

SECTION IV

BEYOND THE THEME: CRITICAL ISSUES IN SUPERVISION AND FORMATION



Although the development of a theme for each issue of *Reflective Practice* has grown remarkably, we continue to be grateful for articles that explore issues of broader interest. This section is particularly rich in diverse perspectives. Literature on ministry in general and pastoral care in particular has been increasingly attentive to the influence of culture on how we think and work. The essay by Bruce Rogers-Vaughn identifies three social realities—consumerism, income inequality, and certain aspects of postmodernity—that constitute a perfect storm of suffering—a trifecta of human misery for the individuals, families, communities, and congregations in our care. Rogers-Vaughn shows convincingly how the assumptions behind this ‘trifecta of human misery’ are incorporated into the psychological and theological theories that shape our practices of care in response to the people damaged by these same social realities.

The article by Roslyn Wright from Melbourne, Australia outlines a concrete process for goal setting to be used by Field Education students that helps them articulate a sense of self-identity grounded in their experience of Jesus. Geir Afdal from Norway explores the relationship between supervision and morality. Supervision, he argues, is itself a moral activity. Since supervision as practice carries with it conceptions of the good, there is a moral dimension to supervision itself. Because this article is written in a richly philosophical way, the reader might begin with the conclusions. The essay by Ryan LaMothe and Rick Stern outlines the program developed at Saint Meinrad Seminary to train pastoral supervisors who are equipped to provide ongoing supervision in ministry in general and in preaching in particular. They believe that supervisory training programs aimed at promoting best practices in ministry and capable preachers are a constituent element in building the kingdom of God.

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