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Article

The Intersectionality of Religion and Social Welfare: Historical Development of Richmond's Nonprofit Health and Human Services

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Abstract: Studying the intersectionality of religion and social welfare in Richmond, Virginia requires going back to the beginning of the Virginia colony. In the crucible of the colony, the religious and social welfare functions of a parish community were one and the same. However, after the Revolutionary War it was just a matter of time before the entire system was disassembled. The process of disentanglement of church and state created an identity crisis in Virginia. In the late 1700s, the emergence of charitable efforts began with leading men of Richmond who tried to address the temporary needs of travelers, followed by groups of women who discovered new roles they could play through charitable works. The new “system” became a potpourri of societies, congregations, associations, and county units attempting to provide for the social welfare of the populous. The intersectionality of religion and social welfare continued as a diverse landscape of small and large organizations and congregations performing the social welfare functions in Richmond and throughout the Commonwealth emerged. Today, to attempt to separate the church from the state in this conglomerate of agencies is neither possible nor desirable. However, understanding its’ historical complexity is essential if one is to engage in contemporary practice within Richmond’s health and human service system.

Keywords: faith-based; social service; history; church-state

1. Introduction

Over the last two decades we have been engaged in historical research about the establishment and development of Richmond, Virginia’s nonprofit health and human service system. To call it a system assumes that something systematic occurred or that there was a master plan. In fact, after the American Revolution and with the disestablishment of the parish vestry system in the late 1700s [1], Richmond’s charitable and public relief organizations were independently founded in response to various human needs as they arose [2]. This somewhat random proliferation of social welfare societies, associations, and asylums continued well into the next two centuries.

We began our research at the Valentine History Center archives where we located City Directories published in the 1800s and in which Richmond’s societies, associations, asylums and charitable agencies were listed. We discovered that the names of board members often accompanied these lists and were surprised to find that the vast majority of these organizations had all “lady boards” in addition to male boards of corporators. Our surprise was not that women were involved in the creation and management of these organizations, but that they were running the majority of these organizations well before women had property or voting rights. We became intrigued with the “lady board” concept

that had not appeared in the nonprofit literature and had essentially been erased from history. For a full exploration of women's roles on lady boards, we refer the reader to our earlier writings on the subject [3,4]. We were particularly interested in those health and human service organizations that had survived for over a century because we assumed that their histories would hold clues to nonprofit capacity building and sustainability. And, thus, another surprise was finding 24 centenarian health and human service type agencies that had been in continuous operation in Richmond in some form for over 100 years. It is important to recognize that in order to survive, these organizations had altered their structures (sometimes many times) to ride the waves of change. For example, clinics morphed into hospitals, some eventually becoming part of for-profit chains; orphanages diversified into family service organizations; old age homes merged into large continuing care retirement communities, and so forth. We assume that those that did not change with the times were the ones that disappeared from the social welfare landscape. We studied the 24 surviving centenarian organizations in terms of their identity construction and early cultures [5], their capacity building strategies [6], and their fundraising methods [7].

The purpose of this paper is to explore the importance of the religious community in the founding, governing, and ongoing development of the social welfare system in early Richmond. Whereas, our previous studies focused on the 24 health and human service organizations that can trace their genealogy back at least 100 years, here we also refer to a few societies, associations, asylums, and other relief agencies founded in the late 1700s and throughout the 1800s that are no longer part of Richmond's landscape. The organizations of interest for this paper and their combined story reflect the intersectionality of religion and social welfare in one southern city and has important implications for understanding and contextualizing Richmond's social welfare system today.

Our database consists of secondary references and hundreds of primary documents. Secondary sources include the works of feminist historians who have focused on Virginia [8,9] and Richmond specifically [2,10], as well as various women's societies and associations [11–14]. Several theses provide studies of Richmond agencies [15–19], along with agency histories [20–23], and histories of religious communities in Virginia [24–28].

Primary documents were located at the Valentine History Center, the Virginia Historical Society, the Richmond public library, Virginia Commonwealth University's archival collections, and in church and synagogue archives. Agency reports, newspaper clippings, minutes of boards, correspondence, and assorted documents pertaining to specific health and human service agencies were read in order to capture information on the agencies listed in Table 1. To understand the intersectionality of religion and social welfare in Richmond, a look at the deep history of the city and of Virginia is important. This deep history including important waves of religiosity embodied in the history of the Great Awakenings gives important insights into the evolution of social welfare and human services as constructed today.

Table 1. Religious Roots of Societies and Charities in Richmond, Virginia 1788–1900.

Founded	Organization	Current Status	Founded by	Faith-Based Roots
1788	The Amicable Society	Ceased to exist in mid 1880s, donated its remaining funds to other charities	60 social, political and religious (Christian & Jewish) male leaders of the city	Ecumenical charity of religious male leaders (including the clergy of Richmond)
1790	Ezrat Orchim	Ceased to exist in mid 1880s	Founded by male members of Beth Shalome synagogue	Jewish charity primarily targeting Jewish travelers and peddlers
1805	Female Humane Association	Is now the Children’s Memorial Foundation in Richmond	Founded in 1805 as a nonsectarian charity of leading Protestant women from Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian congregations	Affiliated with Monumental Protestant Episcopal Church
1834	St. Joseph’s Orphan Asylum	Is now St. Joseph’s Villa	Father Timothy O’Brien decided to start a Catholic School for young women and wrote to Mother Rose, head of the Daughters of Charity in Emmitsville, Baltimore. Three sisters came to Richmond.	Originally located in Saint Peter’s Catholic Church, initiated by Father Timothy O’Brien, and managed by Daughters of Charity
1836	The Union Benevolent Society	No longer exists today	Founded as an ecumenical women’s effort which stood for decades as the premier women’s voluntary association of Richmond	An evangelical mission started by Protestant women
1846	Richmond Male Orphan Asylum	Is now Virginia Home for Boys and Girls located in Richmond and serving the Commonwealth	The first meeting of the Board of Directors (a group of Christian men) was held in Reverend Dr. Stiles’ Church, corner of 8th and Franklin Streets, on the 26th of May 1846.	Christian clergy and laymen governed the asylum and asked ladies from area congregations to visit the boys in the home
1849	Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association	Is now Jewish Family Services (JFS) in Richmond	Rabbi Maximilian Michelbacher inspired female congregants to form the Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association in 1849. Later his daughter, Zipporah Cohen, served as its President for 35 years.	Affiliated with Beth Ahabah synagogue
1854	YMCA	Remains the Richmond YMCA	The first YMCA was founded in Richmond on December 19, 1854 at a meeting in St. Paul’s Episcopal Church.	Spurred into being by evangelical Protestants
1872	Friends	Friends Association for Children	Lucy Goode Brooks, a former slave, worked in the house of Reverend John Bacon Crenshaw of the Quaker Society of Friends and he worked with her to open “The Friends’ Asylum for Colored Orphans.”	Supported by the Quakers in Richmond
1874	Little Sisters of the Poor St. Sophia’s Home	Is now St. Joseph’s Home in Richmond	Bishop Gibbons purchased a site and six sisters arrived to take possession of the property on 13 October 1874.	Remains affiliated with the Catholic Church
1874	Magdalen Society (Spring Street Home)	Brookfield, a home for emotionally disturbed girls, closed in the early 2000s	Modeled after the Philadelphia Magdalen Society and founded by men affiliated with the Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches in Richmond.	The first Magdalen Society in the U.S. was in Philadelphia, opening in 1800. The goal was to rescue “fallen women” and it was founded by men, many of whom were clergy or had a strong affiliation with Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches.

Table 1. Cont.

Founded	Organization	Current Status	Founded by	Faith-Based Roots
1875	St. Paul's Church Home for Aged and Infirm Ladies	Merged into what became Westminster Canterbury (a continuing care retirement community)	Established in 1873 by the Reverend Dr. Charles Minnegerode, Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church and interested ladies of his church.	Is affiliated with the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches in Richmond, describes itself as "a faith-based charitable organization"
1875	Protestant Episcopal Church Home	Merged into what became Westminster Canterbury	Founded for the benefit of indigent Episcopal ladies in Virginia.	Is affiliated with the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches in Richmond, describes itself as "a faith-based charitable organization"
1877	Christian Women's City Mission	Is now Family Lifeline, a family services organization	Organized by an interdenominational association of five Protestant women in 1877; in 1905 Reverend Robert Strange, then Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church executed an agreement between the City Mission, the Citizens' Relief Association, and the Baptist Council of Richmond and Manchester to form Associated Charities.	No longer recognizes its religious roots, has completely secularized
1877	Retreat for the Sick	Retreat Doctor's Hospital (owned by HCA)	Mrs. Annabelle Ravenscroft Jenkins assembled several ladies representing local churches to found Retreat for the Sick, believed to be the oldest nondenominational privately supported public hospital in the South.	Was originally tied to the Episcopal church, but is now a for profit facility within the HCA system
1882	St. Luke's Hospital	Henrico Doctor's Hospital	St. Luke's Hospital was originally founded by members of the Episcopal churches	Was originally tied to the Episcopal church, but is now a for profit facility within the HCA system
1883	Baptist Home for Ladies	Lakeview Manor (a continuing care retirement community)	Initiated by Reverend Jeremiah Bell Jeter, Pastor of Grace Baptist Church, and opened by Mrs. Jeter as president of the newly formed Lady Board of Managers on New Year's Day 1883.	Was formed by Baptists and is now affiliated with the Baptist Church
1883	Richmond Home for Ladies of Presbyterian and Methodist Churches	Covenant Woods (a continuing care retirement community)	Initiated by Dr. William W. Parker (a physician) and Dr. D. H. Gregg (philanthropist) with the support of Dr. Moses D. Hoge, pastor of Second Presbyterian Church and Bishop Granberry of Centenary Methodist Church.	Still posts core values as established by its Presbyterian and Methodist roots in its mission statement
1883	Richmond Exchange for Women's Work	Closed in the 1955	Twenty-one (21) founders of the Richmond Exchange represented the five Presbyterian churches in Richmond.	Run by church women, but no longer exists today
1887	YWCA	YWCA	Conceived in the parlor of Emily Fairfax Whittle, a lady from each religious denomination in the city formed the lady board	The founder was a minister's wife

Table 1. Cont.

Founded	Organization	Current Status	Founded by	Faith-Based Roots
1889	Sheltering Arms	Sheltering Arms	Miss Rebecca Dulaney Peterkin (youngest child of Reverend Joshua Peterkin) formed the Central Circle of King's Daughters from a sewing class of young girls at St. James' Episcopal Church and inspired others to form a free hospital to relieve human suffering.	The founder was a minister's daughter
1889	Richmond Eye, Ear, Throat & Nose Infirmary	Richmond Eye & Ear Hospital Authority	Begun by a prominent physician and run by a lady board of managers as a "charitable" public hospital, in which services were "rendered free of charge to the deserving poor"	Lady managers were likely members of various churches in Richmond
1890	Masonic Home (orphanage)	Masonic Home (old age)	Begun by the Masons for poor children. The Masons are not considered a religious group, but they have a spiritual focus.	Embedded in Masonic rites and rituals
1891	Hebrew Home for the Aged & Infirm	Never a "place" but became the Hebrew Fund at Jewish Family Services (JFS)	Henry Hutzler gathered together a group of charitable men from Congregation Beth Ahabah to raise money for a Jewish Nursing Home.	Although this initiative never resulted in an actual facility, there is a Jewish continuing care community in Richmond today (Beth Shalom)
1894	Virginia Home for the Incurables	The Virginia Home	Miss Mary Tinsley Greenhow founded the Home and was President for the first decade, the home was then managed by representatives of various religious denominations in Richmond.	The Virginia Home continues to have a lady board of managers as well as chaplaincy services
1900	Children's Home Society	Children's Home Society	The first superintendent appointed to the CHS was The Reverend William J. Maybee. Several ministers and one bishop were members of the founding board.	The Children's Home Society remains a nonprofit agency, but has no explicit religious ties today
1900	The Virginia Conference Orphanage of the Methodist Episcopal Church	United Methodist Family Services	The Reverend J. W. Bledsoe was the first superintendent, followed by Reverend J. T. Mastin in 1902 the year the first children were admitted. Target population was Methodist children living in the boundaries of the Conference.	UMFS is affiliated with the United Methodist Church, Virginia Conference
1900	The Nurse's Settlement	Instructive Visiting Nurse Association (1902) William Byrd Community House (1923)	Founded by 8 nurses from Old Dominion Hospital with a board composed of members from the Richmond Women's Club.	The members of the Richmond Women's Club were tied to churches in Richmond, so from the beginning they appealed to the religious community for support

2. Colonial Virginia as Context

Virginia was one of the original 13 colonies, established by England and governed by the Anglican (Episcopal) Church as the church of Virginia. The colonists modeled their provision of aid after The English Poor Laws in which outdoor relief was administered through the parish vestry system. There was no separation of church and state, in that the parish was responsible for overseeing secular (e.g., road repair, caring for the poor) as well as religious functions (e.g., repairing church buildings, hiring ministers). Also borrowed from the parish system in England, were laws of settlement based on the assumption that receiving poor relief required one to reside in a geographic location (a parish) for at least one year. The expectation was that one would remain in the same community his or her entire life; would belong to a parish; and would be known by others. As a result, everyone knew who was in need of help and formalized investigations were not necessary [10].

Virginia was somewhat unique from the other colonies. “Unlike Plymouth (Separatist Puritans), Massachusetts Bay (Non-separatist Puritans), Maryland (Roman Catholics), or Pennsylvania (Quakers), Virginia was not established as a haven for any particular religious minority. Virginia’s early settlers were neither trying to create a godly society in the New World nor escape religious persecution back home” [26]. As the population grew and a General Assembly was established in the early 1600s the Virginia colony was moving toward a limited amount of self-government. Several laws were enacted to “help the church carry out both its civil and religious functions” and, finally, one statute formally established the Church of England in Virginia ([26], pp. 172–73).

An uprising of the Powhatans in 1622 resulted in a third of the settlers losing their lives, including several clergy. A shortage of clergymen remained until the end of the century, thus “colonial laity began to take a larger role in church governance . . . developing a system that led to lay control of Virginia’s Church of England” ([26], p. 175). Colonial vestries (composed of 12 laymen within each parish) did everything from raise taxes in the form of tithes to providing for the poor. “The colonial church was not merely a religious institution, it was also the largest and most effective social welfare agency of the period” ([26], p. 181). In short, in colonial Virginia, the church and social welfare were one and the same and thus, the church (the Episcopal Church) and the state were for all practical purposes, inseparable.

It was not until the 1740s and 1750s that the established Church would face challenges from other religious groups and experience divisions within its own structure. A few Quaker groups, a group of dissenters who called themselves Presbyterians, and Separate Baptists began to engage in evangelical activities during what was later labeled the first “Great Awakening.” This was the first of a series of Protestant evangelical awakenings that came in waves throughout subsequent centuries. An awakening was distinguished from a revival in which individual lives were altered. Historians would define an awakening as decades long, composed of many revivals and activities throughout Protestantism that altered the “worldview of a whole people or culture” ([27], p. ix). Itinerant Baptist ministers were harassed when they challenged Virginia society, holding members to strict moral codes and asserting that their authority came from God, not from the state church. Simultaneously, within the Anglican Church, The Great Awakening had inspired some clergy to embrace revivalism. “Although these evangelicals within the church sometimes existed uneasily with other Anglican ministers, they nonetheless led an internal revival movement that—and without their blessing—led to the creation of the separate Methodist Church in Virginia” ([26], p. 191). It is within this context that Virginia approached the American Revolution in which “the church stumbled through the war years with an identity crisis” as large numbers of displaced refugees “strained systems of charity to the limit” ([26], p. 206), but more than a mere intersection continued.

In summary, prior to the Revolutionary War, church (the Anglican Church) and state were one and the same. With a shortage of trained clergy, laity played a greater role than in European countries and Protestant evangelism engaged both clergy and laity in religious work. This set the stage for faith-based services and congregational volunteerism to emerge in the decades to come.

3. Antebellum Richmond (Post-Revolutionary War)

The Revolutionary War, accompanied by an increasingly mobile and growing population, had significant consequences for Virginia's social welfare system. First, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom was enacted into law in 1786, disestablishing the Church of England in Virginia and guaranteeing freedom from religion to all people of all religious faiths, including Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant denominations [29]. The disestablishment of the Anglican Church meant vestrymen were no longer responsible for poor relief, and the state (overseers of the poor at the county level) inherited this responsibility. Second, a new category of the deserving poor were singled out—veterans and their widows. These persons became eligible for federal support through state pensions. Third, Richmond assumed a more prominent role in Virginia, replacing Williamsburg as the state capital [10]. And fourth, as people became more mobile, settlement requirements became increasingly difficult to maintain. As the diversification of the population increased, social welfare was less communal or personal as everyone no longer knew everyone else, but the role of the laity in leading “good works” efforts continued as you will see in later discussion.

Green describes post-Revolutionary War Richmond as a “rough and tumble frontier town” of nearly 6000 residents by 1800. Immigrants from Germany, France, Scotland, Ireland, Spain, and Portugal had arrived in the late 1780s and 1790s to join the merchants, artisans, lawyers, bureaucrats, and politicians in the newly formed state capital ([10], p. 24). Soon a mixture of free blacks, slaves, and white laborers worked in warehouses and lived in Richmond neighborhoods. Few services were available to persons living in poverty. Now a crossroads of commerce, more and more people were traveling to and through Richmond. Some were in dire need and untethered to sources of support.

Green asserts that “the transfer of responsibility for the poor from church vestry to local government had not gone smoothly” ([10], p. 24). As Richmond struggled to address the needs of its poorest and destitute citizens, new and different religious congregations were organizing as well. In 1789 German Jews in the mercantile trades founded Beth Shalome synagogue. Other religious groups met irregularly for services in informal settings. “Quakers established a “meeting” in 1794; Roman Catholics a “mission” in 1796; and Methodists made Richmond a “station” for circuit riders in 1798 . . . Baptists who had organized their biracial church in 1780, erected a frame meetinghouse in 1800” ([10], pp. 29–30).

In 1788, to provide outdoor relief to strangers traveling through Richmond the Amicable Society was formed by 60 social, political and religious male leaders of the city. This was Richmond's first known charitable organization independent from church or government formal auspices, but influenced in its approach by what had gone before them. Although the Amicable Society included both Christian and Jewish men, it “was joined in the effort to aid travelers in need by a new organization, Ezrat Orchim, founded by members of Beth Shalome synagogue in 1790” ([10], p. 30). Even though Ezrat Orchim did not specify that the recipient of aid be Jewish, it was created to address “the large number of requests for help addressed to the congregation, probably by Jewish peddlers and other travelers in financial distress. The first president, Isaiah Isaacs, distributed funds according to a constitution that spelled out how much could be given to particular applicants (distinguishing, for example between “those persons of a gentlemanly good character” and those “whose characters are unknown” and between those who had lived in Richmond for at least six months and those who had recently arrived)” ([28], p. 27). Both the Amicable Society and Ezrat Orchim provided their services to men and both survived into the mid-1800s.

From 1785–1837, Thomas (1981) documents a second “Great Awakening” of religious evangelism, “a more sweeping movement of revivals after the American Revolution which as an ‘organizing process’ not only gave direction to the young American nation in terms of moral values—such as the need for slavery reform—but also brought the majority of Americans into a meaningful participation in church life and benevolent activity” ([27], p. xiv). Without a state church to formalize benevolent activity through the parish system and with an increasingly involved laity, the stage was set for a proliferation of societies, associations, asylums, and charities.

4. The Early to Mid-1800s: Societies, Associations, Asylums, and Charities

Recognizing the increasing need for poor relief, in 1805 the city government began building a poorhouse on its northern fringe. Simultaneously, the religious community “refused to die” and was being fueled by “rebuilding of the church in Virginia [through] women’s voluntary associations” ([26], p. 220). That same year, a group of white Protestant women founded The Female Humane Association, now seen as one of the oldest continually operating charities in the nation. “An ecumenical organization composed of women from the city’s Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian congregations, the association operated a nonsectarian Christian asylum for the relief and comfort of friendless girls ([30], p. 121). The history of the Female Humane Association is replete with Christian references. Although the children attended various churches of all Protestant denominations, the Association’s church home was Monumental Protestant Episcopal Church. In addition to providing for basic needs and educational instruction, “the fundamental principles of religion were seriously taught” ([31], p. 11). The Constitution and Bylaws of the Association stated that the girls “shall be taught the fundamental principles of the Christian Religion, and have their health and morals diligently attended to” ([32], p. 11) (Constitution and Bylaws, 1833, p. 11). The duties of the Matron included holding “family prayers in [the] living-room, and . . . [seeing] that the children go to church” ([33], p. 49).

Later, in 1845, ladies at the Female Humane Association spurred the development of the Richmond Male Orphan Asylum when a small boy came begging for food at their doorstep [30]. Frustrated that the asylum only served homeless girls, the director encouraged her husband and other benevolent male colleagues to consider establishing an orphan society for destitute boys. Annual reports, board minutes, newspaper clippings and a host of other documents reveal deep Protestant religious connections for the Asylum, including appeals to the moral responsibility of good Christian people to support the cause and noting that the boys were required to attend church on Sundays.

Green writes that “Although staid Episcopal Richmond had largely resisted the evangelical impulse at the opening of the century, by the 1830s Richmond had become an evangelical city, with a plethora of new charities and voluntary associations” ([10], p. 47). The city directories list multiple temperance groups and various societies. Some groups focused on moral reformation in addition to charity. Methodist-based nonsectarian Dorcas Societies gave clothing to poor children, and people pooled their resources to help one another through mutual aid societies. “In the 1830s the Richmond City Mission Society supported two missionaries [to visit the poor in town]; and the City Mission Sewing-Circle of the First Baptist Church also supported a city missionary in Richmond at various times during the antebellum period” ([34], p. 271).

Whereas, most of these charities and associations targeted specific groups of people, the very evangelical Union Benevolent Society (UBS) was created in 1836 to serve the entire city. UBS viewed all of Richmond as its mission and divided the city into districts (much like the original vestries). Two visitors canvased each district and identified 111 poor families in which women were unemployed. The UBS opened a Depository of Work for 30 women, taught sewing classes to girls, and distributed food and blankets to the city’s poor. A Gentlemen’s Benevolent Society was created to support the women’s work, but male visitors were required to be accompanied by female members of the UBS. The UBS became representative of the rise in, and acceptance of, women’s evangelical activism in the city ([10], p. 49).

In the early to mid-1800s, Protestant evangelicals (both lay and clergy) embraced benevolence as a means to reform persons in need. Christian clergy in Richmond grasped the opportunity to win over the souls of the needy, establishing benevolent associations within and as extensions of their churches. For example, very vocal in promoting benevolent efforts was The Reverend Jeremiah Jeter, pastor of First Baptist Church (1836–1849) and Grace Street Baptist Church (1852–1870) and The Reverend Moses Drury Hoge who served Richmond’s Second Presbyterian Church for 54 years (1845–1899). Of Drury, one writer observed that engagement in benevolent activities took an increasingly larger percentage of his time as needs increased ([34], p. 173).

The First African Baptist Church was established in 1841 by splitting with the formerly biracial First Baptist Church. In 1848 this new church established a Poor Saints Fund to provide aid to older members of the congregation. This type practice was likely widespread among Richmond's African American Churches, but they met in secret because "members feared they would be arrested for illegal congregating" ([10], p. 48). Thus, archival records documenting the extent of aid provided in the African American community do not exist. Churches continued to provide aid to their needy congregants, leading Lebsack [8] to contend that church membership served as a type of social insurance for older or homebound black congregants.

Green asserts that a kind of "sectarian competition" between Protestants, Catholics and Jews played some role in the early 1800s ([10], p. 48). In the Protestant community it was common for clergy wives and daughters to have long-term commitments to single charitable ventures [5]. Catholics in particular feared the rise of evangelical Protestantism [25]. This led to religious groups establishing their own private asylums and charities.

In 1834 St. Joseph's Female Academy and Orphan Asylum opened to serve Catholic girls. A dream of Bishop Timothy O'Brien's, St. Joseph's was staffed by three Sisters of Charity who came to Richmond from Emmitsburg, Maryland. The asylum and school was part of St. Paul's Catholic Church, the first Catholic church in Richmond ([25], p. 67). Father O'Brien had also arranged for the sisters to provide nurses to Richmond Medical College, but this did not last. The sisters felt so oppressed by the physicians there that they left town shortly thereafter. In 1860 they would return as the Daughters of Charity to found St. Francis de Sales Infirmary in Richmond "totally under their control" ([25], p. 68).

In 1839 Jewish men in Richmond organized the "Chebrah Ahabah Yisroel" or self-help organization "to aid the needy, help the sick, and bury the dead" ([22], p. 16). In 1849 Rabbi M. J. Michelbacher created the Ladies Hebrew Benevolent Association "for the purpose of drawing into closer relationship the Jewish women of [Richmond], there being no organization at the time to care for the sick and provide funds for the poor and needy among [the women in the Jewish community]" ([35], p. 21). The women who joined this mutual aid society were mostly recent German immigrants "in the 'second wave' of Jewish immigrants to Richmond" ([22], p. 9).

Prior to the Civil War, Richmonders founded a chapter of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), enthusiastically supported by evangelicals who were concerned about the spiritual and moral condition of the majority of Richmond's young men ([34], p. 172). The Young Men's Aid Society was founded by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

5. The Post Civil War Era in Richmond

During the Civil War Richmond's charitable sector was stretched to its limits and pressed into duty caring for wounded soldiers and victims of war. For example, the YMCA operated one of the many hospitals during the War, and any available building, including homes and churches, became temporary hospitals. Ladies' benevolent societies and associations sewed uniforms and wrapped bandages, assisting the war effort in any way possible.

During and after the Civil War, religious values and language continued to permeate charitable work in societies, associations, and asylums even if direct relationships with sponsoring churches seemed to cease. The religious and political contexts in which new organizations emerged is revealed in the city directories and other public documents of the time. For example, immediately after the Civil War, the following statement prefaced the list of "Societies" in which the writer referred to the regalia worn by "colored" society members in Richmond: "God has made the white man lower than the angels, and the African race lower than the white, and it is still the law, the universal suffrage bill to the contrary notwithstanding" ([36], p. 104). In short, racist attitudes were obvious during Richmond's Reconstruction period and were framed in religious language.

In addition to the services that existed, responding to the immense needs following the Civil War generated the creation of numerous new religiously inspired health and human service organizations. Friends Association for Colored Children was founded by a former slave, Lucy Goode Brooks. She

worked in the house of the Reverend John Bacon Crenshaw of the Quaker Society of Friends (known for their opposition to slavery). Reverend Crenshaw worked with her to open the Friends' Asylum for Colored Orphans" in 1872.

In 1874 the Magdalen Society opened the Spring Street Home, based on the first Magdalen Society in the U.S. in Philadelphia (circa 1800). The goal was to rescue "fallen women" and it was founded by men, many of whom were clergy or had a strong affiliation with the Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches. That same year Catholic Bishop Gibbons purchased a site for the Little Sisters of the Poor to house St. Sophia's Home, an old age home. Six sisters arrived to take possession of the property in 1874 ([25], pp. 230–31). St. Paul's Church Home for Aged and Infirm Ladies was established by the Reverend Dr. Charles Minnegerode, Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, along with interested ladies of the church. In 1875 the Protestant Episcopal Church Home was founded for the benefit of indigent Episcopal ladies in Virginia. In 1877 the Christian Women's City Mission was organized by an interdenominational association of five Protestant women. Later in 1905, the Reverend Robert Strange, then Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church, executed an agreement between the City Mission, the Citizens' Relief Association, and the Baptist Council of Richmond and Manchester to form Associated Charities (the first Charity Organization Society in Richmond).

Retreat for the Sick was organized when ladies from several local churches were mobilized to establish the oldest nondenominational privately supported public hospital in the South. Other hospitals with religious connections, including St. Luke's Hospital (1882), Richmond Eye, Ear, Throat, and Nose Infirmary (1889) became part of the health care environment. Sheltering Arms led the community in establishing its first rehab hospital. Miss Rebecca Dulaney Peterkin, the youngest child of The Reverend Joshua Peterkin, formed the Central Circle of The King's Daughters from a sewing class of young girls at St. James Episcopal Church and inspired others to form a free hospital to relieve human suffering. A board member of Sheltering Arms, Miss Mary Tinsley Greenhouse, recognized that Sheltering Arms could not meet the needs of persons with severe chronic disabling conditions created the Virginia Home for the Incurables in Richmond. This home was managed by a lady board of managers from various religious denominations and continues so today.

The rise in health care facilities after the Civil War was described in a newspaper article in 1892 as follows: "It is a distinctive feature of Christian lands that those enfeebled by age, worn by disease, orphaned, or otherwise deprived of their natural guardians and protectors, find in homes, hospitals, and asylums comforts that could never otherwise be theirs . . . In such institutions Richmond is greatly blessed. We have large numbers of them and they represent in the good work done the intelligent effort and humane spirit of all the denominations and sects who have houses of worship in our city, and are in many instances the recipients of aid from the city and from individuals" ([37], unknown page). Human services of that time could not be separated from their religious precipitants. This seems to persist over time.

In 1900, three more agencies were founded—Children's Home Society, The Virginia Conference Orphanage of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Nurses Settlement. All three would become well established parts of Richmond's nonprofit sector, still visible today. The Reverend Joseph Thomas Mastin, first superintendent of The Virginia Conference Orphanage would be tapped as the first Secretary of the State Board of Charities and Corrections in 1908. Reverend Mastin accepted the position only after a new minister was appointed as superintendent of the orphanage and the Bishop gave his consent [38]. The Nurses Settlement changed its name to the Instructive Visiting Nurses' Association (IVNA) and would play a role in the ultimate development of the School of Social Work. The nurses would be joined by social workers who would spin off into William Byrd Community House (WBCCH) in 1923 [39]. Revisiting Table 1 it should be clear from this overview that all services identified in the table and, therefore, the major, most well-established human service providers in Richmond today were either directly or indirectly begun due to religious incentives or inspiration.

6. Discussion

Studying the intersectionality of religion and social welfare in Richmond requires going back to the beginning of the Virginia colony and setting a context. In the crucible of the Virginia colony, the religious and social welfare functions of a parish community were one and the same. Without a separation of church and state and with a small collection of colonists, taking care of people's needs was institutionalized into the fabric of the community through the parish system. We believe that hints of this institutionalization continue today. This is not to say that there were no problems with this approach, but it was manageable and familiar because it had accompanied the colonists to the shores of the New World.

Within this setting, Virginia did not face the same early challenges between state and religious perspectives evident in other colonies that began with the desire to escape religious persecution or to create new ways of providing for the common good. In Virginia, the social contract between its government and its citizens was so embedded in religiosity to make the State and the Church virtually inseparable. Though Virginia presented the impetus for the first amendment to the Bill of Rights via its position on First Freedoms, separation of Church and State was not as important as the freedom to practice one's religion freely. The disestablishment of the Anglican Church as the church of Virginia essentially disassembled the system of care in the state.

The Revolutionary War was jarring for the Anglican Church in Virginia. No longer being tethered to Britain brought with it a disestablishment of a parish-based system that had been in place for well over a century. Not only were new religious groups springing up within the new Commonwealth, but there was dissent within the Anglican Church over the evangelistic nature of the Second Great Awakening. The disentanglement of church and state created an identity crisis of vast proportions as all the functions of society that had been blended into one system were separated into "religious" and "secular" functions. Social welfare as a function moved to the county overseers of the poor acting as representatives of local government. A diversification of social welfare occurred as government and the new private sector struggled with how to deal with a mobile population of persons in need, but with religiously based charitable intensions as the core of service.

In Richmond, the emergence of charitable efforts began with leading men of the city who tried to address the temporary needs of travelers, followed by groups of women who discovered new roles they could play through structured charitable works. Simultaneously, as government attempted to design a poor house and women created an orphan asylum, congregations of various denominations continued to provide support to their members in need. In short, the new "system" became a potpourri of societies, congregations, associations, and county units attempting to provide for the social welfare, still with strong ties to religious thought. The intersectionality of religion and social welfare continued but in a serendipitous form. Whereas there had been a single entry point in the parish vestry system, there were now multiple entry points to access whatever might be available to serve needs. However, the agencies that emerged were still tethered to their religious communities even though they were chartered by the state and they received local government dollars in the form of subsidies. This was very similar to modern day purchase of service contracts between government and the nonprofit sector.

Of particular interest for today's understanding of the secular side of human services in Richmond is the language used in the founding legends of the earliest charities. It was frequently noted that the term "nonsectarian" or "interdenominational" were used. This language pertained to groups of Protestant agencies created by women from Episcopal, Presbyterian and Methodist congregations. Baptists tended to create their own societies and associations, while early Jewish and Catholic groups tended to serve their own. Nonsectarian organizations in Richmond were primarily Christian and incorporated Christianity into their service provision, at the same time they received charters from the General Assembly (state government) and some funding from Richmond's city government. This type of intermingling of religion and state would rarely be questioned in Richmond until the faith-based issues of the late 20th century brought them to the forefront.

To us, Richmond's history offers a preview of the city's complexity today. There is still tension between those religious groups that believe in more evangelical approaches and those that are less prone to proselytize. Thus, proselytizing as part of service delivery *versus* service without question as a charitable act is still present. This tension emerged during the Second Great Awakening and often resurged with challenging times. There are agencies in Richmond that have had board members from religious congregations and generations of family members on their boards, creating a deep historical relationship with communities of faith. The mixing of public and private funds for the purpose of service has been in existence since the beginning of the colony and is still evident in the social welfare system today.

Table 1 summarizes what we learned about the beginnings of those organizations that emerged, many of which are still a vital part of Richmond's health and human system today. Some agencies maintained their religious roots. Names such as St. Joseph's Villa or Jewish Family Services attest to these continuing religious affiliations, while others such as Family Lifeline (originally the Christian Women's City Mission) and Retreat for the Sick have secularized to the point that little if any explicit memory of their religious roots remain. Still others maintain chaplaincy services (The Virginia Home or United Methodist Family Services) for their residents and clients. Many more agencies arose in the 1900s that we have not even begun to study, including those obviously rooted in religious traditions such as Commonwealth Catholic Charities or Bon Secours Health Care System. Interestingly, some agencies that were formally religious have secularized, whereas others have emerged from religious groups to declare their religious affiliations. What remains in the 21st century is a diverse landscape of small and large organizations and congregations that perform the majority of the social welfare functions in Richmond. To attempt to separate the church from the state in this network of agencies is neither possible nor desirable; however, understanding its' historical religious complexity is essential if one is to appropriately engage in contemporary practice within Richmond's health and human service system.

7. Conclusions

Since Colonial times there have been waves of commitment to service for those in need. This commitment has ranged from the moral imperatives and evangelism of what have been called the Great Awakenings to serve the least of our brethren to the evangelistic fervor that predicated service with the need to proselytize. This moral component to service seems well-rooted in many nonprofit human service agencies in Richmond. Some are more secularized than others, but most acknowledge their long-term religious ties in some way, such as website histories, religious sounding names, or board membership.

When considering service to the needy, there appears to be little that is new. How service is constructed and delivered may be different, but many of the same motivations appear from colonial times to the present. Thomas (1981) asserts that this question of what motivates religious people to act benevolently is as old as the second Great Awakening [27], and in our research on contemporary faith-based programs the same question can be asked today [40].

As one looks at the modern day faith-based service movement, those concerned about separation of Church and State tend to want assurance that services are sufficiently secularized by seeing that religious artifacts and practices are absent. Historically, in Richmond faith traditions and artifacts in services were unabashedly present. Through secularization they were removed or at least were not as blatantly present. But religiosity has deep cultural roots in the agencies we investigate. The organizational cultures of these agencies, even in the present, are rooted in the founding religions. One needs to know this and the religious belief systems that have been historically institutionalized in order to understand the organization, what is occurring, and how it is being evaluated. To overlook these deep cultural roots is to miss important clues about an agency. Over time, the agency may have tinkered with its artifacts; but the underlying beliefs about service and those being served only slowly change. We have found that it is not easy to identify this influence, particularly when it has

been asserted to be absent. In long standing agencies like those in Richmond, religious beliefs have been historically infused in such a way to have become intrinsic aspects of the underlying beliefs that undergird the organizational culture.

Our work with hundred year old agencies in Richmond and our recent research into the history of religion and religious freedom in Virginia suggests networks of faith and ideology that cannot be reduced to mere intersectionality. This may be a story unique to Richmond and Virginia, but the lessons learned may have broader implications when considering social welfare and American religiosity generally. Our step further backwards into history has helped us to clarify some of the issues that were intriguing about human services at the turn of the 20th century. They may, indeed, be informative for navigating the challenges of the 21st century.

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