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Introduction: Personhood in African-American Pastoral Care

Personhood has been a major theme in the education of pastoral care givers and counselors since the advent of the clinical pastoral paradigm.¹ The theme of personhood has emphasized the "being" of the pastor more than the pastor's "doing." Personhood has become synonymous with being, and the care giver has developed authentic relational presence as the major vehicle for caring. Related to the notion of being and relational presence is the concept of the emotional, spiritual, and interpersonal maturity of the carer. This concept of maturation gives added meaning to personhood.

In 1959 Thomas J. Pugh brought the being-relational presence-maturity-understanding of personhood to the education of African-American students of Interdenominational Theological Center. With this personhood model as the center of emphasis he built a legacy now called African-American pastoral care and counseling. He helped to give shape to the African-American clinical pastoral paradigm. Thus, Tom Pugh was the earliest pioneer in relating the African-American Experience to pastoral counseling. His pioneering consisted of teaching African-American students for three and one-half decades within a predominantly African-American

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¹John Patton, *Pastoral Care in Context: An Introduction to Pastoral Care* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 4.

context. He was the first generation of African-American pastoral counselors, and he participated in training the second generation as well. This second generation includes pastors, clinical chaplains in hospitals, prison and military positions, and pastoral counselors.

Tom Pugh saw his task as a professor to assist African-American future pastors, pastoral counselors, Christian educators, institutional chaplains, and lay care givers to use their personhood as the major vehicle for doing ministry. He had carefully honed his skills to uncover the psychological needs of these persons as they sought to carry out their diverse caring ministries. He was an untiring advocate of the use of psychological assessment; personal, marital and family therapy; and clinical pastoral education as vehicles enabling care givers to determine their effectiveness.

With the death of Tom Pugh in 1994 the second and third generations must now build on his legacy. Efforts to fashion this bequest have already begun. For example, in the early 1980s the African-American pastoral clinical paradigm began to shift toward the communal-contextual model.² The theme of justice and liberation was present in Pugh's work very early. Beginning in the 1980s, the analysis of racism and its social impact on personality growth and pastoral care have gained added impetus. More recently, the role of gender and African-American women in pastoral care have emerged. Additionally, there are cultural as well as cross-cultural concerns in African-American pastoral care. This growth has paralleled similar evolutions in the general pastoral-care move-

²Edward P. Wimberly, "Black American Pastoral Care," in *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, ed. Rodney J. Hunter (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 92-94.

ment.³

Although there has been development in African-American pastoral care, there is no comprehensive work that chronicles the progress of the clinical pastoral and communal-contextual models of African-American pastoral care. This issue of *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center* exemplifies the clinical pastoral legacy of the first generation and the communal-contextual developments of the second and third generations.

This work is the product of Tom's students and colleagues in pastoral care and counseling and in clinical pastoral education. The focus is the personhood of those who engage in caring ministry. Personhood refers to the growing, developing, and differentiating self of the care giver capable of interacting with others to foster emotional, interpersonal, and spiritual well-being and health. This interaction is not limited to the provider's gender and race but includes others different from the gender, ethnic, and racial group of the caring person. Such a concept of personhood is rooted in an understanding of the self as emotionally, interpersonally, developmentally, and spiritually competent—the foundation of professional caring skills.

³John Patton has chronicled the development of the clinical pastoral model and the communal-contextual model in *Pastoral Care in Context: An Introduction to Pastoral Care* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993). See also Rodney J. Hunter, "The Therapeutic Tradition of Pastoral Care and Counseling," in *Pastoral Care and Social Conflict*, ed. Pamela D. Couture and Rodney J. Hunter (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 17-31; and Rodney J. Hunter and John Patton, "The Therapeutic Tradition's Theological and Ethical Commitments Viewed Through Its Pedagogical Practices: A Tradition in Transition," in *Pastoral Care and Social Conflict*, ed. Pamela D. Couture and Rodney J. Hunter (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 32-43.