

**Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care in the Twenty-First Century: An Introduction.** By Wendy Cadge, Shelly Rambo, Chapel Hill:University of North Carolina Press Chapel Hill, 2022, 266 pps.

To be honest, as a newly trained chaplain yet to be certified and completing the final semester of seminary, one look at the book cover and I groaned. Having ploughed through endless articles, webinars, and tiers of books, I expected another textbook. I was more than surprised as I went through this offering from Cadge and Rambo. It goes without saying that the editors sit on their own lofty tiers of scholarly respect within the practice and researched validation of chaplaincy. But the chapters authored by the assembled stellar roll of practitioner/scholars piqued even this weary student-brain.

Professional chaplaincy is in a period of necessary self-review and revitalization. The challenges of the digital world and its loose boundaries have impacted helping/healing service venues everywhere. Simultaneously, more people of all ages and backgrounds are being drawn to our field. Not attracted to pastoring in traditional settings but feeling the magnetism of spiritual service, chaplain candidates within and outside of seminaries are responding positively to their various calls. The complexities and sometimes seeming vagaries of the practice of chaplaincy come together for the trainee during CPE training. Educators expose students to all the pedagogical components that must accompany the in-situ training environment: parish, church, temple, community agency, hospital, hospice, prison, neighborhood streets. Up until recently, there was a misty and sometimes mysterious connection between psychology, psychotherapy, counseling, and chaplaincy. This book takes on the components of the vocational and applicable theories of chaplaincy. It does so while maintaining the spiritual integrity of chaplaincy and inculcating the valuable applications of psychological theories.

The book's construction lays bare the obvious ambition of the editors and chapter authors: to offer a textbook that can be used at the undergraduate and graduate levels as an introduction and/or in-depth exploration of the practice of chaplaincy. The book is divided into four (4) parts: Background and Context, Meaning Making, Interpersonal Competencies, Organizational Competencies. These form an historic picture of the various functionalities that every chaplain will need to advance both their praxis and their profession. It is especially reassuring for a beginning trainee to see in one place the infrastructure of learning that forms the core of chaplaincy. The different chapters within these four (4) parts house case studies that present both the interpersonal work of a chaplain and the skeletal structure that supports those intimate encounters.

From this *textbook* a CPE educator may assign chapters as overviews of strategic learning for different student needs based on race, culture, gender identity, and other demographics. For example, Chapter 8 (“Interpersonal Competence in Contextualizing Power Dynamics in Socially Just Spiritual Care”) in Part 3 (“Interpersonal Competencies”) gives most trainees who are White exposure to justice issues that by nature will get complicated. Another focus that is important is for chaplains to understand is how to negotiate themselves in and through organizations to both promote the profession as well as care for all who are funneled into a chaplain's sphere, be they administrators, patients, hospital staff or external partners. Understanding how organizations are like organisms is critical for maintaining a firm yet gentle push and prod toward healthy resolution from a sentient caretaker, a chaplain, who attends to the heartbeat and not just the heart.

As one who is interested in crystalizing the pedagogical corpus of Pediatric Chaplaincy, specifically African American children, this writer would have appreciated accompanying

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workbooks that allowed for deeper forays into specific populations, topics, subjects, practices, and specialized areas. This would allow the reader to tailor and point the learners in the direction most apt for their learning and community.

This book is both a herculean attempt at centering and then moving the posture of chaplaincy from vocation to profession. It brings us closer from *alpha* to whatever the Divine intends for our ever-aspirational *omega*, all in service to the universe and the universal.

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