The most consuming of these was the onset of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), which began with the invasion of Afghanistan on October 24, 2001. The effects of GWOT continue to this day, even after its official closure and even as military operations continue across the Middle East, northern Africa, and other locations. To my mind, among the second- and third-order effects these operations provoked was a noted increase in the suicide rate among active duty, National Guard, and Reserve troops of all branches of the U.S. military.[2] In 2018, a total of 541 Army Soldiers committed suicide—the highest year since record keeping began.[3] For the active duty Army, this figure adds up to 21.9 deaths per 100,000, above the age- and gender-adjusted national average.[4] Suicide is now the second leading cause of death in the military, a distressing reality for many reasons, but especially because the population is, for the most part, so young.[5] One oft-repeated summary of the situation is that more American troops have died by their own hands than by action on all of the battlefields of the current war combined.

To confront the realities of suicide in the Army, its leadership has responded in a multitude of ways, including regular prevention training, resourcing events and research, periodic "stand-downs," in which the entire day is dedicated to suicide prevention efforts, and creative events such as suicide prevention marches, runs, and rodeos. Chaplains, by regulation, play a primary role in the Army's suicide prevention program.[6] Of all military leaders, Chaplains are most often called upon to serve as "first responders" when a Soldier or Family member is experiencing suicidal ideation, as they are the likeliest to first discover such an issue affecting a Soldier.[7] For this reason, it is advisable that the Chaplain approach almost every interaction with a Soldier or Family member as an opportunity for suicide prevention.

One of the most powerful intersections of Chaplains and Soldiers occurs each week in chapel. Soldiers and their Families come for worship, for sacred rites, and for contemplation of sacred texts, and, in so doing, invest tremendous authority in the person of the Chaplain. Why, then, is suicide so rarely a topic for sermons? The preacher holds the (hopefully) undivided attention of the congregation for twenty minutes or more. The preacher speaks with the authority of the institution and expounds on the most sacred writings of the faith. If ever there were a subject begging to be covered in a sermon for Soldiers and Family members, it would be suicide prevention. This paper will cover several areas crucial to effective preaching on suicide, as well as offer practical suggestions for sermons.

Reaching the Marginalized; Providing Hope to the Excluded

Several roadblocks must be removed for a sermon to reach a suicidal listener. The pain of those suffering from suicidal ideation often prevents them from hearing and receiving life-affirming, hopeful news. In his profound book *Reading the Bible with the Damned*, Bob Ekblad relates his experiences conducting intense Bible studies with various persons at the margins of society: prisoners, undocumented immigrants, gang members, and others. These persons, he states, understand themselves as "condemned to permanent exclusion, beyond repair, unable to change, in bondage—in short, 'damned.'"[8] Persons contemplating self-harm are quite likely to identify with the hopelessness and depression that diminishes the sense of self-worth of individuals at the margins. This attitude carries over to their perceived value in God's eyes; as Ekblad puts it, "Most people on the margins are not expecting God to show up in their lives in any positive way."[9] Their self-damnation extends to how such individuals are viewed within their communities; changing reputations after a suicide attempt is a complex process that includes rebuilding trust and establishing a character in line with general expectations. In this way, people in desperate states may be less capable of seeking help on their own and less likely to be granted the kind of community understanding that might facilitate gaining the help they need. The shame associated with suicide and suicidal thoughts works to separate those in crisis from the greater community, including the chapel community, which is not to say that those with suicidal thoughts do not enter the chapel. Some attend out of habit, some to satisfy a spouse or parent, and some come as a last gesture of hope to escape the doom they feel is consuming them. Certainly a preacher would feel a keen sense of failure if someone who attended their service ended their life the same day.

Despite the military's extensive (and expensive[10]) efforts to prevent suicide in the ranks, one of the biggest barriers is in the very culture of the military. Service members are taught that self-reliance and personal strength are virtues; military legends retell tales of Soldiers caught alone and behind enemy lines, fighting against terrible odds, and overcoming those very odds despite the lack of any assistance. This narrative has created a pervasive stigma associated with Soldiers and even Soldier's Families asking for help.[11] Most suicide prevention efforts are concerned with addressing and eliminating this stigma, but it is deeply ingrained. In fact, it is so prevalent that it occasionally surfaces in very public and offensive ways, even among high-ranking leaders who should know better.[12]

Destigmatizing the idea of accepting help is a critical sermon concept. Individuals often desire to get help for a physical injury or malady, but this same willingness does not always translate to psychological or emotional wounds.

One approach to working against this stigma is to, in essence, "re-brand" associations with and perceptions related to mental health.[13] Language is always important, and when dealing with the imprecise terminology associated with many popular ideas about mental health, word choice is even more critical. Removing from our common lexicon words like "crazy," "looney," and other flippant terms for mental conditions is a start, as is ensuring that the feelings associated with traumatic conditions are not cheapened by weak sentiments or easy answers. Preachers should properly educate themselves on issues of suicide to ensure they are not incorporating false and potentially damaging information into sermons.

Additionally, medicine has demonstrated increasingly that psychiatric developments have very physical ramifications on the body. By emphasizing the physical afflictions that come with most mental afflictions, getting help from a professional seems more natural: "Drawing more attention to the physical ramifications of mental illnesses might help decrease stigma and lend more legitimacy to psychiatric illnesses in the public perception."[14] This work might include references to mental health issues by common corresponding physical impairments, and referring to health care workers as "doctor" and "nurse" instead of "psychiatrist/psychologist" or "therapist." The preacher who, by regular references to the value of mental health care and the reality that there is no real "normal" when it comes to mental health, normalizes these

activities and lays the groundwork for a more open attitude to seeking such care.

The sermon can be leveraged to raise the consciousness of hearers to better appreciate areas of need in their own lives. Well-established theological precepts in many major religious traditions take for granted our need for spiritual help, leading to gathering for religious observances to begin with; our human weakness in this regard is generally undebatable in the minds of many within these traditions. In this same way, most of us are comfortable acknowledging that we all need, from time to time, the mental bolstering of a friend to gripe to, the parent to reassure us, and the spouse to stand firmly behind us in tumultuous times. Our common need for mental care binds us to the human family. Regular reminders of this human condition from the pulpit—along with gratitude for modern advances in understanding the human psyche—can go far toward breaking down cultural and social barriers to accessing mental health care. The preacher's personal testimony, when appropriate, of the healing power of treatment, can also serve to instigate helpful conversations. If the goal is to preach sermons that connect to the whole person, including one's deepest and most sensitive thoughts, then it follows that the preacher would not exclude areas of mental health, even those most extreme and difficult with which to wrestle. While suicide is not an easy subject to broach, it is a critical one for the lives of parishioners and has been ignored for too long.

The Fear (and Importance) of Speaking the Name of the Monster

From my own experiences as a religious support professional who serves as an Army Chaplain, I observe that suicide has long been a taboo subject of discussion. For many, the very thought provokes feelings of shame, discomfort, and pain. Those who have dealt with the suicide of a loved one will struggle with residual emotions, making open discussion even more awkward. Those who have dealt with their own suicidal ideations will likely also have difficulty coping with their feelings and memories, hiding these experiences, and feeling separated from the mainstream of people who (in their eyes) must live much more manageable lives. For many in the general public, there is a fear associated with suicide: not knowing how to approach it, concern about saying the wrong thing to a suicidal person, and embarrassment over revealing the fate of a suicide in the family. All this confusion is undoubtedly felt by those who have been affected by suicide. The confusion further increases the isolation they know all too well. In this way, the fear itself stands as a significant obstacle to facilitating helpful intervention when and where it is needed the most.

For many clergy, mentioning suicide in a worship context is a scary scenario, even among military Chaplains. One reason for this anxiety is the pervasive myth that talking about suicide will lead to or encourage suicidal thoughts, especially in those already considering it. Whenever I preach on suicide, I always mention this myth and note that if it were indeed true, then suicides would spike after I finished my sermon![15] In fact, talking about suicide not only does not cause people to consider self-harm, but it allows individuals the freedom to speak out about their own stressors and be more open to seeking help, potentially rethinking their opinions in the framework of discussion, and sharing their story with others. The topic becomes more normalized, by being open and intentional about discussing suicide, which allows solid information to be exchanged and opportunities for helpful and healing conversations to be had.

Dr. Joseph Jeter addresses this topic in his book *Crisis Preaching*, in which he emphasizes the critical importance of "naming the monster" when one is dealing in a topic sermon with a crisis. Doing this naming is not only a matter of transparency, but also a radical statement that empowers those suffering from such ideas: "To name the crisis that we face can be a touchstone to understanding it and having power to overcome it."[16] Ancient wisdom held that to know and speak the name of a fearsome enemy granted some control over it. In Genesis 32:29, Jacob wanted to know the name of the mysterious being whom he had wrestled; while the being would not give this name, a blessing was offered. Such a direct approach is especially important with the crisis of suicide; a pastor merely mentioning that this is a topic worthy of discussion can be enough to break down barriers. Solid research backs this function up: "Covering suicide carefully, even briefly, can change public misperceptions and correct myths, which can encourage those who are vulnerable or at risk to seek help."[17] Simply being bold enough to name the monster from the pulpit robs it of some of its power. In fact, encouraging parishioners to be bold enough to ask someone showing signs directly whether they are considering suicide is critical and is a powerful act of love that can break the monster's hold.

Demystifying suicide is an essential step in this direction.[18] There is a lot of misinformation out about suicide, and a preacher should do their best to correct misconceptions. One prevalent myth is that people who think about self-harm give little or no warning and

would never admit to being suicidal. In fact, there are several warning signs,[19] and a person intent on suicide will often be very frank about it. Another myth is that people who seem happy (but show some warning signs) cannot be suicidal. In fact, people who have decided to commit suicide often find comfort in having made this dramatic decision and feel happy because they believe they have found a way to eradicate their pain. Yet another myth is that a person who genuinely wants to die is beyond help. Years of clinical work prove this idea to be untrue; many different therapies help those who are so hopeless. Finally, it is commonly believed that providing a hotline is the best and safest way to help. While hotlines are critical, there is no guarantee that a person in distress will call; such a person may, in fact, act on a suicidal ideation if left alone. It is much safer to remain with a person when they call, or even offer to get them to proper help, such as a medical doctor or mental health practitioner.

Lamentations for the Modern Soul

An especially painful part of having suicidal thoughts is how alone with one's sadness it makes one feel; it is difficult for someone coping with these feelings to believe that anyone else could feel this badly. Part of the problem lies in our "don't worry, be happy" quick-fix society. At the same time, most of us are acutely aware of how much suffering is in the world today. All of this positivity that exists on the surface flies in the face of what we know to be reality, "Shouting, as it were, 'Peace! Peace!' where there is no peace."[20] Of course, we all have a bad day from time to time; sadness and pain are, after all, inevitable parts of life. The biblical authors knew that well; the Bible is not short on expressions about life's troubles. The only regular, intentional homiletical treatment of lament in my o wn tradition comes in the funeral sermon, and often these moments have become brief, scripted affairs meant to help the faithful "find closure."[21] Preachers need to help their congregations recover the ability to lament.

Most of us know instinctively that we have a need to express or vent our

painful feelings, but (beyond a good therapist) there are very few ready-made institutions in our world in which to do so. Human language is often insufficient to express the kind of desolate, desperate pain that comes with loss, shame, and hopelessness. For the people of ancient Israel, lament allowed them to express their pain, not as a hopeless cry, but out of hope, to begin the move to healing and restoration.[22] Even for us today, lament offers a real potential for healing; and, if a sermon regularly devotes a portion to expressions of sorrow and pain, it might well open the door for suicidal people to find a place for hope. These lamentations would not be lightly dismissed, but legitimized and shared together, "proposing no solution" but providing a "landscape of pain" that goes beyond words.[23] This mode of expression presents a challenge to much of today's positive, celebration-focused worship, but offers real opportunities for the preacher to address those suffering quietly in their midst.

The book of Psalms has often been used for lament. According to an old Jewish tradition, a person in grief is said to be too heavy with pain to comprehend the law and the prophets; only the Psalms may be read, because they speak of the most sensitive matters of the heart.[24] Over one-third of the Psalms concern lament, both communal and personal, and deal with it rather directly, for "the Psalms are littered with questions of suffering and pain directed to God: 'How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul? and have sorrow in my heart all the day?'" (Psalm 13:1-2).[25] In this way, they serve as an excellent starting place to explore such emotions as loneliness, grief, and personal loss. The poetic writing, along with the many metaphors it presents, allows them to speak eloquently of some life's situations that are too poignant for words. Crying out to God is modeled by the authors of the Psalter and is as old as the oldest writings of the faith.[26]

A few relevant Psalms (included in most lectionaries) useful for preaching lament include the following: Psalm 22 ("My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?") The theme is how distant God can seem when enduring trying circumstances. The profundity of the psalm's poetry was repeated in the cry of Jesus from the cross, and aptly speaks for many different circumstances of distress. Aside from the mournful expressions, the psalm resolves the cry for God in acknowledgement that God has heard and will provide satisfaction for those who mourn. Psalm 77 ("In the day of my trouble I seek the Lord; in the night my hand is stretched out without wearying"). The distressed feels as if God is preventing any relief, even from sleep; only the Psalmist's memories of better times provide any measure of comfort. These memories also serve to remind the writer that God does provide better times, and hopes can be fastened there. The power of God is emphasized in reassurance. Psalm 102 ("I lie awake; I am like a lonely bird on the housetop. For I eat ashes like bread, and mingle tears with my drink"). The theme of loneliness emerges in this psalm, along with the sure knowledge that God is ultimately in control and that one may feel secure in the provision of God. The use of sentimental images makes them endearing; the brevity of these readings even offers the potential for the distressed soul to claim them as their own. Psalm 139 ("If I ascend to heaven, you are there: if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there"). The knowledge that we are known well by God, even in our innermost places, reassures the Psalmist, who acknowledges that the future is also secure in God's grasp. God's position of dominion over everything, including disaster and distress, is established and provides assurance. That God is everywhere, including the darkest places imaginable, speaks in critical ways to someone feeling so lost as to contemplate suicide.

Preaching from the Psalms demonstrates that mental anguish, pain, and sorrow are a part of the life of faith and should be expressed. Strong emphasis should be placed on the productive nature of these expressions—as opposed to dwelling in self-pity and becoming embittered as a result. When we lament, we are not lost or isolated but rather we are in a long tradition of people wrestling with God. At the end, prayers of lament incorporate hope—confidence that God is listening and understands—and leave us with belief in a better future.

Scriptural Quandaries: Bad News in the Atonement for the Suffering and Biblical Suicides

Although Jesus's death is a principal tenet of the Christian faith, few of those filling the pews can systematically explain its meaning or what it says about the message of the church. That the long-ago suffering and brutal death of a man are a central doctrine of the church can present an obstacle when working with people undergoing suffering. Vague summations from ancient theologians and clichés adorning religious trinkets do little to clarify the complex issues at hand. In recent years, feminist and liberation theologians, among others, have pointed out the insidious

possibilities in popular interpretations of the atonement. Misunderstandings relating to the death of Jesus are confusing to the average layperson at best, and at worst, have the potential to provoke some dangerous conclusions in the mind of a person suffering from mental trauma.

Jesus's suffering associated with the atonement is one such problematic issue. Popular films such as *The Passion of the Christ* go so far as to make the suffering of Jesus the primary focus of his life. It is critical that suffering as a part of soteriology is properly contextualized for congregations. Sally Brown delves into this topic in her book *Cross Talk*, which criticizes the narrow understanding of God's redemptive work as associated only with sin and guilt, associations all too familiar to many of the faithful. This model presents an image of God that is harsh, eager to punish sin, and full of retributive justice, exactly the kind of message that would inspire hopelessness in a person already in distress. One of the results of this emphasis, she opines, is that congregations believe that their suffering is deserved, a part of God's plan for their salvation. Rather than finding redemption, those suffering "sink into a horrifying dread that they are being made to pay for something they have done or somehow failed to do,"[27] believing that their suffering is not only God's will but also something that they simply must endure. The remedy, Brown continues, is to expand the possibilities of the cross by embracing a wider range of "metaphors of redemption, read from the concrete place of suffering"[28]—ones that do more than just emphasize release from sinful behavior, but also draw attention to healing, relief from pain, and, ultimately, hope. Preachers should seriously consider widening their discussions to embrace homiletical as well as theological concerns. As Dr. Brown notes, "It is indefensible to suggest that suffering is inherently redemptive."[29]

Further, some common ideas around atonement might stand in the way of people getting the help they require. Depictions of Jesus as complicit in his own death projects some confusing messages. "Victims [of suffering and oppression] can all be led to believe that quiet passivity is the appropriate "Christian" response."[30] The message that might be easily taken from the death of Jesus is that his willingness to silently undergo suffering is a paramount virtue to be imitated, modeled by no less than the Son of God himself. Moreover, Jesus's refusal to struggle against those who would kill him—coupled with his acceptance of his death—might be seen as an act of divine suicide. The consequences of such a conclusion would be tragic. Such pictures call for constructive thought in preaching, ensuring that these ideas are placed in the proper cultural and historical circumstances. After all, with the right considerations in mind, "it is possible to develop a model of the atonement that not only avoids the pitfalls but also provides help in addressing the very evils associated with . . . the atonement,"[31] a doctrine so central to the faith.

The Bible mentions several incidents of suicide,[32] all of which are what is commonly termed an "honor suicide," meant to either atone for a wrongdoing or to evade a death considered dishonorable. If these verses are dealt with homiletically, special care must be taken to point out the great error of thinking from which such a suicide arises; the thought of "dying with honor" might ring all too attractive a note in the ear of a desperate person.

Performance Issues: Modeling Emotion in the Pulpit

Even as the individuals who make up humanity today are separated by language, cultural conventions, and racial and ethnic identifications, we are bound by the shared experience of emotional responses. Emotions originate in the limbic system, deep within the brain, deeper even than the conscious mind can control. At their base, emotions are the result of evolutionary processes that helped to keep our species alive when our complex thought responses would have been too slow to react effectively. There are good reasons why the use of emotions is critical to influencing others: in the vulnerable spaces of emotion some of the most powerful connections happen.[33] Studies have demonstrated that information absorbed outside of our conscious processes "can have a profound influence on people's subsequent thoughts, feelings, and behaviors."[34] The input received through an emotional reaction can be as or more impactful on our person as the information we learn rationally.

In some worship traditions, a display of appropriate emotion from the pulpit is a typical experience. Emotive expression empowers the message and reinforces the passion with which God engages humanity through sacred worship. Others, however, expect the preacher to remain composed and keep a rein on emotions. In some communities (like those of the military), the preacher has a genuine opportunity to communicate something critical through a display of authentic emotions from the pulpit. But gender-based codes of behavior to which many people (especially in the military) subscribe prevents people

from fully feeling and expressing their emotions and thereby dealing with difficult issues. They might feel inadequate for having these feelings or embarrassed at letting others know they have them. For many, and perhaps especially men, this repression prevents them from accepting the mental healthcare they might need.[35] The preacher who demonstrates genuine emotion at appropriate times without embarrassment or shame gives the listener permission to expose their own emotions. The preacher who models ownership of their expressions reassures hearers that these emotions are normal and that releasing them opens the door to sharing the underlying issues with others.

Another complicating factor comes from social association with some of the underlying issues related to self-harm; for example, depression is often thought of as a women's disorder. As such, researchers have discovered it is underreported by men.[36] In fact, people of all genders can find it difficult to access the complex range of their own emotions—and to have enough trust to confide in others. If the preacher is willing to expose his or her own vulnerabilities by including in the sermon their own experiences with depressive thoughts and emotions along with the healing that has taken place, such honesty can go a long way toward normalizing these experiences in the minds of parishioners. Modeling sympathetic handling of such emotional issues establishes a baseline for how a congregation will approach these concerns in the congregational setting—and gives the listener permission to address their own issues as well.

Treatment of suicide in sermons should focus attention on the many successful stories of recovery after suicidal thoughts or actions. When recounting the actions of a victim of self-harm, sermons should emphasize the unnecessary nature of suicide, highlight the alternatives, and express disappointment that those who died by their own hand did not recognize that help was available and that people who care are only a phone call or email away. Avoid idealizing the deceased in death; a common tack in funerals, such a presentation may afford a sense of nobility to the choice of suicide.[37] One must not inadvertently glamorize suicides by dwelling too much on sympathy for the pain or distress of the deceased; instead, express sadness at the losses suicide creates, especially for those left behind (family, friends, etc.). It is also important to avoid explicit descriptions of deaths as well as detailing the methods of suicide; such imagery could well plant more vivid pictures in the minds of the distressed, adding to any potential ideations.[38] Above all, focus should be placed on the fact that suicide is preventable and treatable, and that help is available.

Conclusion

While the context of my research is the military chapel, the strategies here may be equally applied to a civilian congregation. There is a great likelihood that veterans are present in most congregations, and all of them bring different experiences and stressors from their military service; suicide rates among veterans are shockingly high.[39] Of course, many occupations in civilian life have duties very similar to those in military service, including first responders, medical, and social workers, and other professions with equally high risks of suicide. The onus of suicide hangs over every congregation and affects more lives than perhaps many believe.

It is my own practice to make suicide an annual sermon topic. National Suicide Prevention Week occurs during the month of September, making this an excellent time for such sermons.[40] Another opportune time for such a sermon is after a high-profile suicide: the media often extensively covers such incidents, glamorizing the action and potentially encouraging at-risk people to copy this action in a desperate bid to secure such respect for themselves. A well-pointed sermon can help mitigate this possibility. Also, the telephone number for a suicide prevention hotline can be featured at the bottom of the weekly worship bulletin. There are several nation-wide numbers, including the recently introduced three-digit 988. Such contacts not only serve as a reminder of the issue but also get the information into the hands of those who may need it most.

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NOTES

1 In Dante Alighieri's *Inferno*, those who have committed violence against themselves are banished to the seventh circle of hell.

2 An important word about my conclusions and how I draw them: although the issue of suicide has had a dramatic impact across all of the United States Armed Forces (the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard), it has most affected those with sizable ground forces engaged in combat operations; that is, the Army and the Marines. For purposes of this paper, I will focus on my own branch, the Army (although my conclusions have equal relevance to any of the branches).

3 Karin Orbis, *Department of Defense Quarterly Suicide Report for 2018* (Washington, DC: Defense Suicide Prevention Office, 2018).

4 The average for all suicides across the United States (considering the age group mirroring the military is 18–30, and predominantly male) is 17.4 per 100,000; ibid.

5 Uniformed Services University/Center for Deployment Psychology, "Cognitive Therapy for Suicidal Patients (CT-SP)," https://deploymentpsych.org/treatments/Cognitve-Therapy-for-Suicidal-Patients-CT-SP.

6 Chaplains are one of the resources in the care system for Soldiers and Family members; often, the basic pastoral counseling they provide can be the help needed, although with suicidal behaviors, the Chaplain is tasked with identifying the risk and ensuring the person is linked up with the more comprehensive mental health care provided by trained medical personnel. Department of the Army, *Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention*, DA Pam 600-24 (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 14 April 2015), para 2-1.

7 Chaplains are assigned at a smaller unit level, whereas most other mental health specialists are assigned at either hospitals or much larger formations, taking them away from daily interaction with most "rank and file" troops.

8 Bob Ekblad, *Reading the Bible with the Damne*d (Louisville: Wesley John Knox, 2005), xiv.

9 Ibid, 61.

10 The initial budget for the Army's Office of Suicide Prevention upon its founding in 2011 was $20 million, with subsequent funding every year. Dan Spinelli. "The Pentagon spent millions to prevent suicides but the suicide rate went up instead." November 13, 2018, https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2018/11/the-pentagon-spent-millions-to-prevent-suicides-but-the-suicide-rate-went-up-instead.

11 Carl Andrew Castro and Sara Kintzle, "Suicides in the Military: The Post-Modern Combat Veteran and the Hemingway Effect," *Military Mental Health* 16 (2014), 460.

12 For example, Stephen Losey, "Barksdale Commander Admits Calling Suicide a 'chickenshit way to go' Was a Poor Choice of Words," August 5, 2019, https://www.airforcetimes.com/news/your-air-force/2019/08/05/barksdale-commander-acknowledges-calling-suicide-a-chickenshit-way-to-go-was-a-poor-choice-of-words.

13 Alan Berman et al., *The Challenge and the Promise: Strengthening the Force, Preventing Suicide and Saving Lives* (Washington DC: Department of Defense, 2010), 88.

14 Leigh Jennings, MD, "Do Psychiatry and Mental Illness Need Rebranding?" October 6, 2014, https://www.psychcongress.com/blog/do-psychiatry-and-mental-illness-need-rebranding.

15 Or, I suppose, after reading this paper!

16 Joseph R. Jeter Jr., *Crisis Preaching* (Nashville TN: Abingdon, 1998), 79.

17 Defense Suicide Prevention Office, *Talking About Suicide Online*. (Washington, DC: Defense Suicide Prevention Office, 2019).

18 This information is from the Army's current suicide prevention training model, "ACE-SI" ("Ask-Care-Escort-Suicide Intervention"). Department of the Army G-1. *ACE for Soldiers Facilitator's Handbook*. (Washington, DC: December 16, 2013), 13.

19 Including alcohol and substance abuse, talking about self-harm (even in jest), mood changes, giving precious objects away, and withdrawal from family and social activities, among others.

20 Jeter, *Crisis Preaching*, 81.

21 Of course, in many cultures, funerals with much more open and unashamed expressions of anguish are the norm; it is not these congregations that I am addressing. Many mainline churches could take a cue from the way these traditions embrace lament as part of coming together.

22 Walter Brueggemann, *Spirituality of the Psalms* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2001). This section is inspired by Brueggemann's work am inspired—one of the more thorough treatments of the Psalms as lament literature.

23 Jeter, quoting Ellen Zetzel Lambert, *Placing Sorrow*, 82.

24 Personal story related to the author by a rabbi friend.

25 Cameron Wood. "Mental Health Today: Depression & the Psalms." August 16, 2015, https://mentalhealthtoday.squarespace.com/posts/2018/7/18/depression-the-psalms.

26 The Book of Job, for example, in which songs of lament are a major theme.

27 Sally Brown, *Cross Talk* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 72.

28 Ibid, 73.

29 Ibid.

30 Joel B. Green and Mark D. Baker, *Recovering the Scandal of the Cross* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 174.

31 Ibid, 181.

32 Abimelech in Judges 9:54 and Samson in 16:30; Saul and his armor bearer in 1 Samuel 31:4 and 31:5; Ahithophel, Absalom's counselor, in 2 Samuel 17:23; Zimri, servant of King Asa of Judah, in 1 Kings 16:18; and Judas in Matthew 27:5. Additionally, Paul prevented the Roman guard from killing himself in Acts 16:27-28.

33 Dr. Lara Fielding, "Listening to Your Authentic Self: The Purpose of Emotions," October 20, 2015, https://www.huffpost.com/entry/finding-your-authentic-pu_b_8342280.

34 National Research Council, *Human Behavior in Military Contexts* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press), 207.

35 Sarah K. McKenzie et al. "Masculinity, Social Connectedness, and Mental Health: Men's Diverse Patterns of Practice," *American Journal of Men's Health*, September 2018, 12.

36 John L. Oliffe et al. "He's More Typically Female Because He's Not Afraid to Cry: Connecting Heterosexual Gender Relations and Men's Depression." *Social Science & Medicine*, September 2011.

37 Defense Suicide Prevention Office, *Leaders Guide to Suicide and Postvention Checklist* (Washington DC: Defense Suicide Prevention Office 2016), 2.

38 Ibid.

39 According to Veteran's Affairs, 18.2 million veterans are living in the United States, and the number of veteran suicides has grown over the past fifteen years, with an average of about 16 per day. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, *2019 VA National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs, 2019), 9.

40 The American Association of Suicidology (AAS) sponsors this annual week-long campaign to inform the general public and to engage health professionals in the importance of suicide prevention efforts.

The New Emphasis on Spirituality: Some Reflections from a Theological Philosophy of Ministry

By Chaplain (Major) Sean Levine

Introduction

For fifteen years, I have served as an Army Chaplain without encountering a significant challenge to the central features of my theology and philosophy of ministry. However conditions have recently changed dramatically due to the shift of ministry focus within the rapidly transforming Army Chaplain Corps. The shift from the priority of pluralistic religious support as the primary focus of the Army Chaplain's vocation to the newly coined, culturally-conditioned concept of spiritual readiness threatens the integrity of the theological and philosophical commitments that govern my ministry as a Chaplain.[1] The foundation for my ministry is illustrated in Eugene Peterson's recounting of words of reflection spoken by a seminarian named Irene:

> I think I see something unique about being a pastor that I had never noticed: the pastor is the one person in the community who is free to take men and women seriously just as they are, appreciate them just as they are, give them the dignity that derives from being the 'image of God,' a God-created being who has eternal worth without having to prove usefulness or be good for anything.[2]

The approach to human beings that forms the beating heart of my theological philosophy of ministry is the inherent worth of each human being without reference to a measure of usefulness. As I experience a shift of emphasis in the Army Chaplain Corps, I see a significant departure from the ethos Irene and I share. Instead, I see that we are foreclosing on human dignity in favor of valuing and promising a positive impact on measurable behavioral health outcomes.[3] We are moving away from the basic dignity of the human person as the rationale for religious support. We are moving toward a utilitarian vision of Soldiers that produce units of measurably efficient combat power. Spirituality from being a fundamental element of human dignity to being an ordinary, this-worldly technology: a mechanism to optimize a tool.

This puts me, personally, in a difficult position vis-á-vis the theological anthropology that centers my theological philosophy of ministry. I value deeply and unswervingly the inherent and divinely ascribed dignity and worth of every human person, as a human being, apart from any externalized measures of value. This article serves to explain why I think the Chaplain Corps needs to provide the Army a more nuanced approach to the concept of spiritual readiness; one that is informed by a careful consideration of the underlying philosophical and theological implications and potential consequences of an unreflective shift of focus to a newly fashioned scientific spirituality.[4] I aim to present some contrary thoughts for initial consideration; I write as a Chaplain for the consideration of other Chaplains. The turn to a new emphasis on spiritual readiness and the subjugation of the religious support mission to a non-religious resilience agenda begs many questions and represents a fundamental change that I believe threatens to compromise the essential nature of Chaplain ministry in the Army.

The New Non-Religious Spirituality

The Chaplain Corps exists to protect and facilitate the free exercise of religion in the Army. This Corps of religious military professionals assists the Army in creating and maintaining

an environment that complies with the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.[5] The free exercise of religion remains the constitutional mandate supporting the Chaplaincy and establishing the Chaplain's role. Spirituality, defined as a construct that may stem from religion but need not, has little fundamental connection to religious support provided by a Corps of specifically and exclusively religious military professionals. Although religious spirituality falls under the aegis of the religious military professional, non-religious, secular spirituality, by definition, does not. The subtle shift in language from religion to spirituality reshapes the role of the Chaplain from providing for the spiritual needs of the Army's religious personnel to providing for the spiritual needs of both religious and non-religious persons. Yet how does a Chaplain provide religious support to non-religious people? A Chaplain can care for a non-religious person—show empathy and compassion, etc.—but is this religious support? There are now two separate concepts at play: 1) religious support that provides for the spiritual needs of religious people and 2) care for the non-religious spiritual needs of non-religious people.[6]

It might seem completely obvious that the notion of spirituality underneath the Spiritual Readiness Initiative is different from religious support that Chaplains exist to provide. Spiritual readiness—at best a category of psychological resilience in my view—has little organic or necessary correlation to religious support, either in regard to the nature of religious support endeavors or any desired religious support outcomes.[7] Religious support focuses on the free exercise of religion and its only discernable outcome is the connection between worshippers/meditators and the Divine. The measurable psychological outcomes correlated to spiritual readiness and resilience are not connected to the reasons, or rationale, for religious support, focused as it is on the free exercise of religion as an inherent human right.[8] It is only when the Chaplain Corps succumbs to the current fascination with measurable impacts that claiming these sorts of influences upon the Army population become enticing.

Secularization

Placing psychological metrics of wellness and readiness in the foreground represents the secularization of the Chaplain Corps. A key characteristic that separates the Chaplain from the social worker and the psychologist is the Chaplain's dedication to crafting and providing a specifically religious ministry within the context of a non-religious organization. Throughout the history of chaplaincy, Chaplains have stood ready to do the difficult work of facilitating the spiritual practices of the adherents of the world's religions. The new demand to affirm and actively support a secularized spirituality for the sake of facilitating readiness and mission accomplishment may press many of us into compromise. The new secularized definitions of spirituality may contradict an individual Chaplain's theological beliefs and understandings of both the nature of authentic spirituality and of human personhood. The prioritizing of readiness and resilience as a rationale for ministry in the military may be at cross purposes to fundamentally religious vocations. I think the day is coming when pluralistic religious support is subsumed under the secularized, psychologized, utilitarianism of psychospiritual resilience; the version of spirituality presented in FM 7-22.[9]

Chaplains have, historically, been free to craft ministries that focused on performing religious services for their distinctive faith groups and providing equal opportunities to worship for all other religious traditions. I believe that a new requirement is being imposed that adheres to a secular humanist vision of spirituality that serves as a tool for resilience building rather than for supporting the free exercise of religion. By virtue of decoupling spirituality from religion, this requirement is potentially at odds with an individual Chaplain's religious and theological philosophy of spirituality and ministry as expressed in the constitutive tenets of his/her religious community and traditions of spirituality.[10] Beyond that, Chaplains are being asked to prioritize the use of this secular version of spirituality for the building of the resilience necessary for every Soldier's readiness to accomplish their mission. Centering on mission readiness serves the generally accepted military *mythos*, or guiding narrative: that Chaplains exist to multiply combat power and capability. If Chaplains exist to protect and provide for the free exercise of religion because that free, uninhibited, and unforced exercise of religion is an inherently human and constitutional right, then building mission readiness represents a secularized, utilitarian distraction from the primary mission of the Chaplain Corps.[11]

Technologizing Utilitarianism vs. Theological Sensibility

I am also concerned that the concept of spiritual readiness represents the commodification of the human spirit, or the turning of the human spirit into a measurable and usable commodity. Spiritual readiness promises to harness human spirituality for the enhancement of warfighting readiness.[12] This reduces the human spirit to a warfighting readiness tool, a move which threatens

to dehumanize the person. Such a reduction, from the perspective of my religious tradition, offends the theological anthropology of my Church. If this reduction is explicitly codified in Chaplain Corps Doctrine, rather than implicitly codified in the more general Army Doctrine (FM 7-22 and the like), then the conflict between Church and State shifts in a way that makes it unavoidable. The human spirit is not reducible to a tool for mission success. People in this arrangement are still valued primarily as assets for mission accomplishment and not simply as people. The Army, quite unfortunately, treats people mechanistically to accomplish its mission, but that does not mean that people are mechanisms of war or that Chaplains should, let alone must, be party to this dehumanizing anthropological reduction. The Army Chaplain Corps endures, I suspect, because of the pervasive intuition that our Soldiers deserve the attention of a group of people who are interested and invested in the inherent worth of human beings. This interest in human beings as persons need not be motivated by a utilitarian interest in the success of the organization. An interest in the success of the organization may compromise interest in human beings as people rather than as assets. Chaplains, if they so choose, may help ground the Army in the humanity of our Soldiers so that the Army does not dehumanize of our Service members. The present state of the "people first" initiative communicates, intentionally or unintentionally, that "you yourself don't matter, this is for the good of the institution."[13]

Chaplains can help to anchor their units in the "other-than-warrior" existence of the human beings standing in their ranks. Chaplains, in protecting and providing for the free exercise of religion, defend our Soldier's humanity against the forces that would reduce human beings to weapon systems and metrics of readiness. We as religious support professionals should not join in the treatment of our Soldiers as interchangeable parts and expendable materials valued only for what they contribute to the mission. Yet, the spiritual readiness rhetoric is part and parcel of this orientation. We as religious support professionals can and should be the ones who treat

people as sacred, inherently valuable, irreplaceable, irreducible human beings, and we can remind the Army that this really is the essence of the human beings that the Army is tempted to treat as mere units of combat power. I joined the chaplaincy to help ground the entire organization in the God-created, God-imaging humanity of every member of the Army. In doing so, I honor the God who created all things and all people, and I honor the people God has created as his own Image.[14] To paraphrase the quote that opens this essay:

> [T]he [chaplain] is the one person in the [unit] who is *free* to take men and women seriously just as they are, appreciate them just as they are, give them the dignity that derives from being the 'image of God,' a God-created being who has eternal worth without having to prove usefulness (i.e., worth, effectiveness) or be good for anything (i.e., mission readiness).[15]

My own version of chaplaincy works best when I don't work under what I see as a utilitarian narrative of combat power multiplication, when I am free to relate to every human being as a person of profound, inherent, and even divine worth without any regard for that person's measurable combat output, resilience, or readiness. For me, neither readiness nor resilience determines the rationale for religious support. Religious support has weighty constitutional, existential, and theological rationales that require no supplement with pragmatic, utilitarian rationales and agendas. The rationale for chaplaincy centers on the inherent, undeniable worth of the essential, theological, and ontological dignity of the human person created in the Image of God. Religious support honors and sustains the humanity of the warrior as a God-created human being, not the warrior as a unit of combat power. The Chaplain Corps bears the great religious responsibility to advocate for the humanity of the human being as created in the Image of God, each person being irreducibly unique and irreplaceable. The view of the human person is a theologically conditioned vision; it is a religious, ontological commitment based in religious sensibility. It could be considered disingenuous and duplicitous for us to believe this but sacrifice it in order to clamor for relevance in a pragmatic, utilitarian context. At this point, speaking the language of the institution compromises the truth about the human person to which our religious traditions are committed; at least that is the case for me.

A Decent into Spiritual Minimalization

The secularized spiritual readiness construct, by means of its psychologized version of non-religious spirituality, also represents a utilitarian minimalization of the authentically and ontologically spiritual. It trades the true being of the spiritual for vapid version of spirituality that is merely a psychological experience. As Nassim Nicholas Taleb states, "You cannot express the holy in terms made for the profane, but you can discuss the profane in terms made for the holy."[16] The use of spiritual readiness in support of the Army's pursuit of the psychological and emotional stability required to make individuals better military performers, even as it threatens to commodify the human spirit, sets a matrix for the rather ordinary commodification of the Divine/Transcendent. This commodification reduces the Divine/Transcendent to a means to an end. I advocate recognizing the Divine/Transcendent as the wonderfully mysterious end, or *telos*, toward which human life has reached since the dawn of human conscious self-awareness. I aim to preserve all that is truly and wonderfully human. Secularized and psychologized spirituality makes earthly and ordinary both the true Being of the Divine and the divine humanity expressed in the *Imago Dei*.[17]

Concluding Thoughts

The utilitarian application of the science of secularized spirituality to the Army's desire to manufacture resilience compromises the specifically religious vocation of the Chaplain, downplays the sacredness of the human person by reducing him/her to a mechanism, and profanes the Divine by making the Divine-human relationship to be a mere means to an arguably rather ordinary, utilitarian, this-worldly end. The military, especially in the age of Large Scale Combat Operations and great power competition, can be a profoundly dehumanizing context because the organization must treat people as reducible, expendable, and replaceable mechanisms of war, and war is an inherently dehumanizing endeavor. However, human beings are *neither* reducible, *nor* expendable, *nor* replaceable; nor are they mechanisms designed to kill other human beings. As a Chaplain, I believe that I would compromise my religious advocacy for the human being if I were to use a reductive spirituality to commodify even the human spirit in the warfighting endeavor. Some aspects of the human person should remain sacred and free from the modern, commoditizing reductivity that undergirds the spiritual readiness agenda, and the human soul/spirit is one such aspect. The Chaplain, as a representative of a higher, religious Reality, is the one person in the unit who is free—free, that is, from the demands

that come from a necessary concern for mission success—to remind each person and the larger organization as a whole that warriors are, first and foremost, human beings, not expendable and replaceable weapons valuable only for the quantitative quotient of effective combat power they bring to the fight.

If no one in the formation remains free from the compulsive concern about making winners and about winning wars, there will be no one left truly and authentically to put people first because people are human beings characterized by inherent worth and dignity prior to and beyond anything they contribute to combat strength and unit readiness.[18] The rationale for religious support is the inherent dignity of the human person, recognized and honored by the Army's efforts to ensure that human beings have the resources required to connect with the Divine/Transcendent for no other reason than the inherent value of that connection. Religious support is not about combat readiness, nor even, ultimately, about sustainment. Religious support is about human beings created in the Image of God for a relationship with God. Something far higher than resilience and combat readiness calls the human being to a relationship with the Divine. Religious support facilitates relationships between human beings and God/the Divine/the Transcendent, and it does not do so to make the Army better at winning wars but rather to uphold and honor both the dignity of the human person and glory of the God who creates all people.

The aim of this essay is to present thoughts for initial consideration that may run against some contemporary currents. I see the spiritual readiness initiative as an unnecessary distraction from the core mission of the Chaplaincy. The turn we are taking in the form of the new emphasis being placed on spiritual readiness and the subjugation of the religious support mission to a non-religious resilience agenda should cause concern. This turn represents a fundamental change, under the influence of a secularized version of spirituality, decoupled from religion, that impacts the essential nature of Chaplaincy in the Army; what it is and what it should do. Does the Chaplaincy exist to protect the free exercise of religion, or to serve spiritual resilience, both religious and non-religious? Philosophically and theologically, I do not see this as a false dichotomy; one may not serve two masters. A spirituality that may be either religious or non-religious certainly broadens the focus and applicability of a military chaplaincy. Still, I suspect that this fundamental change of ethos may create an enmity between the theology/philosophy of ministry held by many Chaplains, on the one hand, and the ways in which the Chaplaincy is presently promising to impact the culture of the Army on the other. I have tried to lay bare some key elements of my theological philosophy of ministry and I have presented reflections on how some of those elements interact with the recent shifts in emphasis that are working their ways into the rapidly changing fabric of the Army Chaplaincy. I hope to have encouraged, even if for a moment, some alternative frames of reference for consideration.

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NOTES

1 I am assuming that readers have heard about spiritual readiness and have read either the *Spiritual Readiness Pilot Handbook* or Field Manual 7-22, Holistic Health and Fitness (Oct., 2022) If this is not the case, I refer the reader to these documents. When speaking of spiritual readiness, the definition of spirituality I assume here is the secularized, psychologized, and reductive version of spirituality discussed by Lisa Miller (citation in endnote 3 below) and Army Doctrine (FM 7-22).

2 Eugene Peterson, *The Pastor: A Memoir* (New York: Harper Collins, 2011), 285.

3 This promise—positive mental health outcomes—sits at the center of Chaplain (COL) Robert Marsi's War College thesis, "Invincible from the Inside-Out: Modernizing General Marshall's Spiritual Readiness Strategy," (Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 2021), and Marsi's thesis is featured in the *Spiritual Readiness Pilot Handbook* (April 2021, v. 2), 33-39.

4 I have enough space here only to mention in the most cursory of fashions the epistemological concerns surrounding the so-called science of spirituality that undergirds the spiritual readiness construct. In a review of Lisa Miller, *The Spiritual Child: The New Science on Parenting for Health and Lifelong Thriving* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015). Miller's work, at some points, stretches the particular out of its shape in order to fit it over the generalizations she proposes, and, at other points, particularizes the general in a way that fails to account for the entirety of the situation.

5 Field Manual 7-22, *Holistic Health and Fitness* (Oct., 2020), para. 10-4, page 10-1: "The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution begins '*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof….'* This clause is a constitutional bedrock providing grounding for religious support and spiritual readiness." Chaplains support and defend the Constitution precisely by their support and defense of the Free Exercise Clause found in the Constitution.

6 The insistence that spirituality exceeds the epistemic criteria of religion has been insisted upon by Lisa Miller in *The Spiritual Child*. This insistence is encoded in the definition found in FM 7-22, para. 10-2, pg. 10-1: "Spirituality is often described as a sense of connection that gives meaning and purpose to a person's life. It is unique to each individual. The spiritual dimension applies to all people, whether religious or non-religious. Identifying one's purpose, core values, beliefs, identity, and life vision defines the spiritual dimension. These elements, which define the essence of a person, enable one to build inner strength, make meaning of experiences, behave ethically, persevere through challenges, and be resilient when faced with adversity."

7 Spiritual readiness as just another form of resilience can be seen in FM 7-22, para. 10-1: "Spiritual readiness develops the personal qualities a person needs in times of stress, hardship, and tragedy." In order to weather life's many storms, people need to be spiritually fit/ready. The goal is resilience in adversity, or emotional stability in the midst of adverse experiences. This is, at its base, an existential psychology, as is any vision of spirituality that becomes decoupled from religion and religiosity.

8 This is not to suggest that the faithful practice of religion does not contribute to health and well-being. The data seems clear that that people who live a life governed by religiosity (a cohesive pattern of religious beliefs and practices that craft a robust social imaginary that is shared with an identifiable religious group) tend to exhibit more emotional stability is the face of adversity. For a truly erudite exposition on the shift of language from religion to spirituality in American jurisprudence and the influence of this shift on the Chaplain Corps' changing self-understanding and marketing strategies, see Patrick Stefan, "Religion or Spirituality?: American Religiosity and the Chaplain's Care for Soldiers," in *U.S. Army Chaplain Corps Journal* (2021): 22-29. https://usarlatraining.army.mil/journal. He explains also that deep dives into the data confirm that it is not the generalized spirituality seen in the *Health and Holistic Fitness* model that contributes to resilience, but an identifiable religiosity. The language game played in the modern shift from religion to spirituality comes apart here in the face of the actual data. This suggests that a non-religious spirituality really does not exist except as a fanciful construct lacking entirely in the empirical validation that the proponents of this construct say they and we should value as evidence. Yet, to market religion as a self-help strategy or a resilience mechanism seems epistemologically and ontologically spurious, not to mention utterly unnecessary, for the value of religion is self-validating to those who practice it. When the practice of religion ceases to focus primarily on the ontological reality of the existence of an incomprehensible Divine, Transcendent, Reality as the primary motivation for all that religion is and does, it turns, epistemologically, into a self-help scheme competing with every other self-help strategy. This is the banalization of religion: The turning of something aimed in a Transcendent direction into an ordinary, this-worldly experience.

9 See endnote 5 above for some of the language in FM 7-22.

10 Of note, the Army has *no* Chaplains endorsed by any non-religious spirituality groups or organizations. All Chaplains receive an endorsement from a specific *religious* organization.

11 The trouble with a statement like this one is that we Chaplains have allowed ourselves to be placed under the overarching category of Personnel Services within the Sustainment Warfighting Function. The utilitarian rationale is provided in para. 3-73, page 3-11: "Religious support may become critical during the offensive. Religious support through counseling and appropriate worship can help reduce combat and operational stress, increase unit cohesion, and enhance performance." Yet, what if religion is not about sustainment and performance enhancement? What if it is about the fact that God exists and human beings deserve, not matter the conditions, to be led in the worship of God? What if a higher Reality is at play? What are the consequences to reducing religion to sustainment? Is that what religion is truly for? The Army and the Army chaplaincy may not realize the nature of the philosophy of religion they are implicitly purporting.

12 This is Marsi's point in his suggestion that we reengineer Gen. Marshall's "morale of omnipotence." See his War College thesis, "Invincible from the Inside-Out." Gen. Marshall explicitly aims at operationalizing the warrior's soul as a tool for combat effectiveness.

13 Arthur Kleinman, "The Art of Medicine: Presence," in *The Lancet*, vol. 389 (June 25, 2017), 2466. www.thelancet.com. Cf. Gabor Maté's book, *When the Body Says NO: Exploring the Stress-Disease Connection* (Nashville: Turner Publishing, 2011), 224: "In *Tuesdays with Morrie*, Mitch Albom reports that Morrie Schwartz, his former professor terminally ill with ALS, 'was intent on proving that the word "dying" was not synonymous with "useless."' The immediate question is why one would have a need to prove this. No human being is 'useless,' whether the helpless infant or the helpless ill or dying adult. The point is not to prove that dying people need to be useful in order to be valued. Morrie learned at a young age that his 'value' depended on his ability to serve the needs of others. That same message, taken to heart by many people early in life, is heavily reinforced by the *prevailing ethic in our society*. All too frequently, people are given the sense that they are valued only for their *utilitarian contribution* and are expendable if they lose their economic worth" (ital. mine).

14 Stephen Muse, *When Hearts Become Flame: An Eastern Orthodox Approach to the* dia-Logos *of Pastoral Counseling*, 2nd ed. (Waymart: St. Tikhon's Monastery Press, 2015), 22: "Human value begins with belovedness to God which is a pure gift offered to each of us. . . . If God is not *person*, then neither are we, for we obtain value as persons only by faith in Him Who first loved us and not by empirical validation of our existence from any other source."

15 C. S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man: How Education Develops Man's Sense of Morality* (New York: Macmillan, 1955). In his discussion of humanity's press to conquer Nature on page 81, C. S. Lewis offers this analysis of modern man's conceptualization of Nature: "Nature seems to be the spatial and temporal, as distinct from what is less fully so or not so at all. She seems to be the world of quantity, as against the world of quality: of objects as against consciousness: of the bound, as against the wholly or partially autonomous: of that which knows no values as against that which both has and perceives value: of efficient causes (or, in some modern systems, of no causality at all) as against final causes. Now I take it that when we understand a thing analytically and then dominate and use it for our own convenience we reduce it to the level of 'Nature' in the sense that we suspend our judgements of value about it, ignore its final cause (if any), and treat it in terms of quantity. . . . From this point of view the conquest of Nature appears in a new light. We reduce things to mere Nature *in order that* we might 'conquer' them. . . . But as soon as we take the final step of reducing our own species to the level of mere Nature, the whole process is stultified, for this time the being who stood to gain and the being who has been sacrificed are one and the same." The combination of bracketing out final causes, for the sake of elevating efficient causes, and the treating of something quantitatively rather than qualitatively perfectly describes the underlying method of analysis that science applies to the human being, wresting the human being away from the Divine Image and thrusting him/her into the fully visible elements of Nature for the sake of exploitation. It is the human being seen only as "good for something," as a commodity worthy of exploitation, as a quantity of something usefully, and less worthwhile as its usefulness declines. Again, this is something for which Chaplains should not stand.

16 Nassim N. *Taleb, The Bed of Procrustes: Philosophical and Practical Aphorisms*, rev. ed. (New York: Random House, 2021), 25.

17 Again, spiritual readiness as a utilitarian project aimed at optimization becomes a Procrustean bed upon which the dignity of both the Divine/Transcendent and the human person become the objects of reduction in order to make both fit into reduced conceptualization of spirituality proffered by the scientific and academic study of religion.

18 Gen. McConville, "People First: Insights from the Army's Chief of Staff." As I believe I have made clear in the body of the article, making winners and winning wars should not constitute the reason for the Army's dedication to the protection of and provision for religious freedom.

The Chaplain and Suicide Prevention in Battalions/Squadrons: Forming Support Groups

By Chaplain (Captain) Daniel Ude Asue

Suicide plagues the military services in particular ways: "the death by suicide rate for young service members in 2020 was well over double the rate for civilians the same age."[1] The statistics around this issue are quite daunting.[2] As part of the collaborative effort towards stemming the tide of suicide in the Army, Chaplain (Major General) Thomas Solhjem, Army Chief of Chaplains, has launched a spiritual readiness program. This program aims to support the inner resources and strengths of Soldiers to build their lasting resilience against suicide ideation, which goes with other challenges that stem from harmful behaviors like sexual assault/harassment, racism and extremism.[3] This article builds on previous work about the Chaplain's role in Soldiers' suicide prevention and counseling processes[4] to further emphasize the role Chaplains can assume to enhance positive interventions in the fight against suicide. Chaplains can take on this role by forming and facilitating a suicide prevention support group.

A suicide prevention support group is made up of Soldiers who have had suicide ideation or have attempted suicide. They come together to encourage each other and seek ways of improving their self-resilience and mental health. Thus, a support group "can be defined as the process of giving and receiving nonprofessional, nonclinical assistance from individuals with similar conditions or circumstances to achieve long-term recovery from psychiatric [as well as psychological], alcohol, and/or other drug-related problems."[5] Suicide prevention support groups are a formalized intervention to assist Soldiers in recovery from suicide ideation. However, a support group is not the same as group counseling, which is a clinical approach (psychotherapy) by therapists to treat people with similar conditions in small groups.[6] A In conjunction with clinical interventions, a suicide prevention support group provides a sacred space where Soldiers explore their inner world, share their struggles, and reunite their divided selves without being judged or shamed.

This article, therefore, calls on Chaplains to aid in spiritual readiness by forming smaller units of suicide prevention support groups in their battalion or squadron formations. This activity is consistent with what Parker Palmer calls "creating circles of trust."[7] This article recognizes the relationship between several entwined dynamics: the benefits of suicide prevention support groups, how Chaplains as facilitators can structure suicide prevention support groups to maximize their benefits, and how Chaplains can overcome the challenges of forming suicide prevention support groups. It then proposes a way forward and draws a conclusion.

Recognizing the Benefits of Suicide Prevention Support Groups

A suicide prevention support group is intended to nurture Soldiers' spiritual life by increasing their resilience level, creating unit cohesion, and fostering community life. In fostering community, the Chaplain is deliberate in how s/he uses the powers of nurturing and diversity.[8] Nurturing helps to build love among members and diversity brings together different races, ethnic groups, and people of different

orientations. The group should cherish diversity and promote peaceful coexistence and love of neighbor. Neighbor here is not defined as Soldiers who are in the same unit. To strengthen the virtues of this support group, the Chaplain should advise Soldiers to use conformity as an interaction style. Conformity is the intentional act of behaving in a way that is similar to or matches that of others. This behavior is motivated by the desire to engage in appropriate behaviors and to be in line with socially accepted norms of the group.[9] Conformity here serves as a process of training Soldiers to behave in certain ways that focus on hope and positive thoughts during challenging circumstances. There should be weekly activities for family time in which Soldiers are free to invite friends and those who are going through life challenges. Through these means, nurturing is emphasized, and many people get in contact with others to receive help.

Psychologist Craig J. Bryan, a military veteran who works with military personnel and their Families on suicide prevention as well as stress, trauma, and resilience, questions the efficacy of present approaches to suicide prevention. He argues that current approaches are directed at individual interventions, and advocates focusing on group prevention processes to curb suicide rates among military personnel. He says the group has a bigger impact on the individual.[10] David Wood Bartley, a nationally recognized speaker, writer, and trainer on the topic of mental health, argues for intentionally creating connections among Soldiers with the intent of fostering an environment in which people thrive, work well, and flourish. Giving his own personal testimony of how connections saved him from suicide, Bartley argues that connections would foster group cohesion among Soldiers[11] and a suicide prevention support group is one of the ways of fostering connections.

How Chaplains Can Structure Suicide Prevention Support Groups to Maximize Their Benefits

A suicide prevention support group is comprised of Soldiers with suicide ideation or those who have attempted suicide. With a pledge of confidentiality, individual Soldiers come together to

encourage one another and work toward achieving stable mental health by mobilizing their inner resources for resilience. The group practices solidarity by accepting people as they are, appreciating the expression of differing points of view, actively seeking to understand and integrate those points of view into a richer, fuller appreciation of every individual and of the group.[12]

The group enacts solidarity and cohesion by encouraging an open debate and discussion on all issues. The Chaplain's aim at this point in the life of the group is to facilitate the development of a shared understanding among members and create the necessary perspective for problem solving, and common grounds (approaches) for improving their mental health, and solidarity by way of empathy and emotional support without judging anyone. The Chaplain as facilitator achieves this by doing the following:

- Sets the structure of the group to include the pattern of meetings and how the group is led.
- Sets formats of meetings to include face-to-face, teleconferences, and online meetings.
- Defines meeting times to include when and how often the group meets.
- Establishes guidelines for confidentiality to ensure members' privacy.
- Establishes ground rules to ensure group participation.[13]

The key concept is participation; group members are encouraged to speak. Members freely share their common experiences and deliberate efforts are made to appreciate individuals' uniqueness.

In forming a suicide prevention support group in my formation footprints at Fort Drum, New York, Soldiers suggested the following as activities that enhance cohesive group meetings on a regular basis:

- Gather around for a meal at least once a month, if not twice. People will talk to one another and get to know people more deeply.
- Gather often in a social setting to ensure solidarity.
- Organize suicide awareness and prevention trainings often at platoon size levels. It should be fraternal sharing rather than just check the blocks for training.
- Gather regularly to evaluate their relationships among themselves, and with other Soldiers. Wherever there are concerns, the Chaplain discusses with leadership on ways of enforcing discipline without breaking Soldiers.
- Regularly remind support group members to call themselves on weekends and other work free days to show that they care and are interested in their welfare.
- Identify who group members can go to in times of crisis like family and friends. If they are religious and people of faith, they are encouraged to always seek prayers from faith community members and their faith worship leaders.

A Chaplain may purposefully connect with Soldiers who have suicide ideations and invite them to join a suicide prevention support group. This is particularly true because Chaplains as pastoral counselors "have a vital and unique role to play in suicide prevention."[14]

How Chaplains Can Overcome the Challenges of Forming Suicide Prevention Support Groups

Forming a suicide prevention support group presents many challenges. Admittedly, a "support group provides an opportunity for people to share personal experiences and feelings, coping strategies, or firsthand information about diseases or treatments."[15] From my own experience, groups experience challenges such as availability of time, managing personalities, trust/ confidentiality issues and compassion fatigue, among others.[16]

Chinn acknowledges individual differences and unique circumstances as big challenges in forming solidarity groups in general,[17] and in this case, suicide prevention support groups. Every human being is unique and there is nobody else exactly like another person: every person has unique set of genes, and then other factors like culture, peer groups, friends, family, and environment add to their uniqueness. A person's uniqueness contributes to that person's perspective that they bring to the group. People can have varying perspectives on the experience of suicide. A thriving group ought to recognize and cherish such diversity. As the saying goes, "united we stand and divided we fall." There is another saying that "a tree does not make a forest." For a suicide prevention group to be strong it needs multiple perspectives.

The above describes challenging things for me in building solidarity in my Fort Drum suicide prevention support group. How does a Soldier stay in a group without compromising his or her individual identity? The tendency is for

a Soldier to confuse uniformity with conformity. An extrovert may tend to dominate conversation while an introvert may try to avoid speaking altogether. The aim is to balance extroverts who are inclusive, not dominating with introverts who speak little but initiate conflict when they do. The basic mantra is, "do not let conflict start. If there is any way to nip it in the bud better do." Participating in a suicide prevention support group shapes Soldiers and equips them to travel in new directions. A simple piece of advice to Chaplains is that they should ensure that each member of the support group learns to listen to their own individual voice. They should avoid being defensive and denying responsibility for any wrongdoing. A Chaplain as the facilitator should address an aggrieved party's complaints with an objective eye and willingness to understand the aggrieved party's problem. Integrity of a group entails seeking to understand peoples' individual suicide ideation differences and circumstances, which creates an environment for all to thrive. Showing respect for each other and for their differences can increase harmony whereby people work together to look for ways to collaborate on common grounds and foster relationships.[18]

Another challenge is how to ensure maximum participation by giving everyone a chance to speak during meetings. The Chaplain as facilitator ought to be good at observing people's reactions when they are not allowed to speak and create a chance for them to speak. Chinn recognizes that the fundamental value of allowing people to speak is not only to increase participation but a feeling of belonging.[19] Chinn urges people to be mindful of keeping their comments within a reasonable time limit so that there is time for others to speak. Members should be reminded of this ground rule by the Chaplain at the beginning of every meeting. It is important for the Chaplain as facilitator to encourage others to express points of view that might be different from those already expressed to help create a safe space for all points of view.

The continuous transfer or reassignment of Soldiers could also challenge the stability of the group. As time passes, people disperse, and only some members of the group remain. Does the group need to recruit new members? Closely related is the issue of confidentiality: are people comfortable sharing personal experiences of suicide with new members who may seem like strangers?

The Way Forward

Creating solidarity is the goal of helping suicidal Soldiers to share with and encourage one another: studies on suicide and solidarity have shown that "the external social world matters to individual psychological pain and suffering."[20] While solidarity may require a lengthy amount of time, battalions or squadrons with many trainings have limited time for Soldiers to meet regularly in person. Soldiers may consider the option of online solidarity building. It usually takes a lot of sharing to build strong ties of solidarity. To deepen conversations and enhance sharing, the key processes here could be implementing the concept of the "rotating chair."[21] The rotating chair refers to a shared leadership style whereby every member takes the lead at a different occasion, event, or meeting. This could be very challenging in structured environments like the Army, which is hierarchical in nature. In this context, the group may be guided by the concepts of "Peace and Power" in sharing. Peace here refers to one's inner tranquility or calmness and Power refers to one's inner strength that is released for transformation when there is inner harmony. The goal is "working with others to create a meaningful community where everyone is valued and respected, where you work collectively to get things done that are important to you, and where differences are handled in ways that create peace and solidarity."[22]

From my personal experience of forming suicide prevention support group at Fort Drum, I know that there is a great struggle about how to practice "Peace and Power." It is both a new and novel approach in group organization and dynamics. Members should be prepared to take turns to lead and share their suicide stories and learn from their fellow Soldiers. This has the potential of evolving practices that can lead to greater transformations in the lives of those with suicidal ideations and those who have attempted suicide. There are times when group members may try group practices and fail, but even after failure they should get up and try again and again. To implement the concept of "Peace and Power" and enhance group practices, the Chaplain as facilitator should have periodic evaluations to examine past issues and in anticipation of future challenges.[23] It is advisable for the Chaplain as facilitator to lead periodic review of the principle of solidarity to create a better group space, ensure greater participation, and make members feel that they belong. The group may want to assess what they are doing and to talk about any necessary changes.

The biggest take away in forming and facilitating a suicide prevention support group is the power of transformation. The goal is for each member to work collaboratively with other Soldiers to

enhance each person's inner strength for long sustained mental health, social functioning, and emotional wellbeing as part of the process of growth/healing. Army Chaplains as facilitators of suicide prevention support groups work together with other disciplines (not only Behavioral Health) to provide more effective care for Soldiers in the unit. Chaplains can advocate for Soldiers, and influence, motivate, or inspire Soldiers to join a suicide prevention support group. To do this, Chaplains need to be aware of their professional power.

Chaplains as suicide prevention support group facilitators need to utilize their professional power, that is, the power of competency, which is necessary to be able to influence suicidal Soldiers to join the support group. Studies show that power and influence can be used collaboratively to achieve desired goals in an organization.[24] And Chaplains have the power to lead and influence suicidal Soldiers to join suicide prevention support groups not only through their roles and duties in the unit "but also through the resources they control"[25] such as links to healthcare providers, professional advocates, and access to personal development practices/exercises for Soldiers. Chaplains have distinct opportunities to use their position and competence to help hurting Soldiers find transformation and healing, including through suicide prevention support groups. The values and practices of these support groups can enhance positive and constructive experiences for change in the lives of individual Soldiers.

During meetings, Chaplains as facilitators will lay out expectations around the appropriate information for members to share, provide information about good suicide prevention habits, lead suicide prevention practical exercises, role-play suicide prevention skills, assess an individual's growth, and teach coping strategies for dealing with suicidal thoughts. One may compare the work of a Chaplain to a nurse in this situation, whereby the goal is to bring about transformation and healing of patients. Benner and colleagues, while studying nursing as a caring profession attribute transformative experiences and healing of patients as consequences of the professional power associated with caring provided by nurses.[26] Transformative and healing outcomes are the goals of all caring professions including the Army Chaplaincy.

Conclusion

An Army Chaplain has a significant role to play in preventing suicide. One way a Chaplain can do this is by forming a suicide prevention support group and facilitating that group. An Army suicide prevention support group consists of Soldiers with common experiences of suicidal ideation, suicidal attempts or suicidal concerns who come together to provide each other with encouragement, comfort, and advice on how to sustain their recovery process. The Chaplain as a facilitator of a suicide prevention support group provides the group's structure to nurture Soldiers' spiritual life to increase their resilience level. Though there are challenges in forming a suicide prevention support group, the Chaplain using his/her professional powers can coordinate with Soldiers to work consciously towards Soldiers' healing in collaboration with other caring professionals.

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Soul Wounds: Employing Theological Anthropology and Traditional Chinese Medicine to Better Understand Moral Injury

By Chaplain (Captain) William L. Atkins

Introduction

All Chaplains, regardless of faith tradition, are called to care for the Soul of the Army. We provide what is necessary for the health, welfare, instruction, and protection of all things spiritual. This implies that Chaplains are to treat, or at the very least mitigate, injury done that may be unmeasurable. This mandate prompts questions around how to do this. After all, how can an injury to a Soldier's morals, or violence done to their personal ethical frameworks be measured? How can an assault on a Soldier's transcendent Self be quantified? More importantly perhaps can the inevitable harm caused when one of Soldiers commits or is the victim of moral violence be mitigated? Simply put, how may we of the Chaplain Corps offer practical responses to moral injury?[1]

To address this question, it is helpful to first understand the nature of the Soldier and the nature of the injury. To this end, I offer a worldview of spiritual action through which Chaplains may comprehend what soul wounds are, which may open the door to spiritual treatments. I begin by defining the unified physical and spiritual nature of humans, and how that unified nature may experience injury. I then offer that a unified physical and metaphysical worldview, presented through the lens of Christian theological anthropology and Traditional Chinese Medicine, may afford a new level of understanding which could lead to practical treatments for moral injury. While I operate from the perspective of Protestant Christianity, the spiritual, mental, and physical monism I ascribe are applicable to many different faith traditions. For this reason, I encourage Chaplains, Religious Affairs Specialists, and other care providers to contextualize this content. This is one crucial way to fulfill the sacred call to care for the Soul of the Army.

Holistic Humans and Moral Injury

To begin, it is important to set aside the idea that there is a separation of spiritual and physical in the universe. This idea, commonly referred to as substance dualism, has been argued against by Christian theologians for centuries. St. Gregory Palamas, for example, attempted to challenge dualism in the 14th century when he proposed that God may have immanent spiritual interaction with the material world, while God's personal identity could still be set apart. On this view, there is no true separation between God's actions and God's creation—they exist together. What followed was the Hesychast controversy, a far-ranging scholarly debate that ended by largely upholding the dualism that Palamas sought to combat.[2]

However popular it may be in Western theology; this dualistic understanding of human existence does not encompass the full range of realities discussed in theology and science. As theologian Arthur Peacocke has written, "the ontological gap(s) between the world and God is/are located simply everywhere in space and time…[t]hence, mediated by the whole-part influences of the world-as-a-whole on its constituents, God could cause particular events and patterns of events to occur."[3] Put another way, if the gap is everywhere then there is no gap. This integrated relationship allows God's actions to affect the world-as-a-whole without the interruption of a spiritually empty

separation that God would somehow need to cross.[4] For Peacocke, this influence on the world-as-a-whole is possible not only because of God's pervasive presence and action, but also because of the world-as-a-whole's ability to respond to spiritual influence.[5] Peacocke thinks that there may be "a distinctive layer or level within the totality of human personhood that has a unique way of coming into direct contact with God," allowing for this direct influence.[6] According Peacocke, there is no "gap" between God and the world or the spirit and the body, but rather an integration that allows for spiritual action on physical matter.

Humans possess an innate spirituality—a transcendent identity beyond what may be labeled as consciousness, a finding demonstrated through the research of Dr. Lisa Miller.[7] The empirical data compiled by Dr. Miller shows that an engagement with the transcendent, however one may define it, has a measurable effect on the human body. The "soul", as psychotherapist and researcher Edward Tick has written, may be considered "at once biological and psychospiritual."[8] According to Tick, the human soul is not a fully other transcendent reality, rather the soul is integrated into our mental and physical selves. As such, events involving the soul have a measurable effect on the mind and body.

Events or circumstances that lead moral injury are just such measurable incidents. Moral injury is harm done to a human soul that manifests in physical and mental symptoms; it is a demonstrable occurrence whereby I postulate that we may see the unification of our mental, physical, and spiritual self.[9] There are several ways that a Soldier may incur this type of injury, such as participating in events that conflict with their personal ethics. As Chaplain (Colonel) Sean Wead writes, "many [S]oldiers die spiritually in combat because they feel forced to betray what they believe to be right."[10] However, these are not solely mental or spiritual matters. Physically traumatic events may also cause moral injury, and further, the symptoms of moral injury can be physical.[11] Moral injury spans the mental, physical, and spiritual realms of human being. As Edward Tick writes, "bioneurological functioning of the central nervous system does indeed change as a result of traumatic events. But these are only some of the physiological dimensions of what is in fact a holistic disorder." Moral injury is a holistic form of trauma that affects all aspects of the Soldier, physical, mental, and spiritual, which means that I believe that care for this kind of injury must be based in a worldview that does not artificially separate the body from the mind and spirit.

Seeking to define and disclose such a worldview has been the goal of many moral injury scholars in recent years. Mark Stebnick is one such researcher; he writes that, "healing the mind, body, and spirit of service members and veterans is enhanced by integrating the individuals' spiritual and religious belief system into the therapeutic process."[12] Stebnick affirms the integrated nature of the human person, and further offers the benefits of a spiritual method to treat moral injury. Stebnick's work suggests the essential role that chaplains may play in the treatment of moral injury. The therapeutic process, which includes medical and psychological therapies, is most effective when situated within a spiritual system. In short, Stebnick offers the healing benefits of a worldview that supports sacred treatments that are enmeshed with the empirical and clinical methods of the sciences.

Douglass A. Pryer, who studies moral injury, indicates the need for an integrated spiritual and physical worldview when treating moral injury. Pryer points out that, "no other inner malady depends so much for its diagnosis on how its prescribers view the universe."[13] Moral injury is a complex form of wounding that asks the care giver to understand how the spirit affects the mind and body. There is a clinical interplay of spirit and matter that requires a view of the universe unfortunately uncommon in many Western theologies. To offer the healing Stebnick writes of, then, as Pryer points out, the healer's worldview is key; from this point of view the healer's understanding of the universe cannot be one that sees the spirit as a "wholly other" entity with no discernable interaction with the body.

The research on moral injury of Nancy Ramsay further supports the views of Stebnick and Pryer. Ramsay writes, "many studies point to the potential value of rituals…these rituals, it is worth noting, combine spiritual and social elements; they encourage individuals with moral injury to look both inward and outward, and to find new ways to engage with both the self and the world."[14] This is what both Stebnick and Pryer point to, a therapeutic solution that includes spiritual treatments based in a worldview that allows us to understand spiritual action in the physical world. What these researchers offer is that a new way to view the universe, that allows Chaplains to fully engage in the therapeutic process, is necessary for the treatment of moral injury. The nature of this integrated worldview is the paradigm I will now present.

Holistic Worldview of Moral Injury

According to theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg, humans are established by the intentional and creative acts of

God.[15] Pannenberg does not consider our human physical and spiritual existence separately, rather we humans are a physical, mental, and spiritual creation, progressively moving toward reconciliation with God.[16] It stands to reason then, that if God calls humanity to reconciliation along evolutionary lines, that there must be a physical and spiritual unity in our construction that may be affected by God's will. Pannenberg offers the view that the human body is seamlessly integrated with spiritual actions.[17] This argument lies squarely within the bounds of mainstream Protestant theology, as well as within the bounds of many other faith traditions. The idea that there is spiritual action on physical matter is not an aberration; rather it is the cornerstone of nearly all transcendent cosmologies the world over. The challenge, most notably for those who adhere to a worldview largely characterized as Wester that splits off mind, body, and spirit, is to understand how we may measure spiritual action on physical matter.

In the medical sciences of China, referred to as Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), there is no separation between the metaphysical (or spiritual) and the physical. The holistic monism of TCM includes metaphysical phenomena in addition to physical matter, rather than Western scientific monism which deals primarily with the measurable aspects of reality, or Western theologies which see the spiritual as beyond physical measurement.[18] TCM employs a holistically monistic view to better understand human health and well-being, *per* TCM, a person's health and wellness is directly related to their relationship with the universe.[19] TCM engages universal phenomena that can be found in all things, physical and metaphysical, such as *Qi*.

The *Qi* cosmology of TCM rests on two premises, the Daoist conception of *Dao* (the way), and the Neo-Confucian model of *Li* (the eternal orderly cosmic principle). In TCM, these religio-philosophic constructs are seen as unifying cosmological laws that reveal the universe as orderly and interconnected.[20] The *Dao* presents *Qi* as a fully connective phenomenon which relates all things in the universe; while Li affords a systematic and orderly view of Qi that allows for predictability in these universal relationships. This complex religio-philosophical amalgamation produces a worldview wherein there is no absolute separation between physical and metaphysical, a view where the "supernatural" does not exist.[21]

From this unified worldview, TCM understands *Qi* as an ubiquitous and eternal metaphysical phenomenon that acts on, and is present in, all physical and metaphysical reality. The H*uangdi Neijing*, a foundational TCM text, records that Qi is the "energetic order" of all.[22] In the dialogue between minster Qi Bo and the Yellow Emperor, the pervasive existence of Qi is mentioned over twenty times in various themes, from a building block of the universe to the movement of vital force in the body. According to the *Huangdi Neijing*, Qi is the intrinsic orderly energetic foundation of a holistically monistic universe.

The actions of *Qi* are measurable.[23] TCM holds that humans receive energy and information in 32 different forms of *Qi* that allow our mental/physical/spiritual bodies to function properly in the flow of the *Dao*.[24] The principle of *Li* allows human beings to understand how we may move in accordance with the *Dao*, through the discernable and logical actions of *Qi*.[25] Simply, there is metaphysical action that our human bodies receive in the form of information and energy (*Qi*) that encourages us to move along with the flow of the *Dao*, which is the metaphysical order of all. This directive information is effective in that the human person is a mental/physical/spiritual entity with internal schemas that allow for *Qi* to be received and interpreted.

To further explain how this works, in TCM, *heart Qi* is responsible for cognition and mental activity. This activity is not limited to thoughts or emotions, rather mental activity is the term employed for life in general; it is the present and ongoing connection of a person to space-time, and the horizon of all life experience.[26] Therefore, a person may find balance in the flow of the *Dao* through engagement with the present moment because of the information supplied to the physical body from *heart Qi*. This information comes from a metaphysical source, yet its effect on the human body is measurable through several diagnostic indicators. In TCM, there is a clinical explanation of how *Qi* may flow in and through the body in various ways to connect one with the Dao to provide for good mental and physical health.[27] This action is codified through the process of pulse diagnosis.

Pulse diagnosis is a diagnostic procedure in which descriptive terminology offers a systematic understanding of metaphysical action on the human body. The language of *Qi* in pulse diagnosis has been studied by linguists, physicians, scientists, and historians of Chinese medicine for centuries. Women and men in these various fields of scholarship have examined TCM classics, such as the *Mai Jing* and the *Huangdi Neijing*, for the value of their descriptive nature, offering insight into *Qi*. There have recently been efforts to more

specifically determine the nature of the metaphysical criterion that generates the descriptive language of *Qi*'s actions in pulse diagnosis, through the use of bioinformatics in medical research.

In 2012, a study was launched in Hong Kong that involved 229 subjects and a team of five researchers. The aim of this project was to better understand what physicians felt in pulse diagnosis, to measure pulse conditions so that doctors may assess the *Qi* flow of patients through telehealth consultations.[28] These researchers were able to establish and measure, using a visual analog scale, characteristics of *Qi* flow in the body such as: depth, rate, width, length, smoothness, stiffness, and strength. In the end, sixteen physical parameters were extracted from the pulses of the subjects. According to the research team, "the validity of the proposed system…is established and can assist TCM doctors in collecting relevant health data during telehealth consultation."[29] Essentially, the systematic language employed by the TCM physicians accounted for spiritual action by describing the mathematically quantifying the actions of *Qi* in the body.

Theological anthropology of religious scholars such as Pannenberg, allows for a connection between spirit and matter that provides for direct communication and action. The lens of clinical TCM research into *Qi* may provide the work of theological anthropologists to be seen as quantifying this spiritual action. This combination, this paradigm shifting worldview, may expand understanding and treatment of moral injury through comparative spiritual analysis and clinical TCM practice.

Conclusion

Why should we as religious support professionals seek a new method of understanding spiritual action? Why in this role should we not simply pray for, or meditate with Soldiers in the traditional modes of our faiths and leave moral injury treatment to trusted partners in Behavioral Health? The reason to make this effort is precisely because of who we are. As Chaplains our area of expertise is the spiritual, and psychotherapists do not engage the spiritual dimensions in treatments, even though "these are precisely the dimensions we must address in order to evolve strategies that facilitate identity reconstruction and soul restoration."[30] Tick issues a challenge to evolve our worldviews and develop new spiritual treatments so we may effect change and move forward our theologies forward. We of the spiritual community are every bit equipped to do this as our partners in the sciences, if we begin to view theologies of all faiths as a progressive venture, rather than a historical investigation. As Chaplains we too may have a measurable effect on the Soldiers we serve, especially when the soul is wounded.

As Dr. Lisa Miller has written, "empirical evidence shows that natural spirituality exists within us", and further, that "people with a developed spirituality show positive effects for resilience and healing."[31] Not only will understanding spiritual action on the human body enable us to better mitigate the effects of moral injury, but we may also quantify our efforts to build resilience. "Spirituality has a clear impact on our mental health and thriving," and we of the Chaplain Corps are the women and men called to nurture that spirituality in our Soldiers.[32]

Author and Vietnam War veteran Karl Marlantes writes that, "the returning warrior needs to heal more than his mind and body. He needs to heal his soul."[33] The effects of soul wounds can be felt. The need for healing these wounds is evident to all those who suffer, and yet we as religious support professionals have been limited in our understanding of measurable metaphysical phenomenon. If in this role move forward with a wider worldview, augmented by TCM and the theological anthropology of those such as Pannenberg, we may indeed offer the healing that so many are in need of. If we in the Chaplain Corps have a more clear view of spiritual action in the body, we may then better understand the process of spiritual healing. Research has shown that collective participation in sacred communities benefits humans from birth, the sacred community of the Chaplain Corps can have just such an influence, and further, it may be measurable.[34]

According to Dr. Miller's research, "science says conclusively that we are inherently spiritual."[35] For generations, theologians and religious scholars the world over have also attested to the unity of the spiritual and physical natures of humans. It stands to reason then, if humans are considered to be spiritual, mental, and physical, we should nurture and care for all three aspects. This is most important because these facets of our humanity are not independent, but rather interdependent. Our human transcendent selves may incur injury as easily as our physical bodies, and as care givers of the soul, we as religious support professionals should make every effort to understand, treat, and hopefully heal these wounds—for Soldiers, for ourselves, and for the Nation.

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NOTES

1 "Moral injury defined: In traumatic or unusually stressful circumstances, people may perpetrate, fail to prevent, or witness events that contradict deeply held moral beliefs and expectations (1). When someone does something that goes against their beliefs this is often referred to as an act of commission and when they fail to do something in line with their beliefs that is often referred to as an act of omission. Individuals may also experience betrayal from leadership, others in positions of power or peers that can result in adverse outcomes (2). Moral injury is the distressing psychological, behavioral, social, and sometimes spiritual aftermath of exposure to such events (3). A moral injury can occur in response to acting or witnessing behaviors that go against an individual's values and moral beliefs." Sonya B. Norman and Shira Maguen, National Center for PTSD: https://www.ptsd.va.gov.

2 The Triads is an extensive work of theology written largely as a response to Barlaam of Seminara in defense of Hesychasm. This was a significant controversy with many works on either side of the debate. This is an important discussion; however, disclosing the breadth of this debate is beyond the purview of this work. For more on this beliefs." Sonya B. Norman and Shira Maguen, National Center for PTSD: https://www.ptsd.va.gov subject refer to: Hart, Teresa. "Nicephorus Gregoras: Historian of the Hesychast Controversy." *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 2, no. 2 (1951): 169; Gregory Palamas, *Gregory Palamas: The Triads, trans. Nicholas Gendle* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), 97; and Peter Phan, *Grace and the human condition (Message of the fathers of the church)* (Willmington: Glazier, 1993).

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11 Shira Maguen and Brett Litz, "Moral Injury in Veterans of War" *PTSD Research Quarterly Vol 23 No1* (2012), 2.

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15 Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Anthropology in Theological Perspective*, trans. Matthew O'Connell (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1985), 60.

16 Ibid., 219.

17 Ibid., 233.

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19 Maoshing Ni, trans. Huangdi Neijing 475-221 *BCE: The Universal Truth* (Boulder: Shambahala Press, 1995), 1-3. The *Huangdi Neijing* (the Inner Canon of the Yellow Emperor or Esoteric Scripture of the Yellow Emperor) is an ancient TCM text that is often referred to as the chief doctrinal source for TCM. The work is composed of two texts—each of eighty-one treatises arranged in the form of a dialogue between the mythical Yellow Emperor and his minister, Qi Bo. The first text, the *Suwen* (Basic Questions) discusses TCM theory and diagnostic methods. The second text is the the *Lingshu* (Spiritual Pivot), which focuses on acupuncture. Additionally, two other texts feature the prefix *Huangdi Neijing* in their titles—the *Mingtang* (Hall of Light) and the *Taisu* (Grand Basis), both of which have survived only partially. Complete originals for any of these texts do not exist.

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Workplace Pastoral Care: A Key First Support and Longer-term Aid in Conjunction with Psychological, Medical and Allied Health Treatment

By Chaplain (Major) Dr. Peter Devenish-Meares

The U. S. Army Chaplain Corps Journal warmly welcomes an Australian contributor; it is our pleasure to respect, to the extent practicable, his use of spelling and punctuation.

Introduction

A person with suicide ideation recently reached out to me in my role as a Chaplain. I took them immediately to medical treatment and stayed with them in the ensuing hours as they told their story to four medical doctors. Later when the psychiatrist told the patient they could voluntarily participate in much needed in-patient treatment due the chronic illness identified or may be forced to stay I had the privilege of being in the treatment room and being able to advocate for long-term voluntary participation as an inpatient. The result of active participation by the patient in treatment resulted in improved management of symptoms, the lessening of ideation, and return to work.

This paper is to explores the benefits of workplace pastoral care as a key part of holistic care of those experiencing complex and long-term illness and injury irrespective of their personal belief systems. It does this work in support of leaders who grapple with many issues, primary amongst them are the health and safety of their staff. Of necessity, the paper examines and challenges some rather limiting and prevalent notions about chaplaincy-led pastoral and spiritual care. In this way, it engages with the reality that some leaders almost automatically avoid or undervalue chaplaincy perhaps due to assumed religious connotations yet are unaware that people of all faiths and traditions actively engage with chaplains across many workplace settings including the military.

I undertake this work with a perceived bias. I am a currently serving Army Chaplain in Australia and I am a Christian minister. Therefore, I am working in the context that chaplaincy can and does offer both religious and non-religious spiritual and pastoral care. In fact, recent research shows that, especially in a military context, chaplaincy is enabled, and it can be more challenging to engage chaplaincy due to resources than due to intent (Layson, et at. 2022). This paper is written from a Chaplain's viewpoint yet respects and engages withsecular approaches to care to be as widely accessible and helpful to the modern leader and treatment practitioners.

Chaplaincy is Often an Underutilised Resource

Treatment practitioners do not see universally see a use for nor engage with chaplains and pastoral care activity even when the need for one such treatment (or care) is indicated

(Devenish-Meares, 2015). Perhaps this is because while some practitioners view spirituality as vital to mental health care, and chronic conditions in particular, research is incomplete as its real and measurable effect on PTSD and chronic mental illness, in particular, or in fact what constitutes spiritual and pastoral care (Cooper, 2022; Jones, Freijah, et al., 2022).

More work is needed to ensure that pastoral and spiritual care is activated in triaging and delivering longer-term responses to mental injury, mental health, and trauma (Oman, 2018). Specifically, medical teams need to become adept at "evaluating and improving the emotional and spiritual care experience" (Clark, Drain & Malone, 2004, p. 659). There is also need for more research into the relationship between PTSD and trauma responses and spirituality, meaning and purpose—all which chaplains engage with as part of their pastoral care regimes (Coady, Hawkins, Chartoff, Litz, & Frankfurt, 2021; Jones, Freijah, et al., 2022).

In a military context, a Soldier will often approach a Chaplain first who naturally connects them to requisite medical treatment and can remain in communication to support longer term healing. Chaplains can also be placed in the Army triage center (Burkle, Orebaugh, & Barendse, 1994). However, neither of these proactive actions are by any means universal practice. There is also the issue that some medical treatment practitioners, despite the movement towards integrated care, do not engage with pastoral or spiritual aspects, let alone see a Chaplain as part of the treatment process, even when the pastoral and spiritual aspects of integrated care, when they are included in treatment protocols (Skinner, Mason & Cockling, 2022; Wood, Ross, Raffay & Todd, 2021). Spirituality, meaning-related issues, and intra-personal matters are increasingly seen as important in resilience building, preparation for onerous duties, including deployments, and the work of healing, especially when stress, PTSD or Moral Injury occur (Devenish-Meares, 2015).

Yet, can be underutilised and even undervalued; not using a Chaplain could lessen support options, degrade care, reduce employee engagement, or lead to poorer treatment regimes (Carey, Hodgson, Krikheli, Soh, Armour, Singh & Impiombato, 2016; Gleeson, 2018; Snowdon, 2021; Wolf & Feldbauer-Durstmuller, 2018).

In terms of prevention strategies, a treatment focus that includes spirituality and pastoral care is vital, and some studies even point to the need for this (Berg, Crowe, Borchert, Siebert & Lee, 2012). This need for spirituality and pastoral care is crucial because even before the onset of illness, "physical, mental, social, and spiritual self-rated health statuses were all found to be associated with an individual's predisposition to depression and suicidal ideation" (Fukai, Kim, & Yun, 2020).

What Does the Latest Research and Current Practice Say About Spirituality at Work?

Spirituality in the workplace and meaning-making are positively associated with worker engagement and improved mental health outcomes (Sharma & Kumra, 2020). This research explicitly states that "employee mental health concerns can be addressed by promoting workplace spirituality, improving employee engagement strategies and implementing organizational justice" (n. p).

Despite the positive relationship between spirituality, mental health, and worker engagement it is unclear how much pastoral care and chaplaincy are deployed in the treatment of workplace trauma, illness and injury. If we are to consider pastoral and spiritual care we must acknowledge the extensive debate taking place in emergency service and other first responder workplaces where some leaders say that chaplains only offer religious practitioner skills that are increasingly less needed in the 21st century (Devenish-Meares, 2021). In fact, to say that chaplaincy is solely about religion, misses how it can respond holistically to illness and injury including Moral Injury.

Arguably whether chaplaincy is solely about religious is an engagement issue as well as a practice and research issue. Although more research is needed there is emerging but definitive evidence about the efficacy of chaplaincy for promoting mental health (Skinner, Mason & Cockling, 2022). While more quantitative research is needed, and with the acknowledgement that and themes and issues are difficult to quantify or articulate, there is significant "recognition that trauma (in its various forms) can cause much deeper inflictions and afflictions than just physiological or psychological harm, for there may also be wounds affecting the 'soul' that are far more difficult to heal-if at all" (Carey, Hodgson, Krikheli, Soh, Armour, Singh & Impiombato, 2016).

Research increasingly affirms what was already known experientially; that Chaplains help the ill and injured to remain engaged in treatment (Prazak & Herbel, 2022). Moreover:

> Chaplains have the potential to address this directly, combining an understanding and appreciation for

> trauma and broader mental health into the more subtle and latent experiences such as guilt and spirituality to present an additional avenue of response to service members in crisis. (p. 5)

Specifically, treatment regimens are recognising that illness and traumatic events or incidents can challenge the individual's sense of self, personal or core beliefs, and sense of meaning and purpose (Smith-MacDonald, Morin, and Phillips (2018). Furthermore, in treatment and research circles it is increasingly noted that people may experience deeply personal, injurious symptoms that are not easily related to medical or psychological modalities (Jones, Soundias, Drakopoulos & Carey, 2020).

Hope, the soul, beliefs, wholeness in and of the person, and violations related to these constructs are receiving some increased attention. It is not clear that medicos and allied health treatment practitioners engage with spiritual or meaning-related issues (Smith-MacDonald, Morin and Brémault-Phillips, 2018). This all calls to mind the term "spiritual care," a phrase that notes that profound inner distress, which may take the form of Moral Injury (MI).

Research on Moral Injury is also looking at the impactof COVID on health care professionals and clergy (Koenig & Zaben, 2021; Nieuwsma, Smigelsky, & Grossoehme, 2022). In fact, while integrated treatments in response to MI that include psychology, spirituality and medicine are being considered, much more research is needed in this area (Mantri, Song, Lawson, Berger, & Koenig, 2021).

Posttraumatic growth (PTG), which is about increased self-reliance, improved quality of relationships, discovering new life's paths, appreciating one's life more and positive change, is also relevant (Taku, Tedeschi, Shakespeare-Finch, Krosch, & Kehl, et al. 2021) to a discussion of the kinds of care Chaplains can provide. In some settings, and much more work is needed across locations and populations, Chaplains were found to be helpful because they were seen as spiritual companions and empathic encouragers of inner reflection and personal meaning making (Vanhooren, Leijssen & Dezutter, 2018).

Today spirituality as a theme raises the debates about religious and non-religious spirituality, a conversation that includes discussion about the tendency amongst some to avoid spirituality at work. Some leaders even debunk chaplaincy as being just for a few in the workplace (Gleeson, 2018). Such views include statements such as Chaplains are just for believers, they seek to convert people, or they only conduct religious ceremonies. Beyond this limited view of the role of Chaplains is the fact that many now engage as pastors and researchers in PTSD responses and trauma care and as part of holistic treatment teams, to ameloriate symptoms related to Moral Injury (Drescher et al., 2018; Taku, Tedeschi, Shakespeare-Finch, Krosch, & Kehl, et al. 2021). However, more research is needed on the efficacy of combined approaches that is, the real effect of mental health practitioners working in conjunction with Chaplains (Jones, Freijah, Carey, Carleton, Devenish-Meares... & Phelps, 2022). However, a growing body of research including two recent scoping studies point to a need for more research (Carey, Hodgson, Krikheli, Soh, Armour, Singh & Impiombato, 2016; Jones, Freijah, Carey, Carleton, Devenish-Meares, Dell,... & Phelps, 2022).

Then there are the experiences of the U.S. Army and Veterans Administration, which show that chaplaincy as an expression of spiritual and pastoral care is, in fact, a significant and readily available resource (Wortmann, Nieuwsma, Cantrell, Fernandez, Smigelsky, & Meador, 2021; Pleizier & Schuhmann, 2022). This resource is activated or requested by people of faith, no faith, and significant numbers of ill and injured soldiers and veterans who may keep personal belief, hope or meaning to themselves (Prazak and Herbel, 2020). The treatment field is complex. In addition to identifiable symptoms, there are also relational or values-based considerations. For example; "the person with PTSD will likely have anxiety about relationships, including issues with trust and abandonment" (Hughes and Handzo, 2009, p. 49). These are inherently psychological issues as much as they can be spiritual or pastoral concerns. A review of literature found that overwhelmingly Chaplains were a useful resource;

> 60 resources specifically noted Moral Injury and chaplains (or other similar bestowed title). The majority of these resources were clearly positive about the role (or the potential role) of chaplains with regard to mental health issues and/or Moral Injury (Carey, Hodgson, Krikheli, Soh, Armour, Singh & Impiombato, 2016, p. 1218).

More recently workplace spirituality and meaning was found to be positively associated with worker engagement and improved mental health outcomes (Sharma & Kumra, 2020). This research explicitly says that workplace mental health can be improved with the use of spirituality, meaningful engagement, and fair treatment. To ignore the role of Chaplains in this work is arguably an issue of awareness and evidence, partially because "studies have not adequately defined

chaplain interventions, nor sufficiently documented the clinical practice of chaplains" (Jankowski, Handzo and Flannelly, 2011, p. 100).

Chaplaincy offers practical uses in many aspects of responding to illness and injury. As a counterbalance to sublimation of or ignoring spiritual and inner meaning matters, recent research highlights the need to pay attention to spirituality and sense-making. Isaksen (2000) noted that a sense of inner meaning at work enabled people to better withstand workplace stress. Morin (2008) also found that a sense of meaning can be a protective factor against workplace stress, although they did not delve into applied spirituality. Moreover, Pratt and Ashforth (2003) found that the intrinsic characteristics associated with work can lead to meaning. In terms of self-care, writers and researchers on spirituality posit transformative benefits of applied self-compassionate approaches, particularly those that pay attention to one's suffering in self-loving ways (Devenish-Meares, 2015; Charry, 2010; Rohr, 2000, p. 3).

If leaders and health practitioners are quick to place pastoral care and chaplaincy into figurative religious basket not only does that ignore significant research, it runs the risk of not offering the fullest care and treatment responses to illness, injury and stress. There is also the possibility that "chaplaincy work can be replaced chaplaincy role can be accomplished by non-religious personnel or even replace the chaplain with an empty chair!" (Carey & Hodgson, 2018). Perhaps this is unconscious or active anti-religious issues, but it may also be a lack of knowledge that displaces the sufferer or ill person from the centre of treatment. Chaplaincy is so much more than religion, as vital as that is, and more necessary than ever. In fact, there is clear evidence that people who experience negative issues to do with personal meaning and spirituality, however they are defined, experience poorer health outcomes (Jankowski, Handzo and Flannelly, 2011).

In research and in practice, particularly in the United States, Chaplains are integrated within treatment regimens, and are deemed highly productive. Of particular note, Young (2019) highlights the immediate, healing, purposeful, and multi-faceted role of Chaplains:

> There are many benefits for having trained law enforcement chaplains working with their police departments in their local communities. I have had many police chiefs of various police departments tell me that they didn't know how they did without police chaplains in the past. In the midst of difficult and sometimes tragic situations chaplains can provide spiritual guidance where it is sought, a positive, hopeful spirit and presence where it is needed, and a non-judgmental listening ear (online: n. p.).

Carey and Hodgson (2018) indicate the lengths that some will go to limit or ignore the scope of Chaplains because they see their own clinical skills as are paramount:

> No doubt some clinicians, for the purpose of seeking to maintain and extend their professional boundaries, will believe their unilateral conceptual frameworks of addressing Moral Injury are exclusively correct—they will prefer frameworks that are not truly holistic, failing to endorse a multidisciplinary approach (Carey and Hodgson, 2018).

Chaplains can spend considerable time with a patient over the longer term, whereas the medical doctor may not be able to. This year a very senior military leader told me that their Chaplains are equipped to "stay the course" with the injured or ill person helping to make sense, attend appointments and generally co-operate with essential treatment. He said; "they help ensure that my team get the care they need and that they heal."

> Chaplains work conjunction with other disciplines and are highly trained to work sensitively across belief and faith systems. In a study of U.S. Navy personnel, 85% of respondents either "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that their "chaplain/pastoral care service was best qualified to treat their spiritual/Moral Injury" (Hale, 2013).

In fact, military Chaplains offer innovative, stress prevention programs Moral Injury (Carabajal, 2021).[1] Chaplains also enact psycho-spiritual care that enables more highly effective treatment (Ehman and Henfield, 2014). One also notes that military leaders say that "the unit chaplain is often the most accessible person in the 'personal support plan.' This is particularly relevant when a doctor is not readily available" (Devenish-Meares, 2015, p. 49). All of which raises this key question: how do we as carers, leaders and as a community notice, engage and support the treatment of the whole suffering self—which is body, mind and spirit as a sense making self; a unique individual who experiences and reacts?[2]

Moral Injury

> Moral Injury is the distressing psychological, behavioral, social, and sometimes spiritual aftermath of exposure to such events (3). A Moral Injury can occur in response to acting or witnessing behaviors that go against an individual's values and moral beliefs (Norman & Maguen, 2020).

Chaplains work with MI. Moral Injury a crucial psychological and spiritual term that is receiving considerable attention in medical and psychological literature but is not yet readily identified in modern clinical treatment spaces. This is true despite the fact that recent studies have shown MI often occurs among law enforcement officers and civilians experiencing community violence (Papazoglou, Blumberg, Chiongbian, Tuttle, Kamkar, Chopko, Milliard, Aukhojee, & Koskelainen, 2020; Williamson, Stevelink, & Greenberg, 2018). Examples of MI among law enforcement officers and civilians include experiencing the inability to act during community violence or witnessing events or responses to events that transgress their fundamental personal beliefs.

Professor David Forbes recognised that a Chaplain could be efficacious alongside other practitioners. This multidisciplinary work takes place in terms of "spiritual, religious and social treatments' that 'aim to deal with social and self-condemnation which are often accompanied by emotions of guilt, shame, remorse, regret and self-blame, experienced due to moral failures" (Forbes et al. 2015, pp. 14–15).

Other signs and symptoms too, such as anger, substance abuse, could be comorbid with MI and PTSD. Research is paying more attention to the role of the Chaplain in treatment. Yet again, it must be noted that holistic research about the effect of Chaplains in modern health settings is relatively scant. In fact, comprehensive research into the real outcomes of combining approaches is yet to be undertaken:

> [T]he quality and depth of research to date does not allow conclusions to be drawn about preferred approaches, much less of the relative benefits of psychological, chaplaincy, and combined psychological and chaplaincy approaches to addressing Moral Injury (Jones, Freijah, Carey, et al., 2022, p, 1089).

Noting the above and in my own experience and research, issues to do with meaning, values, morals, and innate beliefs feature in the story or presenting symptoms of the injured or ill preson. However a medical practitioner or a manager may miss the whole story if they are not attuned to these so-called inner

issues, let alone morally injurious events. Borges, Bahraini, Holliman, Gissen, Lawson and Barnes (2020) suggest that, sometimes, therapy can even inhibit the exploration of MI—it was even found that MI can persist after treatment.

Where a Chaplain Can Help Now and in the Longer Term

Air Marshall Leo Davies AO CSC, Chief of Royal Australian Air Force writes:

> Often our chaplains are the first responders in times of need but their role is much broader as they perform invaluable service in providing support and ministry to members and their families. Our chaplains contribute substantially to morale and ensure that emotional health and wellbeing of our members is support by a network trained professionals (Defence Anglicans, 2016, p. 1).

Chaplains as a valued care and resilience resource, work in conjunction with other allied health professionals. Such a view is reinforced in the corporate world where some senior leaders find that "workplace chaplains offer a unique kind of care for employees otherwise unmet in other benefit programs" (Miller & Ngunjiri, 2015, p. 129). Moral Injury, Chaplains are trained to listen for meaning with sensitivity and compassion, which takes on special importance during crisis and recovery, in terms of workplace treatment, and the experience of Moral Injury. Chaplains often hear harrowing personal stories and complex narratives as people share their trauma, try to alleviate suffering, make sense of the situation, and they relate stories of physical injury, relational impairment or personal despair. Pastorally, this can mean the story is told over and over again and people can get caught in the one even unhelpful version of the story and its outcome.

Much more work is needed to understand the process and effects of contemporary chaplaincy (Jones, Freijah, Carey, Carleton, Devenish-Meares, Dell,..& Phelps, 2022, p, 1089). Aspects where a chaplain is able to offer additional support or augment treatment include the following:

- explicit engagement with and honouring of the person/the family's story, needs, spirituality and meaning-making stance (including of a non-religious nature);
- address self-blame, remorse and self-judgment;
- be a non-judgment, compassionate figure in extraordinary and traumatic situations;
- offer rituals especially to do with healing and forgiveness;
- offer pastoral presence—caring, non-abandonment and trustworthiness.

Overall, recent literature debunks the unhelpful myth that Chaplaincy is only about religion. This misses the practical, psycho-spiritual nature of so many practical and healing choices and aspects that spirituality, however we may individually enact it, offers. One recalls, that, so often, work motivation, enrichment, and satisfaction are studied and less attention is paid to stress and suffering let alone spirituality (Devenish-Meares, 2020; Qamari & Tjahjono, 2021).

In fact, there is significant research that highlights the interdisciplinary and positive effects of chaplaincy (Carey, Hodgson, Krikhel, Soh, Armour, Singh & Impiombato, 2016; Devenish-Meares, 2020). A person with a mental injury or illness, including PTSD, may well struggle to keep his or her engagement with treatment care and appointments.

The complex nature of mental illness and injury is exacerbated by the risk that a medical or psychological officer is not familiar with the implications of meaning, forgiveness, Moral Injury or inner values for treatment. In particular, one notes how many veterans exhibit signs of inner conflict due to transgressed beliefs, betrayal, moral turmoil or deeply personal ethical dilemma (Carey, Hodgson, Krikheli, Soh, Armour, Singh & Impiombato, 2016). Here, more particularly Jacob (2013) says that "the treatment of Moral Injury is a spiritual/ emotional procedure' that should be appropriately dealt with by chaplains" (Jacob, 2013).

Moreover, spiritually-focussed therapy and Chaplain-led pastoral care may be useful in addressing Moral Injury (Carey & Hodgson, 2018; Cenkner et al., 2021). Such interventions may help address the spiritual effects of Moral Injury such as loss of hope, purpose and meaning and disconnection from or loss of inner values. In terms of this, in Borges (2019), veterans said their motivation for treatment was strengthened by interventions such as goal setting, story reconstruction and self-transcendence, which in some circumstances may be spiritual in nature.

Despite its prevalence, "surprisingly little is known about whether PTSD treatment reduces Moral Injury, likely because until recently there have not been assessments appropriate for measuring change in Moral Injury" (Norman, & Maguen, 2020).

It has been stated already that increasingly chaplains are increasingly seen as efficacious in terms of holistic treatment of PTSD, Moral Injury and

transgressions with other practitioners (Carey & Hodgson, 2018; Cenkner et al., 2021). This relates to "the lasting psychological, biological, spiritual, behavioral, and social impact of perpetrating, failing to prevent, or bearing witness to acts that transgress deeply held moral beliefs and expectations (Litz et al., 2009, p. 697). When we think of moral transgressions, Kinghorn (2012) also extends our pastoral responses and thinking beyond psychology into the realm of belief and towards morality and moral theology, in particular, not that these are easy subjects to operationalise in acute and even military health settings.

Spiritual help is increasingly seen as being part of treatment processes. In fact, there is clear evidence of the positive nature of a chaplain's support in mental health treatment (Carey, Hodgson, Krikheli, Soh, Armour, Singh, & Impiombato, 2016). Furthermore:

> treatment of depression based purely on medications is insufficient in most cases. It would be imperative to include spiritual help into psychiatric practices, because the medications enable the person to achieve a biochemical balance that helps mitigate the physical causes and effects of depression, such as insomnia, relatively quickly. Without any proper psychological or spiritual therapy, these effects cannot be entirely eliminated, but are only alleviated (Platovnjak, 2019, n. p).

Going further, spiritual or pastoral care in conjunction with psychiatric treatment has proven to be effective. One psychiatrist says:

> Although the help of a psychiatrist or psychotherapist is required in most cases of depression, *adequate spiritual help is always welcome*. This was verified by many persons who received both types of help as well as by some psychiatrists and psychotherapists (Platovnjak, I. 2019b, emphasis added).

Similarly, noting the longer-term nature of chaplaincy. Anecdotally, I have seen Chaplains sustain their pastoral care in the longer term or when a doctor is no longer available due to their triage

workload (Young, 2019; Devenish-Meares, 2021). However, as importantly, military leaders say that "the unit chaplain is often the most accessible person in the 'personal support plan. This is particularly relevant when a doctor is not readily available" (Devenish-Meares, 2015). Finally, in terms of this, it is important to remember that:

> Healing for PTSD requires a spiritual approach because PTSD is a sacred wound to both the soul and society… Healing PTSD requires moving beyond conventional therapeutic practices to restore the proper relationships between veterans and communities (Tick, 2013).

Once this person recovers, we will part ways, whereas the spiritual companion will remain" (Komplan and Erzar, 2006). From this, a key question arises: who can operate sensitively, holistically, and productively in the holistic treatment space? From the above discussion, however brief, it seems that a Chaplain is able to establish and maintain a positive, proactive pastoral spiritual presence in the person's life and willingly participates in the ongoing journey to recovery.

STAYING THE COURSE

Chaplains can remain in meaningful support of injured and ill staff even when the medical practitioner cannot due to resource limitations. Research shows that a Chaplain can be efficacious in this area because they intentionally connect with and check in on people. Chaplains can also advise leaders that it is important to not use guilt as a motivator, but rather to stress that circumstances, response or other factors contributed to or led to an injury or illness. The pastoral carer can assure the leader that they support them while simultaneously caring about the injured ill person.

In terms of meaning making, (re) connections, symptoms reduction and healing, Carey et al. (2016) indicate from their comprehensive research that a Chaplain can assist in a number of areas, including those that complement treatment and restore relationships:

- **Anxiety reduction**: Interventions involving for example spiritual chanting/mantra repetition, prayer, breathing exercises, music
- **Grief work**: Assisting with a member's grieving given effects of trauma and loss of who he or she use to be and will never be again
- **Forgiveness**: Assistance with acceptance of guilt, sin, confession, forgiveness and self-forgiveness, absolution, blessing
- **Reconnection**: Reconnection and reframing of meaning in life with God, with individuals and/or previously associated communities (*e.g*. religious community). (Carey et al., 2016).

Furthermore, Chaplains, being trained in applied spirituality, reflective practice, sense-making, and compassion, use interdisciplinary approaches to help people explore how support self-care and meaningful sense-making can assist psychological treatment(s).

DEVISE AND OFFER WORKPLACE EDUCATION INCLUDING CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION (CPE)

Chaplains can be key first responders and provide vital ongoing holistic support to the most at risk. Moreover, Chaplains, in my experience are very willing to work with leaders and human resource managers in terms of awareness and training. Further research could include the development of training mechanisms that extend leaders' and human resource practitioners' awareness and engagement with psycho-spiritual sense-making and pastoral care issues.

My chaplaincy leadership experience in military and civilian settings shows how Chaplains can offer training in how personal, situational, and contextual factors influence one's willingness or not to enact meaningful treatment, self-care, self-acceptance, and healing. However, Chaplains themselves must be open to ongoing professional development which may include undertaking units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), and staying current with advances in PTSD and Moral Injury treatment. Not doing so risks not offering the fullest care and treatment. Moreover, it is well established in practice although not well understood in leadership practice nor the literature let alone psychological research that chaplains encourage the stressed and suffering about to enact self-care choices and to separate/detach meaningfully from issues and symptoms (Devenish-Meares, 2017).

With these factors this mind let us explore two issues related to treatment and religion.

A key risk to care and treatment:

- An emergency service worker may find it difficult to share an inner belief or morally injurious event/ situation to a first responder such as psychological first aid responder. This can be because feelings of fear, guilt and shame are associated with the presenting issue.

Debunking a myth: "You have to be religious to see a chaplain".

- Everyone whether they are religious or not, seek to make sense of work and life. This is about "meaning-

making," and "it's prevalent in the lives of most individuals" (Gleeson, 2018, n. p). It may not be immediately apparent that illness, injury, or trauma disturbs or disrupts someone's values, world-view, or simply how they act in the world.

Recommendations

The treatment of physical and mental health injury and illnesses including PTSD is not an exact science. A multi-dimensional approach early can identify the best form of treatment. Without wishing to criticise existing and vital mental health care, I offer some positive recommendations for consideration:

COMMAND AND MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- **Multi-dimensional care**: recalling the trauma and Moral Injury concepts, a multi-dimensional approach to supporting ill and suffering member is vital.
- **Holistic treatment responses**: use chaplains as part of holistic treatment responses to but not limited to issues that while hard(er) to measure or identify often present with mental health illness and injury. These include grief, Moral Injury, inability to forgive others/ self, trauma, loss of relational connections (family, unit, significant others). Of note: It is not clear how often treatment plans and case-conferencing processes include pro-active healing and forgiveness steps in the treatment mix.
- **Chaplains are often a useful first responder**: leaders across industries including police and civilian are encouraged to take note of what military leaders say: "the unit chaplain is often the most accessible person in the 'personal support plan. This is particularly relevant when a doctor is not readily available" (Devenish-Meares, 2015, 49).
- **Chaplains remain connected when the injured/ill may be closed off to others**: recognise that chaplains provide insights and access to an individual who may be closing themselves off to others. People are our highest priority, so we must embrace all capabilities, especially those that contribute to wellness and safety.
- **Chaplains work respectfully across belief and non-belief systems**: leaders are encouraged to engage with the fact that people trust chaplains irrespective of either the ill/injured person's religious stance and the chaplains. Chaplains are often a key and localised first responder—yet it is not clear just how often the ensuing treatment system incorporates pastoral care.
- **Research says that treatment needs to be multi-dimensional—body, mind and spirit**: interventions must include the widest range of pastoral and mental health-related professionals, which includes chaplains and other member of the clergy. There is a key risk, that despite significant and growing research to the contrary that mental health planning processes may be inadvertently overlooking the place of pastoral care, especially to do with meaning, healing, relational forgiveness and compassion.
- **Chaplains work sensitively with families and external groups**: we must take note, from military leaders' observations, experience, and feedback, that chaplaincy has a demonstrable effect in its pro-active work with families and those in external treatment.
- **Education**: all including leaders and Psychological First Aid responders learn to exercise non-judgmental and non-anxious listening and ongoing compassion are often an under-explored support to treatment.

RESOURCING

- **Team**: a full resourced chaplaincy team that is well equipped to focus on providing longer-term pastoral and spiritual presence with a person with illness, injury or PTSD—without an agenda.
- **Chaplain pro-activity**: the Chaplain is engaged to gently, appropriately be pro-active in his or her provision of spiritual care presence with persons with illness or injury.

Summary

As part of inter-disciplinary teams and using a psycho-spiritual lens, Chaplains focus on pastoral care, psycho-spiritual care, and encouraging self-care choices. This should be and is increasingly done in conjunction with other health-related, treatment practitioners although more research work is necessary to explore how to enable this well and measure its effects.

Chaplains support the ill and injured by offering direct pastoral care and by intuiting, contrasting, comparing, and integrating a variety of reflective, caring themes from psychology and spirituality. This care may be either religious or more broadly, spiritual in nature. This paper engages with the fact that, so often, positive psychology and applied spirituality

are not well integrated into workplace care responses (Devenish-Meares, 2019). This lack of connectivity has implications and yet it an opportunity not just for workplace chaplains, allied health practitioners but the stressed and suffering themselves who could be missing out on necessary, holistic care especially to do with sense-making, keeping connected to treatment and being able to deal with loss, Moral Injury and betrayal.

Moreover, while workplace pastoral care spirituality has sparked much interest in organisational studies, leadership and business practice, it is not fully understood. This is despite the fact that a chaplain is so often a non-judgmental and compassionate care-giver in times of illness, tragedy and injury when all treatment responses need to be deployed (Devenish-Meares, 2019). Literature has also encouraged both leader and researcher, if they have the injured and ill at the centre of their action are encouraged to pay attention to the chaplain as a resource (Devenish-Meares, 2015).

While significant work has been done, research is underway to better understand how interdisciplinary teams including chaplains can support holistic and meaningful personal change in the areas of Moral Injury and PTSD and how choices such as self-forgiveness work. Specifically, in a recent scoping review it was found that "one of the most obvious shortcomings in the MI intervention literature…is the absence of comprehensive and validated change measurements specific to diverse MI outcomes" (Jones, Freijah, Carey, Carleton, Devenish-Meares... & Phelps, 2022). Here it was recommended that future research explore "validated measure of Moral Injury (MI) outcomes that captures the full spectrum of MI across psychosocial and spiritual domains" (Jones, Freijah, Carey, et al., 2022).

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NOTES

1 *Psycho-spirituality*: is the "immaterial inner core of human personality (and) refers to the fact that the inner world has no separate spiritual and psychological compartments" (Benner, 1998, p. 540).

2 Spirituality is now a wider term that "can" include religion but is a far broader meaning-related term. Chaplains, in the main, work well and cooperatively within the broader definitional framework.

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REFLECTION ON
The First Amendment of the Constitution

By Chaplain (Colonel) Chip Huey

In this essay I will propose that there is a growing ethos in America of indifference, or even hostility, to the free exercise of religion such that it seems that the role of government is to tolerate or not tolerate religious practice. In the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries the words "tolerant" and "intolerant" are used mostly in debates in academia and politics. But in the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries in England and her colonies, the word "toleration" referred primarily to the state's acceptance or rejection of a particular religious belief and practice. On this view, government has the right to allow or not to allow religious practice as it sees fit. I will also assert that the duty of the Army Chaplain Corps is to promote the free exercise of religion in the face of this trend to view the state as having the power to repress religious belief and practice.

The free exercise of religion is a phrase that is familiar to Americans, and is especially familiar and vitally important to those of us who serve in the Chaplain Corps. The concept of the free exercise of religion is enshrined in the first phrase of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."[1] I see the story of how those words came to be in the First Amendment as a guiding light to us as Americans and as members of the Army Chaplain Corps today.

In the summer of 1776, the Colony of Virginia was developing its own foundational charter. The Virginia Declaration of Rights contained a list of "rights" or "bills" that lay out the protections individuals could expect under independence. George Mason was the primary author and head of the committee that wrote the Declaration of Rights.[2] According to Article 16, "All men should enjoy, the fullest toleration in the exercise of religion according to the dictates of conscience."[3] In using the word "toleration," Mason drew from John Locke's famous "A Letter Concerning Toleration" and the English Act of Parliament known as the "Toleration Act."[4] Locke called for the English government to extend toleration to all Christians, but not to atheists and Roman Catholics.[5] The Toleration Act withheld governmental toleration from non-Trinitarian Protestants and Catholics, and granted toleration to Trinitarian Protestants who agreed to take an oath of loyalty and to pay a fee for a license for a preacher.[6] In comparison to Locke's "Letter," and the Toleration Act, Mason's Article 16 of the Virginia Declaration of

Rights, which extended toleration to "all men," appeared extraordinarily enlightened.[7]

However, to a young delegate to the Virginia Assembly named James Madison, Article 16 did not go far enough. Madison studied at Princeton under its president, John Witherspoon. Witherspoon was a Presbyterian minister who asserted that the word "toleration" implied that someone or something had the power to allow someone or something else to be tolerated or not tolerated.[8] Madison was ready to apply what he learned at Princeton after watching the Baptists struggle to function under the established denomination of Virginia, the Anglican Church. He objected to Article 16 of the Virginia Declaration of Rights and drafted an amendment that stated, "all men are equally entitled to the full and free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience."[9] The committee accepted Madison's amendment, and the updated Article 16, along with the rest of the Declaration of Rights, was ratified by the Virginia Assembly that summer of 1776.[10]

Madison's amended Article 16 codified a new relationship between government and the people. The exercise of religion in Virginia would no longer be viewed as tolerated or not tolerated by the government, but rather as a right inherent to men and women. Thirteen years later in 1789, as a member of the first Congress sitting under the new Constitution, Madison incorporated the language and the concept of Article 16 into his proposed amendments to that Constitution.[11] When the Bill of Rights was ratified in 1791, America became a nation where all people were free to worship according to their conscience based upon the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

The free exercise of religion is the lifeblood of the Army Chaplaincy. In *Katkoff v. Marsh*, a Federal Circuit Court of Appeals stated that the Army Chaplaincy enables a Soldier to "practice his freely chosen religion," "under the Free Exercise Clause."[12] The Court acknowledged that Chaplains have pursued this duty since America's Chaplains facilitate Soldiers and Families of all religious beliefs to practice those beliefs whether deployed, during training, or in chapels. However, the free exercise rights of Soldiers have sometimes been infringed upon (see the movie *Hacksaw Ridge*), I believe there is a pervasive erosion of those rights in our country and Army today.

Sadly, from what I see all levels of American government, including the military, seem to be moving back in the direction of assuming the state may tolerate or not tolerate the exercise of religion. To my mind, this backward trend began to gather steam in the twentieth century and came to the fore with the application of what I believe were draconian COVID restrictions by the national, state, and local governments. These actions, which were typical in America in 2020 and 2021, assume that government has the inherent right to tolerate or not tolerate religious practice. From my vantage, religious practitioners, and especially members of the Chaplain Corps, should be vigilant for, advise, and advocate in their spheres of influence for the ability to tolerate or not to tolerate religion and to maintain the free exercise of religion that makes America what it is… a beacon of religious liberty around the world.

Chaplain (Colonel) Chip Huey is the Chief of the Policy and Government Affairs Division in the U.S. Army Office of the Chief of Chaplains. He graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi a few years before Brett Favre with a degree in History, Reformed Theological Seminary with a Masters of Divinity in Biblical Languages, and from the U.S. Army War College with a Masters of Strategic Studies. He and his wife, Kristin, have five kids: Isa, Sam, Ethan, Nathan, and Seth.

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NOTES

1 James Madison, et al. “Constitution of the United States: Bill of Rights.”(December 15th, 1791). https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights-transcript.

2 William E. Miller, *The First Liberty: Religion and the American Republic* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 3-4.

3 Ibid., 4.

4 Ibid., 4.

5 Lois M. Eveleth, “Locke and the Problem of Toleration,” Salve Regina University, *Faculty and Staff* – Articles and Papers 77, (2007): 19-20.

6 John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. James H. Tully, (Indianapolis: 1983), Introduction, 1-2.

7 William E. Miller, *The First Liberty: Religion and the American Republic* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 6.

8 William E. Miller, *The First Liberty: Religion and the American Republic* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), 4.

9 Ibid., 5.

10 Ibid., 5-6.

11 Richard E. Labunski, *James Madison and the Struggle for the Bill of Rights* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000) 198-199.

12 U.S. Court of Appeals, Second District, “Katkoff v Marsh,” Casemine.com, January, 1985.

RESPONSE TO

Chaplain (Colonel) Chip Huey's Reflection

By Daniel Blomberg and Eric Baxter

Chaplain Huey is correct that religious freedom is not a matter of governmental grace, which the government gives and can take away, but rather "a right inherent to men and women."[1] We also think that he is—unfortunately—correct that there are legitimate and growing concerns that this inherent right is threatened by increasingly hostile, or at least indifferent, government actors. A recent line of cases that reached the U.S. Supreme Court is illustrative.

In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the world was trying to figure out how best to respond, American governments mandated widespread shutdowns. Houses of worship often led the way in adopting measures to help protect public health during the time of uncertainty. Over time, society started re-opening. But churches, synagogues, and mosques were left behind while government increasingly loosened restrictions for favored commercial entities. This created a prolonged isolation for faith groups, cutting them off from communal activities. That was a severe burden on the groups, which are often theologically defined in large part precisely by their existence as a community which assembles together. Indeed, a leading religion-law scholar, Prof. Michael McConnell of Stanford Law School, explained that the "precursor" to the First Amendment's freedom of assembly was precisely that "freedom to gather together for religious worship."[2] Thus, as the Supreme Court later recognized, barring believers from assembling for worship "str[uc]k at the very heart of the First Amendment's guarantee of religious liberty."[3]

New York was a particularly flagrant offender, issuing regulations that openly targeted Orthodox Jewish synagogues. When a group of synagogues (and nearby Catholic parishes inadvertently caught up in the state's dragnet) sued, the Supreme Court called New York out for obviously "singl[ing] out housing of worship for especially harsh treatment" while giving a pass to commercial entities such as "acupuncture facilities, camp grounds," manufacturing plants, and large shopping centers.[4] Despite being "ahead of the curve" and "enforcing stricter safety protocols than the State required," with "no outbreak of COVID-19 in its congregations," houses of worship were treated worse than politically popular special interests.[5]

After the Supreme Court rebuked New York, though, other states were slow to get the message. California repeatedly lost at the Supreme Court when it discriminated against religious gatherings in favor of "hair salons, retail stores, … movie theaters, and private suites at sporting events."[6] Governments, the Court explained, cannot "assume the worst when people go to worship but assume the best when people go to work"; rather, religion must be treated fairly.[7]

Two problems were at work in these cases. *First*, a palpable hostility toward religion, such as New York's dangerous scapegoating of Orthodox Jews as a "very politically powerful" group that was a "problem" for protecting people from COVID-19.[8] New York's own data showed houses of worship were safer than many other permitted activities, yet officials in the highest reaches of state government forced public health authorities to garb political priorities in scientific-sounding statement.[9] Second, the COVID cases showed a substantial devaluation of religion by some government officials. To them, casinos and sporting events were more important than worship during a time of crisis. Thus, even though synagogues posed no more threat to public health than tattoo parlors, only one was worthy of accommodation. That gets things exactly backwards. In a society committed to religious liberty, religion should be treated at least equally, not worse, than similar secular activities.

That many of our governmental leaders flunked this elementary lesson during the COVID-19 pandemic is cause for concern. It is also a reminder of one of CH Huey's other points: the chaplaincy's continuing crucial role in faithfully and courageously advocating for religious liberty for all.

NOTES

1 The authors wish to thank Chaplain Huey for his service to our country.

2 *See* Michael McConnell, *The Problem of Singling Out Religion*, 50 DePaul L. Rev. 1, 16 (2000). *See also* John Inazu, *Between Liberalism and Theocracy*, 33 Camp. L. Rev. 591, 601 (2011) (describing the "rich political-theological meaning" to religious assembly, as reflected in the Greek word *ekklesia*, which described "not just the occasional gather, but the [religious] group itself").

3 *Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn* v. Cuomo, 141 S. Ct. 63, 68 (2020).

4 *Id*. at 67 (cleaned up).

5 *Id*. at 68.

6 *Tandon v. Newsom*, 141 S. Ct. 1294, 1297 (2020).

7 *Id*.

8 *See* Application at 6-7, *Agudath Israel of America v. Cuomo*, No. 20A90 (2020).

9 *See* Mark Rienzi, *COVID's Religious Liberty Lesson for Courts*, RealClearPolitics (April 1, 2021), https://perma.cc/HDJ6-V2TP; *see also* Luise Ferre-Sadurni, *Health Agency Under C*uomo 'Misled the Public' on Nursing Home Deaths, New York Times (March 15, 2022), https://perma.cc/C4HU-ZZG3; *accord* Joseph Goldstein, *Doctor Who Swabbed Cuomo Describes a Health Department in Shambles*, New York Times (Nov. 22, 2021), https://perma.cc/6ND2-9TZS.

RESPONSE TO

Chaplain (Colonel) Chip Huey's Reflection

By Dr. Wendy Cadge, Dr. Amy Lawton, and Dr. Grace Tien

The balance between the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause is a continual challenge in American public life. That balance is also perhaps the primary reason that religion is sometimes controversial in public life. Consider the recent Supreme Court decision in *Kennedy v. Bremerton*. The Supreme Court, at the end of June in 2022, ruled in favor of a high school football coach who had been put on paid leave after praying publicly in his official capacity. The Supreme Court found that the coach's religious speech was protected by the Free Exercise Clause, while the dissent cited the Establishment Clause. The dissent argued that a public-school employee should not endorse particular religious practices in their official roles. Both the ruling and the dissent use an important constitutional tenet, so it is not surprising that emotions around the ruling run high.

In whatever light one views the *Kennedy v. Bremerton* decision, it is the newest version of a longstanding American question: How can we best protect free exercise without establishing religion? This question and its answer are crucial to the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps because military Chaplains frequently find themselves at the intersection of the Free Exercise Clause and the Establishment Clause. In interviews conducted by the Chaplaincy Innovation Lab, military Chaplains spoke often of the "mandate" to ensure free exercise for religiously-diverse members of the Armed Services. In the military, Chaplains see themselves as tasked with guaranteeing both spiritual care and the constitutional right to practice one's religion or no religion. This mandate includes ensuring the rights of religious minorities and advocating for marginalized groups in the face of competing interests. There is no single way to do this so Chaplains frequently navigate the complexity of finding this balance. Because it does this work, among many kinds of work, the Chaplain Corps is truly indispensable.

RESPONSE TO

Chaplain (Colonel) Chip Huey's Reflection

By Jason Lemieux

I imagine that even religious leaders can understand why nonreligious Americans might be nonplussed by the assumption that their empirically verifiable concerns about health and safety are legally or culturally inferior to unfalsifiable moral convictions, whether religious or otherwise. The evidence abounds that SARS-COV-2 has harmed many people and continues to hurt and kill many more. A Humanist might observe that our common humanity includes the capacity to examine evidence, confirm it for ourselves, and come to agreement on proven facts. Religious faith is extremely important to many people, but it is not accessible to every individual member of the public in the same way.

To my knowledge, there are two types of controversial COVID protections with implications for free exercise: emergency restrictions on assembly in communal spaces, including houses of worship; and religious exemptions to immunization or masking mandates as a condition of assembly or employment in communal spaces.

Assuming these protections are the ones being alluded to, the author's position seems to be that Constitutional law provides for the supremacy of religious concerns at the expense of other concerns including the health and safety of members of a congregation, military communities, and the general public.

I find it vexing to make sense of this argument in the context of military service. As I mentioned in my own reflection, as I see it, voluntary military service involves sacrificing many privileges and, to some extent, rights enjoyed by civilians. Vaccination mandates, which have long been a requirement for military service, seem to me to fall squarely within this realm.

Restrictions on assembly impose a greater burden on those affected; I believe these should be applied much more narrowly to protect public health during emergencies. A general prohibition on in-person attendance at houses of worship would be a plain violation of the right to free exercise. But in the specific context of a temporary prohibition to slow the spread of a dangerous, highly contagious airborne virus such as SARS-COV-2, I believe such protections are justifiable.

Advocates for the constitutional separation of church and state have a saying regarding religious freedom: your right to swing your fist ends at my nose. Everyone has the right to worship freely if they do not infringe upon the rights of others, including the right to freedom from sickness and disease. I believe, and here I am speaking frankly, that all nonmedical exemptions—religious, moral, or otherwise—to public health mandates should be eliminated.

REFLECTION ON

The First Amendment of the Constitution

By Dr. Wendy Cadge, Dr. Amy Lawton, and Dr. Grace Tien

At the Chaplaincy Innovation Lab,[1] we examine the field of chaplaincy through the twin lenses of supply and demand. We consider how Chaplains are supplied through training programs and hiring programs, while Chaplains are in demand from organizations and people who need spiritual care. Our research on supply-side issues includes questions about who is training to become a Chaplain, where and how Chaplains are training, and how Chaplains are hired, particularly for federal jobs. We summarized many of these questions and existing research about them in a working paper, "What are Chaplains Learning? Perspectives on the Supply Side." A supply-side focus brings into view where chaplains are being trained to work now and what that training includes.

Questions about the demand side are different because they focus on where chaplains are needed or are in demand and the effects are of their work. Where are the people who need a chaplain, and what is the content of that need? Does demand exist only for an individual in a moment of crisis, or for an institution that needs regular spiritual care providers? Our working paper on demand-side issues will be in circulation for feedback at the end of 2022. The demand-side focus brings into view where spiritual care needs are being met, but also, where they are being overlooked.

In asking questions about the supply of and demand for chaplains, we identify gaps between the demand for chaplaincy and spiritual care, and how chaplains are trained and certified. In the Army Chaplain Corps both supply and demand are governed by the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses of the First Amendment. The requirement for the Army to have Chaplains is, on its face, neither a supply nor a demand question. The U.S. government has long recognized the importance of religion to its Service members, beginning with Chaplains in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. Today's professional Chaplain Corps developed first in World War I and included and served Protestants, Catholics, and Jews by the second half of the twentieth century.

Demand for chaplaincy and spiritual care shifts with broader changes in American religious demographics. Recent survey data from the Pew Research Center and Public Religion Research Institute show that nearly 3-in-10 of Americans are not religiously affiliated,[2] including 36% of those under the age of thirty.[3] According to the Defense Manpower Data Center, one-quarter (24.4%) of active-duty personnel reported their religious affiliation as other, unclassified, or unknown in January 2019.[4] This is in addition to 2.3% of Active Duty personnel who identify as atheist or agnostic. Taken together, social scientists call these 26.7% of people "Nones"[5]—those who are aligned with none of the established religions or religious categories. "Humanist" is its own religious preference code as of 2014 and is not reflected in these numbers. There are more Nones—religiously unaffiliated Soldiers—among Active Duty personnel today than at any time since our Nation's founding, which parallels the increased diversity in the military overall.[6] It is in the particular case of the Nones that we begin to see the need for supply and demand lenses in the Chaplain Corps. How do members of this group experience Chaplains in the Army and other branches of the military (demand side question)? How are Chaplains in the Army Chaplain Corps, who at this point at likely not themselves Nones, being trained or hired to serve the Nones (supply side question)?

There appears to be a growing gap between the religious demographics of Soldiers and the Army Chaplain Corps that serves them. The Army Chaplain Corps is largely Christian, mostly Protestant. Soldiers are much more diverse than the Corps and include many Nones—people who are not religiously affiliated. We encourage leaders

of the Army Chaplain Corps to think about questions of establishment and free exercise in addressing this gap: How is the free exercise of Nones supported by people who may not themselves be Nones? How are establishment concerns addressed when the religious-endorsing organizations are, by definition, religious?

Serving Soldiers who are not religiously affiliated is further complicated by the fact that it is currently impossible for the Army Chaplain Corps fully to reflect their religious preferences. To become a Chaplain, applicants must be endorsed by one of the approximately 200 endorsing agencies recognized by the Armed Forces Chaplains Board. According to Section 4 of DoD Instruction 1304.28, religious-endorsing organizations must function to provide religious ministry to a lay membership and must hold an exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service as a church[7] for federal tax purposes, among other requirements. While the federal government has technically sidestepped establishing a religion by relying on religious-endorsing groups in these ways, it has outsourced to religious-endorsing organizations the responsibility for certifying religious professionals.

The list of religious-endorsing organizations excludes Humanist, Atheist and other groups to which Nones might be connected. Individuals from religious traditions without federally-recognized Endorsers—and individuals with no religion at all—cannot become military Chaplains because there is no religious-endorsing organization to recognize them. In deciding which religious-endorsing organizations to recognize, the government *de facto* decides what counts as religion and puts the religious-endorsing organizations in a position of implicitly establishing or recognizing some groups and not others. There is no endorsing Church of None, and yet, there is abundant research that suggests that the Nones have the same keen spiritual needs as their religious fellows—needs such as self-worth, reconciliation, and meaning and direction.

As more young people—and therefore more Soldiers—are not religiously affiliated, the Army must advocate for changes in demand to shape how Endorsers supply Chaplains for their work. This will likely require them to continue to protect free exercise and dis-establishment, even in forms that free exercise has not previously taken. At minimum, all members of the Army Chaplain Corps should be receiving ongoing education in how to support Soldiers who are not religiously affiliated. In the longer term, we encourage the Army to recognize that the search for meaning, for spiritual growth, and for connection beyond oneself are not constitutionally mandated to happen within a group that fits the definition of a religious-endorsing body, as defined either by the IRS or the DoD. The act and process of searching for meaning and purpose are essential aspects of our humanity regardless of our religious affiliation or lack thereof. The current structure of endorsement—specifically the endorsing agencies recognized by the Armed Forces Chaplains Board—makes it impossible for the Army Chaplain Corps to recognize leaders among the Nones and allow them to join the Army Chaplain Corps.

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The Forum is a space for engaging conversation on difficult topics that are relevant to chaplaincy in the context of national defense. The views expressed in the reflections and responses are those of the contributor and do not necessarily represent the views of the Department of Defense or its Components. Further, the views expressed do not constitute legal advice regardless of whether the contributor is an attorney or not.

NOTES

1 The Chaplaincy Innovation Lab, based at Brandeis University, launched in October 2018 to bring chaplains, theological educators, clinical educators, and social scientists into conversation about the work of chaplaincy and spiritual care. Visit us at https://chaplaincyinnovation.org/.

2 Pew Research Center. "About Three-in-Ten U.S. Adults Are Now Religiously Unaffiliated." December 14, 2021. https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/12/14/about-three-in-ten-u-s-adults-are-now-religiously-unaffiliated/.

3 Public Religion Research Institute (PPRI). 2021. "The 2020 Census of American Religion." July 8, 2021. https://www.prri.org/research/2020-census-of-american-religion/.

4 Congressional Research Service. 2019. "Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity in the Armed Services: Background and Issues for Congress." R44321. https://crsreports.congress.gov/.

5 *Nones* dates to a sociological paper published in 1967, although it has made its way into popular culture in the meantime.

6 Our supply-side working paper discusses how increasing racial and gender diversity may present other challenges and opportunities to the Chaplain Corps, the leadership of which remains largely white and male.

7 While DoDI 1304.28 specifies that a religious-endorsing organization "currently holds an exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a church for Federal tax purposes, in accordance with Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code," IRC Section 501 does not define a "church," referring instead to organizations operated for "religious…purposes." The decision to not define "church" is explained in IRS Publication 557: "Because beliefs and practices vary widely, there is no single definition of the word church for tax purposes. The IRS considers the facts and circumstances of each organization applying for church status." The lack of an agreed-upon definition adds yet another level of confusion for nontraditional religious-endorsers to navigate.

RESPONSE TO

Dr. Wendy Cadge, Dr. Amy Lawton, and Dr. Grace Tien's Reflection

By Chaplain (Colonel) Chip Huey

The authors from the Chaplaincy Innovation Lab (CIL) use a novel lens to examine the military chaplaincy: supply and demand. As a free market believer, I support using supply and demand as eyeglasses through with to look at the military, and specifically the Army, chaplaincy. I also like it when someone offers innovative ideas to improve how Chaplains serve. However, assumptions and data inputs drive economic models. In this instance I respectfully beg to differ with some of the assumptions and data inputs in CIL's model and want to offer an alternative perspective.

One of CIL's primary assumptions is that military Chaplains, as religious leaders endorsed by religious organizations, cannot effectively serve or minister to non-religious Service members. However, the upcoming version of AR 165-1 codifies what's always been true of Army Chaplains: "While a historic Army Chaplain Corps function involves providing moral and ethical leadership and advice; ethical and moral impacts, and decision-making often involve non-religious personal and institutional values and ethics. In this context, the religious support of the CHC applies to both religious and non-religious personnel."[1] While there are always exceptions, Army Chaplains have historically ministered to all comers, regardless of beliefs. In fact, the entrance criteria to serve in any of the Service Chaplain Corps require that Chaplains can "address issues of spirit, conscience, or well-being that may not be exclusively ministerial in nature or defined by their religious-endorsing organization. Such care and counseling are rooted in ethics and morality and may or may not be faith based at the person's request. The well-being of the person receiving such services will always receive the highest priority."[2] Endorsers are obligated to nominate potential Chaplains who are able to serve effectively both religious and non-religious Service members. There's a positivity to most Chaplain-Soldier ministry, that Soldiers are very willing to see Chaplains.

Currently the Army Chaplain Corps is building the infrastructure across the Army for the Spiritual Readiness Initiative (SRI). Based largely on the work of Dr. Lisa Miller from Columbia University, the SRI recognizes and seeks to address the spiritual needs of all Soldiers. Field Manual 7-22, in a chapter on Spiritual Readiness largely authored by Chaplains, states: "Spirituality is often described as a sense of connection that gives meaning and purpose to a person's life. It is unique to each individual. The spiritual dimension applies to all people, whether religious and nonreligious. Identifying one's purpose, core values, beliefs, identity, and life vision defines the spiritual dimension."[3] I think Army Chaplains get it, contrary to the assumption that we don't recognize that "the search for meaning, for spiritual growth, and for connection beyond oneself" occur in Soldiers who aren't religious and are "essential aspects of our humanity." Human nature is human nature with many commonalities between the religious and non-religious.

I readily acknowledge that 24.4% of Active Duty Service members "reported their religious affiliation as other, unclassified, or unknown," but that doesn't mean they are necessarily irreligious and unable to relate to a Chaplain. Those Soldiers could have opted for Atheist, Agnostic, or Humanist designations… but they didn't. That they didn't opt for those designations may imply more of an openness to religious leaders like Chaplains; one certainly can't assume they are opposed to religious leaders. Anecdotally, many Army Chaplains may testify to the unreliability of religious data in personnel files, which is based on Soldier self-report without an individual Soldier necessarily possessing clear awareness of possible categories.

Finally, *10 U.S. Code 7217*, which lays out the duties of Chaplains, states that "each chaplain shall… hold appropriate religious services…"[4] So it's reasonable to assume that Chaplains are going to be religious leaders. Humanist or atheist Chaplains can't conduct religious services, but Chaplains are religious

leaders who lead religious services and can minister to all Soldiers, religious and non-religious. Psychologists are assigned down to the brigade level and are available to serve Soldiers who are uncomfortable with Chaplains, and if those Soldiers don't want to see psychologists, Chaplains can refer them to civilian Chaplains with whom they might be comfortable. Through the doctrine of perform or provide, Chaplains balance the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses as we meet the demand of the religious and spiritual needs of all Soldiers.

NOTES

1 Army Regulation 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities*, August 19, 2021, Chapter 1, 1.7 "The Chaplain Corps and the U.S. Constitution," pp 1-2.

2 Department of Defense Instruction 1304.28, *The Appointment and Service of Chaplains*, May 12, 2021, Section 3, 3.1, g, page 5.

3 Field Manual 7-22, *Holistic Health and Fitness*, October 2020, Chapter 10-1.

4 *10 U.S. Code 7217*, https://uscode.house.gov/.

RESPONSE TO

Dr. Wendy Cadge, Dr. Amy Lawton, and Dr. Grace Tien's Reflection

By Daniel Blomberg and Eric Baxter

The authors from the Chaplaincy Innovation Lab (CIL) are right that the military has "long recognized the importance of religion to its service members," and that the necessity of military chaplains is not a mere question of supply-and-demand, but rather "governed by the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses of the First Amendment." But, like Lemieux, CIL suggests that chaplaincy should abandon religion as its animating purpose. We think that would cuts it adrift from precisely those Free Exercise and Establishment foundations.

CIL reasons that the search for meaning is indeed essential to our shared humanity, and Service members should absolutely have access to resources that support those needs. Those points are both of course true. But we do not see that those premises lead to the conclusion that the chaplaincy must be so drastically reconfigured. Not every search for meaning is religious in nature, and the chaplaincy fundamentally exists to meet religious needs. While the military chaplaincy provides support for people of all religions and no religion, its Constitutional and existential grounding is in protecting the free exercise of religion. Congress is constitutionally required to provide a chaplaincy because it must not infringe the free exercise of religion when the call of duty would otherwise interfere with Service members' regular religious observance.[1] That is, it must ensure access to *religion*. But Congress has no similar First Amendment duty to provide general secular services.[2]

Making such services the chaplaincy's ultimate purpose would weaken its constitutional *raison d'être*. Similarly, a secular chaplaincy would undermine the nuanced, faith-sensitive manner in which the U.S. military ensures chaplains are authentic representatives of their faith groups. If the chaplaincy were primarily or solely a secular enterprise, then the constitutional basis for respecting the decisions of religious bodies in the selection of chaplains would not be nearly so well-supported by the First Amendment.[3] In less legal terms, it would also lose sight of the unique role of religion in human identity, dignity, and history. Religion has a special role in society because it has a special role in how humanity has understood, guided, encouraged, comforted, and consoled itself throughout our history. This is not

to say, of course, that nonreligion is unimportant; just that it is different.

Further, abandoning or muddying the religion-focused core purpose of the chaplaincy would harm more than it helps. Non-religious Service members can and do already obtain considerate care from chaplains that respects their secular perspective.[4] And there are existing forms of secular guidance available from the military, including from military psychologists and counselors.

To the extent additional services or protections are necessary for non-religious Service members, then they of course should be provided. But not in ways that mandate abandoning the chaplaincy's religious purpose.

NOTES

1 *See Katcoff*, 755 F.2d at 227.

2 *Thomas*, 450 U.S. at 713; *Yoder*, 406 U.S. at 215.

3 *Our Lady of Guadalupe Sch. v. Morrissey-Berru*, 140 S. Ct. 2049, 2060 (2020) (explaining that "[s]tate interference" in religious leadership selection "would obviously violate the free exercise of religion, and any attempt to by government to dictate or event to influence such matters would constitute one of the central attributes of an establishment of religion").

4 *See Katelyn Myers, 21st Theater Sustainment Command welcomes the Introduction of Spiritual Readiness Initiative*, U.S. Army (Oct. 31, 2021), https://perma.cc/UM9J-R92G (quoting the Army Chief of Chaplains that chaplains must care for soldiers "[r]egardless of whether they have a religious belief or not"); see also Libby Weiler, *Chaplains nurture living, care for wounded, honor dead*, U.S. Army (January 11, 2022), https://perma.cc/TL8K-2VPY; *accord Samuel Keenan, Military chaplains serve non religious service members*, U.S. Army (Feb. 21, 2018), https://perma.cc/8KAH-NAH8.

RESPONSE TO

Dr. Wendy Cadge, Dr. Amy Lawton, and Dr. Grace Tien's Reflection

By Jason Lemieux

I greatly appreciated the authors' observation that there are no Humanist organizations on the list of Ecclesiastical Endorsing Agents maintained by the Department of Defense (DoD). This touches on a critical process issue—there is at least one Humanist organization ready and willing to endorse Humanist candidates. The Humanist Society, which trains and certifies Humanist Chaplains, is registered for tax-exempt status as a religious nonprofit organization with the Internal Revenue Service.[1] In addition, it is recognized by the Association for Professional Chaplains (APC) as a Chaplain Endorser.[2]

So why have no candidates endorsed by the Humanist Society been approved? There are no obvious regulatory explanations. I suspect that this is symptomatic of a larger issue: a belief among key leaders that the right to free exercise elevates religious concerns above nonreligious concerns regardless of context.

In 2014, the Humanist Society agreed to endorse Jason Heap to become the only Humanist chaplain in both the Navy and the military. After a Navy review board initially found that Heap's application met eligibility requirements, lawmakers from both chambers of congress intervened to stop the Navy from approving an "atheist" candidate.

Although the Navy never provided a formal explanation of their reasons for rejecting Heap, *Military Times* quoted an anonymous Navy official as saying, "I don't know that he represents a religious organization by any accepted definition."[3, 4] Setting aside that Heap was endorsed by a religious organization by the definition of the IRS, this conception of chaplaincy is too narrow to attend to the diverse pastoral needs of today's military.[5] Humanism is not a religion per

se, but in our society Humanists have a worldview that is culturally-oriented with respect to religion.

Recognizing this fact, the DoD in 2017 added several nonreligious options to the list from which service members self-report their religious identity and amended the title of the list from "faith codes" to the more inclusive "faith and belief codes." According to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, these changes were requested by the Armed Forces Chaplain Board (AFCB) in part to enable "better planning for religious support to the force" and "better assessment of the capabilities and requirements of each Military Service's Chaplain Corps."[6] This reads to me like an acknowledgement from AFCB that these changes are necessary for the Chaplain Corps to meet the pastoral needs of a 21st century force. In other words, it sounds like movement in the right direction.

However, it is clearly not movement enough, because Heap re-applied to the Navy Chaplain Corps and, although still meeting all qualifications, was rejected again in 2018.

The Chaplain Corps should embrace changes that uphold the right of every Service member to religious freedom while harming no one. The Corps should commit to and reaffirm a vision of pastoral care in which every Service member has a meaningful choice to find, express, and share meaning in life via a religious context, a nonreligious one, or both.

NOTES

1 Wintermute, Kristin. Director of Education, American Humanist Association, in email correspondence with author, September 16, 2022. See also U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Form 990, Schedule R, "THE AMERICAN HUMANIST ASSOCIATION," 2020, https://safe.menlosecurity.com/doc/docview/viewer/docNB85F15A7445482817a3f26327929fc17e8a09b18c5c6798c836837562856e99681826d7d0164.

2 The Humanist Society, http://americanhumanist.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/2020-AHA-990.pdf, accessed on September 15, 2022.

3 "Atheist group urges Congress to allow humanist military chaplains," *Military Times*, July 22, 2014, https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2014/07/22/atheist-group-urges-congress-to-allow-humanist-military-chaplains/.

4 In the following year, Heap alleged in a complaint filed in federal court that then-Chief of Navy Chaplains and Armed Forces Chaplain Board (AFCB) member Rear Admiral Margaret Kibben privately gave a different explanation, telling a fellow officer that "Humanist organizations never really demonstrate the benefits of a Humanist Chaplain compared to a Christian Chaplain." No regulation establishes "the benefits of a Christian chaplain" as a standard that non-Christian organizations must meet or exceed for eligibility, nor would such a regulation meet the constitutional requirement for religious neutrality.

5 U.S. Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, Faith and Belief Codes for Reporting Personnel Data of Service Members, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary Lernes Herbert. Washington, D.C.: 2017, Caution-https://americanhumanist.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Faith-and-Belief-Codes-for-Reporting-Personnel-Data-of-Service-Members.pdf.

6 U.S. Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, F*aith and Belief Codes for Reporting Personnel Data of Service Members*, Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary Lernes Herbert. Washington, D.C.: 2017, https://americanhumanist.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Faith-and-Belief-Codes-for-Reporting-Personnel-Data-of-Service-Members.pdf.

REFLECTION ON

The First Amendment of the Constitution

By Jason Lemieux

A modern, professional, Constitutionally-grounded military Chaplain Corps must provide pastoral care to all Service members regardless of their religious beliefs or lack thereof. It should be inclusive of Humanist Chaplains, although individual Chaplains do not need to be Humanists themselves to fulfill their pastoral obligations to this growing group of Service members. To my own mind, above all, the Chaplain Corps must remember always that it is a public institution with a secular purpose.

The provision of pastoral care must transcend a purely religious character, because the United States military is tremendously diverse. Even in a unit comprised entirely of Christians, there are very likely to be adherents of many denominations with hotly contested theological interpretations and therefore very little theology that a Chaplain could safely assume was shared by all.

The regulations that establish the purpose of the military Chaplain Corps are silent on the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution.[1] Instead, they cite only the Free Exercise Clause. On some views, the military, as a government institution bound to the Constitution, elevates religious concerns above nonreligious ones. It does not. In 1968, the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Epperson v. Arkansas* that the Establishment Clause "mandates governmental neutrality between religion and religion, and between religion and nonreligion" (emphasis added).[2] To my mind, what flows from this is that to faithfully uphold the Constitution, the Chaplain Corps is obligated to provide equal pastoral care to all Service members regardless of their religious beliefs or lack thereof.

Nonreligious Humanist Chaplains serve with distinction in institutions of all kinds both in the U.S. and abroad—militaries, hospitals, schools, prisons, allied government agencies.[3, 4] In Northwestern European countries, there are enough Humanist Chaplains to fill a conference hall.[5] Humanist Chaplains serve everywhere, it would seem, except for the United States military. I say this to preempt the too-clever-by-half assertion that a nonreligious Chaplain is a contradiction in terms.[6]

I have had conversations with Chaplains who acknowledged the necessity for equality in pastoral care. I spoke with one veteran of the Army Chaplain Corps who insisted that, when a Service member came to him for help, he took off his priest collar so that he could meet them one-to-one without religious authority acting as a barrier to trust and understanding. Regardless of the religious views of an individual Service member, this technique made his counseling more effective.

There have been times in my life when I would have appreciated similar thoughtfulness, but it was not forthcoming. Recently, less than one week before my birthday, my father died of cancer. He was a Marine Corps veteran who conducted security patrols around the Da Nang Airbase in 1970. One weekend in January, recognizing that his time was short, I booked a one-way flight to my hometown for the following Thursday to spend the rest of his life with him. His cancer had been worsening for months, but I had recently fallen on hard times and had only now recovered enough financially to afford the trip. Two days after I booked the ticket and four days before my flight, my father died. My trip home was no longer to spend his last days with him. It was to attend his wake.

After my father's wake, we held a reception at the local Veterans of Foreign Wars post where he had served as Quartermaster. There, a distant family member asked if he could pray with me. He clearly just assumed that all good people are religious, as I've noticed religious

people sometimes do. In that moment, having just said goodbye forever to my dad, I did not have the strength to confront the stigma and disdain that would have presented itself, in bystanders if not in him personally, had I revealed my nonreligion. That evening, I would not get the benefit of a gesture based on informed respect for my worldview that drew from our shared empirical knowledge of the world, which imparted a deeply meaningful experience to me.

Strictly speaking, his prayer was not helpful, but I chose to find a more universal meaning in his compassionate desire to help me find peace and comfort in my time of grief. So I bowed my head and pretended for a few minutes to seek solace from the Christian god.

My experience is not unique. In a trend that is unlikely to reverse any time soon, the population of nonreligious Americans has grown to become larger than any religious demographic in the United States. According to the federally funded General Social Survey, following a meteoric rise from under ten percent in the 1990s, in 2018 nonreligious folks narrowly edged out Evangelical Christians to become the largest "religious" identity bloc in the U.S. at 23.1%.[7]

A similar trend holds for the U.S. military. According to survey data analyzed by the Military Leadership Diversity Commission, 25.5% of U.S. military Service members held no religious preference in 2009.[8] A much smaller percentage of explicitly Humanist Service members is growing rapidly.[9] Despite this huge proportion of Service members with pastoral needs that do not fit neatly in any religious box, there has never been a Humanist or nonreligious Chaplain in any U.S. military service.

Nonreligious Service members need pastoral care as much as anybody. As their proportion in the ranks continues to grow, it is more important than ever for the Chaplain Corps to anticipate and meet their needs. The basic elements of human experience—joy, grief, loss, anxiety, contentment—can obviously be expressed in religious terms, but they do not by any means require a religious framework. It is up to the individual Service member to decide how, and to what extent, their pastoral needs are met with religion.

In the United States, the military Chaplain Corps has a constitutional obligation to maintain neutrality with regard to matters of religion. This means meeting every one of the roughly 2.2 million currently serving Service members where they are, religious or not, to offer compassion and guidance in moments of need, and to help make meaning of their life experiences. The Corps currently falls short of this obligation.

Jason Lemieux served as an assault man in the U.S. Marine Corps from 2001-2006. He was honorably discharged with the rank of sergeant. Jason holds a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Master of International Affairs from Columbia University. More recently, Jason has advocated for the rights of nonbelievers with several nonprofit organizations. He lives in Washington, DC with his domestic shorthair cats Dorito and Gobble.

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NOTES

1 Department of Defense. Directive 1304.28. "The Appointment and Service of Chaplains." May 12, 2021. https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodi/130428p.pdf.

2 *Epperson v. Arkansas*, 393 U.S. 97 (1968), Justia (U.S. Supreme Court 1968).

3 "Humanist Chaplains Are Slowly Becoming Reality - at Least in Europe." Humanists International, February 1, 2019. https://humanists.international/2018/09/humanist-pastoral-support-slowly-becoming-reality-least-europe/#:~:text=In%20Norway%2C%20a%20humanist%20%E2%80%9Cchaplain,team%20in%20a%20public%20hospital.

4 Sherwood, Harriet. "NHS Appoints Humanist to Lead Chaplaincy Team." *The Guardian*, April 9, 2018. https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/apr/09/nhs-appoints-humanist-to-lead-chaplaincy-team-lindsay-van-dijk.

5 Schuhmann, C. M., J. Wojtkowiak, R. van Lierop, and F. Pitstra. "Humanist Chaplaincy According to Northwestern European Humanist Chaplains: Towards a Framework for Understanding Chaplaincy in Secular Societies." *Journal of Health Care Chaplaincy* 27, no. 4 (2020): 207–21. https://doi.org/10.1080/08854726.2020.1723190.

6 See, for example, this exchange between Tony Perkins and Senator Roger Wicker, both military veterans who are educated enough to know that the Constitution does not support their religious supremacy: Broadcast. *Washington Watch with Tony Perkins*. Family Research Council, March 20, 2018. Accessed June 1, 2022. https://www.tonyperkins.com/get.cfm?i=LR18C15.

7 Jenkins, Jack. "'Nones' Now as Big as Evangelicals, Catholics in the US." Religion News Service, October 9, 2019. https://religionnews.com/2019/03/21/nones-now-as-big-as-evangelicals-catholics-in-the-us/.

8 To be clear, indicating no religious preference does not necessarily mean that someone is nonreligious. For example, some people of no religious preference may believe in a higher power that does not meet the description of God in the Bible. It does, however, demonstrate the need for broader pastoral care than strict religious ministry can provide.

9 Military Leadership Diversity Commission, Religious Diversity in the U.S. Military. Issue Paper #22 (2010). https://militaryatheists.org/resources/MLDC-RIPSdemographics.pdf.

RESPONSE TO

Jason Lemieux's Reflection

By Chaplain (Colonel) Chip Huey

I am grateful to Jason Lemieux for his service as a Marine. Fewer jobs in the world require more courage… especially when that job entailed three deployments to Iraq. I'm saddened to read of his father's death and am grateful to his father for his service in Vietnam. So, it's with the utmost respect that I will offer a differing perspective from Lemieux's. I hold that while the military chaplaincies, to include the U.S. Army Chaplain Corps, are religious in their core purpose, they nevertheless reinforce the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment. I base this statement on what I have seen in my time as a Chaplain: that Chaplains effectively serve all Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines regardless of the beliefs of those Service members.

Lemieux begins his essay with an assertion that is true: today's military chaplaincies must provide pastoral support to all Service members, whether religious or not. However, he sees, as I do not, military chaplaincy as a public institution with a secular purpose. On my view, the legal record clearly shows that the military chaplaincy expressly has a religious purpose. The Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses of the First Amendment to the Constitution, both of which the military chaplaincy exists to uphold, are about religion… as stated in their verbiage. The U.S. Code that defines the Chaplain's role does so in expressly religious terms: "Each chaplain shall, when practicable, hold appropriate religious services… and shall perform appropriate religious burial services…"[1] I see very clearly that the core purpose of the military chaplaincy revolves around religion.

Chaplains represent the diversity of religious bodies in the U.S., and they serve all Service members, regardless of religious belief or lack thereof. Army Regulation states that "Congress recognizes the necessity of the Chaplain Corps in striking a balance between the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses."[2] The U.S. Army has had Chaplains since 1775 and the Senate and the House of Representatives have also maintained chaplains. In each case courts have not held that these chaplaincies are a violation of the Establishment Clause, and the implication is clear that those chaplains serve all of their people regardless of individual beliefs.

However, while the core purpose of the military chaplaincy is religious, Chaplains spend much of their time serving non-religious Service members. Chaplains do, as a matter of doctrine, and in daily, practical experience, provide pastoral care to all Service members. Army Techniques Publication 1-05.04 states the following: "The word *religious* when describing the Chaplain Corps role of religious support is not limited solely to strict matters of religion as the term is commonly defined. FM 1-05 articulates an historic Army Chaplain Corps function of providing moral and ethical leadership and advice. While ethical and moral impacts and decision making are often related to religion in the traditional sense of the word, these issues often involve non-religious personal and institutional values and ethics."[3] Over the course of my almost three decades on Active Duty, at least half, if not more, of my counseling and opportunities to be present amidst crisis have been with those who hold no religious beliefs. I can't begin to count the number of counseling conversations I've had with Soldiers that started with, "Chaplain, I'm not religious, but…" On the occasion when a Service member is uncomfortable with the idea of talking with a Chaplain because of the Chaplain's religious commitments, the Chaplain will ensure that Service member meets with someone who will meet the need, whether a military psychologist (they're now assigned to every Brigade in the Army) or an appropriate professional on the Civilian side. We don't have to remove a priest collar; our uniform and our presence welcome Soldiers in and of themselves.

The Services' Chaplain Corps, and the Chaplains in them, do meet Service members "where they are, religious or not, to offer compassion and guidance in moments of need and to help make meaning of their life experiences." We call this "ministry of presence." While Chaplains are religious leaders who enable the free exercise of religion, they also serve all Service members on their, the Service members', own terms…and if for some reason any Service member is uncomfortable and wants someone else,

Chaplains will ensure that those needs are met. Chaplains understand human nature, spirituality, and experience and have served those needs since America's colonial days. The Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses and U.S. Code clearly dictate that Chaplains must be religious leaders, but in keeping with their religious traditions, Chaplains meet all Service members just as they are: human beings on the journey of life in the American military.

NOTES

1 10 US Code 7217.

2 Army Regulation 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities*, June 23, 2015, Chapter 1, 1-6, a, page 1.

3 Army Techniques Publication 1-05.04, *Religious Support and Internal Advisement*, March 23, 2017, Chapter 1, 1-3, page 1-2.

RESPONSE TO
Jason Lemieux's Reflection

By Daniel Blomberg and Eric Baxter[1]

Jason Lemieux notes that Chaplains must provide care "to all Service members regardless of their religious beliefs or lack thereof." But his ensuing call for the chaplaincy to abandon its religious roots is mistaken.

We disagree with Lemieux's premise. As a matter of law, the military chaplaincy is not "[a]bove all" meant to serve solely a "secular purpose," nor does it have a general "constitutional obligation to maintain neutrality with regards to matters of religion." Rather, as Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg explained in a unanimous U.S. Supreme Court ruling, the chaplaincy exists to accommodate "*religious* practice by members of the military."[2] While Chaplains must, of course, respect and accommodate all Service members' religious liberty (including the right not to observe a religion),[3] this does not make the chaplaincy religion-neutral. Rather, it is religion-*positive*: it exists to support religious needs and treat them with unique respect. The First Amendment, which is much of the legal foundation of the chaplaincy, likewise provides heightened protection for religion. Thus, for instance, "[o]nly beliefs rooted in religion are protected by the Free Exercise Clause"; other secular "way[s] of life, however virtuous and admirable" are not so protected.[4] And, as another unanimous Supreme Court decision explained, the "text of the First Amendment"—in both the Free Exercise and Establishment Clauses—"gives special solicitude to the rights of religious organizations."[5]

Lemieux argues that the Establishment Clause compels his conclusion. Again, we disagree. In addition to the solicitude identified above, the Supreme Court has also said for decades that the Clause "must be interpreted 'by reference to historical practices and understandings.'"[6] And the "unambiguous and unbroken history" of the military chaplaincy, stretching back before the founding of the country, shows it has an unmistakable religious character.[7] Moreover, the Court recently re-emphasized that the Establishment Clause is not "warring" within the Free Exercise and Free Speech Clauses (which, of course, "appear in the same sentence of the [First] Amendment"), but rather all three clauses "have 'complementary' purposes": protecting religious liberty.[8] As we explain in our Reflection, the chaplaincy exists and is uniquely structured to advance this purpose.

The chaplaincy provides a commendable way to help Service members answer fundamental questions of life, death, and meaning that military service often uniquely raises. To be sure, the chaplaincy should continue to improve

to meet the needs of Service members and their Families. These improvements should, for instance, include expanding the ranks of endorsing bodies and chaplains to include unrepresented minority faiths, such as Sikhs.[9] But removing the chaplaincy's religious character would not be an improvement. It would be a rejection of its identity.

NOTES

1 The authors wish to thank Lemieux for his service to our country in the Marines and to extend their sincere condolences on the loss of his father.

2 *Cutter v. Wilkinson*, 544 U.S. 709, 722 (2005) (emphasis added); *Ramirez v. Collier*, 142 S.Ct. 1264, 1278-79 (2022) (describing long history of chaplain religious ministry, including in military); *accord Katcoff v. Marsh*, 755 F.2d 223, 227 (2d Cir. 1985) ("The primary function of the military chaplain is to … meet the religious needs of a pluralistic military community").

3 *Kennedy v. Bremerton Sch. Dist.*, 142 S. Ct. 2407, 2429 (2022) ("government may not, consistent with a historically sensitive understanding of the Establishment Clause, 'make a religious observance compulsory'" (quoting *Zorach v. Clauson*, 343 U.S. 306, 314 (1952)). Chaplains have long cared for those who do not share their beliefs without pressure or coercion. *See* Colleen Curtis, *President Obama Awards Medal of Honor to Father Emil Kapaun*, The White House (Apr. 11, 2013), https://perma.cc/FWP6-4XGD (detailing Chaplain Kapaun's sacrificial service to "men of different faith, perhaps some men of no faith").

4 *Thomas v. Review Bd.*, 450 U.S. 707, 713 (1981); Wisconsin v. Yoder, 406 U.S. 205, 215 (1972); *see also Cutter,* 544 U.S. at 724 (affirming that laws may uniquely provide "religious entities … a benefit," and that religious accommodations "need not 'come packaged with benefits to secular entities'").

5 *Hosanna-Tabor v. EEOC*, 565 U.S. 171, 189 (2012).

6 *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, 572 U.S. 565, 576 (2014) (emphasis added) (explaining that this was the meaning of *Marsh v. Chambers*, 463 U.S. 783 (1983)).

7 See, *e.g., Town of Greece*, 572 U.S. at 576; *Katcoff*, 755 F.2d at 225-26 (listing history of military chaplaincy). *See also* 10 U.S.C. § 7217 (listing specifically religious duties of Army chaplains); *accord* 10 U.S.C. § 6031(a); Army Reg. 165-1 § 3-2(a) (chaplains provide for the "nurture and practice of religious beliefs, traditions, and customs in a pluralistic environment to strengthen the spiritual lives of [Service members] and their Families"); *accord* Air Force Instruction 52-101 § 1 (similar); OPNAV Instruction 1730.1E § 4(a) (similar).

8 *Kennedy*, 142 S. Ct. at 2426-28 ("[T]he Establishment Clause must be interpreted by reference to historical practices and understandings," and must "accord with history and faithfully reflect the understanding of the Founding Fathers." (cleaned up)).

9 *See* Dave Philipps, *The Marines Reluctantly Let a Sikh Officer Wear a Turban*, New York Times (updated Sept. 28, 2021), https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/26/us/sikh-marine-turban.html (following a series of religious accommodations for Sikhs in the U.S. Armed Forces, there are now at least 100 Sikhs serving in the military).

RESPONSE TO
Jason Lemieux's Reflection

By Dr. Wendy Cadge, Dr. Amy Lawton, and Dr. Grace Tien

We support Jason Lemieux's assertion that the role of military Chaplains is to provide pastoral care to all Service members, regardless of the care-seeker's religious affiliation or lack thereof. As Lemieux briefly touches on the range of non-religious experiences in his piece, we use our response to further reflect on the diversity belied by the affiliated/unaffiliated dichotomy. While the differences between religious affiliations are well-known among religious professionals, the similar diversity among the unaffiliated is rarely engaged and is thus important to discuss.

Just as all religious beliefs vary neither are the unaffiliated monolithic in their orientations to meaning-making. There is a near-universal level of understanding that there are differences between religious beliefs. But what are the important differences between, say, a care-seeker who identifies as some type of secularist and another who identifies as "nothing in particular?"

In our reflection, we use the catch-all term "nones" to discuss the describe those who do not affirmatively identify with a religious tradition. "Nones" has emerged as a social scientific way to describe all types of nonreligion, but it masks some important differences. In the context of national survey data, "nones" would include Humanists, atheists, agnostics, skeptics, and the spiritual-but-not-religious along with the respondents who say that they are "nothing in particular." An incredibly diverse group of beliefs and non-beliefs are lumped together in this category, which eases analysis for social scientists but does not illuminate the diversity among the nonreligious. To further understand that diversity, two social scientific typologies might be useful.

Darren Sherkat uses the term "nonidentifiers," in *Changing Faith*,[1] to refer to the same group we have called "nones." Using national survey data, Sherkat parses this group, determining that 22% of nonidentifiers were "believers"—people who believe in a deity but do so without a religious affiliation. Another 13% are affirmative atheists, people who actively deny the existence of a god or gods. The majority of nonidentifiers (59%) are nontheists, or people who lack "belief in the type of agentic god which is definitive of the Abrahamic tradition" (p. 103). Nontheists may still believe in a "higher power" or "something more," or may describe themselves as spiritual-but-not-religious. While the 22% of believers might find a nondenominational prayer a helpful intervention from a Chaplain, other practices may be better suited to meet the needs of the majority of nonidentifiers.

Christel Manning presents a typology of "nones" in her book Losing Our Religion.[2] Sherkat relies on survey data, while Manning interviewed the religiously unaffiliated, learning that there are actually four major identities within this group: the unchurched believers (similar to the 22% of believers in Sherkat's study), the spiritual seekers, the philosophical secularists, and the indifferent. The spiritual seekers in Manning's study met at least two of three criteria: they identified as spiritual-but-not-religious; they rejected theism but believed in a "higher power;" and/or they engaged in spiritual practices from a wide variety of traditions. Philosophical secularists described themselves as neither spiritual nor religious but actively articulated a secular life philosophy. The indifferent were uninterested in religion or in secular philosophies.

We encourage all members of the Chaplain Corps to consider what tools they have for reaching care-seekers in groups labeled "nones" or listed in the two different studies here. In a moment of crisis or despair, what aids an atheist or a philosophical secularist may not be the same as what would help a nontheist or a spiritual seeker. There are times when it may be useful to pray with a nonidentifier but there might be times where it would cause spiritual harm. We encourage chaplains to increase their understanding of the nuances and diversity within the "nones" as they prepare to serve an expanding population. For an overview of spiritual care models that are inclusive of these groups, we recommend the article "Spiritual Care of the Non-Religious".[3]

NOTES

1 Darren Sherkat. *Changing Faith: The Dynamics and Consequences of Americans' Shifting Religious Identities* (New York: New York University Press, 2014).

2 Christel Manning. *Losing Our Religion: How Unaffiliated Parents Are Raising Their Children* (New York: New York University Press, 2015).

3 Mary Martha Theil and Mary Robinson. "Spiritual Care of the Non-Religious." *PlainViews* 12(7). July 15, 2015. https://www.professionalchaplains.org/Files/resources/reading_room/Spiritual_Care_Nonreligious.pdf.

REFLECTION ON

The First Amendment of the Constitution

By Daniel Blomberg and Eric Baxter

The modern chaplaincy stands as a leader in advancing religious liberty for all—a role it has played since before our Nation's founding. Two innovations by the chaplaincy are particularly notable for their protection of authentic religious pluralism. The first allows the military to accept faith-specific Chaplains; the other allows Chaplains to remain true to their own faith while supporting religious exercise for all Service members and their Families.

While many of the founders came to this country to freely exercise their own faith, they did not always extend that freedom to others. In the founders' day, much of the world saw religion as divisive. The preferred solution for people who saw religion in this way was state-enforced suppression of disfavored religious viewpoints.[1] Several American colonies had established churches, along with the religious coercion typically attendant to them. For instance, the earliest settlers in Virginia, an officially Anglican colony, attended twice-daily religious services on pain of losing daily rations, whipping, and six months of hard-labor.[2] Virginia eventually eased those laws, but versions remained in effect until 1776, and similar laws existed in Connecticut and Massachusetts until 1816 and 1833, respectively.[3]

Military service was one of the key catalysts for breaking this paradigm and placing our Nation on a different trajectory, as it brought together regiments from different colonies with men from many different faith traditions. In 1758, during the French and Indian War, then-Colonel George Washington observed that his Virginia militia included non-Anglicans, such as Baptists, and requested that Virginia create a Chaplain Corps that could minister to the faith-specific needs of his troops.[4] This was remarkable: Virginia imprisoned some thirty Baptist preachers between 1768 and 1775 because of their undesirable "evangelical enthusiasm," and horsewhipped others for the same offense.[5] Yet the Virginia Convention responded to the call for religious-minority Chaplains with a resolution instructing commanding officers to protect "scrupulous conscience" by "permit[ting] Dissenting clergyman celebrate divine worship, and to preach to … soldiers."[6] Later, as Commander of the Continental Army, Washington continued his original effort of "generous toleration" for religious differences by "giv[ing] every Regiment an Opportunity of having a chaplain of their own religious Sentiments."[7]

This experience of authentic religious diversity had a powerful effect on the assembled Service members, who were "Massachusetts Congregationalists, Rhode Island Baptists, New York Episcopalians and Dutch Reformed, New Jersey Presbyterians, Pennsylvania members of many small Protestant sects . . . , Maryland Roman Catholics, and a scattering of Jews."[8] This kind of "intermingling of men of different religious faiths . . . had not before taken place in America except in a few of the larger cities."[9] That exposure, coupled with the parallel "important" experience of having diverse, faith-specific Chaplains willingly serving "all the men in their regiment," was dynamic.[10] It impressed upon the young nation "a new idea of the need and the possibility of religious tolerance."[11]

That same respect for authentic religious pluralism is reflected in the modern U.S. military chaplaincy, which exists to support the religious freedom of all Service members and their Families. Two key elements of the modern chaplaincy reflect the chaplaincy's commitment to respect religious plurality in ways that neither ignore nor denigrate the real theological differences that exist. And both elements are elegant solutions to otherwise messy problems.

The first problem: to alleviate the burdens military service places on Service members' free exercise of religion, the military must provide access to faith-specific religious leaders who can authentically represent the Service members' own faith.[12] But military officials, as arms of the state, cannot determine who qualifies as an authentic religious leader, since that would require making inherently religious judgments.[13] How then is the government to ensure it has religious ministers who can meet Service members' religious needs? By partnering with faith groups that can "endorse" (i.e., identify) a pool of eligible religious leaders from whom the military can select Chaplains. This partnership with religious Endorsers allows the military to meet its constitutional obligations to Service members without unconstitutionally "decid[ing] matters 'of faith and doctrine.'"[14] It also prevents the entanglement that would arise from the government determining if endorsed Chaplains remain "in good standing with the[ir] faith group" and "qualified to perform the[ir] full range of ministry."[15]

The second problem concerns how Chaplains can support the free exercise of all Service members while remaining faithful representatives of their own distinctive religions. Here, the Army Chaplain Corps' doctrine of "perform or provide" is an elegant solution.[16] Chaplains must—as a matter of law, conscience, and professionalism—perform only the sacraments and religious services of their own faith group and preach, teach, and counsel according to their faith group's beliefs.[17] At the same time, Chaplains are also duty-bound to respectfully provide for the "nurture and practice of religious beliefs, traditions, and customs in a pluralistic environment to strengthen the spiritual lives of [Service members] and their Families"—including those who do not share and may even oppose a Chaplain's beliefs.[18] This complicated dynamic is expressed in the saying, "We are pastor to some, Chaplain to all."

Solutions to both problems are crucial to the fundamentals of the chaplaincy: identifying qualified Chaplains without government entanglement in religion and empowering those Chaplains to remain true to their own beliefs while still caring for Service members of different faiths. To some, these solutions might seem exclusionary or discriminatory. They require the military to permit distinctions based on religion. They also allow sex-based distinctions (*e.g.*, all Catholic Chaplains are men) and ethnicity-based distinctions (*e.g.*, Jewish matrilineal requirements) in the selection of Chaplains and the performance of religious worship services. But rightly understood, they provide essential accommodation for religious pluralism, "follow[ing] the best of our traditions" by "mak[ing] room for as wide a variety of beliefs and creeds as the spiritual needs of man deem necessary."[19]

Much contemporary conflict over issues of the relationship between the Church and State in the United States comes from a lack of appreciation of and respect for real religious differences. Government agencies can tend to see religious groups as obstacles to be removed or opponents to be defeated. The existence of the military chaplaincy shows that this kind of zero-sum thinking is misplaced and that religious distinctives both can and should be accommodated.

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The Forum is a space for engaging conversation on difficult topics that are relevant to chaplaincy in the context of national defense. The views expressed in the reflections and responses are those of the contributor and do not necessarily represent the views of the Department of Defense or its Components. Further, the views expressed do not constitute legal advice regardless of whether the contributor is an attorney or not.

NOTES

1 See, *e.g.*, *Hosanna-Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church & School v. EEOC*, 565 U.S. 171, 182-185 (2012) (tracing the centuries old historic context of church-state relations in early America).

2 George Brydon, *Virginia's Mother Church and the Political Conditions Under Which It Grew*, app. 1 at 412 (1947).

3 Sanford H. Cobb, *The Rise of Religious Liberty in America: A History* 512-515 (Burt Franklin 1970) (1902).

4 Anson Phelps Stokes, *Church and State in the United States* 268 (1950).

5 Michael W. McConnell, *Establishment and Disestablishment at the Founding, Part 1: Establishment of Religion*, 44 Wm. & Mary L. Rev. 2105, 2118, 2166 (2003).

6 Stokes, *supra*, at 268.

7 *Id*. at 271 (quoting Letter from George Washington to John Hancock, 8 June 1777).

8 *Id*. at 267-68.

9 *Id*. at 268.

10 *Id*.

11 *Id*.

12 *Cutter v. Wilkinson*, 544 U.S. 709, 722 (2005) (Chaplains are crucial to "accommodat[ing] … religious practice by members of the military"); *Katcoff v. Marsh*, 755 F.2d 223, 226-34, 236-37 (2d Cir. 1985) (chaplaincy required to avoid violating Religion Clauses); see also John Brinsfield, Jr., *Encouraging Faith, Serving Soldiers: A History of the U.S. Army Chaplaincy, 1975-1995* at 127-28 (Office of the Chief of Chaplains, 1997) (detailing testimony that, due to mobility of troops, "no civilian clergy had ever meet the Army's comprehensive religious needs with any degree of success").

13 *Our Lady of Guadalupe School v. Morrissey-Berru*, 140 S. Ct. 2049 (2020) (government cannot interfere in management of religious ministers, and risks impermissible "entanglement in religious issues" by even trying to determine who qualifies as a coreligionist).

14 *Id*. at 2060.

15 *Iwuchukwu v. Archdiocese for Military Services*, 2022 WL 424984, at *4 (D.D.C. 2022) (quoting VHA Directive 1111 § 3(c), and explaining "conferral of … an endorsement" is "a purely religious decision" beyond the purview of the state); Our Lady, 140 S. Ct. at 2060 (religious groups must remain free to prevent "a wayward minister's preaching, teaching, and counseling" from "contradict[ing] the church's tenets and lead[ing] the congregation away from the faith").

16 Army Reg. 165-1 § 2-3(b)(1).

17 See, *e.g.*, 10 U.S.C. § 6031(a) ("An officer of the Chaplain Corps may conduct public worship according to the manner and forms of the church of which he is a member."); 10 U.S.C. § Subt. A, Pt. II, Ch. 53 (no Chaplain can be required to "perform any rite, ritual, or ceremony that is contrary to the conscience, moral principles, or religious beliefs of the Chaplain"); *see also* Air Force Instruction 52-101 § 3.2.3; Army Reg. 165-1 § 3-5(b).

18 Army Reg. 165-1 § 3-2(a); accord Air Force Instruction 52-101 § 1; OPNAV Instruction 1730.1E § 4(a).

19 *Zorach v. Clauson*, 343 U.S. 306, 313-14 (1952).

RESPONSE TO

Daniel Blomberg and Eric Baxter's Reflection

By Chaplain (Colonel) Chip Huey

Daniel Blomberg and Eric Baxter assert that the modern American military chaplaincy is, and has been since its inception, a leading force for religious liberty in our country. They assess that two of the primary reasons for this leadership in religious freedom are the role of Endorsers and the doctrinal approach of "perform or provide." They close their piece with the idea that the military chaplaincy sets an example that the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses can both be fulfilled simultaneously, which means that religious freedom for all faiths and beliefs is possible.

The tone of hope through faithfulness to their understanding of the Constitution in Blomberg's and Baxter's essay also characterizes the Army Chaplain Corps. The story of the Four Chaplains who gave their lives during the sinking of the S.S. Dorchester is the most prominent example of how military chaplaincy is lived out in the context of a diverse Chaplain Corps. A Jewish rabbi, a Catholic priest, and two Protestant ministers from divergent theological points of view, joined hands, prayed, sang hymns, and distributed life jackets, including their own, to the men on board the transport ship as she sank into the icy waters of the North Atlantic. Those Chaplains represented four different Endorsers, nevertheless they were united in service to every Soldier and Sailor on that doomed ship, even at the cost of their own deaths. They proved this unity with their lives.

The Four Chaplains are emblematic of how Chaplains, with their Endorsers standing behind them, personify the synthesis of the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses of the Constitution every day. Their Endorsers represent the wide body of religious groups that make up the kaleidoscope of religious faith and practice in America. It is clear to me that the U.S. Government wasn't establishing an official, state religion when it commissioned those four men to serve as Chaplains, rather, it selected those religious professionals from among the great body of faith groups that make up the American religious landscape. Those religious professionals, Chaplains, then provided for the variety of religious beliefs and groups within the Army, as Chaplains had done since the days of the Continental Army under George Washington.[1] To me this is a rather simple matter: no state religion is established when Chaplains are nominated by the religious groups in our country; the Army is provided a pool of candidates from which to select militarily qualified representatives to meet the religious free exercise needs of Soldiers and their Families.

In a similar way, contemporary Army Chaplains provide religious support and spiritual care to all Soldiers, Family members, and authorized Civilians regardless of religious belief or lack of religious belief on the part of those individuals. The "perform or provide" doctrine is key to this.[2] As Chaplains, we listen carefully and respectfully to every Soldier and if we cannot directly perform the service that Soldier needs, then we provide for that Soldier by arranging for them to see someone who can meet their need. The perform or provide doctrine enables the Army Chaplain Corps to do what Congress expects of it: strike the balance between the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses.[3]

The Four Chaplains symbolize how the Army Chaplain Corps strikes the balance between the Establishment and Free Exercise Clauses. Congress authorized the one-time creation and presentation of the Four Chaplains Medal to the families of the chaplains. The Four Chaplains serve as an example of the religious support and service to all that military Chaplains offer every day. Blomberg and Baxter affirm this when they write that today's American military chaplaincy exemplifies religious liberty for all.

NOTES

1 "The Old Establishment gives every Regiment an Opportunity of having a Chaplain of their own religious Sentiments—is founded on a plan of a more generous toleration—and the choice of Chaplains to officiate, has been generally in the Regiments." Letter from George Washington to John Hancock, 8 June 1777, National Archives, https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-09-02-0639.

2 Department of Defense Instruction 1304.28, *The Appointment and Service of Chaplains*, May 12, 2021, Section 3.1, Capability Requirements, page 5. Also, Army Regulation 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities*, June 23, 2015, section 1.6, "The Chaplain Corps and the US Constitution," page 1.

3 Army Regulation 165-1, *Army Chaplain Corps Activities*, June 23, 2015, section 1-6, "The Chaplain Corps and the US Constitution," page 1.

RESPONSE TO

Daniel Blomberg and Eric Baxter's Reflection

By Wendy Cadge, Amy Lawton, and Grace Tien

We affirm the essence of Daniel Blomberg's and Eric Baxter's argument: The military's commitment to meet the religious needs of Service members and their Families is of both historical and modern importance. This commitment is significant, to our minds, to the development of a religiously-pluralistic military and, indeed, to the health of a religiously-diverse nation. We respond to one of the phrases the authors use to describe the current state of affairs: "authentic religious pluralism." This intriguing phrase raises several questions. What does authentic religious pluralism look like, and do we have it today? What are the means by which authentic religious pluralism can be achieved and maintained?

Pluralism is more than simple diversity. The natural world is wonderfully diverse, but it cannot be said, in our thinking, to be pluralistic. Pluralism requires recognition of others and of the principles by which they live. Reciprocity is a critical element of pluralism. There are myriad ways in which religious pluralism is a moving target. As the population changes, the proportions of religious affiliation and disaffiliation shift. Denominations emerge, join together, split apart, and sometimes even disappear entirely. As young people enter adulthood, they often create new ways of being religious, including being nonreligious, that differ radically from and are unrecognizable to the practices of previous generations.

Each of these factors requires honestly assessing and acknowledging diverse religious identities, how those identities may have changed, and how those identities may change in the future. They also require questioning the very essence of religion as a concept, which means interrogating what kinds of meaning-making beliefs, identities and practices can fit within the term "religion." Without this ongoing conversation, assessment, and attendant policy changes, the religious pluralism of today will not be adequate for the military of tomorrow.

The pluralism that exists in the contemporary military chaplaincy owes its beginnings to efforts made during World War I. At a time when all Chaplains were Christian, and virtually all were Protestant, the Jewish Welfare Board lobbied the War Department for the appointment of Jewish Chaplains. The resulting chaplains-at-large bill opened chaplaincy to Jewish chaplains and to members of other minority faiths.[1] This was an important step at the time, but not the final word on religious pluralism in the military.

Today, it remains necessary to assess diverse religions and update policies in light of some of the dynamics we touch on below. One hundred years after the inclusion of Jewish Chaplains in the military, in 2017, the Department of Defense nearly doubled its list of recognized religions, from just over 100 to a current list of 221.[2] The expanded list marked the first time that Jewish Service members could identify with a branch of Judaism. Despite a century of inclusion in the chaplaincy, Jewish Service members were still unable to specify if they were affiliated with Orthodox, Reform, or Conversative Judaism until the 2017 Faith and Belief Codes were issued. Sikhism was also only recognized as part of the 2017 list, despite being the fifth largest religion in the world.[3] These examples illustrate how responsiveness to what counts as religion will continue to be an important component of religious pluralism.

We at CIL cannot predict the future, but if the past is prologue, religious pluralism is not one-and-done. We see Chaplains in general, and military Chaplains in particular, well-positioned to ensure the continuing practice and evolving development of what counts as religion in the military, a necessary step to authentic religious pluralism.

NOTES

1 Stahl, Ronit Y. *Enlisting Faith: How the Military Chaplaincy Shaped Religion and State in Modern America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017. 28-30.

2 Winston, Kimberly. "Defense Department Expands its List of Recognized Religions." *Religious News Service*, April 21, 2017. https://religionnews.com/2017/04/21/defense-department-expands-its-list-of-recognized-religions/.

3 Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense. "SUBJECT: Faith and Belief Codes for Reporting Personnel Data of Service Members." March 27, 2017. The Sikh Coalition. "About Sikhs." https://www.sikhcoalition.org/about-sikhs/.

RESPONSE TO

Daniel Blomberg and Eric Baxter's Reflection

By Jason Lemieux

If I had taken a slightly different approach to my reflection, I might have written in support of laws that protect the right of Chaplains to freely exercise their religion while also providing them discretion to participate in the activities of other religions and beliefs as a form of pastoral care.

We are fortunate that Chaplains are indeed permitted to engage in extra-denominational activity.[1] A prohibition on such activity would be impractical in many military settings. Very often, one or a few Chaplains serve units composed of hundreds of Service members in forward-deployed areas where referral to an alternative Chaplain is not logistically feasible. Prohibiting extra-denominational activity in such circumstances would needlessly complicate the provision of quality pastoral care to every individual Service member. It would privilege denominations that are overrepresented in the Chaplain Corps, exacerbating gaps in pastoral care for religious minorities and nonbelievers.

I find some common ground with the authors when they celebrate the popular expression, "We are pastor to some, chaplain to all." However, while the authors acknowledge that Chaplains are obligated to support the free exercise of religion for all Service members, even those with beliefs contrary to their own, they say little about the practical challenge of meeting this obligation in a diverse military: for example, how should the services respond if a Chaplain decides that merely informing a Service member of the existence of wedding services at LGBTQ-inclusive churches constitutes an unacceptable form of support for those marriages?[2]

Overall, I find that the authors overstate the urgency of accommodating what I see as discriminatory beliefs and practices. Freedom of expression does not require public institutions to turn a blind eye to forms of what many, including me, believe are harmful discrimination. Upholding the right to express divisive ideas may be an awkward necessity to uphold separation of church and state but accommodating practices will not necessarily result in a positive-sum outcome for a 21st century fighting force.

We shouldn't shy from discussing the tension between what some regard as discriminatory religious beliefs and service in a religiously pluralistic environment. For example, the *2021 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Military Members* estimates that in the active military force, 20% of women and 5.9% of men identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual. An estimated 1.7% of Service members identified as gender minorities including transgender.[3,4] Chaplains who oppose LGBTQ rights in spite of all worldly evidence that these upholding these rights results in a happier, freer, more just society will struggle to meet the pastoral needs of a modern force in a way that LGBTQ-inclusive Chaplains will not.[5] Eliding this fact is a disservice to Service members who are subjected to harmful discrimination both in and out of uniform.

NOTES

1 For anyone skeptical that Chaplains can and do engage in such activity, I would direct you to the September 2014 testimony of Rabbi Bruce E. Kahn, CAPT, USN, Ret. to the House Armed Services Committee. Space requirements prevent me from quoting Rabbi Kahn at length:

Hearing on Religious Accommodations in the Armed Services, Before the House Subcommittee on Military Personnel, 113th Cong. 129 (2014) (written testimony and supplemental written statement of Rabbi Bruce Edward Kahn, D.D. CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret.))

2 This claim would be no more tenuous than the one made in 2017 to the Supreme Court by Little Sisters of the Poor, who argued that the Affordable Care Act imposed a substantial religious burden by requiring them to self-certify their objection to contraceptive care in employee health insurance plans, which then legally shifted financial responsibility for such care to the insurer:

"Little Sisters of the Poor Saints Peter and Paul Home v. Pennsylvania," Oyez. Accessed September 13, 2022. https://www.oyez.org/cases/2019/19-431.

3 In this survey, transgender responses overlap with gay, lesbian, and bisexual responses because the survey allowed respondents of any gender identity to select any sexual orientation and vice versa. For example, transgender respondents had the option to identify as straight, gay, lesbian, or bisexual. For this reason, adding transgender respondents to gay, lesbian, and bisexual respondents to calculate a cumulative total of LGBT service members would produce an inaccurate result.

Rachel A. Breslin et al., "2021 Workplace and Gender Relations Survey of Military Members: Overview Report," Office of People Analytics (2022), https://www.opa.mil/research-analysis/health-well-being/gender-relations/2021-workplace-and-gender-relations-survey-of-military-members-reports/2021-workplace-and-gender-relations-survey-of-military-members-overview-report/, Pp. 32-33.

4 In the reserves, 14.1% of women and 3.1% of men identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual. 1.4% of Service members identified as gender minorities including transgender. See *Breslin*, et. al. (2022), Pp. 50-51.

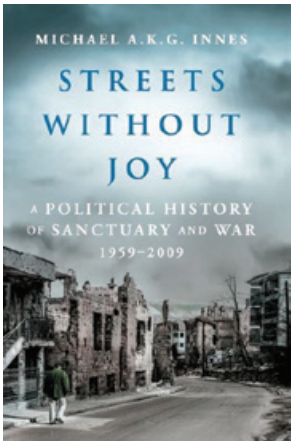
5 Not to relitigate civil rights that have been made the law of the land, but in support of the principle that public policy should be informed by empirical evidence that each of us can at least in principle confirm for ourselves, I provide the following example:

Badgett, M.V. Lee, Kees Waaldijk, and Yana van Rodgers. "The Relationship between LGBT Inclusion and Economic Development: Macro-Level Evidence." *World Development* 120 (August 2019): 1–14. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2019.03.011.

Streets Without Joy: A Political History of Sanctuary and War 1959-2009

by Michael A.K.G. Innes

Reviewed by Adam Tietje



In *Streets Without Joy*, Michael Innes argues that post-9/11 wartime decisions were inflected with sanctuary rhetoric. He explores the historical precedents for that rhetoric, how those precedents were employed, and how that rhetoric flowed from Presidential speech into policy and its attendant interagency machinations. To show both the availability of sanctuary rhetoric and how the George W. Bush administration drew on (or failed to draw on) precedent, Innes traces the political use of sanctuary from Vietnam forward. Innes takes Vietnam as a fitting starting point because many of the key players in the administration (*e.g.*, Colin Powell, Donald Rumsfeld, Paul Wolfowitz, Dick Cheney, etc.) began their careers then.

Innes traces out and builds upon what he sees as three distinct iterations of sanctuary scholarship. The first accounts are found within 20th century works on revolution and guerrilla warfare. Bernard Fall's work is widely understood to be the foundation of sanctuary scholarship and Innes' title directly calls back to Fall's seminal work *Street Without Joy*. The second generation of scholars adapted the ideas of Fall and others and applied them to international terrorism between the 1970s and 1990s. The third generation of scholarship on the idea of sanctuary focuses on the post-9/11 era.

Streets Without Joy follows this general trajectory. It begins with chapters that analyze Fall's work, moves through the use of sanctuary discourse during and after the Vietnam war, and finishes with three post-9/11 case studies from the George W. Bush administration. The first case study examines the initial use of sanctuary and the "harboring principle" in the wake of the attacks to justify the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq. The harboring principle—Bush's assertion of equivalence between terrorists and "those who harbor them"—became a central feature of the Bush doctrine of military preemption. Innes traces the movement from presidential rhetoric to national policy. In the second case study, Innes explores sanctuary discourse in the 9/11 Commission. The final case study examines how sanctuary rhetoric is taken up into interagency processes and leads to the production of significant reports on terrorist safe havens by both the Department of State and the Department of Defense.

Innes does not provide a critical moral and political assessment of President George W. Bush's "harboring principle" and the Bush doctrine. What. Innes does, however, is provide the historiography of the political uses of sanctuary available in the wake of 9/11 and how those precedents were taken up or ignored during that administration.

Innes' historical work lays bare how sanctuary rhetoric functions both internally and externally, and how it was applied and/or taken up by victims and perpetrators alike. Internally,

Innes argues, sanctuary rhetoric was securitized, that is, it functioned to heighten the state of emergency in the wake of 9/11. Sanctuary discourse aided in the passage of both the Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) and the Patriot Act in the fall of 2001. Together these laws created and sustained a state of emergency that shifted war powers from Congress to the Executive branch in the fight against terrorism (AUMF) and attenuated civil liberties (Patriot Act). Externally, sanctuary discourse was deployed to justify the Global War on Terror. Innes maps out how sanctuary rhetoric was put to work, for example, in arguments both against Saddam's regime in Iraq (as a supposed sponsor of terrorists) and in favor of support for the Kurds (as in need of a *de facto*, if not *de jure* country as refuge). In the course of his analysis, Innes explores the breadth of sanctuary discourse, to include the links between its use during the Vietnam War, on behalf of Vietnamese refugees, and they ways that sets the stage for its use in the context of American interventions in Central American. While at odds with Reagan-era foreign policy (and related policy on refugees from Central America), the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s built on the sanctuary discourse that supported refugees from Southeast Asia, while returning to the roots of the term in a more overtly (although not exclusively) ecclesial frame of reference.

Innes delivers, as promised, on his historical analysis of the rhetoric of sanctuary during the George W. Bush administration. Innes' historical analysis could be strengthened, however, in conversation with political theory. He alludes to the interrelationships and overlap between sanctuary and sovereignty throughout his book, but he never explores sovereignty (or its relationship with sanctuary) conceptually. If we foreground sovereignty, Innes' work on sanctuary emerges as a powerful case study in Giorgio Agamben's account of the state of exception. For Agamben, the trajectory of modern political sovereignty is toward a permanent state of exception in which force is substituted for law.

With Agamben in view, we can see how the George W. Bush administration's sanctuary rhetoric functions to portray "ungoverned," terrorist sanctuaries as existing in a state of nature apart from the rule of law. Innes highlights the importance of the early depictions of al-Qaeda operatives as cave dwelling troglodytes. This is no accident. The Bush doctrine, with the harboring principle at its center, casts the net of American sovereignty to the furthest reaches of the globe by including terrorist sanctuaries even as Bush sought violently (and preemptively) to exclude them. At the same time, the securitized rhetoric of sanctuary underwrote the creation of a permanent domestic state of exception (the state of nature brought into the heart of the state in the exchange of force for law). While beyond the scope of Innes' book, we might wonder at how the success of Bush's rhetorical campaign laid the foundation for the further use of sanctuary rhetoric by both Obama and Trump administrations.

While Innes notes the etymological and historical roots of sanctuary discourse in religion, that is clearly not his focus. He helpfully, if only summarily, tracks the movement of sanctuary from its religious to secular uses. Innes sees its movement encapsulated in the migration of sovereignty from the person of the king, often imbued with religious authority, to the body of the state. Innes does not capture the subtle nuance of medieval sovereignty and the interrelationships between princes and prelates. Importantly, Innes does not pick up on the way sanctuary (with its roots in religious sources of authority) continues to be contested by religious communities. By that, I do not mean that Innes does not consider the Sanctuary Movement as largely (although not exclusively) emerging from religious contexts. Rather, I mean that the Sanctuary Movement (which continues to this day) is but one example of ongoing contestation of claims to a nation state's claims to sovereignty (in this case America).

Innes' work is a powerful reminder that political uses of sanctuary discourse should prick our ears. Sacred texts, including Jewish and Christian scriptures, are replete with calls to protect and safeguard the vulnerable. Sanctuaries, especially the temple and its altar, are places of refuge precisely because God is there (*e.g.*, Psalm 18:2, 46:1, 91:2, 71:3; cf. Psalm 27:5, Exodus 21:14, 1 Kings 1:50, and 1 Kings 2:28). The Sanctuary Movement continues this tradition of holy spaces as places of refuge (i.e., exception), even from unjust American policies. The underlying claim is not that secular authority stops at the doors of the church (or temple or mosque). Rather, the claim is that God's governing authority relativizes earthly secular authorities. Sanctuaries, then, are spaces of exception that prove the rule: not the rule of force, but the rule of God's love and mercy.

So it is that in the context of Christian ethics and political theology, the friend/enemy distinction is penultimate. God loves all human beings, even when they are enemies and claims them all as beloved friends. Medieval laws around sanctuary make room for the potential conversion of enemies. Sanctuary for certain kinds of enemies was licit,

precisely as a sign that the friend/enemy distinction is never ultimate. Innes work underscores the extent to which the George W. Bush administration's sanctuary discourse makes a virtue of the political distinction between friends and enemies. Rather than recognizing international relations as a dynamic reality of conflict and conciliation—where we compete with even our closest allies in some areas and need to cooperate with countries we might sometimes regard as "enemies"—the Bush doctrine reduced this complexity to "either you're with us or you're against us."

My point is not that enemies should not be resisted, sometimes even meeting violence with violence (although I do find pacifism to be a faithful form of Christian witness and an important part of the wider Christian tradition). My point is that American religious communities should have been much more skeptical about the use of sanctuary rhetoric over the last two decades because, in the end, its use has been predicated on the notion that America itself is exceptional. American foreign policy in the wake of 9/11 embodied the inherent hubristic vice of that claim. For religious communities, God's sovereignty relativizes all earthly claims and calls for humility, mercy, and co-labor (both domestically and internationally) in the care of the vulnerable. The pursuit of imagined threats and their sanctuaries (read: the invasion of Iraq) should melt in the face of the very real needs for sanctuary in our midst.

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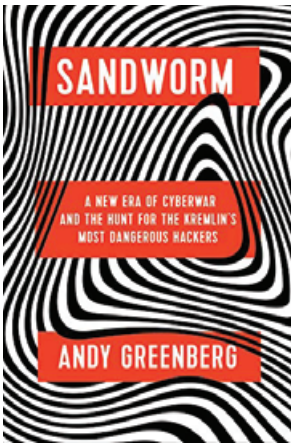
***Sandworm**: A New Era of Cyberwar the Hunt for the Kremlin's Most Dangerous Hackers*

by Andy Greenberg

Reviewed by Chaplain (Captain) Kaitlin Declet



In 2016, just two days before Christmas and exactly one year after a devastating power-outage, Oleksii Yasinsky, a resident in Kyiv, realized he and his city may be experiencing the aftermath of yet another cyberattack. A similar cyberattack the previous year left a quarter-million Ukrainians without power in the dead of winter, plunging them into freezing darkness. Could this event and its timing be more than a mere coincidence? Was this the beginning of something bigger than we had ever experienced before?

Sandworm: A New Era of Cyberwar and the Hunt for the Kremlin's Most Dangerous Hackers is the story of the Russian GRU hacking team, specifically Unit 74455, that evolved in a few short years to become the most persistent and destructive cyber warriors who were eventually dubbed Sandworm. Andy Greenberg takes readers on a thrilling journey to find out whodunit by profiling the researchers on the front lines of these attacks, including private security firms and military/government investigators. Throughout the sleuthing process, investigators referred to the hackers by multiple names, including Voodoo Bear, Fancy Bear, Iron Viking, and Telebots, before realizing the same people were behind each of the attacks. Greenberg uses the frustrations, fears, and triumphs of the people who populate the book to humanize the very abstract business of cyberwar.[1] He does not just outline the facts of some of the most devastating cyberattacks, but rather he recounts firsthand stories of those who were in the virtual trenches. Unlike information technology (IT) security specialists' take on how to stop future attacks from occurring, Greenberg also sets out to discover these ingenious hackers' motives. At its core, Greenberg's book travels into this newest dimension of war and in doing so, he may be writing about the blueprint for future wars.

Just outside of D.C., a small private intelligence firm called iSight Partners had a black room where two highly skilled men were tasked with software vulnerability research. Jason Passwaters, iSight's head of international intelligence, had discovered an intriguing malware sample that appeared to be pulled off a computer in Ukraine.[2] This discovery led researchers at iSight to conduct a six-week analysis of several seemingly independent cyberattacks on Ukraine only to conclude that these attacks were in fact interconnected and culminated with this 2016 event. iSight discovered what appeared to be a vast, highly sophisticated espionage campaign.[3] However, this attack was different. Sandworm was unique in that it appeared to be trying to reach into victims' systems potentially to hijack machinery, with physical consequences.[4] Typically, intelligence-gathering operations do not break into industrial control systems. Could a new kind of warfare be upon us?

Greenberg looks to the recent past to explain the events of 2016. In 2007, Russia

launched a cyberattack on Estonia. NATO did not invoke Article 5[5] due to the attack being perceived as a mere attack on the internet, not a life-threatening act of physical warfare. In doing so, the Russian government appeared to achieve an indiscriminate, unprecedented form of disruption of an adversary's government and civil society alike. And it got away with it.[6] The lack of NATO intervention on the Russian-led attack cracked the door open for future similar attacks.

Then, in 2008, with Georgia set to join NATO, cyberattacks on the nation put them in a frozen conflict with Russia. Those attacks set a historical precedent—no country had ever so openly combined hacker disruption tactics with traditional warfare. Russians sought to dominate their enemy in every domain: land, sea, air, and now cyber.[7] With Georgia under its control, Russia shifted its focus to Ukraine. The attacks in 2015 and 2016 on Ukraine were merely the training ground for Russia's cyberattacks.

Greenberg concludes, based on his careful interviews with security and military officials, that the lack of intervention from NATO or Western countries, like the United States, during these attacks opened the door in 2017 for the most devastating attack in the history of the internet—NotPetya. In less than 24 hours, NotPetya struck at least 4 hospitals in Kyiv alone, along with six power companies, two airports, more than 22 Ukrainian banks, ATMs, and car payment systems, and practically the entire federal government; 10% of all computers in Ukraine were wiped clean.[8] But more surprisingly, companies like Maersk, thousands of miles away, also fell victim to the attack resulting in more than $10 billion in damages. And yet, the West and NATO still did not decisively respond.

Greenberg uses several analogies to bring to life cyberworld jargon. His most powerful analogy is to improvised explosive devices (IEDs) during counterinsurgency operations. With the exit of U.S. troops from Afghanistan still on everyone's mind and the invisible wounds of war still haunting thousands of our troops today, the analogy is especially poignant. Greenberg quotes John Hultquist, a cyber-security manager, "In Iraq [and Afghanistan], the war quickly shifted to a hunt for a largely invisible force of saboteurs planting hidden makeshift bombs, highly asymmetric guerrilla conflict. We learned how psychologically devastating those repeated, unpredictable, and lethal explosions can be."[9] Cyberattacks are not only focused on espionage, but rather are intended to inflict psychological disruption on an enemy, to shut down civilian resources, and create chaos.[10] Russia sets off its own versions of digital IEDs—NotPetya, interference in U.S. elections, the attack on the Olympics—as cheap, asymmetrical tactics to destabilize a world order that long ago turned against it.[11]

Sandworm is much more than historical account of the greatest cyberattacks to date. It is a wake-up call to anyone who uses the internet. It exposes our vulnerabilities on each page. In the case of NotPetya, Ukraine was a backdoor to the whole world. Russia's seemed to say: If you do business with Ukraine bad things happen to you.[12] Since 2019 when the book was published, Russia mounted a full-scaleland invasion of Ukraine. The geographic distance between the West, particularly the United States, and Russia may be the U.S.'s greatest defense. However, NotPetya and its impact on Maersk are reminders in cyberwar, distance is no defense and nothing appears to be off limits.

People on the frontlines of these cyberattacks regularly debate where and how the line should be drawn for ethical cyber warfare. The lines between interference with civilian and military infrastructures are especially tricky to sketch. Experts ask whether there should be another Geneva Convention to set some ground rules on cyberwar that if crossed, would result in punishment of a war crime. Today no red lines seem to exist even though the threat against cyberattacks dramatically increases as the world becomes exponentially more interdependent.

Sandworm, as Greenberg writes, "Exposes the realities not just of Russia's global digital offensive, but of an era when warfare ceases to be waged on the battlefield." Unlike in the popular novel *Ghost Fleet* by P.W. Singer and August Cole, which uses what Cole calls useful fiction to vividly paint realistic scenes of the future, Greenberg in *Sandworm* uses real-life stories from the recent past to illustrate what is potentially coming. Richard Clarke, the former White House counterterrorism coordinator and author of *Cyber War*, describes *Sandworm* as:

> "An in-depth investigation of what the Russian military's best cyber unit has already done to disrupt corporations, penetrate utilities, and prepare for cyberwar. Sandworm is a sword of Damocles over the US economy that any US president has to take into account when deciding on whether and how to counter the Kremlin."[13]

The future is now. We are living in a world where the cyber domain is an increasingly devastating vulnerability. As the U.S. military prepares for future wars, it is imperative to account for the cyber threat.

Sandworm is a thrilling and thought-provoking book with value for any military leader, including Chaplains and Religious

Affairs Specialists (RAS). Since World War I, military leaders have envisioned cleaner wars from air capabilities to IEDs and now to digital attacks. The lines of argumentation laid down during the revisions of the Geneva Convention in 1949 remain relevant today, but the fast-paced rise of cyber weapons and cyber capabilities create challenges in the creation, interpretation, and application of the laws of armed conflict. If rules are not established swiftly, they may not be able to keep pace with rapid changes. The book provides a solid foundation and understanding for our future wars, raises questions surrounding combat ethics and just war, and solicits discussions about the implications of America's current inaction towards Russia's cyberwar.

Chaplains and RAS could also benefit from this book as they prepare for future wars. As the strategic framework for war shifts from the top down to the tactical level, Unit Ministry Teams (UMTs) must begin to think about the implications this may have on their provision of religious support. Our tightened security and reduced digital communication may limit our breadth of reach to troops across the battlefield. We may no longer be able to use digital assets to develop connectedness among our troops in the ways we do now, so we must begin thinking about how we can connect and provide religious support to a world addicted to our screens, but in an environment where it is deemed unsafe to do so.

Furthermore, as the battlefield continues to shift, so must our moral aperture and subsequently our depth of command advisement. Things that were previously not even imaginable (i.e. crippling an enemy's economy from thousands of miles away) are now the way of war. How will we reconcile the ethical and moral implications of waging war in the cyber domain? Commanders and leaders are wrestling with this every day and we cannot afford to be ignorant on the matter.

Chaplain (Captain) Katie Declet currently serves in the Colorado Army National Guard as the 2-135th Aviation Battalion Chaplain as well as the Assistant Full-time Unit Support Chaplain. She graduated from James Madison University with a degree in Criminal Justice and earned her Masters of Divinity in Chaplaincy from Denver Seminary. She is married to her husband, Aaron, and together they enjoy spending time outside in the beautiful state of Colorado with their two dogs Lexi and Samson.

NOTES

1 Cory Doctorow, "'Sandworm' is an Essential Guide to a Shadowy World," review of *Sandworm*, by Andy Greenberg, *LA Times*, November 1, 2019, https://www.latimes.com/entertainment-arts/books/story/2019-11-01/sandworm-andy-greenberg-cybersecurity.

2 Andy Greenberg, *Sandworm: A New Era of Cyberwar and the Hunt for the Kremlin's Most Dangerous Hackers* (New York: Anchor Books, 2019), 5.

3 Greenberg, *Sandworm*, 17.

4 Greenberg, *Sandworm*, 21.

5 Article 5 is the cornerstone of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and states that an attack on one member of NATO is an attack on all of its members. See https://www.history.com/news/nato-article-5-meaning-history-world-war-2 for more information.

6 Greenberg, *Sandworm*, 88.

7 Greenberg, *Sandworm*, 109.

8 Greenberg, *Sandworm*, 189.

9 Greenberg, *Sandworm*, 23.

10 Greenberg, *Sandworm*, 24.

11 Greenberg, *Sandworm*, 283.

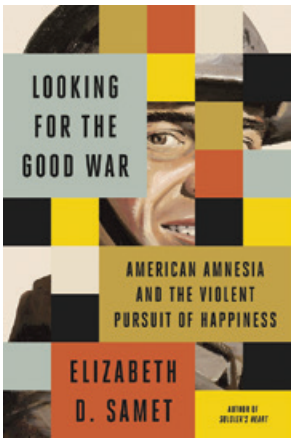
12 Greenberg, *Sandworm*, 217.

13 "Andy Greenberg," Author od Sandworm, accessed April 14, 2022, https://andygreenberg.net/.

***Looking for the Good War**: American Amnesia and the Violent Pursuit of Happiness*

by Elizabeth Samet

Reviewed by Chaplain (Captain) Caleb Miller



Elizabeth D. Samet in her new book, *Looking for the Good War*, examines art, journalism, literature, and film produced in the years following World War II, suggesting that "mythology surrounding World War II […] has simultaneously fortified and diminished the United States."[1] Samet is a professor of English at West Point and author of *Soldier's Heart*. In *Looking for the Good War*, Samet describes how, on the one hand, this mythology has fortified a sense of unity among various factions in the United States—North and South, Democrat and Republican. Even today world leaders from across the spectrum of political beliefs still routinely rehearse the same talking points about defending of the free world against oppression and fascism. On the other hand, this mythology has diminished the nation through what Samet calls "amnesia"—an oversimplification of the "good war" against the Axis powers, and the misguided belief in the inherently miraculous and redemptive qualities of American violence and involvement in war. In her words: "World War II left behind the dangerous and seemingly indestructible fantasy that our military intervention will naturally produce (an often underappreciated) good."[2] This point is especially salient in the wake of controversial and costly wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, a time when as Samet notes, "nostalgia for a good war, a greatest generation, and a simpler time remains as seductive as ever."[3]

Samet points to the enduring popularity of the *Call of Duty* video game franchise and Captain America's place in the Marvel universe; Soldiers serving in the Army today may also notice a continued military presence in Japan and Germany, and a return to "pinks and greens" service uniforms as further examples of World War II consciousness and nostalgia. Samet leverages her expertise as a literary critic to provide corroborating evidence in film, literature, and art to trace in great detail why this consciousness is so. She describes how World War II idealism and nostalgia slowly emerged out of noir-era introspection to become a whitewashed pretext for future conflicts in Vietnam, the Gulf War, and the War on Terror.

Through five chapters Samet describes how World War II came to dominate a distinctly American cultural consciousness. In Chapter 1, she considers the portrayal of the war as a good war waged by the so-called Greatest Generation. In Chapter 2, she highlights the deeply ambivalent attitudes and complications that accompanied the U.S. involvement in the war after Pearl Harbor and how they manifested in the decade following the war. Chapters 3 and 4 focus on the post-war period in the decades since, considering the conflict in Korea, Vietnam, both Iraq wars and Afghanistan. Chapter 5 compares World War II with the Civil War; Samet argues that World War II will ultimately occupy a similar place in

the American consciousness: a remote epic filled with symbols and nostalgia.

She begins her analysis with contemporary examples such as Stephen Ambrose's *Band of Brothers*, Tom Brokaw's *The Greatest Generation*, and Steven Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*. She argues that these works prop up misconceptions about the war through six exaggerated propositions:

1. The United States went to war to liberate the world from fascism and tyranny;

2. All Americans were absolutely united in their commitment to the war effort;

3. Everyone on the home front made tremendous sacrifices; 4. Americans are liberators who fight decently, reluctantly, only when they must; 5. World War II was a foreign tragedy with a happy American ending; 6. Everyone has always agreed on points 1-5.[4]

She then dismantles these propositions by putting recent portrayals (*Saving Private Ryan*, *Band of Brothers*, and *The Greatest Generation*) next to earlier works of art and literature, providing a wealth of commentary on countless journalistic retellings and films of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s such as *Confessions of a Nazi Spy* (1939), *Destry Rides Again* (1939), *Cry 'Havoc'* (1943), and *Twelve O'Clock High* (1949).[5]

At many points she rightly rails against the glorification of war, but Samet's thesis is not dependent on a particular stance on the ethics of war generally or of any particular war. Her relationship to war is more complicated than straightforward pacifism. At no point does she deny the atrocities committed by the Axis powers and the need for someone to stop them. Nevertheless, she points out that most enlisted Service members in the United States were motivated by compulsion (the draft) or vengeance (Pearl Harbor), rather than the ideological commitment to democracy and freedom. Scattered throughout the book are reflections on war and whether it can be justified or beneficial in a grand scheme. For instance, her statement that "it isn't easy to determine whether a war is futile" speaks to the tragedy of not knowing whether any particular sacrifice is worth it, while also implying that non-futile wars are possible. She continues this thought with open-ended questions: "Are all lost wars a waste? Are all victories worth their price? How many are Pyrrhic? Wait long enough, of course, and many of history's victories will be reversed."[6] Samet's conclusion here indicates something more nuanced than an articulation of Just War theory, and is closer to ambivalence or agnosticism than pacifism. In asking these kinds of difficult questions, Samet does the harder work of an effective teacher: to get people to think for themselves, and to model engagement with difficult and complex issues.

As an argument about the history of post-war politics and pop culture, Samet's analysis rests on the work of others and is not easily disputed. Even so, it perhaps oversimplifies the decision of world leaders to wage subsequent wars in Vietnam or Iraq. As the old saying goes, "truth is the first casualty of war."[7] There has been no shortage of scholars applying this proverbial truth to World War II specifically; thinkers and writesr such as Martin Gilbert, John Bodner, Studs Terkel, Samuel Stouffer, and Mary Louise Roberts have decried sentimentalizing the costliest war in world history, and Samet cites them generously.

As an argument about how World War II was and continues to be experienced individually and culturally in America, it is at once more intriguing and more difficult to evaluate. A productive exercise for Army Chaplains is to carefully ask and answer the question: how does this book aid or hinder Chaplains seeking to nurture the living, care for the wounded, and honor the dead in 2022 and beyond?

In terms of nurturing the living, this book aids Chaplains through a reminder that many see war as an abstraction (a political issue or theme in a movie) rather than a daily reality. Combat veterans need no reminders that war is messy, but increasingly civilians and unseasoned Service members do. That war itself has always been messy—and not simply as a peculiar feature of today—is a necessary admonition. Samet highlights how cultural moments can put undue burdens on Service members to perform in impossibly heroic ways. For example, the sentiment of "I will never leave a fallen comrade," which was only added to the Soldier's Creed in 2003, and was popularized by *Saving Private Ryan* and *Black Hawk Down*. But the phrase was not treated the same way in older films. Tom Hanks' Captain Miller in *Saving Private Ryan* contrasts with Gregory Peck's Brigadier General Frank Savage *Twelve O'Clock High* in the way he approaches group integrity and sacrificing many for the needs of one. Savage's undoing comes when he deviates from that principle.[8] Meanwhile the nature of Miller's fictitious mission is to sacrifice many for Private Ryan. Samet notes that this is due at least in part to the higher casualty counts in conflicts prior to the Gulf War; Saving Private Ryan reflects a forgetfulness of this reality and "effectively reduces World War II to a contest of individuals."[9] Given the recent doctrinal shifts in military

circles away from counter-insurgency and toward large-scale combat operations,[10] it is again a necessary admonition that "leaving no one behind" in a way reminiscent of Captain Miller's mission is a noble yet probably impossible goal.

In terms of caring for the wounded, here Army Chaplains may think especially of moral injury rather than simply physical wounds. Samet echoes the wisdom of clinicians and counselors today who warn that wars can prove costly to individuals even in the midst of a corporate just cause. Samet adds her voice to this chorus, showing sensitivity to the ways war and violence have been offered as solutions to the urge for vengeance and justice, draped in vague sentimental notions of a fight between good and evil. In her words: "wars never can do the work of redemption, even when their causes meet generally agreed-upon criteria for justice."[11] When it comes to honoring the dead, the book's central message about refusing sentimentality speaks to the damage that can be done when lives of human beings are reduced to less-dignified symbols or relics, mere means to an end. Even in eulogies for strangers it is not necessary to exaggerate or say patently untrue things.

There have already been three noteworthy reviews of the book by Jennifer Szalai (in *The New York Times*),[12] Robert Kaiser (in the *Washington Post*),[13] and Carlos Lozada (in *The New Yorker*)[14] praising and popularizing the book for its message about the dangers of sentimentalizing war, and deservedly so. What *Looking for the Good War* lacks, however, is a concrete recommendation to accompany the identification of so many serious problems and unknowns. Those looking for resolution will be disappointed. Had Ambrose's *Band of Brothers*, Spielberg's *Saving Private Ryan*, and Brokaw's *The Greatest Generation* never been produced, or if they had simply told more accurate stories, would that have made a difference? If enough of the population commits to more accurate retellings moving forward, will this be a pivotal moment to prevent a future misguided war? Samet is caught between the complications involved in constructing any compelling yet faithful war story ("The longer war stories go on, the more difficult they are to listen to")[15] and a final encouragement (harkening back to Abraham Lincoln's remarks on the Founding Fathers) that the U.S. must begin to embrace a different war story divorced from the circumstances of World War II.[16] In the meantime, the United States is poised for future conflict, for better or for worse. At present with near-peer threats in Eastern Europe and the South China Sea, the reasons for such a posture are more complicated and frightening than a "backward looking search to recover […] illusory greatness." [17]

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NOTES

1 Elizabeth Samet, *Looking for the Good War: American Amnesia and the Violent Pursuit of Happiness* (New York, NY: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2021), 5.

2 Samet, *Looking for the Good War*, 9.

3 Samet, *Looking for the Good War*, 22.

4 Samet, *Looking for the Good War*, 25-26.

5 Samet, *Looking for the Good War*, 66, 94, 86, 96-105.

6 Samet, *Looking for the Good War*, 89.

7 *The Dictionary of Modern Proverbs*, ed. Charles Clay Doyle, Wolfgang Mieder, and Fred R. Shapiro (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 265. The earliest known close match came from Ethel Annakin in 1915, but it has been variously attributed to a 1928 quote from Arthur Ponsonby's *Falsehood in Wartime*, U.S. Senator Hiram Brown in a 1918 speech, or Samuel Johnson's words in The Idler in 1758: "...among the calamities of war may be jointly numbered the diminution of the love of truth, by the falsehoods which interest dictates and credulity encourages." Others cite the Greek dramatist Aeschylus (525BC - 456BC).

8 Samet, *Looking for the Good War*, 67.

9 Samet, *Looking for the Good War*, 66.

10 TRADOC Pamphlet 525-3-1, *The US Army in Multi-Domain Operations 2028*, 6 December 2018.

11 Samet, *Looking for the Good War*, 23.

12 Jennifer Szalai, "'Looking for the Good War' says our nostalgia for World War II has done real Harm," *The New York Times*, Nov. 29, 2021.

13 Robert Kaiser, "The Danger of American Nostalgia for World War II" *The Washington Post*, Dec. 10, 2021.

14 Carlos Lozada, "The Cost of Sentimentalizing War," *The New Yorker*, Nov. 29, 2021.

15 Samet, *Looking for the Good War*, 336.

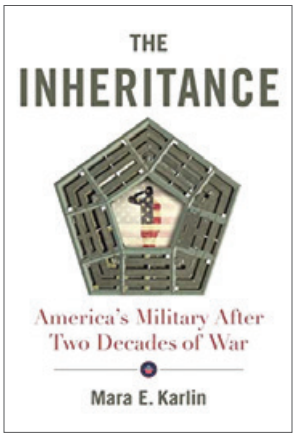
16 Samet, *Looking for the Good War*, 340-344.

17 Samet, *Looking for the Good War*, 344.

***The Inheritance**: America's Military After Two Decades of War*

by Mara Karlin

Reviewed by Dr. Jacqueline E. Whitt



What is the legacy of a war? Waging war is risky and costly; even when a war is won, it leaves lasting marks—on people, families, communities, militaries, governments, states, and nations. How much more complicated is that legacy when the war is not one war, but several, when those wars lasted in various permutations for two decades, and when those wars definitely were not won? These are the questions that Mara Karlin seeks to answer in *The Inheritance: America's Military after Two Decades of War*. The book that results is part post-mortem (for what was), part diagnosis (for what is), and part meditation (for what might be).

Karlin straddles the academic-practitioner divide, which makes her ideally situated to write this book, but it also means readers should understand that Karlin is a participant in the events she describes even as she also writes as an observer and scholar. Karlin recognizes her double position early in the introduction; in the main text, however, this perspective recedes a bit. Karlin is a long-time civil servant and political appointee who has served under five Secretaries of Defense. When not serving in an administration, Karlin has taught and directed academic programs and strategic studies at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. She currently serves as the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Strategy, Plans and Capabilities, confirmed to the position in August 2021.

Karlin is at her best elucidating and contextualizing how leaders—civilian and military—understood the post-9/11 wars, their participation in it, and their feelings about it. Karlin conducted nearly 100 interviews that form the central source base for the book; interviewees represent a range of military and civilian personnel at various levels and with varied perspectives. It is clear that the interviewees trust Karlin enough to share difficult and reflective assessments about the last twenty years. Karlin is masterful at using quotations and stories to tell the book's larger story, especially early in the book where she examines three crises, which she labels the "Crisis of Confidence," the "Crisis of Caring," and the "Crisis of Meaningful Civilian Control." These are gripping chapters as Karlin describes the tensions wrought from twenty years of war. The contemporary U.S. military is more technically proficient, educated, and combat-experienced than it has ever been. And it still did not win. There is plenty of blame to go around. Karlin does not assign blame, but lets readers sit with a number of things that are concerning, troubling, and worrisome.

With every strength, there is a limitation and the interviews in The Inheritance conform to this truism. Many of the interviews are anonymized—for entirely understandable reasons, the events covered in the book are in the recent past, and many interviewees still occupy positions of public responsibility in the national security arena so without anonymity

their interviews would have likely been more circumspect. This anonymity and the established relationship between interviewer and interviewee also mean that Karlin is unable to fully interrogate her own sources. She acknowledges, for example, that Vietnam was a ready analogy for many interviewees but Karlin largely refrains from analyzing whether those analogies are useful, appropriate, or accurate.

The breadth of topics covered in the book is impressive, and this range highlights the extent to which twenty years of war have shaped every aspect of the American national security apparatus and especially the United States military. It includes analysis and commentary on military planning, civil-military relations, the civil-military gap, service culture, military sociology and demographics, leadership, the iron triangle of readiness-modernization-and-force structure. The book's wide scope, though, may frustrate more expert readers. Each chapter represents a ripe area for study, many with a rich and developing literature to support it. The bibliography in *The Inheritance* will be an excellent reference point for scholars who want to delve further into any number of topics.

Even with this range, there are some surprising gaps. Perhaps most disconcerting: there is very little discussion about the strategic wisdom of the post-9/11 wars. Given the principle of civilian control, civilians made the decision for war, but military and civilian leaders kept the United States there year after year after year. The book never quite acknowledges that the inheritance is one that need not have been bequeathed at all. This is, surely, the great tragedy of the era, and one with which we not yet begun to grapple.

There are narrower but also jarring gaps, particularly when it comes to the social and cultural legacies of the GWOT era. For example, even though Karlin covers some of the social dynamics related to gender integration, the repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT), and policies regarding transgender personnel, there is no discussion of sexual harassment and sexual assault as a crisis for the contemporary military. On DADT repeal, Karlin repeats the military's narrative that the repeal, once enacted, was basically a non-issue in the ranks. The lived experiences of LGBTQ Service members might suggest otherwise. There is no interrogation of persistent racism or discrimination in courts martial or non-judicial punishment. There are only cursory mentions of mental health crises, PTSD, moral injury, and traumatic brain injury, which may be understood as the "signature wounds" of the post-9/11 era.[1]

The book deals with very recent history so some of the legacies Karlin explores will not be fully known for years or decades. Reading it in early 2022 means reading it having watched the anguished and chaotic end of the war in Afghanistan—the Taliban taking back over, Service members losing their lives in the last days of a war, aircrew pulling off incredible feats to load cargo planes for evacuation, Veterans finding themselves unable to help Allies and interpreters get out. And then we watched Russia invade Ukraine, kicking off a conventional war in Europe, and calling into question many things we thought we had learned about time, space, and the spectrum of war and bringing to light new/old questions about alliances and nuclear weapons. Not knowing how things turn out—this is the nature of the genre, and every examination begins somewhere. This book is a very, very strong start.

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NOTES

1 David Kieran. *Signature Wounds: The Untold Story of the Military's Mental Health Crisis*. New York: New York University Press, 2019.


MEEKER

The following entries provide excerpts of and links to recently published articles that are relevant to how members of the Chaplain Corps can serve in an evolving operational environment.

Leadership and the Profession of Arms

Adapting the Mold: Preparing Leaders for Complexity

by Cole Livieratos, Ph.D.

The year is 2040 and the United States is locked in a high-intensity conflict with a near-peer adversary. An Army division is tasked with controlling a major highway to provide security and support another division's assault to seize an objective on key terrain. To control this highway, now currently in enemy hands, the division must breach defensive obstacles and clear the enemy off the route. After employing its unmanned aerial and ground reconnaissance systems, launching loitering munitions, conducting electronic warfare attacks, and employing precision fires, an infantry brigade prepares to breach. Several hundred kilometers away, the division commander walks into the operations center at one of the small, mobile command posts the division is employing. He quickly issues orders to his staff and demands to see the live video feed from the infantry brigade's drones so he can control the battle at the decisive point—the breach. This is exactly the kind of situation this commander had prepared for. At Fort Bragg, he routinely trained for scenarios like this, developing a mental playbook so he could quickly react to the enemy's actions. He is prepared to control the battle through advanced communications platforms and a state-of-the-art battlefield tracking system that utilizes cutting-edge artificial intelligence.

https://mwi.usma.edu/adapting-the-mold-preparing-leaders-for-complexity/

Better Curricula, Better Strategic Outcomes: Irregular Warfare, Great Power Competition, and Professional Military Education

by Heather S. Gregg, Ph.D.

On April 29, 2021, cyber hackers broke into the networks of the US Colonial Pipeline system through a compromised VPN account and installed ransomware, effectively shutting down the largest fuel pipeline in the United States a week later. In the following days, US citizens up and down the Eastern Seaboard waited in hours-long lines, fearing that gasoline supplies would run out. Panic buying resulted in some states nearly running out of fuel before executives paid the ransom, ending the crisis. A postmortem investigation of the incident tied the attack to individuals from the "ransomware as a service" group Darkside, who reportedly resided in Russia and had ties to the Russian government, intelligence services, or the military. This attack, which was perpetrated by a near-peer adversary but with a degree of plausible deniability, directly targeted the American public with the goal of achieving a strategic effect. It demonstrates that the United States and its allies are in an age of strategic competition with a range of actors, including near-peer adversaries, rogue states that do not conform to international laws and norms, as well as nonstate actors who seek to challenge the status quo. These strategic competitors leverage a wide variety of means below the threshold of armed conflict, including cyber activities, to provoke the United States and offset its conventional military capabilities.

https://mwi.usma.edu/better-curricula-better-strategic-outcomes-irregular-warfare-great-power-competition-and-professional-military-education/

Thoughts on "Winning Wars"

by B.K. Greener, Ph.D.

There are books aplenty about war and strategy. Even so, only a few consider the notion of victory as a concept—Richard Hobbs' 1979 book the *Myth of Victory* and William Martel's *Victory in War* (2011) are notable exceptions. Even fewer books focus on how victory is imbued with different meaning in different contexts. This focus, then, is the main contribution of Matthias Strohn's edited collection on Winning Wars, a bringing together of a range of scholars who have answered the question: what does victory look like? in varying times and places. Hew Strachan opens the book with a nuanced introduction. He notes that the United Kingdom's Defence Doctrine avoids terms like victory and instead focuses on the idea that war is about maintaining advantage. This theme of the use of military force to attain or maintain an advantage emerges in other chapters, as does Strachan's suggestion that the West's engagement in contemporary conflicts shows a divergence between tactics and strategy, ends and means. Other themes that recur throughout the contributions include discussions about the idea, perhaps expressed most clearly in the chapter on Africa by Richard Reid, that war is pursued for objectives such as "ownership, effect, ideas," with these three broadly translatable to territorial gains, influence, and ideological battles.

https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2022/4/27/reviewing-winning-wars

From Understanding Levels of Command Authority

by SGM Jeremy Crisp

Command is integral to military operations but is not just a simple surface structure. It has different levels and missions as the commander's intent is passed down through multiple echelons. This article will analyze command relationships and authorities in the joint environment, use historical vignettes to demonstrate how different aspects of command were used both successfully and unsuccessfully in wartime environments, and highlight how senior NCOs can best affect the battlefield.

https://www.armyupress.army.mil/Portals/7/nco-journal/images/2021/July/Command-Authority/Command-Principles.pdf

The Most Difficult End to a Most Difficult War

by Benjamin Van Horrick

War plays tricks. Its cruelest trick is making participants, individuals and countries alike, think they can walk away from conflict on their terms. After multiple deployments to Afghanistan, Elliot Ackerman left his military service behind him to embark on what would become a successful literary career. Like many veterans, Ackerman believed he could depart war on his terms, but the collapse of Kabul in August 2021 drew him—and others—back into its grasp. In his new book *The Fifth Act: America's End in Afghanistan*, Ackerman documents the maddeningly frantic, tragic, and sometimes triumphant actions that assisted in evacuating Afghan citizens as the Taliban tightened its vice on Kabul. In telling the story of the Afghan airlift, Ackerman pulls back the curtain on the two decades of conflict that this episode punctuated. Ackerman takes the readers to Arlington National Cemetery's Section 60, Farah province in Afghanistan, and the E-Ring of the Pentagon before framing the chaotic final days of the Kabul evacuation. His rendering of the events of August 2021 and his service paints a compelling picture of why the Afghan airlift was urgent and why so many veterans dedicated themselves to the task of facilitating the exit of Afghans they knew, who they had worked and fought side by side with to secure and stabilize a country rapidly and violently returning to the status quo ante bellum. How Afghanistan ended will mar America's memories of the war, the longest in our nation's history.

https://mwi.usma.edu/the-most-difficult-end-to-a-most-difficult-war/

Healthy Worry About Healthy Civil-military Relations

by Kori Schake

"Civil-military relations" is a term that covers a multitude of sins. Scholars of civil-military relations write on topics ranging from recruiting and retention to military coups to norms of professional military behavior. This week's Horns of a Dilemma speaker, Dr. Kori Schake, argues that civil-military relations in the United States have historically been strong and stable. So why are U.S. civil-military relations an important topic of study and debate? As Schake observes, Americans tend to put off addressing potential problems until they are worried about them. So, especially in light of challenges to the norms of strong and stable civil-military relations associated with a highly polarized partisan environment, worrying about healthy civil-military relations is … healthy. This talk was delivered at the Clements Center Summer Seminar in History and Statecraft held in Beaver Creek, Colorado in July.

https://warontherocks.com/2022/08/healthy-worry-about-healthy-civil-military-relations/

Why Intrusive Leadership in the U.S. Military is Actually a Good Thing

by Marcus Candy

In June of 2020, I wrote an article published by the U.S. Naval Institute entitled Racial Tension in America Requires Intrusive Military Leadership. I wrote this article because I was struggling with the gut-wrenching murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. I wasn't doing okay. I needed someone to ask how I was doing and be prepared to listen to my struggle as an African American man, and as a husband and father. I knew I wasn't alone, so I wrote the article in the hopes that it would motivate people across the country to engage in some difficult conversations, with the goal of increasing unit cohesion and providing everyone with a sense of care and support. That experience made me passionate about intrusive leadership and the positive impacts it can have on people and organizations. I have worked for intrusive leaders before in my career, and those leaders had a profound impact on me. I remain in contact with many of them today and still seek their guidance from time to time. So, I decided to turn that passion into a purpose. I wanted to study intrusive leadership and talk to senior leaders about their experience with this leadership style. I wanted to find out if it is taught and if it is desired by the generation entering the workforce today. Through qualitative interviews, literature reviews, and a survey, this is what I discovered.

https://taskandpurpose-com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/taskandpurpose.com/opinion/what-is-intrusive-leadership-military/?amp

The Paradoxical Trinity of Leadership

by COL Al Boyer and Cole Livieratos, Ph.D.

Last month, the United States Military Academy at West Point graduated around one thousand cadets from the class of 2022 and commissioned them as second lieutenants into an Army emerging from two decades of war. While the Army's newest officers are physically fit, incredibly smart, and qualified to lead, dozens of cadets we have taught during their four years at the academy admit that something is missing from their experience, leaving them genuinely concerned about their preparation to lead in future wars. These admissions are not simply the natural trepidation of people taking a major step in their lives. Their concerns are much more specific, with many divulging that they feel more adequately prepared to fight the conflicts of the past than those they see around the world today. As officers who have spent a good deal of our own careers fighting America's post-9/11 wars, we recognize a host of tactical, leadership, and life lessons these wars have imparted on us. The past few years at West Point, we taught and mentored many cadets in the graduating class, but we did not focus on our experiences fighting these wars of the past. Rather, we centered our instruction on the future of warfare. And what we found was astonishing. As with most professional military education in the Army, West Point does an excellent job imbuing its graduates with general attributes and competencies expected of military leaders in all environments. However, there is too little attention paid to how these traits should be applied in a context characterized by conventional and irregular threats from powerful competitors, the increasing use of artificial intelligence and autonomous systems on the battlefield, the rising importance of electronic warfare and signature management, and the erosion of truth itself. In other words, we train young leaders on the nature of leadership while often disregarding its character altogether. Preparing leaders for future war is about anticipation and adaptation, not prediction. As former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates aptly noted, "When it comes to predicting the nature and location of our next military engagements, since Vietnam, our record has been perfect. We have never gotten it right."

https://mwi.usma.edu/the-paradoxical-trinity-of-leadership

A Strategist's Cast of Characters: The Critical Attributes and Skills of Strategic Decision-Makers

by Roni Yadlin

Since the day when Thespis made dramatic history and first took to the stage as a character in a play, the ancient Greeks used theatrical productions to provide social commentary, impart lessons, and inspire action. These publicly funded events helped the audience understand their history and role in society. The Greek use of drama imbued a tragic sensibility in the citizenry, warned them of dangers facing their community, reminded them of their responsibility to the collective and helped them develop national strategy. A key tool in these dramas was symbolic characterization in which the characters on stage represented moral concepts and imparted desired lessons. Greek drama was itself embodied in the masks representing Melpomene, the

Muse of tragedy, and Thalia, the Muse of comedy. This concept of characterization also provides an allegorical framework through which to consider some of the critical characteristics and skills necessary for strategists.

https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2022/9/2/a-strategists-cast-of-characters-the-critical-attributes-and-skills-of-strategic-decision-makers

Ambiguous Ethical Situations and the Letter "A"

by LTC Daniel Pace

As a leader in the Special Forces, I frequently chew on how my organization makes ethical decisions, particularly when we are working in morally uncertain environments. What concerns me most is the potential disparity between what I think is ethical and what the folks that are executing my guidance think is ethical when I am not around. In my experience, units I have served in have tried to address this issue through large auditorium briefings from the JAG or Chaplain. Most of us on the ground-pounding side of the Army aren't a very theoretical lot, so the briefings on Just War Theory or The Hague Convention frequently lead to dozing audiences, and the question and answer sessions at the end frequently end up with "you'll know it when you see it" as the answer to the ever-present question: "how will I know if what I'm doing is immoral or illegal?" Unfortunately, the way I see it, the way the 15-6 officer sees it, and the way the guy that took the action sees it rarely line up, which results in undesirable consequences for everyone involved. While chewing on this problem and thinking about how to improve moral agency in my unit, it occurred to me that at the unit level, the problem isn't necessarily that I need to improve the quality of my troops' moral education, but rather that I need to ensure we have a similar enough understanding of what moral and immoral decisions look like that I can trust them to execute on my behalf. For operational purposes, the disparity in our opinions is more important than the specifics of either of our interpretations.

https://www.realcleardefense.com/articles/2022/09/07/ambiguous_ethical_situations_and_the_letter_a_852183.html

We're Doing It Wrong: Returning the Study of War to the Center of Professional Military Education

by James Lacey

After what was effectively a bloody, three-year master's course on operational level warfare, the Red Army, in June 1944, unleashed an offensive—Operation Bagration—that in mere weeks tore apart three of the four armies comprising Germany's Army Group Center. In a stunning display of its recently acquired competence, the Red Army proved it had fully absorbed the intricacies of operational warfare. Fortunately, for the fate of Ukraine, at some point in the decades since Bagration, the Russians appear to have forgotten all they had learned. Just as Operation Bagration forced the world to take notice of the Red Army's operational skills, the level of Russia's military incompetence put on display for the past several months has equally stunned the world. What has gone wrong? Undoubtedly, there are many answers to this question. But please allow me to offer one essential item that likely lies at the root of Russian military ineptitude—Russia's professional military education ceased taking the study of war seriously. The supposed experts of the new forms of war—hybrid warfare, conducted in the gray zone by little green men, with heavy doses of cyber and information operations—have forgotten how to execute more traditional forms of war.

https://mwi.usma.edu/were-doing-it-wrong-returning-the-study-of-war-to-the-center-of-professional-military-education

The following entries provide excerpts of and links to recently published articles that are relevant to how members of the Chaplain Corps can serve in an evolving operational environment.

The Evolving Operational Environment

A More Talkative Place: Why the Human Domain Still Matters in Strategic Competition—Brutality in an Age of Human Rights

by Heather Venable, Ph.D.

One of the guiding yet implicit assumptions of the return to strategic competition appears to be that human terrain does not matter in a near-peer or peer-conflict as much as it does in counterinsurgency. As such, Brian Drohan's Brutality in an Age of Human Rights: Activism and Counterinsurgency at the End of the British Empire may read as a relic of the COIN-infused approach to the Global War on Terror. But that interpretation would be wrong. Drohan's work on counterinsurgency speaks to increasingly important issues ranging from lawfare to crafting narratives that are foundational to strategic competition. Drohan—an Army officer who received his Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina before returning to teach at West Point—begins by pointing out the convenient myths that surround British counterinsurgency after World War II, especially the idea that the nation succeeded by adhering to its own laws, unlike other colonial powers. According to Drohan, this kind of myth infuses more contemporary documents as well, such as Field Manual 3-24: *Counterinsurgency*. In reality, though, Drohan highlights the paradox between British rhetoric and British reality. British officials did not conform to laws in conducting counterinsurgency, and activists pushed back, forcing those officials to craft their own competing narratives. The British continually insisted they used only "minimum force" and adhered to the "rule of law", but "rights activists" disagreed, and their efforts to challenge British officials helped shape "wartime policies and practices." Thus, Drohan focuses his work on the human "topography of war."

https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2022/5/10/a-more-talkative-place-why-the-human-domain-still-matters-in-strategic-competition-reviewing-brutality-in-an-age-of-human-rights

Defining Defeat

by COL(R) Kevin Benson

In December 2018, President Trump announced the U.S. had "defeated ISIS in Syria" and indicated his initial decision to withdraw all U.S. forces. This action raised blood pressures all over the U.S. Central Command headquarters. It also raised many important points for analysis, among them how U.S. Central Command defined the defeat of the Islamic State in its strategy. Defining such a term in doctrine is critical when attempting to link tactical actions to conditions that attain policy objectives. In essence, doctrine, while not dogma or regulation, guides thinking about warfare. The U.S. Army updated the only available definition for defeat in 2019. The definition is too narrowly focused on the tactical level of warfare. This article proposes a more useful definition for defeat and provides a description of defeat at all three levels of warfare. While some may disdain a by-the-book approach to decision-making and planning, the tacit understanding of a shared lexicon is important in providing clarity of language and establishing the basis for shared understanding. A meaningful definition of defeat and an understanding of what it takes to accomplish the defeat of an enemy force in general, and specific adversaries

like the Islamic State in particular, is also important. Considering these necessities, it is alarming that there is no joint force definition of defeat.

https://thestrategybridge-org.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2020/4/13/defining-defeat?format=amp

America's First 'Limited War'

by Donald Stoker, Ph.D.

The term "limited war" entered the modern American lexicon in May 1951, during Senate hearings on the Korean War. When Secretary of Defense George C. Marshall was asked to describe the conflict, he said: "I would characterize it as a limited war which I hope will remain limited." Since then, the same description has been applied to the wars fought by the U.S. in Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq. The outcomes of these conflicts suggest that in wars for limited political aims, clear victories are difficult to achieve. Indeed, Western liberal democracies in the post-World War II era may be the only countries in history to go to war without the expectation of victory. As former Secretary of State and retired general Colin Powell once noted, "As soon as they tell me [war] is limited, it means that they do not care whether you achieve a result or not." The history of the Korean War, America's first limited war, helps to show why.

https://www.wsj.com/amp/articles/americas-first-limited-war-11656597665

Melting the Myth of Arctic Exceptionalism

by CAPT Jason Smith

In. In 1987, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev called for the Arctic to be a "zone of peace." In a speech declaring that the region would remain separate from the confrontations and conflicts of the middle latitudes, he expressed a vision for Arctic exceptionalism—setting a trend that Arctic nations and international organizations would follow for the next thirty-five years. It wasn't until Russia's invasion of Ukraine that Arctic stakeholders were forced to shed the misguided view that the region was somehow exempt from the competitive dynamics playing out across the rest of the world. It is increasingly apparent that this notion—since Gorbachev first gave voice to it—has always been based on wishful thinking. What this means for the United States is clear: to effectively compete with its pacing threat of China and an increasingly aggressive Russia, the United States needs to rethink its Arctic strategy and take advantage of the geostrategic importance of the region. To the degree that there has been any exceptionalism inherent to the Arctic, this was not due to political restraint or mutual agreement, but rather because it's difficult to conduct operations in the northernmost region of the globe. Remote and inhospitable, the Arctic is difficult to access, explore, support operations in, extract resources from, or defend. Advancements in technology and receding polar ice are beginning to ease the costs of Arctic operations and many countries, even those far away from the Arctic like China and India, are reconsidering their approaches to the region. America should too. But, more importantly, it first needs to consider how the Arctic fits into its national strategies because, in reality, the Arctic is no different than any other region and not exempt from contest or conflict. In fact, it is a strategically important region that provides access to major theaters—access that could be decisive in future conflict. And it is becoming an even more important focus for states in strategic competition—a security context that has been steadily encroaching on the Arctic for years. Understanding America's future approach to the Arctic begins with an appreciation of the historic tensions that have always existed there.

https://mwi.usma.edu/melting-the-myth-of-arctic-exceptionalism/

LSCO Lessons: What the Army Should be Learning About Large-scale Combat Operations from the Ukraine War

by COL(R) James Greer, Ph.D.

While the Western world largely expected a rapid Ukrainian military defeat by Russian forces, the Ukrainian armed forces and their people halted the initial thrust of the invasion and have since regained some of their lost territory and continue to defend their nation. The war is far from over. At this point, no one can describe with certainty the eventual outcome. That said, there is already much we can learn from this war. For the US joint force, and the Army in particular, that should include identifying major lessons regarding the conduct of large-scale combat operations on the modern battlefield. These lessons and their implications should then inform both near-term readiness—in the form of leader development, training, doctrine, force deployments and preparedness—and future force design across the DOTMLPF spectrum (doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leadership and education, personnel, and facilities). We must always recognize that every war is unique and that none perfectly predicts the next.

https://mwi.usma.edu/lsco-lessons-what-the-army-should-be-learning-about-large-scale-combat-operations-from-the-ukraine-war

Space, Cyber, and Special Operations: An Influence Triad for Global Campaigning

by BG Will Beaurpere and COL Ned Marsh

Throughout George Lucas's depiction of the conflicts that gripped a galaxy long ago and far, far away, both the heroes and the villains employ a myriad of unconventional capabilities and tactics. They utilize mind tricks to confuse their enemies, conduct raids to penetrate secret facilities, and make use of stolen codes at critical moments. To be sure, the characters do not eschew large conventional weapons or methods—there are space fleets and massed infantry formations, huge lasers and fighter wings. Yet the preeminent warriors, the Jedi, knew that there were always other ways to fight. Lucas's Jedi complemented conventional space war capability with subterfuge, rebels, and niche skills to influence their operational environment. Lucas portrayed a form of war that was all encompassing and had to be fought simultaneously across the entire competition continuum. In our real contemporary operational environment, the joint force needs speed and flexibility to effectively influence across the full competition continuum, both below and in armed conflict. These characteristics are the products of an agile and open mindset—a requirement for modern military campaigning. To resource that requirement, we recommend the combination and integration of space, cyber, and special operations capabilities as a joint concept for influence that directly complements existing conventional warfighting concepts.

https://mwi.usma.edu/space-cyber-and-special-operations-an-influence-triad-for-global-campaigning

Why America's Army Can't Win America's Wars

by John Nagl, Ph.D.

Since achieving victory in World War II, the United States military has a less than enviable combat record in irregular warfare. Through a detailed historical analysis, this article provides perspective on where past decisions and doctrines have led to defeat and where they may have succeeded if given more time or executed differently. In doing so, it provides lessons for future Army engagements and argues that until America becomes proficient in irregular warfare, our enemies will continue to fight us at the lower levels of the spectrum of conflict, where they have a good chance of exhausting our will to fight.

https://press.armywarcollege.edu/parameters/vol52/iss3/3/

What's Next for Al-Qaeda?

by Tricia Bacon, Ph.D. and Elizabeth Grimm, Ph.D.

In a televised news conference this week, President Joe Biden confirmed the rumors that had been swirling: the United States had conducted an airstrike that killed the emir of al-Qaeda, Dr. Ayman al-Zawahiri, in Kabul, Afghanistan. Though reports of his demise had circulated for almost two years, this strike eliminated the leader who had been at the helm of the group since the death of Osama bin Laden in 2011. While many observers are seeking to predict who the next leader will be—some arguing that it may be veteran Egyptian jihadist Saif al-Adel or perhaps Abd al-Rahman al-Maghribi, head of al-Qaeda's media committee—the focus on who the next leader will be is not necessarily the most critical question now. Rather, the focus instead should include what type of leader will follow Zawahiri and to what extent this successor will continue the trajectory established by bin Laden. Leaders matter a great deal for religious terrorist groups like al-Qaeda, but the kind of leader is equally as important as the person. Our new book, *Terror in Transition: Leadership and Succession in Terrorist Organizations*, explores these terrorist leadership types. Our findings offer a means of understanding who Zawahiri was and what kind of leadership role he embodied for al-Qaeda, as well as a framework for assessing the current transition facing al-Qaeda.

https://mwi.usma.edu/whats-next-for-al-qaeda/

The Sword, the Shield and the Hedgehog: Strengthening Deterrence in NATO's New Strategic Concept

by Sean Monaghan

When NATO leaders gathered in Lisbon in 1952, the Alliance hoped to have 50 divisions available to deter Soviet attack. By the end of the Cold War, it had over 100. At the end of June, with war raging in Ukraine and a revanchist Russia making nuclear threats towards its members, NATO's leaders gathered a short distance away in Madrid with just eight forward-deployed battlegroups at their disposal. In Madrid NATO revealed its new strategic concept and made significant force posture changes to bolster deterrence and defense. These measures were described by

Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, as "the biggest overhaul of our collective deterrence and defence since the Cold War." However, although the concept sets out a high level of ambition, NATO still has plenty of work to do to meet it. While the threat from Russia has returned to Cold War levels, NATO's strategy is playing catch up. To close the gap, NATO should revitalize—and modernize—the basic tenets of the "sword and shield" strategy and the "hedgehog defense" that contained Soviet aggression.

https://warontherocks.com/2022/08/the-sword-the-shield-and-the-hedgehog-strengthening-deterrence-in-natos-new-strategic-concept/

Paying for Tomorrow's Readiness with Today's

by MAJ Christine Krueger

In his book, *Making the Unipolar Moment*, Hal Brands describes the unique strategic environment that emerged after the Cold War with the United States as the sole and uncontested superpower.[2] The world Brands describes is not the one the United States Department of Defense operates in today. The urgency of the quote above from the 2018 National Defense Strategy, that we must restore readiness rather than maintain it, is underscored throughout that document in its discussion of that fast pace at which the Nation's peers are catching up to it. It is imperative that the Department of Defense figure out how to remain competitive by achieving the maximum readiness that allows it to compete or to transition to conflict. This is certainly a challenge for the Department of Defense as a whole, but each service also faces its own unique challenges. As the ground force provider with constant missions, the United States Army has, post-WWII, attempted to maintain readiness while it modernized simultaneously and in-stride. However, the force the U.S. Army wants to field in the future is transformational and therefore requires a more deliberate approach. The U.S. Army must determine not only how and when to modernize, but also how to mitigate the cost of modernization.

https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2022/3/17/paying-for-tomorrows-readiness-with-todays

Fight for the City: Creating the School of Urban Warfare

by Michael Anderson

In 2016, then Chief of Staff of the Army General Mark Milley remarked, "The American Army is probably going to be fighting in urban areas. We need to man, organize, train and equip the force for operations in urban areas, highly dense urban areas, and that's a different construct. We're not organized like that right now." Six years later, Russian failures in urban operations in Ukraine have added weight to Milley's statement. Ukrainian resistance in Kyiv and Mariupol slowed Russian advances and helped continue the war. Milley's prognosis and the implied tasks therein still have not been fully implemented by the US Army. To prepare for the future urban fight and to avoid Russian-type struggles, the Army needs to improve its urban warfare proficiency through the creation of a school of urban warfare, concurrent with the development of an urban combat training center. While the US Army has extensive recent experience in urban operations, most notably in Baghdad, there needs to be continued emphasis and further development on the specific skills and training needed for the demanding and dynamic requirements of urban combat. The complexity of urban terrain and the presence of civilians in an information- and media-dense environment pose significant complications for armies.

https://mwi.usma.edu/fight-for-the-city-creating-the-school-of-urban-warfare

Blast From the Past: What We learned by Bringing a Rear-area Combat Concept From the 1980s to the National training Center

by LTC Gordon Kinneer and LTC Eric Ponzek

It was a brutally hot out—106 degrees—as Private First Class Myles Baney sat under his camo net, scanning his sector. As he looked toward the horizon through the wavy heat lines in his binoculars, he noticed two vehicles that seemed out of place. Watching this pair of odd-looking vehicles, he sensed something wasn't right. Without even realizing it, weeks of training suddenly kicked in, and he was quickly getting his Javelin into operation. In the span of five minutes, Baney would destroy three enemy vehicles, singlehandedly sparing the brigade support battalion, the rear logistical headquarters for the brigade, from almost certain destruction. Baney and his unit were part of a larger force tasked with protecting the brigade rear area, and for the soldiers in the logistical rear of the brigade, they sure were glad he and his fellow soldiers were at the right place, at the right time. To paraphrase journalist Malcolm Muggeridge, new things are old things happening to new people. This was the case in the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team's recent rotation at the National Training Center, during which the brigade

was tasked to organize a tactical combat force in support of the exercise scenario. Responsibility for this mission was assigned to a task force—Task Force Paxton—and its experience during the rotation offers important lessons for the Army as it prepares for the future battlefield. The tactical combat force concept has fallen out of the Army's lexicon in recent years, but with the flood of lessons learned from Ukraine, it is suddenly relevant again.

https://mwi.usma.edu/blast-from-the-past-what-we-learned-by-bringing-a-rear-area-combat-concept-from-the-1980s-to-the-national-training-center

The Tank is not Obsolete, and Other Observations About the Future of Combat

by Rob Lee

After six months of war in Ukraine, some observers have insisted that "we are seeing the very nature of combat change" and that tanks, along with fighter jets and warships, "are being pushed into obsolescence." But it is too soon to write off the tank, and we should resist jumping to other sweeping conclusions about the future of warfare based on a conflict whose lessons are not yet clear. There is still much about this war that is not known from open sources, and there is good reason to think that the conditions that marked its early phases will not necessarily be relevant to future conflicts. As a result, specific weapon systems may appear to be ineffective based on how and where they are employed, not necessarily due to their inherent shortcomings. The available data from Ukraine, as well as the recent war in Nagorno-Karabakh, indicate that tanks are still critical in modern warfare and their vulnerabilities have been exaggerated.

https://warontherocks.com/2022/09/the-tank-is-not-obsolete-and-other-observations-about-the-future-of-combat/

On the Front Lines with Ukraine's Military Chaplains

by Anna Romandash

They cannot bear arms, but they are an essential part of the Army Forces: these are Ukraine's military chaplains. After volunteering for years in the East of Ukraine, they finally have been granted official recognition. In March, Ukraine passed a law that legalizes the work of military chaplains and makes them officers. This means that the chaplains are now contracted by the state and are members of the army. Father Andriy Zelinskyy is among those who worked on the law. He is a military chaplain and the Deputy Head of the Military Chaplaincy Department of the Patriarchal Curia of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. In his job, he overseas 40 full-time chaplains and more than 100 volunteer priests who regularly travel to the front line. In addition, Zelinskyy is the head of the Supervisory board to "The Ukrainian Veterans' Fund" which helps soldiers and their families.

https://inkstickmedia.com/on-the-front-lines-with-ukraines-military-chaplains/

Case for Approving COVID-19 Vaccine Religious Exemptions

by CH (MAJ) Paul Tolbert

From the Pilgrims and Puritans that fled England to follow the religious dictates of their consciences to the Bill of Rights that enshrines freedom of religion in the US Constitution, religious liberty is at the heart of the American ethos. The Department of Defense has further established policy to accommodate the "individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs (conscience, moral principles, or religious beliefs), which do not have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, good order and discipline, or health and safety." However, there is a growing perception that DoD is too dismissive of service members' sincerely held religious beliefs—especially since it has become a central issue surrounding vaccination against COVID-19. Federal judges in Texas, Florida, and Georgia have issued injunctions against the military for seemingly discriminating against service members' religious vaccine exemption requests. The Texas case has recently been granted class-action status for 4,095 Navy religious exemption requests. Additionally, in a statement on the COVID-19 vaccine, the Roman Catholic Archbishop for the Military Services opined, "The denial of religious accommodations, or punitive or adverse personnel actions taken against those who raise earnest, conscience-based objections, would be contrary to federal law and morally reprehensible." None of this looks favorably on a military that has been losing the trust and confidence of the American people.

https://mwi.usma.edu/a-case-for-approving-covid-19-vaccine-religious-exemptions/

Three in Tandem for Religious Support in the U.S. Army: Community, Culture & Constitution

by CH (COL) Karen Meeker and CH (MAJ) Eric Dean

The global pandemic of 2020-2021 has had far reaching and sometimes unexpected effects. In the U.S. Army,

this has led chaplains to hold in tandem three inextricably connected but distinct issues: the U.S. Constitution, the local community, and the cultural dynamics of the country. Similar to the set of Borromean rings depicted above, these three must be kept in relative balance with one another, adjusting as a whole—and not independently—in proportion to the risk. What follows is the development of this approach along with five maxims to guide decisions for safely providing religious support especially to soldiers and their families stationed overseas during a pandemic.

https://chaplaincyinnovation.org/2021/05/three-in-tandem-for-religious-support-in-the-u-s-army-community-culture-constitution


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