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SPECIAL ISSUE

Disability Studies and Ability Studies: Two Lenses to Investigate Peace

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From Peace Studies to Disability Studies

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Introduction

When I was asked to be the Editor of a special issue of Peace and disabled people I agreed right away as this is one example of two areas rarely intersecting although they are intertwined they are really not covered together. Culture of Peace is a central theme discussed within UNESCO and United Nations for decades but it does not really involve disabled people. Disabled people are also not really mentioned in peace research journals. Searches revealed the following visibility: The *Journal of Peace Research*, has 1 article that mentions the term "disabled people" and none for "people with disabilities", *Conflict Management & Peace Science* 0/0; *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 0/0; *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 0/2; *Cooperation and conflict* 1/0; *Defence and Peace Economics* 1/0; Global Change, Peace & Security 0/3; Global Society 4/2; In *Factis Pax: Journal of Peace Education & Social Justice* 0/0; *International Journal of Conflict Management* 0/0; *International Peacekeeping* 1/0; *Journal for Peace and Justice Studies* 0/0; *Journal for the study of peace and conflict* 0/0; *Journal of Peace Education* 1/0; *Peace and Change* 1/1. *The International Journal of World Piece* had a special issue in June 2013 called The Rights and Abilities. "This issue of IJWP has articles on three different topics: Political stability in Chechnya, treatment of women in Pakistan, and bullying in U.S. schools. While these are quite different topics, they all relate to the general issue of rights and abilities." No article in the journal covers disabled people or people with disabilities.

Although this is not surprising given the lack of engagement with the angle of disabled people in many topics its also in the case of the peace coverage regrettable not only from an activist point

but also from an academic point. Disabled people highlight one particular factor in peace and conflict that is omnipresent but not talked about explicitly and that is conflict based on divergent ability expectations. The disability community is in a perpetual ability expectation conflict with the so called non-disabled people based on the expectations of certain abilities of the body which disabled people are labeled as lacking(Ayim, 1997; Campbell, 2008; Campbell Kumari, 2009; Carlson, 2001; Overboe, 2007; Wolbring, 2008, 2012a, 2012b) leading to an experience of a systemic disablism(Miller, Parker, & Gillinson, 2004). This ability expectation conflicts plays itself out also outside the body ability dispute between the so called disabled and non-disabled people for example sustainable development(Wolbring & Burke, 2013) or human security(Wolbring, 2014). I argue that most conflicts are based on ability expectations; for example the ability expectation to dominate others leads to conflicts.

Overview of Special Issue

The theme of the special issue was: "Disability Studies and Ability Studies: Two Lenses to Investigate Peace." The CFP stated "Peace is an ever evolving concept whose relation to disabled people and to ability expectations is so far under-investigated. We present in this issue four articles that thematized Peace and disabled people in strikingly different ways. One looked explicitly at the nexus of the academic fields of disability studies and ability studies. Three articles looked at different groups of disabled people without using the frame of disability studies. Unfortunate no article was submitted that used the ability studies lens.

Summary of Articles

As to the article, *The Peace Studies/Disability Studies Nexus* by Arthur W. Blaser, Angeliki Kanavou, and Samuel Schleier that looked directly at the academic field of disability studies the authors give us the current status of, and prospects for, interaction between Peace Studies (PS) and Disability Studies (DS). They argue "that the practice of keeping the two fields separate is reinforced by scholars' and practitioners' emphasis on negative peace (absence of direct violence, war)" and "the medical/deficit approach of scholars and practitioners operating outside of DS". They posit that modern approaches to PS that emphasize positive peace not just an absence of war and contemporary DS programs and scholars presenting disability rights and disability culture as ways how to look at disabled people might allow for a fruitful nexus between PS and DS. Blaser, Kanavou, and Schleier outline what barriers still have to be eliminated for this nexus to take off such as rigid structure of academic disciplines and discouragement of interdisciplinary teaching.

As to the three articles that cover groups of disabled people one articles focuses on people with intellectual disabilities, one on injured war veterans of Nicaragua and one on the group of disabled people in general.

As to the article, *Wounded Warriors or One of the Crowd?: Civil War, Citizenship, and Disability in Nicaragua* by Stephen Meyers, on war veterans, the author investigated the stresses and strains placed upon differing views of citizenship in a post-conflict environment through the lens of the current disability rights movement in Nicaragua and disabled veterans from the

Contras and the Sandinistas and argues the following lessons can be drawn; a) many developing countries are likely to have significant numbers of disabled ex-combatants; b) some groups may pose obstacles to the expansion of disability rights to the larger disabled populous. Others may actually find it as a new road towards their inclusion; c) different groups of ex-combatants may resort to different citizenship discourse and d) finding ways to make all groups of ex-combatants feel welcome within disability rights movements may prove important in movement's success in post-conflict environments.

As to the article, *Religious Peace and Disability* by Wesley Don Cohoon, investigating people with intellectual disabilities, the author provides a "theoretical approach to the importance of religious peace within a context of intellectual disability". He argues that religious peace is often restricted to narrowly defining it as religious services provided to individuals and that this understanding does a disservice to those with intellectual disabilities that strip them of human dignity and the experience of peace. He examines the value of personhood as it relates to peace provides an spiritual assessment tool that he argues helps caregivers to assess and address the spiritual needs and the paper concluded that spirituality can work in conjunction with other disciplines by offering care to those who have intellectual disabilities.

Keith Dow's article, *Suspending the Ethical: Autonomy, Disability, and Shalom* engages the topic of peace and disabled people through Wolfensberger's concept of death-making. Keith Dow argues that "modern Western culture teleologically suspends the ethical in its death-making treatment of persons with disabilities". He employs the term death-making coined by Wolf Wolfensberger and asks what response peacemaking has to give to a society blind to its own death-making practices. Dow posits that whether death-making is accepted within peacemaking or not depends on the meaning of peace. He argues that under some definitions of peace such as "Freedom from quarrels and disagreement"; "Public security and order" and "Inner contentment; serenity" a death-making culture can be accepted within a peacemaking culture. Dow highlights that not every definition of peace is equally useful to disabled people a theme also evident in Blaser and Kanavou's piece. This makes certain definitions of peace less than useful for disabled people. Dow then put forward the Jewish connotation of peace as shalom, which he argues leads to a different form of peacemaking that carries with it a responsibility to restoration and restitution for those who have been wronged in order to see the state of wholeness, this state of 'peace' achieved. Dow finishes his article as follows: "Will I relinquish the 'peace' that maximizes my independence in pursuit of the wholeness of shalom, or am I content to sacrifice the Other to avoid disruption of my own autonomy?"

Conclusion

We have received fewer submissions than we would have liked. We believe it's somewhat due to the lack of history of coverage of disabled people within peace studies and a missing nexus between disability studies and peace studies as outlined by Blaser and Kanavou's. We hope that this special issue leads to a wave of engagement on the topic of peace and disabled people. The four articles presented here all have controversial content we believe could be a hook to further the discourse in this area. The four articles show that there are many different angles one can use to engage with the relationship of peace and disabled people.

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The Peace Studies/Disability Studies Nexus

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THE PEACE STUDIES/DISABILITY STUDIES NEXUS

Abstract

This article resulted from conversation among two faculty members and one law student. Arthur Blaser teaches Political Science courses, many of which are cross-listed with Peace Studies (PS), and can be taken by Disability Studies (DS) minors. Angeliki Kanavou teaches primarily PS courses, some of which reflect a growing emphasis of DS. Samuel Schleier graduated in PS, and is now a law student. We examine the potential for integration of PS and DS, and argue for collaboration between the fields. Through journal searches, we establish that the intersection has been minimal, as reflected in prominent academic journals. Globalization, intersectionality, and advocacy are key concepts in both PS and DS. Finally, we mention two of our undergraduate courses relevant to both PS and DS (People with Disabilities in Politics and Society and

Nonviolent Social Change), and examine topics where PS and DS offer complementary insights (demographics, human security, and violent conflict).

Our concern is with the current status of, and prospects for, interaction between Peace Studies (PS) and Disability Studies (DS). We contend that there has been little interaction, while there is great potential for fruitful synergy in teaching and scholarship between PS and DS. We base this on major texts, academic journals in both fields, and development of cross-listed courses over the last eighteen years.

The practice of keeping the two fields separate is reinforced by scholars' and practitioners' emphasis on negative peace (absence of direct violence, war). A parallel assumption is the medical/deficit approach of scholars and practitioners operating outside of DS. In contrast, modern approaches to PS emphasize absence of structural violence (positive peace with justice, meaning not just an absence of war), while contemporary DS programs and scholars present alternative "frames" through which disability is viewed, such as disability rights and disability culture.

Contextual approaches to disability and peace point to a fruitful nexus between PS and DS. This nexus cuts across both theory and practice, emphasizing the need for critical pedagogy. Theoretical perspectives allow one to differentiate among ideal types such as peace-making, peace-maintaining, and peace-building. Practical perspectives force one to consider the urgency for peace-making as necessary for societies not only in Cambodia, Egypt, and Syria, but also in Europe, Canada, and the United States.

Peace Studies

Representative statements from the field and examination of selected journals suggest the importance of nuanced thinking about "peace." Although only partially successful, some noteworthy efforts to transcend cultural and disciplinary barriers have resulted in multifaceted conceptions of peace.

Definitions of the Field

"The field" varies greatly at different colleges and universities. PS has changed over time and continues to respond to global and domestic issues of violence. Indeed, the field is expressed through different names, which are sometimes interchangeable, but may represent conscious framing. Some of them are Peace and Conflict Studies, Justice Studies, Security Studies, Dispute Resolution, Coexistence Studies, Reconciliation Studies, Transitional Justice Studies, and Nonviolence Studies (see for instance Barash, 2010; Lopez, 1985; Peace and Justice Studies Association and the International Peace Research Association Foundation, 2006; and McElwee, et. al., 2009).

This is an effect of the situation described by Johan Galtung (1985): "…from the very beginning, it was assumed that the concept 'peace' should continue to be considered problematic" (p. 143).

Galtung examines how the structure of both tangible institutions (justice mechanisms) and more abstract conceptualizations (defining and creating justice) within a given society and the global community perpetuate and maintain power structures. He proposes a comprehensive conception of justice in which "structural violence" is a subtle form of violence embedded in the foundation and functioning of national and international institutions. Structural violence is fostered through policies of exclusion through unjust institutions that create and perpetuate stigma. Such practices penetrate norms and allow for societal moral disengagement from and marginalization of disabled people. Unjust discrimination based on prejudice is a consequence.

David Barash (2010) noted that his edited reader *Approaches to Peace*, "reflects the assumption – characteristic of peace studies – that peace can and must include not only the absence of war ('negative peace') but also the establishment of life-affirming and life-enhancing values and structures ('positive peace'). Thus, an important concept in peace studies is that…negative peace is a necessary but not sufficient condition for positive peace" (p. 2).

Recent Evolution

Many sources report on rising numbers of PS programs. From the founding of the first program at Manchester College in Indiana in 1948, hundreds of institutions now have PS programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels (see for instance Barash, 2010; Lopez, 1985; Peace and Justice Studies Association and the International Peace Research Association Foundation, 2006; McElwee, et. al., 2009; and Smith, 2007).

More difficult to characterize are differences in focus over time. Some changes in focus followed political changes, for instance the end of the Cold War. Other changes reflect increased recognition of social justice movements and environmental changes. Ian Harris (2006) noted some areas of change in his introduction to the 7th edition of the *Global Directory of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution Programs*:

> At the beginning of the twenty-first century peace studies programs focus attention on the threat of terrorism, as the disenfranchised of the world, unable to wage war against oppressive states perform individual acts of extreme violence to punish their oppressors. Fear of bio-terrorism, chemical war, and nuclear sabotage is complementing a deep concern about the health of the environment that is developing as sea levels rise, forests die, the ozone layer depletes, temperatures increase, and water becomes scarce. A further concern is globalization, where large multinational corporations are accumulating power and wealth that transcend national boundaries. As the twentieth century came to a close, peace studies programs have diversified to include domestic violence, the teaching of mediation skills, an emphasis on ecology and have reflected the growing realization of the interconnectedness of the planet. (p. xiv-xv)

Reflections in Leading Journals

A general overview of PS journal contents (summarized in Table 1) gives the impression of an absence of PS/DS interchange. Examination of specific articles, however, suggests the

fruitfulness of the PS/DS nexus. The Peace and Justice Studies Association maintains an online list of "Journals in Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution" which included 85 publications on July 2, 2013. Some of the 85 are included in major library search engines, and three, *Peace and Change*, the *Journal of Peace Research*, and the *Journal of Peace Education*, were surveyed for this article. The tendencies in the major publications examined represent a general trend.

Table 1: Peace Studies Journals

Journal	"Disability Studies"	"Disability"	Total Items [actual]
Peace and Change	1	19	1,372
Journal of Peace Research	0	24	3,072
Journal of Peace Education	1	6	203
Total	**2**	**49**	**4,647**

Peace and Change

An online search [Wiley Online Library] of contents located no articles, but one book review (Kim Nielsen's biography of Helen Keller) in which "disability studies" was used. There were few (19 from 1997 – July, 2013) items where "disability" was used; most of these used predominant (deficit) concepts of disability. One of the articles, dealing with education and diversity, included the passage, "Among the most salient variables that shape this diversity are nationality, race, ethnicity, religion, social class, immigrant status, gender, disability, and sexual orientation" (DeMulder, Ndura-Ouédraogo & Stribling, 2009, p. 27). Although this is a limited reference to disability, its inclusion highlights the potential of overlap between PS and DS.

Others: Journal of Peace Research, Journal of Peace Education, Peace Studies Journal, etc.

With the *Journal of Peace Research*, the online search [JSTOR and SAGE] of contents located no items where "disability studies" is used. There were a few, 28, articles in which "disability" is mentioned. The usual, although rare, reference to "disability" assumed a deficit approach as a consequence of violent conflict, with no attention to rehabilitation or reintegration. This shows how a deficit perception of disability is linked to a negative conception of peace. Within the potential PS/DS overlap, positive peace encompasses a more comprehensive examination of disability and related issues.

A search of the *Journal of Peace Education* found a single book review mentioning "disability studies" tangentially, and only five other articles or reviews mentioning "disability" [to July 3, 2013]. One of the five was an intriguing study of attitudes in early childhood education in Turkey. It was based on a survey that included the item "Pictures of disabled people engaging in sports activities should be accessible in the classroom" (Divrengia & Aktan, 2011, p. 48).

In the *Peace Studies Journal,* the current issue is an important exception that proves the rule of insufficient attention to the PS/DS overlap. Most previous issues have little or no mention of disability or DS. An encouraging exception is mention of PS and DS in Anthony Nocella II's (2012) case for Critical Animal Studies, with trenchant criticism of "traditionally structured departments" (p. 64).

Disability Studies

PS recognizes the complexity of "peace," and draws from many disciplines' insights. Similarly, representative statements from the field of DS, and examination of selected journals, suggest the importance of nuanced thinking about disability.

Definitions of the Field

Within DS, social, contextual definitions and interpretations replace the reductionist, individualized, deficit assumptions of a structurally violent society. Drafters of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD, 8 May 2008) found that how and where to define "disability" was not simple.   Rather than include "disability" in Article 2, *Definitions*, the drafters wrote in the *Preamble*: "Recognizing that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others." The concept is not only evolving, but also amorphous (part of what makes it worthy of study). What is considered "impairment" also changes and varies between people and over time.

The individual, deficit, interpretation is accompanied by a medical model or approach. As seminal disability theorist Mike Oliver (2009) noted, "From a social model perspective, too much is invested in individually based interventions with ever-diminishing returns. As a consequence, modifications to environments tend to be neglected or under resourced, despite the greater potential benefits of such investments" (p. 45-46).

The multivolume *Encyclopedia of Disability* provides amplification, though not simplification. In her entry on "Disability Studies," Sharon Snyder (2005) wrote:

> Importantly, the limitations of a medical model that early disability studies references may itself have little relation to actual practitioners of medicine. Instead, concepts of a 'medical model' refer to the…premise, frequently held outside of medicine, that disability requires referral to the purview of medical practitioners. (p. 481)

In place of the medical approach, Susan Gabel (2005) suggested an eclectic approach to "social interpretations" (p. 7). She described the social approach, "in which disability is understood as form of oppression" (p. 2), as a hallmark of DS: "As a whole, social interpretations of disability contrast with typical educational views wherein 'disability' represents innate individual deficits" (p. 2).

Evolution

Similar to PS, there is agreement that DS as an academic field goes back decades, although not centuries. There is also consensus that the field has evolved and continues to evolve. Many descriptions of this evolution describe a similar mirroring of global, national, and local trends and conflicts.

John Swain and Sally French (2008) wrote in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* that "Disability studies…is a relatively recent and burgeoning arena within the social sciences." Gareth Williams (2001) wrote that: "existence in Britain and the United States, in particular, of 30 years of movement in disability politics has ensured a strong platform from which the academic discipline of disability studies was able to take off in the 1990s."

Several sources note the growth in DS programs. Snyder (2005) wrote that: "Nearly 100 disability studies courses are currently offered at colleges and universities, while many curricular and research plans continue apace. Universities offer degrees, concentrations, minors, or simply courses of study in disability studies" (p. 484). In a later systematic survey, Cushing and Smith (2009) found a pattern that characterized courses and programs not only in North America, but also elsewhere. "Statistically, DS has moved beyond straight-line growth, to impressive, exponential growth." Nevertheless, courses and programs are primarily still in the 'minority world' ("have" countries, i.e. modern post-industrial nation-states).

Reflections in Leading Journals

As was the case with PS journals, the DS "glass" (summarized in Table 2) is mostly empty (reflected in the general absence of "hits" for "peace studies") or partly full (reflected in examples where "peace" yielded articles drawing on important controversies in both fields). "Leading journals" were included in major library search engines, and four, *Disability Studies Quarterly, Disability and Society, Review of Disability Studies,* and *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* were surveyed for this article.

Table 2: Disability Studies Journals

Journal	"Peace Studies"	"Peace"	Total Items [estimate based on 2012 actual]
Disability Studies Quarterly	3	51	1,065
Disability and Society	0	65	2,655
Review of Disability Studies	1	21	348
Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research	0	8	305
Total	**4**	**145**	**4373**

Disability Studies Quarterly

Although overlap with PS is negligible, intriguing articles allude to themes commonly discussed in PS. Indeed, there were 61 "hits" for peace in the online issues (from 2000; search July 6, 2013). Many "hits" were duplicates, however. With some "hits," the connection was small; for instance in Cushing and Smith's (2009) survey of DS programs (Cushing's affiliation in "Social Justice and Peace Studies"). In other cases, though, there is major PS/DS overlap. An example is Steve Sunderland's 2008 article, "Opening the Door to Higher Education: The Rights of the Intellectually Different to Access and Peace."

Disability and Society, Review of Disability Studies, Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research, others.

Disability and Society is a journal published in the United Kingdom, until 1994 called *Disability, Handicap, and Society*. Although not explicitly discussing PS, several articles deal with peace (65 "hits" in a search conducted July 6, 2013). Many examples briefly mentioned peace activities. One instance is Mike Oliver and Colin Barnes's (2008) response to Neil Crowther of the Equality and Human Rights Commission. Oliver and Barnes cited disabled people's participation in peace activism as evidence of openness to wide involvement (p. 398).

Myriam dos Santos-Zingale and Mary Ann McColl's (2006) "Disability and Participation in Post-Conflict Situations: The Case of Sierra Leone" is an exceptional article that integrates DS and PS. The authors observed: "As the conflict has come to an end, one of the major priorities of the different UN bodies is peace-building" (p. 255). The authors emphasized that peace-building requires the full participation and integration of disabled people.

The tendency for occasional reference to peace issues, although very little explicit reference to PS, was present in all of the DS journals. In the *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research*, there were only eight articles that were cross-referenced with "peace" (not PS, July 6, 2013). One intriguing example was the article, "Paying for Stories of Impairment – Parasitic or Ethical? Reflections Undertaking Anthropological Research in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone" (2010). The article's author, Maria Bergh, observed that socio-cultural context "illustrates that the 'parasitic' connection between collecting stories of impairment and violence for money needs to be ethically reconsidered, and that more of a contribution for the benefit of an entire community needs to be made" (p. 14).

The cursory survey of publications undertaken here parallels other publications accessed via major search engines. *Omni Full Text Mega* and *Academic Search Premier* searches produced no "hits" for the search term "'peace studies' *and* 'disability studies.'" When the fields were taken separately, there were 619 "hits" for "peace studies" and 464 for "disability studies" in *Omni Full Text Mega,* and 576 "hits" for "peace studies" and 656 for "disability studies" in *Academic Search Premier* [search undertaken July 8, 2013; [ID 3] Library].

Searches of book manuscripts produced similar results. There were only two "hits" in *WorldCat* [described on [ID 2] library site as the "OCLC catalog of books, web resources, and other material worldwide. Contains all the records cataloged by OCLC member libraries and offers

millions of bibliographic records"]. One "hit" is for a publication where one coauthor is associated with a DS program and two coauthors are associated with a PS program. The other is for Clear and Hutchinson's (2006) *Review of Disability Studies* article, "Learning from Each Other: A Theoretical and Applied Overview of the Relationship between Disability Studies and Peace Studies," a notable exception to the pattern of minimal interchange. Brown's (2012) *International Peace Research Association* presentation, "The Contribution of Disability Rights and Culture to Global Peace and Justice," is another very rare exception that proves the rule.

Three Themes for Common Concern and Nuanced Analysis

Globalization, intersectionality, and advocacy are three of the many themes on which PS and DS add important dimensions to mainstream analyses. Our intent is to amplify the potential PS/DS intersection.

Globalization

Both PS and DS have global aspirations, and acknowledge the detrimental effect of uneven participation in local, regional, and international institutions. They both highlight the constraining effects of a narrow focus that limits issues to a singular and local perspective.

Peace Studies

Many scholars and students in PS recognize uneven participation as a pervasive global problem. For instance, Barbara Wien (2009) acknowledged:

> We show an insufficient understanding of the deep, underlying causes of conflict rooted in world political and economic structures. For many reasons, faculties in other countries cover these concepts much better than their US counterparts. There is almost an aversion on the part of US faculty to dealing fundamentally with North-South questions, international debt, declining terms of trade for the global South, and a new international economic order. (p. 7)

Addressing the gap is on the many PS practitioners' agenda.

Disability Studies

Before noting that "If disability studies has been reticent on the subject of globalization, recent literature on globalization has been silent about disability" (p. 137), Michael Davidson (2010) wrote that: "We understand the ways that political violence and civil conflict create disability through warfare, landmines, and displacement, but we need to remember the structural violence that maintains disability through seemingly innocuous economic systems and political consensus" (p. 134, with an endnote referencing Johan Galtung). In the light of globalization and the growing gulf between the minority (have) and the majority (have not) worlds, DS faces a challenge:

Malnutrition may not be on the minority world agenda of disability issues, but in the majority world it is on the front line. Hence the first challenge that globalization poses for disability studies is a consideration of class and the unequal distribution of wealth. (p. 135)

Thus, globalization presents the greatest challenge to, and the greatest opportunity for, building a cohesive global disability rights movement, linking local struggles with global issues.

Intersectionality

Kimberlè Crenshaw wrote about the intersection of race and gender (1989, 1991). Her writings eloquently expressed the idea that identities often overlap. Rather than ignoring identities, scholars should notice the complexity of patterns of identity. PS and DS highlight this complexity of identity, while seeking to maintain individual and group identities.

Peace Studies

Timothy McElwee and colleagues (2009) called attention to intersectionality in writing:

> Besides competing economic interests or political interests, numerous other pressures bear on the state of human security. Religion, for one, is treated in a section of its own because of its centrality to worldwide conflict in the early twenty-first century, but dynamics such as race, gender, age, ethnicity, nationalism, mal-development, and access to natural resources are also important pressures at work in conflict. Left to their competing claims, these dynamics will erode the peace, but put to good use as tools of negotiation, they play a role in transforming conflict to positive peace. (p. 433)

Five of the syllabi in their curriculum guide therefore highlight "cultural dynamics" involving social groups' participation in society; in one case, disabled people's participation is presented.

Disability Studies

Rosemarie Garland-Thompson (2001) cogently expressed the relevance of identity in DS:

> Acknowledging identity's particular, complex nature allows characteristics beyond race, class, and gender to emerge. Standpoint theory and the feminist practice of explicitly situating oneself when speaking thus allow for complicating inflections such as disability or, more broadly, body configuration-attributions such as fat, disfigured, abnormal, ugly, or deformed- to enter into our considerations of identity and subjectivity. (p. 25)

One DS focus is adding to the identities, not as a necessary evil, but as a positive factor. As Mike Oliver (2009) wrote about "disability politics:" "This identity politics does not merely provide a personal plea to allow us to stay alive but suggests that difference makes a positive contribution to the ultimate health and well-being of society" (p. 165). Within and across groups

defined by gender, ethnic, or sexual orientation, from a DS perspective, disability suggests possibilities for social justice.

Advocacy

PS and DS unabashedly challenge tradition and authority, and encourage new ways of thinking. Although in both fields, people have held positions of authority, their emphasis has usually been on using authority to change society, rather than to secure more power.

Peace Studies

David P. Barash's wrote in his introduction to *Approaches to Peace: A Reader in Peace Studies* (2010):

> Peace studies unblushingly acknowledges biases and preferences. It is scholarly but not disinterested. It does not simply encourage the study of peace but is in favor of peace: peace, we proclaim, is better than war, just as social justice is better than injustice, environmental integrity is better than destruction, and so forth. (p. 3)

It has not always been that way. Barbara Wien (2009) acknowledged: "Peace studies in the 1950s was in large measure a top-down, elitist, Western, white blueprint for world order. Absent were voices from the global South, feminist scholars, or mass nonviolent movements for revolutionary change" (p. 2).   Awareness of imbalance in participation, in PS as in DS, distinguishes the aspirations of the fields from mainstream disciplines.

Disability Studies

Mark Priestley (2005) described the close link between advocacy and DS's aspirations:

> The emergence of disability studies as an academic discipline…has its roots in the activism and experiences of disabled people. It is therefore no coincidence that developments in disability theory have taken place alongside the emergence of an international disabled people's movement, campaigning for equality and full participation in all spheres of social life and human rights.

Just as other "minority" or "cultural" studies emerged following social movements for political and economic change, the growth of DS programs reflects the disability rights movement's current significance. DS advances the causes and struggles underpinning the disability rights movement. Simultaneously, the disability rights movement provides legitimization of DS programs and aspirations.

Sharon Snyder (2005) examined this in her essay on "Disability Studies" from the *Encyclopedia of Disability*. She began the entry: "Disability studies functions as the theoretical arm of disability rights movements" (p. 478). (We would add to this, "also the historical arm"). Snyder later elaborated:

> Disability studies, uniquely, must put the status and experience of disabled persons prior to its own success as a professional operation. Thus, whereas rehabilitation and a rehabilitation movement could oppose disability rights in favor of principles of intervention, service, and care, disability studies aims to place the perspectives of the objects of scrutiny and remediation front and center to its concerns. (p. 482)

Similar to PS, DS includes concern that academic enterprises may be co-opted. Mike Oliver (2009), for instance, wrote about "…the increasing academization of disability studies and the declining influence of the disabled people's movement…" (p. 179). Thus, both PS and DS insist on linking theory and activism. However, there is a distinction between the fields' aspirations and realization of goals.

Examples: Courses and Topics

In this section, we offer examples of the PS/DS nexus's application to teaching and research. Two of our courses are particularly relevant to both PS and DS (People with Disabilities in Politics and Society and Non-violent Social Change). Demographics, human security, and violent conflict are three topics where both fields offer insights.

Courses

Although often DS courses explore themes in PS and vice versa, they seldom do so explicitly. Cushing and Smith's (2009) survey of DS courses contains only one example of an apparent crossover: Cushing teaches DS, and is affiliated with a program on Social Justice and Peace Studies The periodic compilation of PS syllabi includes only one PS/DS example in its latest edition (adapted from the first course described below) (McElwee and others, 2009).

People with Disabilities (PWDs) in Politics and Society

This is an undergraduate course taught by Arthur Blaser, regularly offered since 2006. It is cross-listed as PS and Political Science. The course emphasizes four models or approaches to disability issues: medical, civil rights, human rights, and cultural. (Similarities and differences are explored in moral, rehabilitation, independent living, minority group, and other overlapping approaches).

Course subjects include demographics (discussed below), social and political movements, and United Nations action culminating in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. All topics reflect disabled people's evolving activism in shaping policy. (Education is a topic in a separate PS/DS course, "Disability and the Law").

Nonviolent Social Change

This undergraduate course is taught by Angeliki Kanavou. Like "PWDs in Politics and Society," it is cross-listed as PS and Political Science, and is part of a proposed DS minor. Its underlying

question is: Can an individual and/or an excluded group trigger nonviolent change in society, and if so, how? The question of the power of the excluded is central throughout. The class derives answers primarily from Gandhian thought and the movement for Indian independence. Then it examines how Socrates, Kant, Weber, Marx, Thoreau, Arendt, King, and others conceptualize power and change. These ideas are applied to specific cases. One case is nonviolent disability rights protests, exemplified by the bus access actions in the United States and adoption of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Topics Bridging Peace Studies and Disability Studies

Annual meeting paper topics (in the Society for Disability Studies, Peace and Justice Studies Association, and elsewhere) and contents of scholarly journals tell us that there are many PS and DS topics to examine. We suggest three examples where DS and PS teaching and scholarship is especially helpful.

<u>Demographic Trends</u>

Moving "peace" from the realm of the abstract to the specific requires a focus on universal human characteristics (e.g. theories of human nature) and on disabled people. Two factors mentioned in the *World Report on Disability* (2011) that are important in its conclusion are at the PS/DS nexus: aging and consequences of violent conflict. Expressed simply, "The number of people with disabilities is growing" (p. 262).

<u>Aging</u>

The *World Report on Disability* (2011) contains much data supporting the premise that "disability is part of the human condition. Almost everyone will be temporarily or permanently impaired at some point in life, and those who survive to old age will experience increasing difficulties in functioning" (p. 3). Although the effects are greatest in the global North, they are significant also where morbidity and mortality occurs earlier: "The disability prevalence among people 45 years and older in low-income countries is higher than in high-income countries...Despite differences between developing and developed nations, median ages are projected to increase markedly in all countries" (p. 35). The *Report's* conclusion therefore suggests: "There is a higher risk of disability at older ages, and national populations are growing older at unprecedented rates" (p. 262). Peace (positive and negative) requires citizen engagement (at local and global levels). Recognizing imminent demographic changes will allow for peace-making and peace-building processes to be more inclusive.

<u>Human Security</u>

The term "human security" reflects a more inclusive concept than "national security." In 2001, the United Nations established the Commission on Human Security (CHS), co-chaired by Sadako Ogata and Amartya Sen. In 2003, the CHS released its final report: *Human Security Now*. In the CHS report, South African parliamentarian and journalist Frene Ginwala wrote: "the state must provide various protections to its citizens. But individuals also require protection from

the arbitrary power of the state, through the rule of law and emphasis on civil and political rights as well as socio-economic rights" and added "Rethinking security in ways that place people and their participation at the centre is an imperative for the 21st century (p. 3).

Unfortunately, most of the report's 16 uses of "disability" assume a deficit approach. One of many barriers to attaining human security is that "disability" is often framed as the inverse of "health." Its elimination is, therefore, part of "human security," narrowly conceived. (The report goes as far as labeling disability a "critical pervasive threat"). Yet, as noted in the *World Report on Disability* (2011):

> Many people with disabilities do not consider themselves to be unhealthy. For example, 40% of people with severe or profound disability who responded to the 2007–2008 Australian National Health Survey rated their health as good, very good, or excellent. (p. 8)

The CHS was succeeded by the 2004 creation of a *Human Security Unit* within the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). The Unit's declared purpose is to integrate human security into all United Nations activities.

Consequences of War

The relationship between war, peace-making, and disability affects people across the age span. As described in the *World Report on Disability* (2011): "Armed conflict generates injuries and trauma that can result in disabilities. For those incurring such injuries, the situation is often exacerbated by delays in obtaining emergency health care and longer-term rehabilitation" (34). It can also be exacerbated by such disabling factors as workplace discrimination, as is often pointed out within DS.

Although war has some constants, modern warfare, exemplified by the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, is distinguished by a high proportion of surviving civilians and veterans, many with PTSD and injuries from landmines and improved explosive devices (IEDs). Major social change requires emphasis on full participation by the millions of people described as disabled.

Cambodia's DS/PS nexus is evident in the overview by Clear and Hutchinson (2006), in a forthcoming article by Karr and Meyers (2013), and in field research designed by Angeliki Kanavou and co-researcher Kosal Path. Kanavou and Path focus on Khmer Rouge agents and survivors of the Cambodian genocide's post-conflict social adaptation. This has left both groups to co-exist where trust, empathy and anticipation for the future are compromised by a collective sense of alienation.

Conclusion

The question then arises: Why is there such a lack of fruitful interaction between PS and DS by scholars and by institutions as well? The structure of academic disciplines is a major source of disincentives. Rewards, such as tenure, may come from a single academic field due to rigidity in

departmental structure and functioning. Therefore when individuals involve themselves in PS or DS, there is a perception that it is work outside their primary field. One outside field is tolerated, and might even be encouraged. More than one outside field will seldom be viewed positively, and two or more are seldom tolerated. The desire of traditional departments to maximize revenue often means that interdisciplinary teaching is discouraged. This is extremely unfortunate, since the potentially fruitful overlaps mentioned in this paper would be bolstered by overlaps with women's, LGBT, ethnic, and many other forms of identity studies. The nexus explored in this paper is a fraction of the potential and is a challenge to people who share the objectives of PS and DS – and to that which doesn't.

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Wounded Warriors or One of the Crowd?: Civil War, Citizenship, and Disability in Nicaragua

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WOUNDED WARRIORS OR ONE OF THE CROWD?: CIVIL WAR, CITIZENSHIP, AND DISABILITY IN NICARAGUA

Abstract

The current human rights-approach to disability is based upon a liberal-individualist tradition of citizenship that conceptualizes citizens as free to pursue their own self-interest and with equal rights to either make claims upon public goods or for the state to leave them alone. Civic-Republican citizenship, which has a much longer history, however, conceives of citizenship as an exclusive group of committed community members who actively contribute towards the common good. Soldiers who have been wounded in battle exemplify the Republican ideal of the good citizen and have traditionally been rewarded for their service and sacrifice. Many of the States-Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) are post-conflict states. As such, they are implementing new laws that treat all persons with disabilities the same, wiping away privileges once reserved for disabled veterans. Nicaragua, which has separate civil society associations for ex-Sandinista and ex-Contra soldiers with disabilities provides a useful case study for understanding why certain groups of ex-combatants distance themselves from the disability rights movement and others embrace it. In Nicaragua, ex-Sandinista soldiers with disibilities utilize a civic-republican citizenship discourse to resist changes in the law and to continue to frame themselves as war heroes who deserve special rights. Ex-Contra soldiers with disabilities, however, have taken advantage of the disability rights

movement to cover up their histories as counter-revolutionaries and to instead makes rights-claims upon the state in accordance to liberal citizenship.

Introduction

Public spaces in Segovia[1], Nicaragua, like many Latin American cities, are blanketed with colorful murals and memorials. Many of Segovia's most prominent displays of public art commemorate the 1979 Sandinista Revolution and subsequent, decade-long civil war against the *Contra* (Counter-revolutionaries). A twenty foot high silhouette of Sandino sits at the city's entrance and a cement statue of a Sandinista fighter launching a Molotov cocktail is in the market's center. In addition to these Revolutionary images, there are new displays sponsored by various campaigns that recognize historically marginalized groups, such as women and the indigenous. Persons with disabilities are depicted in both forms of art, but in very different ways. In the space of a single downtown block sit two of Segovia's largest and most colorful murals. On the outside wall of the *Casa de Cultura*, Sandinista soldiers are depicted fending off a *Contra* attack. Many of the soldiers are painted with bright red spurts of blood coming out of their bodies as they are riddled with bullets. Others are shown missing limbs. This mural depicts disabled Sandinista fighters as war heroes: citizen-soldiers who willingly sacrificed their bodies in order to protect the community. One block South, there is a very different depiction of persons with disabilities on the outside wall of a city block. Under a banner stating "Education is for Everyone," a dozen boys and girls, some with cartoon-like ethnic features and in a rainbow of skin colors, are holding hands as they cross through an elementary school's ramped gate. One of the children is in a wheelchair and another is using a white cane. This mural contains a message of disability inclusion, depicting equal access to education as a right of citizenship.

While these displays of public art borrow paints from the same palette, they are rooted in very different conceptions of citizenship. The former was born during war, where a civic-republican citizenship centered on duty and sacrifice towards the common good (Hosking, 2005; Pocock, 1998). The more recent mural, however, reflects the contemporary era of peace in Nicaragua and a global concern with human rights. This latter mural corresponds to liberal-individualist norms (Oldefield, 1998; Glendon1991), where citizenship is about equality and non-discrimination. Nicaragua is not unique in having multiple citizenship discourses (Shafir and Peled, 2002), but the prominence of ex-combatants in the public sphere and Nicaragua's recent ratification of the 2006 UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) highlights the way different groups of persons with disabilities[2] advocate for rights and privileges in this post-conflict context.

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[1] Segovia is a pseudonym. Neuva Segovia refers to several *departmentos* in Nicaragua's Northern, mountainous zone, an area that includes a number of sizable cities. Using "Segovia" as a pseudonym is akin to using "Midwest City" to refer to a town in the Midwestern region of the United States.

[2] In order to remain consistent with the language of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, I will be using "persons with disabilities" throughout this article rather than "people" or "individuals" with disabilities, which I consider equally valid descriptors of the subject group of this article.

The social model of disability, which is at the conceptual base of the UNCRPD, understands disability as the result of social discrimination (Oliver 1983, 1986; Shakespeare, 2006) and frames persons with disabilities as a singular group as a result of the shared experience of oppression (Zola, 1982; Galvin, 2003). As such, disability rights movements are civil rights movements, whereby activists advocate for the extension of the full rights and privileges of citizenship to persons with disabilities (Barton, 1996). Many communities, however, make distinctions regarding persons with disabilities on the basis of service. Army veterans with disabilities often have their own organizations and state-sponsored benefits (Rimmerman and Herr, 2004). These sorts of programs promote a form of citizenship too, but one that does not include persons with disabilities who have not served. In addition to this values-based preference towards disabled soldiers in post-conflict states, national and international actors pragmatically prioritize ex-combatants with disabilities for demobilization and reintegration in order to promote a long-term peace (Knight and Ozerdem, 2004). These programs also grant benefits that distinguish ex-combatants from the general disabled population.

In Nicaragua, disabled ex-Sandinista soldiers advocate for rights through civic-republican rhetoric, arguing that as war heroes (Bruun, 1996) they deserve more than other persons with disabilities. The larger disability movement, which is centered on the UNCRD, advocates for policies that treat all Nicaraguans with disabilities the same. This has alienated ex-Sandinistas, but attracted ex-*Contra* soldiers with disabilities, who fought on the "wrong side of history" and are thus discriminated against. The new disability rights movement allows ex-*Contras* to advocate according to liberal-individualist grounds on the basis of disability and not their political histories.

While there is little concern that old animosities in Nicaragua will reignite, understanding how different groups of ex-combatants with disabilities in Nicaragua utilize differing citizenship traditions is an important area of research. Insights drawn might help fill the gap in knowledge regarding the likely outcomes of disability rights movements across various contexts characterized by conflict, post-conflict, and sustained peace.

Multiple Discourses of Citizenship and Disabled Persons

Citizenship, as both a concept and political instrument, has been attributed a multiplicity of meanings and been utilized for a variety of purposes. The ambiguous language of citizenship is based upon a history that spans back 2,500 years to the Greek *polis*, yet leans forwards towards an uncertain future of regional political communities (i.e. EU) (Preuss, 2003), global governance (Held, 2005), and the ascendance of universal human rights (Shafir, 2004).

Multiple Discourses of Citizenship

Many countries maintain multiple discourses of citizenship (Shafir and Peled, 2002). Rather than being complimentary, many discourses are opposed: liberal-individualist citizenship argues that

everyone is free and equal; civic-republican citizenship differentiates the populous according to their contributions towards a pre-defined common good; ethno-nationalist citizenship grants membership on the basis of blood; and so forth. Polities (as well as individuals) rarely adhere to a single discourse.

Citizenship, in all cases, binds together a political community, or a "we" (Preuss, 2003). The creation of a "we," and the social cohesion upon which it is premised, however, often implies "othering" (Durkheim, 1984). Types of citizenship, therefore, run on a continuum of identity, inclusion and exclusion.

Liberal-individualist citizenship is the most inclusive form of citizenship and the basis of human rights and the modern, democratic state (Oldfield, 1998). Its roots are traceable to the Roman Empire (Walzer 1989, p. 211) and liberal citizenship discourse has been dominant within Anglo-American political thinking since Hobbes' writings in the 17th Century (Oldefield 1998) and the basis of the American Declaration of Independence in 1776 . Liberal citizenship is based upon an individualist conception of the self – everyone is free to pursue their own ends under a generic conception of natural rights, public utility, and the nation. The strength of liberal citizenship is its tolerance for diversity, whether differences are cultural, religious, or political. Liberal citizenship discourse is often oriented towards "rights talk" (Glendon 1991), either making claims for a share in benefits, such as access to public services, or nondiscrimination protections (Oldefield, 1994) and the right to simply be left alone. It is also the basis of the modern welfare state. T.H. Marshall (1964), for example, premises his study of citizenship on the idea of equality of status. Thus, the evolution from civil and political rights through to social rights (education, health care, etc.) are all steps taken by a state towards ensuring greater equality between its citizens.

Civic-republican citizenship is very different. Its roots are much older and its outcome quite different in terms of its ability to accommodate diversity. Republic citizenship dates back to Ancient Greece, when citizens were a limited and exclusive group within the city-state (Pocock, 1998). Citizenship was a way of rewarding loyalty to the community. It encouraged public-mindedness, active participation, and self-sacrifice for the public good. The community of citizens "constitutes the backbone of the polity, its strength and capacity to survive depends largely upon the intensity of the bonds of reciprocity, trust and readiness to assume duties for the community" (Preuss, 2003, p. 4). Citizenship, thus, was a way of incentivizing citizens to orient themselves towards the state. Of course, "greater obligations are accompanied by exceptional privileges. Active participation is the core of the citizens' civic virtue and the criterion entitling them to a larger share of the community's material and moral resources" (Shafir and Peled 2002, p. 5).

There are other forms of citizenship, but the bulk of the theory and policy-making is based upon the liberal/republican contrast. Communities are often stuck in a tug-of-war regarding how to expand or limit the benefits of citizenship (Shafir and Peled, 2002).

The Citizen Soldier and Disabled Veterans

The earliest forms of citizenship were linked to military service. In fact, Max Weber argued that the tie was so strong during Antiquity that "Chronic war was therefore the normal condition of the Greek full citizen… while a long period of peace meant ruin for citizenship" (1981, p. 331). Citizens were members of a soldiers' guild, a relation that persisted in many cases until the modern evolution of the state and conscript armies.

The citizen-solider as the ideal of republican citizenship (Hosking, 2005) did not, however, disappear in late Medievalism. Theda Skocpol's *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers* (1992) outlines the benefits provided to Union veterans following the US Civil War. Pensions to soldiers were originally limited to Union soldiers whose disability was "incurred as a direct consequence of…military duty" (1862 law quoted in Skocpol, 1992, p. 106). Today, governments, as well as civil society, continue to justify special rights for disabled soldiers in the vernacular of republican citizenship.

Soldiers are also targeted for reasons that go beyond "reward" for service. The successful demobilization of ex-combatants has been seen as a contributing factor towards sustained peace in post-conflict environments as different as Northern Ireland (Rolston, 2007) through to Mozambique (Alden, 2002). Ex-combatant reintegration programs, such as cash transfers, training, or income generation are common. The reintegration of former fighters is not simply a peace keeping or humanitarian activity, but an explicit contribution towards state-building and institutionalizing new forms of citizenship (Metsola, 2006). Specific demobilization regimes have been developed with the identification and tailoring of interventions for disabled ex-combatants in mind (Knight and Ozerdem, 2004). One consequence of these sorts of programs for disabled soldiers is that they learn that they can demand privileges on the basis of their military past.

Preferencing soldiers, however, can divide persons with disabilities into distinct groups, institutionalizing inequalities. Confederate soldiers with disabilities were sidelined following the US Civil War. Such distinctions can sustain animosities and endanger the peace in a post-conflict environment. It can also prevent the development of broad-based disability rights movements. Skocpol argues that pensions for Union soldiers did not form the basis of a liberal welfare state, but instead institutionalized divisions between the "deserving" and "undeserving poor" by deeming Union soldiers as "morally worthy" (See 1992, pp. 148-151; See also Goldberg, 2007).

The Social Model of Disability and Citizenship

The framing of disability rights in terms of republican citizenship is an exception normally reserved for soldiers. The vast majority of contemporary disability movements utilize the language of liberal citizenship in their advocacy. This is because contemporary disability movements are based upon the social model of disability. By framing disability as a socially ascribed identity rooted in a discriminatory "mode of thought" (Oliver 1990) rather than in an individual's physical or sensory difference, persons with disabilities liken themselves to other marginalized groups.

The social model confronts citizenship by pointing out that "people with disabilities have been fundamentally excluded from citizenship; they have been viewed as subhuman and therefore

unworthy or unable to experience the entitlements and responsibilities associated with citizenship" (Barton 1996: 1). Because of this discrimination, the language of liberal citizenship is used to press the case of equality on the basis of a shared human dignity. In addition to leading to the development of a disability-specific "identity politics" (Anspach 1979), disability movements in the West drew analogies between their struggles and other marginalized groups, such as women and African-Americans. Early activists extended "civil rights rhetoric, symbols, and strategies to people with disabilities" (Groch 1994: 375; see also Barnartt 1996: 7). The current international disability movement promotes a liberal conception of citizenship. The UNCRPD frames persons with disabilities as a marginalized group, denied equal rights. In addition to an obvious focus on nondiscrimination protections and access to public places and benefits, identity recognition or "voice" has become central to theories of citizenship from a disability studies' perspective (Das and Addlakha 2009, p. 128).

Setting, Data, and Method

Nicaragua offers a useful case for examining the relationship between different conceptions of citizenship in relation to ex-combatants with disabilities. Much of Nicaragua was a battleground in the years just prior to the Sandinista Revolution in 1979 through to the end of the *Contra* War (1980-1990). Most of the violence occurred in the north, along the Honduran border where revolutionary activity was strongest, first inviting a crackdown from the Somoza dictatorship preceding the Revolution and later becoming a target of the "resistance" or "counterrevolutionaries" (*Contra*) forces that invaded from their safe havens across the border in the north (Kinzer, 2007). An estimated 40,000 Nicaraguans, out of a country of 4 million, died during the Revolution and *Contra* War (1% or equivalent to 317,000 of the current U.S. population). In an effort to ensure peace, the Sandinista government offered returning *contra* troops a blanket amnesty and a variety of socio-economic reintegration opportunities (Oliver, 1990).

This legacy goes beyond a history of violence to include long established civil society organizations and a still active discourse regarding the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. As the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, Nicaragua is also a priority country from human rights and humanitarian organizations focused on persons with disabilities. I chose Segovia, Nicaragua as my primary field site. Its close proximity to the Honduran border meant that it had been a central battleground. As such, Segovia has a large population of ex-Sandinsta soldiers. It also has a number of ex-*Contras* who returned to Nicaragua following the end of war. Segovia remains one of the most Sandinista cities in Nicaragua with 64% of its residents voting for the Sandinista Front in the 2011 elections. This means that ex-*Contras* are a minority and must operate in a political space where they are making claims upon political institutions dominated by many of the very people they sought to topple in the past.

Segovia is not only a center of Sandinista sympathy and support, but also a center of international disability rights organizing. Handicap International (HI), an international NGO, designated Segovia for its new, worldwide *Making It Work* campaign in 2008. The campaign involves disability organizations in developing countries in advocating for the implementation of the UNCRPD. As a result, Segovia became one of the first Nicaraguan cities to form a cross-

disability advocacy coalition: the Committee for Disability Advocacy and Awareness (CDIS), which organizes rights awareness events and advocacy projects. CDIS includes seven organizations comprising associations for the blind, deaf, motorly disabled, women with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities, and, most significantly, ex-Sandinista soldiers and ex-Contra soldiers with disabilities. These last two groups are the local chapters of the *Organization of Disabled Revolutionaries* (Sandinista) and *National Association of Disabled Resistance* (*Contra*).

The data for this paper is drawn from field work conducted during the summers of 2009 and 2010 and an eleven month period spanning 2011-2012. I was fortunate to be in Nicaragua during two major events pertinent to my research: the 2011 presidential campaign and the passage of Law 763, a new National Disability Law for Nicaragua. This brought into high relief both citizenship rhetoric and changes regarding the rights of persons with disabilities.
I collected data using ethnographic methods. In Segovia, I was a participant observer as I joined leaders of organizations on their daily activities. I supplemented my participant observation with semi-structured interviews. I recorded 69 formal interviews in Nicaragua. In addition to my field work in Segovia, I attended events and interviewed staff members of national and international organizations in Managua. I also collected documents whenever I could and have utilized secondary sources in my analyses of citizenship and the history of disability organizations in Nicaragua.

Citizenship and Post-Conflict Nicaragua

More than two decades have passed since the end of open conflict, yet the Revolutionary discourse that dominated that era remains ever-present. This is especially true since Daniel Ortega, leader of the Sandinista Front's ruling junta from 1979-1984 and its first elected president (1984-1990), was reelected as president in 2007 and again in 2011. Ortega campaigned on and justifies his current policies as finishing an "unfinished revolution" (Morris, 2010).
The dominant Sandinista political rhetoric reflects the current multidimensionality of Nicaraguan citizenship discourse. During 2011, telephone poles and store windows were blanketed by Sandinista Front political posters in preparation for the presidential elections, which Ortega won handily. These cultural artifacts offer a gateway into the seemingly contradictory citizenship discourses present in Nicaragua today. The Sandinista's main motto was *Unidad por el Bien Común* (United for the Common Good), which is embedded in a constellation of related mottos such as "*con todo y por el bien de todos!"* (with everyone and for the good of everyone). A campaign pamphlet elaborates these themes, linking civic republican language with liberal notions of rights: "[The] path of restitution of our rights, has been and will be in ongoing construction, from working with the Community…because it is our duty and responsibility" (*Compana Solidaria*, 2011, p. 8). Nicaraguans are likened to a "big family" where "our liberties, our democracy, and our paths to rights are reinstated and protected" (Ibid. p. 24). In the very next sentence, these rights are specified as applying to everyone, including children, women, and persons with disabilities (Ibid. p. 24-25). As can be seen, some themes are civic-republican and others are liberal-individualist.

While the Sandinista rhetoric regarding duty, service, and the common good is undeniably strong, there is plenty of evidence to offer that Nicaragua is attempting to become a modern, liberal democratic country. To this end, Nicaragua has been incorporating historically marginalized groups.

Women were a major beneficiary of the Sandinista Revolutionary government, gaining new civil and political rights in the 1980s. Other groups, however, are just now being included. For example, the Penal Code was rewritten in 2008, decriminalizing same-sex activity and in 2012, Omar Cabezas, a member of the National Assembly, began a campaign to recognize same-sex marriage (Rogers, 2012). The campaign is not yet successful, but its mere existence makes Nicaragua unique within the region. While the 1987 Nicaraguan Constitution specifically states that "the Nicaraguan people are multiethnic" and extends rights of autonomy to indigenous peoples (Babb, 2001, p. 214), the government has only recently begun to make good on these promises, beginning with the granting of land rights to the Awas Tingni and other indigenous groups on the Atlantic Coast (Schertow, 2008).

In 2007, Nicaragua became one of the first countries to sign and ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). In 2011, Nicaragua passed national disability legislation (Law 763) modeled on the UNCRPD, explicitly recognizing persons with disabilities as free and equal citizens.

These moves, guided by the norms of liberal citizenship, however, stand alongside long-held traditional beliefs regarding civic responsibility and ideal citizens.

Ex-Sandinistas with disabilities and Republican Citizenship

The *Organización de Revolucionarios Discapacitados* (Organization of Disabled Revolutionaries—ORD) was founded in 1982. Today, it nationally registers 16,000 ex-Sandinista soldiers who were wounded in battle. As the civil war persisted on in the 1980s, the Sandinista government strategically celebrated the sacrifice of young men and women, encouraging the establishment of civil society organizations such as "Mothers of Heroes and Martyrs" and the ORD to honor individuals who exemplified solidarity with the nation. The ORD intuitively understood this and did their best to frame their members' identity as "war heros" (Bruun, 1995). As a result, the ORD expresses their participation in the war in the idiom of civic-republicanism, framing themselves as having sacrificed for the common good. As I observed on multiple occasions, ORD members were at pains to describe themselves as *lacerados de la guera* (war wounded), rather than *personas con discapacidades* (persons with disabilities), making clear distinctions in their advocacy and activities regarding their focus on war wounded in contrast to campaigns and events focused on persons with disabilities in general (Field Notes: April 29, 2012).

Denis, the local president of the ORD's Segovia chapter, explained to me why he, and others, volunteered to join the Sandinista People's Army in the 1970s and 80s:

> We never said we are going to fight for you [the community] to give us shelter, we never said we are going to fight for you to give us a pension, we never said we are going to fight so that my family is well—nothing of the sort. You think about it, we only believed in defending the Revolution so that today we [Nicaraguans] would be better off… If you go by us in the organization [the ORD], we are seen here [in Segovia] as having been born of the Revolution… We are the dead, the wounded, and the wounded ex-soldiers who participated in the war—that is the Revolution. Those of us who are the Revolution: the mothers of heroes and martyrs that, thanks to this [Sandinista] government today, are eating a little better. I am glad that I gave. (Interview: March 14, 2012)

The patriotic altruism given voice by Denis does not mean that he does not advocate for rights and benefits. Instead, their history of service to the community undergirds claims for benefits made by Denis and other ORD members on the basis of their superior moral worth. To wit, one of the local members of the ORD explained to me that "Because we have acquired our different disabilities while contributing to the country, I think they [government] should give us special attention" (Interview: June 24, 2012). The longest lasting benefit the ORD in Segovia has benefitted from is their office space. For more than twenty-five years, they have had a small room in a building confiscated by the local government from a Somoza loyalist in 1979. This, now dilapidated space, is used regularly for monthly meetings and daily organizational activity. With the exception of the office, receiving "special attention" as disabled veterans has come under threat multiple times. The ORD members' special status as war heroes, however, has also cushioned them from cuts in government programs because the larger society holds them in high esteem. For example, in the 1990s, after a conservative government was elected and implemented neo-liberal economic policies, the ORD persisted to draw benefits for their members. Norwegian researchers comparing the occurrence and severity of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder amongst ex-Sandinista and ex-*Contra* soldiers during the 1990s found that despite benefits cuts, Sandinista soldiers had lower levels of PTSD because they "were met by public acknowledgement and active social and political support, aiding in the construction of meaning" (Sveaass & Castillo, 2000 p. 124). Nicaraguan mental health professionals, who had been laid off by the new government, told researchers that they continued to voluntarily work with disabled Sandinista soldiers because, in the words of one therapist: "I was not myself a combatant during the war—but, the Sandinista soldiers fought my war too—I felt I owe a lot to them" (Ibid). *Contra* soldiers did not fare as well.

These formal and informal benefits derived from the ORD members' participation in the Revolution have continued to this day. As a result, members of the ORD do not face the same problems as the more general population of persons with disabilities. CMIS, the disability rights coalition in Segovia, identified employment as a priority during my field work in 2011 and 2012. Denis, the leader of the ORD, explained to me that unemployment was not a real problem amongst his members, something I confirmed through my own interviews and survey. While ORD members were by no means wealthy or working professional jobs, having spent their youth at war rather than in school, local businesses and public institutions employed them, including a significant number working as night watchmen. Nationally, for many years, the ORD was able to manufacture and distribute wheelchairs with aid from international NGOs such as the World

Institute on Disability and Whirlwind Wheelchairs. Many of these organizations, which had begun working with the ORD in the 1980s, chose them specifically out of solidarity with the Sandinista Revolution's leftist goals (Interview: 07/12/2010).

The latest threat to disabled veteran benefits, however, has not been the result of budget cuts, but the passage of a new, National Disability Law—*Ley 763,* which replaces all previous laws. Two of the most prominent were Law 119 "Granting Benefits for War Victims" and Decree 58 "Social Security Benefits for Fallen (*Caido*) Combatants and Families," which were passed by the Sandinista government during the 1980s, but ceased to be implemented by the Chamorro government in 1990.

In the Spring of 2012, Denis showed me a copy of a proposal that the ORD national office had sent to the national government in late February, 2012. The proposed "Petitioned Agreement with the Government of Nicaragua and Institutions of the State" outlined the ORD's position regarding the new, national disability Law 763 and its intent to replace all prior disability laws. Firstly, it called upon the government to reinstate Law 119 and Decree 58. Denis, who was particularly adamant about this point, called it a "moral obligation" of society to care for disabled soldiers. Secondly, the petition pointed out that the new law did not specifically mention ex-combatants. As such, it advocated that the ORD be given a special, designated seat on a newly formed National Disability Council, a council made up of representatives from relevant government ministries and civil society organizations. The petition pointed out that a national, cross-disability federation composed of all disability groups was appointed to the council, leaving the need, in the ORD's mind, for them to be on the council in order to ensure that there is "the attention and respect that is deserved by persons with disability resulting from the war" (ORD, 2012, p. 1).

A few months later, I met with one of the members of the national board of the ORD in Managua to ask about progress being made in their advocacy for special rights for their members. He admitted that they had made little progress, portraying the rise of the national disability rights federation and the decline of the ORD's influence as a zero sum game. Referring to changes in disability law in Nicaragua, the board member stated that:

> In the last two years, the [national, cross-disability federation] movement of persons with disabilities has grown. They have strengthened a lot, they are organizing—fighting and defending their rights… The Federation is working, planning, and anticipating the [new] laws that are coming out… In the last few years, they have grown into a strong organization… For the ORD, however, the problem is ugly. It is a horrible future for us. (Interview: August 21, 2012)

This loss of influence has both psychological and material components. As one member of Segovia's ORD explained to me: "It is clear that we need [more] support, especially because a lot of times we [ORD members] *are forgotten, or not remembered—the sacrifice that a person who fought in the war has made*" (My emphasis; Interview: June 24, 2012). The member's reference to sacrifice as the justification for support draws from a lexicon of republican citizenship.

Understandably, ex-Sandinistas with disabilities have continued to publicly press their case for recognition based upon their military service, including marches in Managua advocating for the reinstatement of benefits specifically for ex-combatants with disabilities. This has put them at odds with the larger disability movement. A representative of the national, cross-disability federation expressed disappointment and frustration with the ORD, who refuse to fall in line behind the national network's goals and objectives. One federation staff member shook his head, telling me that the ORD were "showmen" (Field Notes, Oct. 10, 2011) and not team players.

Ex-*Contras* with disabilities and liberal citizenship

Whereas the Organization of Disabled Revolutionaries, despite their appeal to civic-republican conceptions of citizenship, is seeing their fortunes decline, the *Asociacion Civil de Discapacitados de la Resistencia Nicaragüense* (Nicaraguan Association of Disabled Resistance—ADRN) is accessing new opportunities and benefits. The ADRN has been quick to frame their claims in the language of liberal-individualist citizenship, wherein social inclusion is a right, irrespective of past behavior or current political beliefs.

The ADRN was founded in 1990 as demobilized, disabled *contra* soldiers returned to Nicaragua under the blanket amnesty. Its primary purpose in the early years was to advocate that disabled *contras* receive access to rehabilitation benefits, as promised in the Peace Accords. But, as the conservative government had cut social programs, no such benefits were forthcoming. In recent years, the ADRN has begun advocating for universal benefits open to all persons with disabilities and opened its membership to all persons with disabilities, regardless of whether or not they had fought as a *contra* during the civil war. These attempts to broaden their membership and advocate for universal benefits utilize a liberal citizenship discourse. It does not mean, however, that they no longer identify with the *contra* political cause.

Interestingly, Humberto, the leader of the ADRN chapter in Segovia, explains his own participation in the war according to liberal, rather than republican values:

> Well, for us [members of the resistance], and the principles for which we went to war [against the Sandinistas], it was for freedom and democracy… I still tell people that the mission has not yet been completed, only we've left the rifle for the pencil to try to find those rights, those benefits, and the claims of membership. (Interview: June 6, 2012)

Whereas Denis and other members of the ORD framed their participation in terms of self-sacrifice and for the benefit of the common good, Humberto utilizes the language of freedom, democracy, and rights. These values have become all the more important in the war's aftermath, as *contras* are a minority and the memory of their attacks continues to loom large. ADRN members see themselves as a discriminated group, in some cases for political reasons and in others for being persons with disabilities. In fact, whereas unemployment was not a problem for ORD members, it was so for ADRN members, including in the same fields. Denis recounted being fired as a night watchman on the basis of his *contra* past:

> Sometimes you have to hide your political beliefs, because in the government, I was working at the INSS [National Institute of Social Security], and Pablo [another member] too. We worked as security guards and one time we arrived and an official told us that we could no longer work there…We had been given the assignment [by the security firm] and objectives, we were fulfilling them, but this government lady told us "No, I'm sorry, you can't be here." (Interview: June 7, 2012)

While Humberto and his colleague were unable to protect themselves from political discrimination, they have been able to advocate for protections on the basis of disability. Another wounded, ex-*contra* and local ADRN member explained the power of disability rights in terms of countering barriers and discrimination.

> Currently, I no longer [encounter discrimination] because I am really defending my rights—which say that I should not be discriminated against for having a disability. It's better [now] because I am defending my rights like any other, I cannot be discriminated against because a person with a disability and a normal person, who does not have anything [any disability], is under the same law. The law is not lost. (Interview: July 13, 2012)

 Disability rights, which utilize the language of liberal citizenship, have provided an avenue to social inclusion for ADRN members that would be impossible from a republican perspective, given the fact that many view *contra* as traitors and former terrorists.

Segovia's local government, in response to the growing disability movement, has instituted several outreach programs focused on Disabled Persons Organizations (DPOs). As a DPO, the ADRN applied for and received free land on which to build a new office and meeting hall, which was dedicated in December, 2011 as part of the local chapter's end-of-the-year meeting.

During that meeting, the vice president of the board announced that the ADRN would no longer publicly advocate for the rights of war wounded (i.e. Law 119), and only advocate for "universal" disability rights (Field Notes: December 4, 2011). He also reiterated the point that the ADRN was no longer an organization reserved for ex-*contra*, but open to all persons with disabilities, no matter what the cause. In strict contrast to the ORD, where "war wounded" was the primary term by which members identified themselves, the ADRN, despite continuing to have a membership exclusively made up of ex-*contra* soldiers, refer to themselves as "persons with disabilities" only.

The new ADRN recruitment pamphlets demonstrate the influence of a liberal conception of citizenship, referencing their advocacy in terms of "human dignity" rather than participation in the war. The organization's new objective is: "Contributing to the process of the integration of persons with disabilities in social life and the nation's productivity, in a framework of respect for their human dignity." Further down in the document, it explicitly states that "All persons with

disabilities can be members of the ADRN…" going on to specify that active members can "be a person possessing a disability, *the cause of which is not important*" [my emphasis].

In many ways, the ADRN has become an extension or mirror of Segovia's larger, disability rights coalition, within which the ADRN is one of the most active members (and the ORD the most reluctant). When I spoke to Humberto regarding the ADRN's objectives, he had nothing to say about the specific situation of his members, but instead spoke about the importance of being part of a coalition: "We are strengthening here in Segovia, when we started an alliance [CMIS] with all the organizations of people with disability, we found common objectives to fight for, for example, health, education, accessibility… Already the City Hall has recognized us" (June 7, 2012). The ADRN has no objectives other than those: health, education, etc. The ADRN has clearly learned that they can gain benefits and put their *contra* past behind them by fully integrating themselves into the larger disability rights movement and utilizing its language of liberal citizenship.

Conclusion

The current disability rights movement in Nicaragua provides a prism through which we can recognize the stresses and strains placed upon differing views of citizenship in a post-conflict environment. The demands of war contribute towards a concept of citizenship centered on putting the community first. The state's very survival might depend upon a citizenry centered on loyalty, sacrifice, and service. These appeals to republican notions of citizenship in Nicaragua provide a frame for disabled Sandinista veterans—"wounded warriors"—to give meaning to their pasts and make claims upon the state. This form of citizenship, however, poses real challenges to disabled *contra* soldiers. They, in fact, sought to destroy the very political order they now seek benefits from. As such, their appeals are made within a framework of liberal citizenship. Liberal citizenship places the individual above the community, protecting their right to pursue their own, individualistic, or even anti-community, goals.

The UNCRPD is seemingly tipping the balance in Segovia. Liberal citizenship, through the vehicle of disability rights, is strengthening the position of the ADRN. Ex-*contras* with disabilities are using its discourse to get beyond their pasts and benefit as persons with disabilities who deserve the same rights and protections as all other citizens. The ORD—ex-Sandinistas with disabilities—seem to be losing ground. While they are certainly honored as heroes, they are no longer able to make claims by standing out and standing above other persons with disabilities on the basis of their military service.

While Nicaragua seems likely to remain stable and at peace and the ORD's attempts to influence the implementation of the new National Disability Law and the UNCRPD do not look likely to derail the inclusion of all persons with disabilities in new rights, there are still lessons to be drawn. Namely, many developing countries are likely to have significant numbers of disabled ex-combatants. Some groups may pose obstacles to the expansion of disability rights to the larger disabled populous. Others may actually find it as a new road towards their inclusion. Different groups of ex-combatants may resort to different citizenship discourse. Finding ways to

make all groups of ex-combatants feel welcome within disability rights movements may prove important in movement's success in post-conflict environments.

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Religious Peace and Disability

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RELIGIOUS PEACE AND DISABILITY

Abstract

The subject of religious peace and intellectual disability has limited consideration. This usually restricts religious peace through narrowly defining it as religious services provided to individuals. This spiritual vacuum is a disservice to those with intellectual disabilities that strip them of human dignity and the experience of peace. This article provides a theoretical approach to the importance of religious peace within a context of intellectual disability. Professionals can take advantage of a practical method outlined below in the spiritual care offered. The paper then examines the value of personhood as it relates to peace. A major component of this paper is that it examines and provides an example of a Spiritual Assessment Tool. This tool helps the caregiver assess and address the spiritual needs of those whom they serve. The paper concludes with the assessment that spirituality can work in conjunction with other disciplines by offering care to those who have intellectual disabilities.

Introduction

I am a chaplain at a State Supported Living Centers which serves approximately 488 adults with Intellectual/Developmental Disability (I/DD) along with employing 1600 people. While I am

ordained and endorsed as a Christian minister, I work in a pluralistic environment that does not proselytize nor impose a theological construct on those whom I serve. I initially worked as a hospital chaplain and am fairly new to Intermediate Care Facilities for Mental Retardation (ICF/MR). The lack of spirituality in the guidelines for ICF/MR (Davis & Yale, 2001) alarms me. Clinical chaplaincy could be reduced in ICF/MR to religious programming. This does not have to be the case. The chaplain can have a positive influence on the care for people with I/DD and the life of the institution. This is true with the issue of peace. This article outlines a theoretical and practical approach on the importance of religious peace with intellectual disability.

Religious Peace

The first issue that must be addressed is defining peace in a religious context. From my faith heritage, peace includes a feeling of wholeness and the restoration into a right relationship with God and fellowman (Tenney & Douglas, 1987). The first part of this is that peace occurs when a person feels or has a sense of wholeness. This wholeness does not exclude disability. While the term disability denotes being less than whole, I would argue that this is usually the bias of the caregiver instead of the person who has the disability. What one person defines as wholeness may not be to another. The experience of religious peace involves wholeness, personal choice, and relationships. It cannot be imposed onto others.

An example of peace through wholeness is a resident who frequently attends Sunday Services. This resident loves to participate through leading various songs and singing into the microphone. While he sings out of tune, monotone, and offbeat most of the time, he may experience more wholeness than the rest of us. I speak with many people who are afraid of public speaking and do not possess the confidence to sing in front of a group. However, this individual enjoys hearing his voice and giving to the community in this way. The definition of wholeness by others does not restrain him. He has incorporated his passion and found peace. The community's response is to rejoice with him in this peace through letting him exhibit it.

The second area of peace is restoration into a right relationship with God and with others. While some may agree with the first definition of peace, the issue of restoration with God is one where some may feel I am evangelizing. However, in this context I am defining God in much broader terms. I am working under the assumption "*God*" is related to a person's worldview, how they make sense out of the world, define themselves, and interpret significant events (Fowler, 1981). Everyone then has a concept of God, even if by negation, which can range from their religion, family tradition, self, nature, or a variety of other choices. Most individuals have a conceptual understanding of what they were told about God and how the events of their life come together. These two concepts can work together through identifying religious services and practices which are important while also utilizing and honoring preferences and choices. Ultimately to deprive persons with I/DD of God is to deprive them of their own human identity.

Peace through restoration to God can result in a variety of ways. One is through religious symbolism. Metaphorical images, icons, and symbolism are powerful tools in serving those with I/DD. They can serve to help people make sense out of life and provide meaning during

significant events (Schurter, 1987). Every day we have the opportunity to utilize images and symbolism to provide comfort and meaning for those we serve. There is an individual who sees me and usually wants to sing *Jingle Bells* or *Silent Night*. I have sung this with him year-round. Every time we sing together it communicates acceptance and reconciliation to him. I connect on his level and utilize an image that is meaningful to him. It is an innate human desire to be connected with something larger than oneself.

Renewed relationship with other humans is another element of peace. I am a supporter of both community living options and Intermediate Care Facilities. Both serve a great purpose and individuals, guardians, and family members need to be informed and offered both options. However, one advantage that I see of the Intermediate Care Facility where I work is that it offers a built-in community. This community offers residents options and relationships which are not that different from where most of us live. I have seen several residents yearn and grow from connection with others. Every Sunday, residents show up to Chapel Service two hours ahead of time. This pre-service time allows us to talk and spend time before the service. For some residents, it means we just sit together. Others tell me about their week. There is one resident who is primarily non-verbal except for a few words that I always work into the conversation which he can say. This renewed relationship is an avenue for peace.

Religious peace is not that different for people with or without disabilities. The means could be different, but the outcome and need are the same. The main difference is that those with an intellectual disability might not have as comprehensive a set of coping skills as others. This makes them more susceptible to spiritual abuse and neglect. This could range from a person with I/DD turning to self-injurious behavior to cope with abuse or the caregiver neglecting the spiritual practices of the individual because of an assumption that the individual does not have the intellectual capacity to practice his particular faith. Instead, the caregivers can direct the individual to the concept of religious peace to cope and seek meaning from events. The caregiver is in a unique place to partner with the individual and learn how to be a spiritual support to him.

Another difference between religious peace between those with and without a disability is the issue of justice. A challenge for most of us who work with people who have Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities is arrogance. It is a conceited view that we are right and that we know best. After all, we tell ourselves that we are the caregivers and the professionals. Everyone is responsible for reporting abuse and neglect. Perhaps we even help them change or prompt them to do the activities which we deem appropriate and right. This arrogance of the professional being right can sabotage the goal of allowing the individual to be free. We want to provide honor and human dignity to those we serve. However, being human is not something that can be given or taken. People with disabilities are human regardless of any limitations.

Justice is related to peace because the lack of Justice can interfere with the religious peace of individuals. As well-intentioned as it may be, a framework can be imposed on them while ignoring their priorities. Caregivers need to ask themselves, "Is my voice silencing or echoing their voice?" If we are silencing their voice, we are interfering with their well-being. It should be a goal to echo their voice. It is a responsibility to be their voice when their voice cannot be heard by others. Echoing is a daunting task that should not be taken lightly. Caregivers need to be self-

aware and involved in professoinal community where others can also point out where silencing might occur. Professional caregivers need to work in tandem and recognize that each professional discipline represents and builds upon a unique aspect of holistic care. All of this presumes a relationship and peace with individuals who have an intellectual disability.

There is a crucial tension which must be maintained with religious peace. Caregivers must advocate for peace while also not imposing their ideas of peace on the individual. We need to learn to listen to those we care for in new ways and see how we can support their idea of peace. The individuals we serve deserve peace. All of us have an opportunity to be bearers of peace as we live in a relationship and work with those who have I/DD. Next we will examine how peace can be applied through spiritual care.

Spiritual Care

 Peace is my job. I do not say that conceitedly, but it is ultimately what I do. I serve as a symbol of peace and reconciliation to individuals, families, guardians, staff, and the life of the institution where I work. It is my area of expertise, and it is why they call me during chaotic situations. One of those incidents happened a few weeks ago. A residents was at a local hospital receiving treatment. The resident wanted to come home and did not like being at the hospital. He started exhibiting behaviors that he knows would help accomplish that like running through the hospital naked. In a situation like this, they call the chaplain. After the visit, he was fine and did not exhibit any more of these types of behaviors. In essence, he experienced and lived peacefully afterwards.

I do not think most people know what I do exactly. They observe that I go into a crisis situation and that it is better when I leave. Despite what a small number may think, I do not retain any magical powers. My main secret is that I know or get to know the person on a spiritual level and provide care. In the above example, I knew that the individual loved Elvis and played the guitar. What I decided to do was bring my iPod player to the hospital with several Elvis' songs. As I entered the room, he recognized and expressed joy to see me. My presence for him was a sign of peace before we even started. As I told him what I had and outlined the expectations, he agreed happily. We then listened, sang, and jammed to Elvis in his hospital room for the next 30 to 45 minutes. I set up follow up visits while he was in the hospital. We talked about his boredom in the hospital and desire to return home. I continued to coordinate with the team for this individual's benefit.

Attaining peace is not an easy task or one-size fits all. Not knowing the source of peace amidst the complexities of life is one reason why most people never experience peace. If we or the ones we serve are seeking peace, it all starts with God. This could vary from a Higher-Being, specific religion, philosophy, or worldview. A non-responsive person with a severe Intellectual Disability still has spiritual needs. Spirituality can be defined as what makes a person who they are. A spiritual need is an underlying need which pertains to a person's spirituality. Below I have included a Resident Spiritual Assessment Form which I created at my current setting. This assessment is a tool, which can be modified, that helps in identifying spiritual needs and providing peace.

RESIDENT SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT FORM	
Resident Name:	Unit & Apartment#:
QIDP (Qualified Intellectual Disability Professional):	Chaplain:
DOB:	Case#:
Date of Assessment:	
Resident's Background	
Psychology:	
Medical:	
How long have they lived here:	Residence/time of stay before:
Family History:	
Spiritual Strengths/Resources	
Faith/Religious Background:	Activities Enjoyed:
What support from other departments:	
Outside support:	
The Preferred Staff:	
Preferences:	
Spiritual Injury/Wounding	
History of Abuse/Neglect:	
Family Abuse:	
Targeted for Person to Person Aggression:	History of Pica behavior::
History of being aggressed against by Peers:	LOS (Level of Supervision):
History of Unusual Incidents:	
Other Trauma or Traumatic Experiences:	
Potential barriers to utilize Spiritual Resources/Strengths:	
Spiritual Needs	
Participation in Religious Services:	Regular Chaplain Visits:
Religious Objects/Symbols:	Other Spiritual Disciplines:
How does Individual Support Plan support spiritual needs:	
Involvement in the workshop activities:	Other Programming Activities:
Music Preferences/Therapy:	
Communication Needs:	
Analysis	
Chaplain Assessment:	
Spiritual Care Plan	
Chaplain Plan of Action:	

The four main sections of the Resident Spiritual Assessment Form are background, spiritual strengths/resources, spiritual injury/wounding, and spiritual needs. A combination of visits with the resident, information from his chart, discussion with other disciplines, and discussion with family members or guardians helps obtain this information. This helps provide a sense of who the person is and how they define their needs. The last two sections are narrative in focus and allow for the chaplain to interpret the information. The first is the Chaplain's Assessment. This is where the chaplain puts all of the information together and explains it in a concise way to other disciplines and caregivers. The last is the Spiritual Care Plan which outlines the plan of action that the chaplain will take to offer care. A new Spiritual Assessment can be redone anytime a life changing event occurs. The Resident Spiritual Assessment Form is one tool, which can be utilized to conduct a comprehensive spiritual assessment

A key element regarding peace and spirituality is acceptance. Acceptance means "as-is", and this is very important to those with a disability. Recently, I was talking with a resident whom has a dual diagnosis of Schizophrenia and Intellectual Disability. He can be aggressive and has other troubling behaviors. I enjoy his company, and he frequently seeks me out. I heard him say, "God loves good boys and girls." I acknowledge that God does, but I added, "God even loves us when we are not good." The resident reported agreement and thanked me for being, "so nice to him." This resident experienced that the basis of love and acceptance is based upon personal-worth and dignity instead of action. When we accept someone the way they are without the hidden agenda of changing, we extend that person love and peace. This is especially true in a community with people who have a disability because most people have defined them through their disability instead of their personhood.

Being instead of Doing

The focus of our lives needs to be shifted from being instead of doing since the accomplishment of peace occurs through who we are. We live in a society of doers. When we go to a social event with new people, an easy icebreaker question is, "What do you do?" Essentially, this is a question of personal identity and worth. Is a person successful or not; prosperous or poor; educated or ignorant; altruistic or greedy? This is an assessment question which determines the worth and social location of the individual. So how does this affect those with I/DD? Personhood equates with what we do and how we live a purposeful life (Swinton, 2004). This paradigm does not have room for the disabled and is contrary to peace. External factors in life, like work, do not determine who we are. After we wrestle with this personally, we can apply it and recognize it to those with Intellectual Disabilities.

In my current working environment, we have residents with different levels of functioning. Several of the residents are medically fragile and nonambulatory. These residents have enjoyed religious services over the years, but they find themselves unable to attend now. In order to meet their needs, we have brought the services to them through having a weekday service in their homes, workshops, and programming areas. Some of these residents have a severe Intellectual

Disability and are not fully aware of persons, places, and things. Nevertheless, they enjoy the service, music, and that we come to them and visit. One thing that I always do after these services is that I thank the person for being there. There are some ways that they each participate, but the focus is for them just to be present. Their presence is what makes a difference. This is a message that they and their staff need to hear. What we do is important, but a person's presence is what makes the major difference in the lives of others.

All of this is a process, not a onetime action. Living in peace and accepting ourselves and others as beings instead of doers is a choice that we make daily. There is a time for doing, but often it interferes with the peace of others and us. Fluidity of life where being intersects with doing is where we and others experience wholeness. We can do and be at the same time. Likewise, we can involve those with I/DD in this sacred process. One way is through encouraging their preferences and celebrating their unique personhood. Holistic care does not compartmentalize nor impose a societal norm onto them. Instead, it hears their voice and lets it speak through their presence and actions.

Obtaining and projecting a peaceful presence is not an easy task. A lot of my chaplaincy training focused on being a calming and peaceful presence in the midst of crisis situations. Initially this concept was foreign to me. My personality and comfort zone is typically to move towards the conflict and the action. My complaint against being a calming presence is that I felt it diminished my role to that of a piece of furniture. After a lot of exposure to crisis situations and guidance from my supervisors, I was able to appreciate the value of being a calming presence. My observations are that emotions are contagious. When a person is fearful, others around him also sense and experience fear. Likewise, when a person experiences peace, others around him share in that peace.

Being a peaceful presence first starts with identifying emotions within oneself. Peace does not occur from denying that feelings are there, but rather embracing them. Several people identify emotions as positive or negative. They then try to eliminate the negative emotions through denial or changing their perspective on the situation. Many times this backfires and does not allow the person to accept and acknowledge their feelings. If someone is angry or afraid, the first step is to acknowledge the anger or fear before trying to fix it. A person that wants to be a peaceful presence will need to experience the peace within their own life. This does not mean perfection. It is accepting the way things are which includes your circumstances and feelings. Many times we are too busy denying or trying to change that we miss the opportunity of peace in the crisis. Recently, I was with two other professionals. We were to inform a resident that his mother had died. One of the professionals was adamant that he wanted to tell the resident. That professional fumbled around and used flowery language. Finally, the resident verified with the other staff that his mom was dead. The next thing he wanted was to get a snack in the kitchen. The professional who told the resident experienced more of the crisis than the resident did. I sensed this in the professional, so I fished around. He reported that his mother had died, and this brought back a lot of those feelings. Since the professional was not aware of his feelings and functioning, he introduced crisis into the situation.

Conclusion

Religious peace is a facet of care which can be easily overlooked. The modern technological age can downplay the holistic care and peace. Instead, I advocate for a re-examination about the presuppositions concerning religious peace and life. The scientific approach can help advance cures and technical discoveries, but alone it falls short to answer questions within the soul. Addressing the spiritual care of those with a disability can be a component which helps the interdisciplinary team, institution, and individuals experience peace. There are many ways this can be done. Ultimately, it involves recognizing the personal-worth everyone brings. This will enable peace to flourish in individuals and in the life of institutions.

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Suspending the Ethical: Autonomy, Disability, and Shalom

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SUSPENDING THE ETHICAL: AUTONOMY, DISABILITY, AND SHALOM

Abstract

As with the teleological suspension of the ethical in Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*, a culture of autonomy suspends the ethical in its death-making practices for people with disabilities. Is "shalom" peace possible without challenging the fundamental ethical vein of the society we find ourselves in?

Suspending the Ethical

"Father?" The dust floats gently around my feet with every plodding step. It has been three days, and the end is in sight, but one question is on all of our minds. "Yes, my son?" Wiping the sweat from his glistening brow, the piercing brown eyes continue to gaze straight ahead, as though possessed by the mission before him. The young man glances at him inquisitively; "The fire and wood are here, but where is the lamb?" The father's answer delivers no satisfaction, but it is clearly final.

I am a spectre, incapable of intervening, transfixed with horror. The relentless sun gleams on the edge of the knife as it hangs for a moment, poised over the body that lays too stunned to protest. Perhaps a mirage caused by the flash of light in my eye, in the reflection of the blade I catch the

face of the Other, transfigured. Those eyes… The eyes of a brother, sacrificed in a jealous rage. The eyes of a young Jewish rabbi, crucified out of religious zeal and political fear. The eyes of a Muslim, slaughtered for nation and sacred space. The eyes of a young black woman, enslaved for commercial pursuit and colonial power. The eyes of a Jewish mother, torn from her family due to ultranationalism and racism.

Finally, I see the eyes of a person with a disability, their life quietly extinguished because…

Despite my familiarity with the story of Abraham and Isaac, it was Søren Kierkegaard who first held me close to the scene. In the work *Fear and Trembling,* written under the pseudonym of Johannes de Silentio (John the Silent), Kierkegaard returns again and again to the possible thoughts of Abraham as he prepares to sacrifice his only son, upon whom Israel's hope lay for future generations. Ultimately Johannes de Silentio concludes that Abraham sacrifices Isaac as a result of a *teleological suspension of the ethical.* Abraham's ethical instinct (to not murder, to protect his son, etc.) is suspended as a result of his ultimate allegiance to his *telos,* an ultimate end or goal. In the story of Abraham and Isaac this *telos* manifests itself as his absolute relation to the Absolute, the One who has commanded that he sacrifice his son (Kierkegaard, 2006).

In this paper, I will argue that modern Western culture teleologically suspends the ethical in its death-making treatment of persons with disabilities. Where peace is defined apart from *shalom* or 'wholeness', these devaluing practices could even be argued to be 'peace-making'. This 'peace' amounts to no more than that which the prophet Jeremiah alludes to when he writes "They dress the wound of my people as though it were not serious. 'Peace, peace,' they say, when there is no peace" (Jeremiah 6:14, see also Jeremiah 8:11). In light of a complete picture of peace as *shalom* the societal *telos* of individual autonomy must be identified as the 'Absolute' if we are to confront the root causes of this suspension of the ethical. The outcome of this line of thinking may even result in what appears to be the absence of 'peace' – intrusion on private serenity and disruption of communal space – that necessitates active and sometimes difficult involvement in the lives of others. This outcome is inevitable when we dare to look in the eyes of those we place under our knives and may be the only way to achieve *shalom* or 'wholeness' of community.

Death-making

First, what are these "death-making" practices? Dr. Wolf Wolfensberger (1994) first coined the phrase to refer to a wide range of practices that attempt to legitimize or ignore behaviours that minimize the death of people who have been devalued by a society. He observes that persons with disabilities, for example, are "commonly denied relatively elementary life supports such as antibiotics, basic resuscitation, or even the simplest medical procedures" (Race, 2003, p. 191). Having witnessed stories of simple medical procedures not being carried out at a family's preemptive enactment of a DNR, Dr. Wolfensberger's observations have been confirmed in my own experience. Our ethical framework as a society professes that persons with disabilities have the same human rights as those without a disability, but when a situation arises where the theory becomes actuality, the ethical is often suspended.

Another example of the suspension of the ethical is the terminations of fetuses based on a pre-natal screen indicating the probability of a disability. The statistic that is often used is that 90% of all women who receive a prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome choose to terminate their pregnancies in the United States (James, 2009). This number has come under scrutiny but the underlying evidence remains that a significant percentage of pregnancies are terminated due to a pre-natal diagnosis of disability (Becker, 2012). In France and Switzerland, for example, more than 80% of all pregnancies with Down syndrome are aborted (Leach, 2013). It has been reported that Denmark intends to be 'free' from Down Syndrome by 2030 (Somerville, 2011). In most Western countries, gender and disability are prohibited grounds for discrimination, but where the sex-selective abortion practices of other countries are rallied against, disability-selective abortion practices have become common-place and, in many cases, expected or pressured. If the diagnosis of Down Syndrome is postnatal, a comprehensive survey has revealed that the medical community often continues to entrench negative stereotypes even after the child's birth (Skotko, 2005).

Peace-Making

What response can be given to a society blind to its own death-making practices? Dr. David Coulter, in his 2005 presidential address to the organization now known as the American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (AAID), proposed that "Peace-Making is the Answer." The question to which he was responding was, "How should we act today so that our actions will be viewed as moral by others, now and in the future?" (Coulter, 2006, p. 67). In this address he specifically references death-making and argues that peace-making requires valorization of all people including those with disabilities. Coulter argues for Spiritual Valorization, the key to which lies in seeing the Other as a human being "just like myself" in uniqueness and spirituality (p. 66). Dr. Wolfensberger's (1983) approach of Social Role Valorization, which seeks to reveal the value of each person in their social roles, is similar to Dr. Coulter's in its intent to uphold the value of those whom society has devalued.

If peace-making is the answer to the question of how to act morally or ethically, from the perspective of both current society and societies to come (i.e. how to avoid what would be considered 'ethical suspension'), one's conception of 'peace' must also be examined. Even the term 'peace' varies depending on the culture in which it is used, and so what would presently appear to be 'making-peace' could arguably be construed as quite the opposite in another context.

The English definition of peace is: "The absence of war or other hostilities"; "An agreement or a treaty to end hostilities"; "Freedom from quarrels and disagreement"; "Public security and order" and "Inner contentment; serenity" ("Peace", n.d.). Even from in its Latin origins as *pax* it carries the connotation of an agreement or contract and the absence of war (Lewis & Short, 1879). Under these definitions, it could be argued that a death-making culture is also a peace-making culture. Does not the elimination of those who are unable to be self-sufficient make simpler the ability to achieve inner peace or serenity for myself? Does not the removal of those who most significantly draw from the systems of support and medical care lessen conflicts for existing

resources within a society? Does not removing persons who have challenges fitting into societal norms make for more 'peaceful' environments and communities?

If taken back to the Jewish connotation of peace as *shalom,* however, peace-making takes an entirely different form. *Shalom,* although used generically as a Jewish greeting, comes from the Hebrew to mean, properly, "completeness, soundness, welfare" ("shalom," n.d.). It carries with it a responsibility to restoration and restitution for those who have been wronged in order to see the state of wholeness, this state of 'peace' achieved. It may very well be this fuller sense of 'peace' that David Coulter refers to in his 2005 address given his references to Judeo-Christian texts. The problem arises when the assumptions *behind* the use of the word 'peace' remain unchallenged, in which case 'peace-making' can be argued to contradictory outcomes. One definition may lead to a tranquil society in which anyone 'unlike me' is no longer around to challenge my own sense of peace and well-being, while another definition may necessitate a responsibility to the Other in order for *us* to be whole, equal, and 'at peace' together.

Subliminal to the discussion lies the cultural contexts of these definitions. Coulter (2006) acknowledges that he is most familiar with Roman Catholic teaching, which is an extensive and established community of faith, and *shalom* arises from the Jewish culture, one which is arguably even more established in communal identity. This stands in contrast to modern Western culture where social contracts between individuals and states exist in order to reach a state of 'peace' i.e. absence of war or conflict. As theologian Stanley Hauerwas observes, "Our society, in brief, is built on the presumption that the good society is that in which each person gets to be his or her own tyrant" (Hauerwas & Willimon,1989, p. 33). In this context, community exists subservient to the needs and wants of the individual unless one individual's needs and wants infringe on another's.

Ethical Veins

American cultural anthropologist Richard Shweder's research on morality reveals that societal ethics are dominated by three fundamental veins of moral development. He has categorized these veins as the ethics of autonomy, community, and divinity (Haidt, 2006). The ethics of autonomy is based on moral concepts such as harm, rights and justice. These moral concepts are intended to protect individuals in pursuit of the gratification of their wants. The ethics of community is based on moral concepts such as duty, hierarchy and interdependency. Through these, individuals achieve dignity by virtue of their role and position in a society. The ethics of divinity, meanwhile, is based on moral concepts such as natural order, sacred order, sanctity, sin and pollution, which are designed to maintain the integrity of the spiritual side of human nature (Shweder et al., 1997). Shweder goes on to identify that presupposed by the ethics of autonomy is a "conceptualization of the self as an individual preference structure" while the ethics of community views the self as an "office holder" as part of a larger collective. He observes that the ethics of divinity conceptualizes the self as a spiritual entity, "connected to some sacred or natural order of things" (p. 99). Even within the definitions provided, it is apparent that, while overlap may occur in actual ethical practices, these ethical frameworks are driven by diverse moral concepts and values along with differing conceptions of the "self" and personhood.

Shweder's findings revealed that "Americans of high social class relied overwhelmingly on the ethic of autonomy in their moral discourse" (Haidt, 2006, 188). This contrasts strikingly with the other two veins, where "The ethic of community, which stresses the importance of the group over that of the individual, tends to be allied with the ethic of divinity" (Haidt, 2006, 209). In coming to understand what peace and peace-making means for a culture, then, the particular vein of ethics of that society must be taken into consideration. That there are 'veins' of ethics indicates that there are guiding forces shaping the ethical discourse of each culture. In other words, there is no 'pure ethics' but these ethics are shaped and guided by moral conceptions, values, and conceptualizations selfhood and personhood. These variables indicate a higher direction, *end,* or guiding principle that infuses each ethical principle. The *telos* or 'final cause' of these ethics are not pure ethical systems in and of themselves, but are dictated by a higher principle that *supersedes* the ethical.

In Kierkegaard's exploration of the teleological suspension of the ethical, the ethics of divinity dominate the discourse. It was as a result of a divine revelation that Abraham's ethical system was suspended and he committed to sacrificing his only son, before knowing that the sacrifice would not ultimately be required (see Genesis 22:1-18). While ethics of community or of autonomy might not suspend the ethical as a result of perceived divine revelation, either may demand ethical sacrifices if their primary values are challenged. In examining 'peace', it has been shown how even the words used to describe ethical results are shaped by the vein in which they arise. This, in turn, further perpetuates the ethical vein and its definitions. Those definitions then have the ability to control and devalue those who do not fit neatly into accepted categories of normalcy. As Thomas Reynolds (2008) writes, "The most stringent power we have over another is not physical coercion but the ability to have the other accept our definition of them" (p. 46). Once those definitions are crafted in a linguistic space shaped by a certain ethical perspective, debating the definitions themselves may fail to produce meaningful results without addressing the presuppositions that the linguistic space carries with it. In this case, the priorities of autonomy, community, or divinity in the ethical discourse.

Every ethical system, when implemented in reality, confronts scenarios in which it must sacrifice one or another of its own principles. In Hauerwaus' words, "There is no morality that does not require others to suffer for our commitments. But there is nothing wrong with asking others to share and sacrifice for what we believe to be worthy. A more appropriate concern is whether what we commit ourselves to is worthy or not" (1983, p. 9). What then, are the commitments that cause us to sacrifice others? According to Shweder's results, one of these primary commitments in high social classes of North America is *autonomy*. Too often, words and specific issues have been debated without properly acknowledging this teleological value shaping the entire ethical discourse.

Fascinating to these results is the identification that the ethic of autonomy, while pervasive in Western society generally, is most prevalent among those of high social class (Haidt, 2006, 188). The examples given at the beginning of this paper generally relate to medical procedures such as life support and prenatal diagnoses. Those whose advice is most relied on in these instances are doctors, who are generally of high social class, while patients may be from any background or social standing. This is not to say that doctors do not respond to the particular values and ethical

priorities of their patients, but when the advice of the 'expert' is generally couched in the discourse of an ethics of autonomy, they can have a persuasive impact on the outcome.

One instance of semantics being shaped by an ethics of autonomy in medical practice has been highlighted by Wolfensberger in his examination of the term "quality of life." He observes that the "very grammar of the term 'quality of life' facilitated a line of thinking that went via 'quality of life' to 'quality of living,' to the 'quality of a life,' from there to both 'the quality of a person' and the 'value of a life'" (Race, 2006, p. 198). In this way, "the construct of 'quality of life' came to replace the traditional Judeo-Christian belief in the absolute and intrinsic value of the life of each individual, or what one might call the 'quality of the value of the human'" (Race, 2006, p. 199). Examples of the use of 'quality of life' to devalue those that do not exhibit traits valued by an ethic of autonomy can be found in the work of Peter Singer, who wrote a paper entitled "Sanctity of life or quality of life" (1983). In this paper Singer argues that that compared to a "severely defective human infant," a healthy dog or pig "will often... have superior capacities... for ... anything ... that can plausibly be considered morally significant" (Race, 2006, p. 199). Similarly, "Dr. Jack Kevorkian claims he only helps those people to commit suicide... whose 'life quality has to be nil'" (Race, 2006, p. 199). In a society dominated by ethics of autonomy, an estimation of the degree of quality of life of each individual is closely tied to the degree of autonomy that human being is able to exhibit. This, then, determines or locates the *value* that person has is within the ethical system.

Robert Spaemann (2006) wrote *Persons: The Difference between 'Someone' and Something'* which addresses the question "Are All Human Beings Persons?" (p.252). In this work, Spaemann identifies that the fundamental question starts as "What properties must someone possess to have the right to recognition as a person?" (p. 237). Among other problems with this question, Spaemann identifies "these properties [of being a person] emerge only where a child experiences the attention that is paid to persons" (p. 240). In other words, almost regardless of the specific properties used to identify a 'person' (self-consciousness, rationality etc.), an infant will not come to display these properties unless they are first afforded the care that would be due *to a person.* Their initial *quality of life* is so 'low' that under an atomistic ethic of autonomy they should not be afforded the care to ever develop the quality of life that would be described as 'personhood. This *reductio ad absurdum* occurs when personhood is defined as possessing desirable properties or attaining a certain quality of life within the ethic of autonomy.

The danger of this line of thought is also evident in any discussion of race, class or gender where certain properties are deemed less desirable than others. If the 'whole human' is nothing more than the sum of parts, then the value of a human being can be calculated according to relative values placed on their properties or attributes. While modern Western culture prioritizes human rights, subliminal calculations of worth based on racism, chauvinism, or prejudice are made possible within a calculative framework of autonomy.

Spaemann (2006) argues that:

> 'Humanity', unlike 'animality', is more than an abstract concept that identifies a
> category; it is the name of a concrete community of persons to which one belongs not on

the basis of certain precise properties objectively verified, but by a genealogical connection with the 'human family'. (p.240)

Underlying this argument is the perspective that it is not enough to examine personhood from an atomistic perspective, where each individual human being is viewed as an autonomous and objective subject, removed from relations with the whole. Rather, each human being must be viewed as a person in relation to other human beings because there is a communal and familial ethical relation. Spaemann, arguing from an ethic of community, confronts the discourse of autonomy by rejecting 'certain precise properties objectively verified' and substituting the 'concrete community of persons' and 'human family'.

In an ethics of community, it may also be easier for a society to appreciate Wolfensberger's Social Role Valorization and understand that each human being has a role to play, especially if seen from the perspective of *shalom* peace-making. Spaemann also picks up on this line of thought by articulating the importance of people with severe disabilities to the community. For Spaemann (2006), disabled persons

> constitute the paradigm for a human community of recognizing *selves,* rather than simply valuing useful or attractive *properties.* They evoke the best in human beings; they evoke the true ground of human self-respect. So what they give to humanity in this way by the demands they make upon it is more than what they receive. (p. 244)

There can be a danger here of underestimating the gifts and abilities persons with disabilities contribute to society out of their individual attributes, but in locating the value of a human being in a relational and communal space, Spaemann is able to identify the value even of a *lack of autonomy* in persons with disabilities.

In an ethics of divinity, where personhood is defined by relation to a divine or natural order, Coulter's Spiritual Valorization might be a preferred way to speak of the value of a human being. Coulter refers specifically to "the sense of universal spirituality that lives in every human being" and emphasizes that "we see in the other person the ground of all being and all existence, the transcendence that we may recognize as God Who is Love" (2005, p. 66). In many contexts the ethic of divinity will reference 'sanctity of life', whereby the value of a life is *infinite,* not to be entered into a quality of life calculus.

If we find ourselves amidst the background plausibility structures of an ethic of autonomy, however, approaches to valuing life from an ethic of community or an ethic of divinity sound foreign or nonsensical. Within this perspective each life continues to be viewed atomistically and therefore its value is perceived to be calculable in and of itself. If peace-making is a sincere goal, we must question whether there is an authentic approach to recognizing the value of those who have been devalued by society within the current ethical framework, or whether *shalom* is only possible once the fundamental assumptions of our culture are challenged.

Confronting the Ethic of Autonomy

Does challenging the ethic of autonomy, where the ethic of community is often aligned with the ethic of divinity, imply an underhanded attempt to "put God back into" Western society? In a sense it could be argued that it is quite the opposite. Confronting the ethic of autonomy necessitates becoming *less reverent* as a society to the *telos* or 'higher power' that demands the ethical be suspended. This 'god' must be named in order to uncover the impact of the deity of Autonomy on modern Western ethical discourse. In naming our god, we find that the *telos* that has been dictating ethical principles all along has not been the Judeo-Christian God, but rather the Autonomy of the Individual.

Perhaps in diagnosing the ethical vein that shapes our discourse, we will recognize that society has all along been disabled in its ability to reach wholeness or "shalom" in community with persons with disabilities, precisely because "community" is also a word dominated by and subjected to the dictates of autonomy. As Wolfensberger observes,

> In a world that is falling apart and where virtually every single social glue that can hold a society together is coming unstuck… the promotion of communality is another essential and basic priority. We need a community by means of which people at risk of social rejection and devaluation are included and embedded in communal, supportive, primary and secondary social groups and networks. (Race, 2006, p.161)

Wolfensberger's description of community where people are not only included but "embedded" contrasts sharply with the view of community as those that "tolerate" people who are different in their midst. A community defined by tolerance fits well with an ethic of autonomy, but according to Thomas Reynolds (2008),

> Though often touted as benevolent, tolerance can be subtly heavy-handed. It may assume a position of power that grants differences a share of the public space only so long as they do not disrupt or cause inconveniences to a dominant group's way of life. Inclusion then becomes more a matter of insuring that things remain the same than of providing resources to welcome differences as contributions to the group. And because the focus is on preserving group identity, tolerance can easily slip into assimilation. (p. 46)

If peace is taken to signify a contract or agreement where there war and conflict ceases and inner serenity is achieved, tolerance could be argued as the 'pathway to peace'. Based on Reynolds' observations, however, tolerance fails to achieve *shalom,* where 'wholeness' does not mean lack of disruption or inconveniences but where *our* wholeness depends on *your* differences being welcome as contributions to community.

Wolfensberger writes that those of us in Western society are being "lead into a desert" due to the underlying prejudices and presuppositions of societal discourse (Race, 2006, p. 162). Although Wolfensberger likely did not have Abraham in mind, we, as Abraham, find ourselves lead into a desert of death-making practices; we are just as dutiful in obeying the underlying dictates of the god who remains unnamed.

In an ethic of autonomy, the temptation in addressing pregnancy terminations due to pre-natal diagnoses of disability is to point to the autonomy of the person making the decision or the doctor or family member advising a particular outcome. Similarly with other death-making practices: where autonomy of the individual is prioritized, community guilt is absolved. If peace runs much deeper than lack of disruption, though – if peace means the wholeness of *shalom* – perhaps in the reflection of the knife my own eyes appear, not as victim but as the executor. Perhaps my own reinforcing of perceptions of autonomy abandons and isolates decision-makers, leaving them without alternatives in a way that they never needed to be. In the end, I am haunted not by an abstract theory confronting the ethical discourse of my culture, but by a question that challenges the very way I live my life: *Will I relinquish the 'peace' that maximizes my independence in pursuit of the wholeness of shalom, or am I content to sacrifice the Other to avoid disruption of my own autonomy?*

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