

HERBERT E. ANDERSON

A Tribute

This is the first issue of Reflective Practice without its long-time, revered editor, Herbert Anderson. So, several of us associated with the journal in its present form and its previous version would like to take this occasion to share with our readers some words of tribute and reflection upon the ministry of Herbert E. Anderson.



Herbert Anderson, the Connector

In 1969 I had the good fortune to connect with Herbert and Phyllis Anderson in Princeton, New Jersey. For the dozen or so families that actively interacted with one another there, it was a halcyon era facilitated by common transitional experiences: graduate work had been completed (by at least one family member), which led to a teaching position, often at the seminary or university; almost every couple had two children; we regularly socialized, took vacations, and worshipped together; and life was good. Herbert and I readily recognized that he and I had several things in common: he was hired by Seward Hiltner to be a member of the Pastoral Theology Department and I was a TA for Hiltner while developing a CPE program at Princeton Medical Center. One of our most fulfilling projects was contributing to the establishment of a highly successful pastoral counseling service at Trinity Episcopal Church in Princeton, which also included popular workshops with emerging leaders in family therapy.

Just prior to our leaving Princeton in the late 1970s—Herbert to Warburg Theological Seminary and I to the Pacific Presbyterian Medical Center in San Francisco—we co-authored the article “Use of Family Systems in Preparation for Ministry” that was published in *Pastoral Psychology* in the fall of 1978. While the content of the article has faded over time, the joy of working with Herbert has been reconfirmed over almost 40 post-Princeton years. Then, in 1983, a remarkable *tour de force* in the field of death and dying was published, *All Our Losses, All Our Grievs*, by Kenneth Mitchell and Herbert Anderson. Ken was a staff member at the Menninger Foundation in Topeka. He was brilliant, colorful, and a bit of a prima donna. The tragedy

is that he died prematurely while he and Herbert were working on a follow-up book, a terrible loss for his family and friends as well as for the pastoral care and counseling field.

After Iowa, Herbert joined departments of religion at Yale and then Chicago, where a highly productive connection was made with George Fitchett, who served as a co-editor for several excellent issues of the *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry*. With George's gift for research in spiritual care and Herbert's roots in pastoral theology, they made an outstanding editorial team. Herbert may not remember this, but when he left Chicago to support Phyllis, who had been hired to administer a Protestant seminary within a Jesuit institution in Seattle, I said he might check out the Ernest Becker Institute. It seemed only a matter of months before he was on their board as well as being a featured speaker.

In 2006, I received a marvelous and unforgettable call from Herbert. Phyllis had just been selected as the next president of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley. Not only did Herbert inform me that the *Journal of Supervision and Training* was being terminated, but he said he felt it would be possible to give it new life, with two conditions: the name would be changed and its address would move from Chicago to the San Francisco Bay Area. He offered to take on the editorial responsibilities and asked me to serve as president of the board. The first issue was 295 pages, about twice what we had anticipated. Herbert brought many gifts to *Reflective Practice*, especially his national and international contacts. His introductory essays to the sections of each journal were simply outstanding. How could *Reflective Practice* not succeed with such a gifted editor? Those joy-filled, invigorating eight years passed too quickly.

When I reflected on this tribute to Herbert, the one theme that continually bubbled to the surface is that Herbert Anderson is a connector—more than that, he is a premier, model connector. Over fifty years ago, when Herbert and I entered the field of pastoral care and counseling, the dominant leadership model appeared to be more about White males competing and confronting each other than about people complementing and connecting with each other. Had I described myself to my certification committee as more of a connector than a confronter, two strikes would probably have registered against me. This is not to say that Herbert is the connector *sui generis*, as we all know several such individuals in the pastoral care and counseling world. Can you think, however, of any other individual who has even come close to the number of articles and books Herbert has *co-authored*? Can

you think of any other who has had such a pan-United States and global career (Princeton, Yale, Dubuque, Chicago, Seattle, Berkeley, and Korea)? What other leader in the field has connected so well with medical and nursing colleagues? Nor has Herbert the connector slowed down, as you will discover, if you have not already, when you read his latest book, *The Divine Art of Dying*. Once again he has connected with a talented co-author, Karen Speerstra, and he has also persuaded Ira Byock, a leading physician in the death and dying field, to write a marvelous introduction. It appears Herbert has co-authored another tour de force.

What a blessing it has been to have connected with Herbert at both the sunrise and the sunset of our careers—and it's not over yet.

C. George Fitzgerald

Herbert Anderson, the Visionary

When Herbert Anderson came to the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago in 1985, I was the editor of the *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry (JSTM)*, and he warmly accepted my invitation to join the journal's board. Who could have known then how deeply involved he would become in the journal and even more so in its reorganization in 2007 as *Reflective Practice* under his editorial leadership? In 1989 he became an assistant editor, and in 1991 he became president of the JSTM board. He served in that position until he moved to Seattle in 2000. During those years Herbert was much more than just an assistant editor or board president. Between 1985 and 2000 he was the editor or co-editor of three JSTM symposia and the author or co-author of four JSTM articles. He was also the author or co-author of two articles in volume 4 (1981).

As the twentieth anniversary of JSTM approached, Herbert believed it should be the occasion for a thoughtful examination of the recent history of pastoral care and pastoral supervision. He organized the symposium in volume 20 (2000), contributed an important essay to it, and led the related workshops at the annual meetings of the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education and cognate groups. Herbert brought immense energy and vision to his work with the journal, helping us explore important topics and recruiting new partners to share their ideas with our readers. The journal would not have been what it was in those years without his dedication and leadership.

Personally, I treasure the friendship that developed between us during those years. I learned so much from our conversations, from his description of his classes and other projects, and especially from reading some of the work he wrote during those years. My thinking about paradox, narratives, rituals, and families has been shaped by Herbert, in part due to the wisdom of his ideas and in part due to the eloquent way in which he communicated them. For example, in discussing marriage he wrote, "We must leave"—leave home, that is—"before we can cleave." His advice to the parents of a couple planning a wedding is even more unforgettable: "Stay close and stay out!"¹

During the years we worked on the journal I also came to appreciate and enjoy Herbert's enthusiasm and passion for pastoral care and for the education and formation of religious leaders. Perhaps it is that passion that gave him the vision and commitment to produce volume after volume of thoughtful, inspiring essays about the reflective practice of supervision and formation for religious leadership. Herbert's words about that vision, from the JSTM Twentieth Anniversary Symposium, are eloquent (and are posted on the office door of one of my colleagues):

Perhaps nothing is more important for the future of pastoral care than the development of women and men who have a high tolerance for complexity and ambiguity and who are capable, as Keats once wrote, "of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact or reason." People who tolerate ambiguity are also able to respect difference, celebrate diversity, live the questions that have no simple answers, and discover that most truth in life and in faith is paradoxical. Process education . . . is ideally suited to lead students to such mature faith. Mature faith is never easy to acquire, either intellectually or emotionally, but it is difficult to imagine how ministry for the twenty-first century will endure without it.²

A salute to Herbert as he retires from this journal again. His friendship has enriched my life, and his dedicated and gifted labors on this journal have enriched our reflections on the important practice of the formation and supervision of religious leaders for the twenty-first century.

George Fitchett

Herbert Anderson, the Consummate Host

I first met Herbert in 2006 when he began the process of moving the *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry* (JSTM) from Chicago to Berkeley. He had been asked if he would be interested and willing to take over the role of editor. He decided to take it on and at the same time to expand the journal's focus and the professional input into the journal. Herbert pulled together a new board of people he knew from the Graduate Theological Union plus a few others whom he knew in the greater San Francisco area. I was a friend of one of those people and so was asked to be on the editorial board. I had just retired the previous year and was interested!

From the very first meeting, Herbert's hospitality and warmth as a welcoming person was immediately tangible. His wife, Phyllis, had become the president of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley. Herbert had volunteered to teach a couple of courses per year for the seminary, so he was ideally set up to take on the challenge of reworking and reforming JSTM. He had gathered board members from the fields of pastoral counseling, CPE supervision, spiritual direction, and contextual theological education—a new approach to the journal, which had been for the most part previously focused just on CPE supervision.

In his inimitable style, Herbert welcomed this newly formed board to the seminary for its first official meeting. He was a consummate host at this meeting. Not only were we welcomed to the Great Hall at the seminary, but we were served a home-cooked lunch that Herbert had prepared from scratch the morning before we arrived. These lunches became as highly anticipated as the actual conversation around the table when we were working on and focusing on creating the next volume of *Reflective Practice*—the new name the board came up with for this new iteration of what had been JSTM.

I was and still am amazed at Herbert's genuine hospitality that surrounded and was a part of every meeting. Being sensitive to the eating patterns of the board members, he often made two lunch entrees—one with meat and one without! Not only did he welcome me/us into this new adventure, he also had a knack for inviting and welcoming people into areas they had not even considered. After a short time on the board, he suggested that I could be the editor for the book review section. Herbert graciously took me under his wing and began sharing titles and authors of books he had read or was familiar with. Getting the list together was actually the

simple part. Then, I needed people to review the books. Once again Herbert guided me and demonstrated his facility at inviting and welcoming people. He contacted people from all over the United States, inviting them to write book reviews. Almost every time he invited someone to write a review they were more than willing and enthusiastically contributed their reviews. So not only was he a great chef, he also was an inviting and welcoming person who was generous with his time and expertise.

Four years after *Reflective Practice* was launched and we had successfully published a volume of the journal each year, Herbert returned from a vacation on which he had visited his son. He had been inspired by his son to take *Reflective Practice* to a new level. Why not publish the journal online and have free, open access to anyone who wanted to read it? He had heard about a Canadian university that hosted free, open access online journals for universities and professional groups. We needed to check with them to see if they might host our journal. Herbert's excitement and enthusiasm about this new venture inspired the Board to decide that this would be our future. In 2011, volume 31 was published open access, online—available now to people all over the world. We have discovered from an analysis of who accesses the journal that people from all continents of the world have accessed the online version.

I am forever grateful for getting to know Herbert. My primary relationship with him has been through the work on the journal, but his warmth and hospitality invited me into a new relationship. I now count him as one of my mentors and friends. I am thankful that our paths crossed and that we worked together to create this masterpiece.

Rod Seeger

Herbert Anderson, the Theologian

I was a student in Herbert's first class on death and dying at Princeton in 1972. While we kept in touch over the years and collaborated on occasion, it wasn't until 2006 that I re-entered Herb's influence when he asked me to join the editorial board of *Reflective Practice*. And now, upon his retirement, I am trying to fill his large shoes as editor of *Reflective Practice*. I feel like the bookends on the professional career of Herbert Anderson.

There are many things I appreciate about Herbert. Let me mention just one. In my discipline of pastoral care and counseling, there has been a division between the clinicians and the theoreticians. Over the years of my professional life, pastoral theologians have largely dropped out of AACPC and ACPE, forming their own organization called the Society of Pastoral Theology. Increasingly, there has been a distinction, even a wall, between pastoral theology and pastoral care and counseling. The former has evolved into theological reflection upon larger societal and psychological issues and research and developments in the behavioral sciences. The latter are those who are practicing clinicians and are focused on the issues of the guild.

Years ago, I took away from one of Herbert's early classes at Princeton the phrase "theological reflection on clinical process." That has been one of my passions professionally, even though for many years I have been absorbed in the world of clinical psychology. Over the years, Herbert has held true to that focus too. Unlike most of his colleagues, he has never separated himself from those of us in clinical work. He wanted to hear from us, be involved with us, attend our meetings, and help us think theologically about what we were doing, even though he has never clinically credentialed himself. It is no accident that his career has reached its zenith in *Reflective Practice*, the art of reflecting theologically upon the practice of ministry. His most recent book, *Divine Dying* (reviewed in this volume), is also a good example of theological reflection upon clinical process, in this case, the clinical experience or story of a dying friend. Theological reflection upon clinical process—this is a theme that has colored his career and guided his thinking.

Herbert is many things to me. He has been my friend, mentor, and colleague, but most of all he has been my theologian, my theologian in residence. I suspect he has been so for many others as well.

Scott Sullender

NOTES

1. Herbert Anderson with Robert Cotton Fite, *Becoming Married* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993).
2. Herbert Anderson, "Pastoral Supervision at the Crossroads," *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry*, 20 (2000): 11-12.

The following people have made financial contributions to Reflective Practice "in honor of" Herbert E. Anderson. All of us, including the authors of the above written tributes, join together in lifting up our collective voices and proclaiming, "Hooray for Herbert!"

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