

**Duane R. Bidwell and Joretta L. Marshall, eds., *The Formation of Pastoral Counselors: Challenges and Opportunities* (Binghamton, NY: Haworth Pastoral Press, 2006), 228 pp., co-published simultaneously as *American Journal of Pastoral Counseling* 8, nos. 3/4 (2006).**

Twenty-four very prominent clinicians and scholars in the field explore the concept of formation of pastoral counselors from clinical, theological, cultural, and theoretical perspectives. This unique book examines the challenges to the personal and professional formation of pastoral counselors in a cultural and historic context that's radically different from the time when the profession first emerged as a specialized ministry. Contributors explore, in depth, formation from a variety of contexts and perspectives, including spirituality and gender, address theological education and intercultural issues, and present emerging models for pastoral counselors. Each article is well researched and documented.

*The Formation of Pastoral Counselors* is a practical guide for educators working to shape curricula and training programs to the shifting context in which pastoral counselors are formed for ministry, service, and lifelong learning. This includes pastoral counselors, theological field educators, spiritual directors, CPE supervisors, Marriage and Family Therapists and Social Workers.

The book is divided into two sections. The first examines the content and contexts of formation. The content includes theological education, psychological theory, pastoral theological reflection, and spiritual and personal development. This section includes attention to racial and ethnic identity, global and intercultural issues, gender and sexual orientation, and the role of socioeconomic factors in the formation of pastoral counselors and pastoral counseling centers. The book's contributors call on their extensive experience to explore the essential components of formation across different contexts; how contextual realities change the delivery systems; and the epistemological nature of formation.

The second section offers particular models and practices for formation. Practices that can shape formation include supervision that integrates narrative approaches to identity formation and intentionally engages the spirituality of the clinician. This section examines formation through a number of models: Parallel Charting, formation based on Benedictine spiritual formation, multicultural urban context for the pastoral care specialist, formation for care of souls, The Virginia Institute of Pastoral Care model, and expanding the context of care.

This book is a rich resource for anyone in the caring professions who want to learn about pastoral counseling. This book is a must for the reading list of any academic or training center educational program. Each article in this book can stand alone for use in a class or training group on the particular subject matter; and copies are available from the publisher for a fee.

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