

*Moving in From the Fringes of the Academy:
Spirituality as an Emerging Focus in the
Canadian Professional Faculties of Business,
Education, and Social Work*

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ABSTRACT: An increasing number of professional faculties in Canada are teaching courses, conducting research and offering conferences that address some aspect of spirituality. Through a review of course offerings and publications taught and authored by Canadian faculty associated with business, education and social work, this paper provides a preliminary comparative analysis of the emerging force of spirituality as a focus for research and teaching within these three professional faculties in the context of Canadian universities. While there is a gradual emergence of spirituality as a research and teaching agenda, particularly within the professional faculties of social work and adult education (within the faculty of education), there is evidence of underlying tensions within the mainstream academy as it seeks to ignore, marginalize and at times actively discourage such a focus.

RESUMÉ: Un nombre de plus en plus important de facultés professionnelles au Canada enseignent des cours, mènent des recherches et offrent des conférences qui abordent un aspect de la spiritualité. Au travers un examen d'un éventail de cours offerts et de publications enseignés et écrits par la Faculté canadienne rattachée au commerce, à l'éducation et au travail social, cet article apporte une étude préliminaire comparative de la forte montée de la spiritualité comme centre d'intérêt dans la recherche et l'enseignement au sein de ces trois facultés professionnelles et ce, dans le cadre des universités canadiennes. Alors même qu'il y a une émergence progressive de la spiritualité comme moteur de recherche et d'enseignement dans les programmes et ce, spécialement au sein des facultés professionnelles de travail social et de l'enseignement pour adultes (au sein de la faculté d'éducation), des tensions sous-

jacentes à l'intérieur du courant principal universitaire, apparaissent d'une façon claire ce qui cherche à ignorer à marginaliser et parfois, à décourager fortement un tel centre d'intérêt.

Introduction

A graduate student within the Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary mulls over her course selections for the fall. She pauses over a course entitled *Spirituality in a Postmodern Age* and reviews the description:

This course focuses on spirituality – both ancient and current. The goal of this analysis is to help you, the participant, make sense of the current smorgasboard of spiritual ideas, and to begin to formulate (or refine) your own coherent spiritual framework and cosmology. (Bohac-Clarke, 2007, p.1)

While the graduate student is intrigued, she is also drawn to the description in the *Spiritual and Moral Leadership* course outline: “*Spiritual and Moral Dimensions of Leadership* examine the necessary changes in consciousness and heart that are prerequisites for the transformation of organizational cultures” (Jacob, 2003, p. 1). Meanwhile at York University a graduate student in Social Work stops by the bookstore to pick up the required readings for his next course entitled *Spirituality and Critical Social Work*. This course promises to “explore the connection between spirituality and critical social work and how the spiritual, personal, and political are intertwined” (York University Course Calendar, 2007). He also plans to attend the annual *Canadian Society of Spirituality and Social Work Conference* in a few weeks as it is an excellent venue to learn about the latest research in this area. Finally, a list serve update informs a business faculty member at St. Francis Xavier University of an upcoming conference taking place at the *Centre for Spirituality and the Workplace* in the Sobey Business School of St. Mary's University. He marks the dates in his calendar.

An increasing number of professional faculties in Canada are teaching courses, conducting research and offering conferences that address some aspect of spirituality. Indeed, I myself am part of this emerging phenomenon, as I instruct a graduate level course entitled *Spirituality in the Workplace* (Groen, 2007) in my own Faculty of Education. However, even a preliminary review of the emerging trend of spirituality within Canadian university professional faculties has not yet been conducted. While there was an initial survey conducted by

Duerr, Zajonc, and Dana, (2003) that documented "academic programs and other initiatives in North American universities and colleges that incorporate transformative and spiritual elements of learning" (p.177), this survey indicated that there was "fragmentary evidence for such research [and that] studies of the transformative/spiritual classroom would be helpful" (p. 205).

The research I am conducting provides a preliminary analysis of the emerging force of spirituality as a focus for research and teaching within three professional faculties in the context of Canadian universities: education, business, and social work. The paper focuses on phase one of this study: an initial review of Canadian scholarly literature that addresses some aspect of spirituality as well as documenting where, across Canadian universities, spirituality is emerging as the focus of "for credit" course work within these three faculty areas.

Theoretical Underpinnings

In April 2002 the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2002) in the United States held a conference entitled *Spirituality and Learning: Redefining Meaning, Value, and Inclusion in Higher Education*. The conference addressed:

The question of the role of spirituality in higher education and proceed[ed] to consider such topics as authenticity that allows for the expression of both heart and meaning, and case studies on transformation of leadership to embody integrity, values, and personal meaning. (Conference program, p. 1)

This conference was symptomatic of an emerging discourse in higher education; that which explores the importance of personal values, meaning, and purpose in the lives of students and faculty within our universities and colleges. Both Zajonc (2003) and Chickering, Dalton, and Stamm (2006) indicated that the inclusion of spirituality in higher education acknowledges a way of exploring knowledge that has not been acceptable up until now and questions the pre-dominant focus on rational and cognitive approaches to analyzing and processing curriculum. "Such characteristics as wisdom, compassion, and integrity, and such concepts as justice, ethics, values, morality, virtue, and character are ones that most undergraduates fail to consider because curriculum does not encourage them to do" (Chickering et al., p. 2). Also, as demonstrated by both Tisdell (2003) and Chickering et al. (2006), the scope of this emerging discourse touches upon multiple aspects of higher education such as the function of the student affairs

office, faculty development, the links between spirituality, cultural identity, and social justice, as well as teaching and learning in a spiritually grounded practice.

Regardless of the specific focus linking spirituality to higher education, there is a unifying and consistent thread through the discourse; the need to define or describe spirituality and to consider its relationship with religion. However as Whyte (1994) aptly explained, "it [spirit] evades the cage of definition" (p. 33). This was supported by English, Fenwick, and Parsons (2003) who maintained that "attempting to define spirituality is problematic. The attempt presumes that the experience of spirituality can be captured in words, its meaning contained and its essence identified" (p. 6). Despite the elusive nature of spirituality, a recent qualitative research study conducted by Sandra Estanek (2006) analyzed the meaning given to spirituality in higher education and several themes emerged that are helpful in framing the discourse. The first theme posited that the emerging discussion of spirituality "separates the understanding of spirituality from its roots in religion and thus changes its meaning" (p. 271). Indeed this is reflected in the discussion by Tisdell (2003) and Teasdale (1999) who argued that spirituality is bigger than religion and religion can be described as an organized community of faith. However, both recognized that, for those who have been socialized in a religious tradition, spirituality and religion are related. I believe, like Estanek, that the desire to separate spirituality from religion within the secular university discourse is partly driven by the fear that linking the two might condone a particular set of religious beliefs that, in turn, can become exclusionary. "It was clear to me that this separation allowed practitioners who worked at public institutions to engage questions of spirituality within a secular pluralist environment" (Estanek, 2006, p. 271).

Further discourse exploring the idea of spirituality is situated within the context of a higher education epistemology that places high value in objectivity and empirical rationality (Chickering et al., 2006). In contrast, spirituality in higher education is a call to acknowledge and value different ways of knowing. Diamond (2005) said that:

Faculty are expected to analyze, debate, clarify, synthesize, conceptualize, argue, evaluate, hypothesize, propose, and test ... and yet we are more ... just as our students are more than their latest grade, we are multidimensional. Taking time to view our teaching through a spiritual lens can affirm our holism. (p. 43)

In determining what spirituality includes as it is situated within the secular higher education context, and for the purpose of this preliminary literature review, I align myself with the following spiritual dimensions outlined by Tisdell (2003). Spirituality and religion are not the same, but they may be interrelated. Spirituality is about awareness and honouring of wholeness and the interconnectedness of all things through the mystery of a higher power. Spirituality is about seeking a sense of purpose and ultimate meaning-making in one's life. Spirituality is always present in the learning environment. Spiritual development is movement toward greater authenticity. Spirituality is about how people construct knowledge through largely unconscious and symbolic processes (p. 28-29).

Methodology of the Review

During *Phase One* of the review an electronic search of all Canadian Universities within the three professional faculties of social work, education, and business was conducted to: a) document courses which explicitly use the words "spirit," "spirituality," or "spiritual" in the title and have a spiritual focus, b) uncover faculty members who have explicitly indicated a research/and or teaching interest in spirituality, and c) determine if there are conferences and/or centers of research which incorporate spirituality as a overt focus. It is important to acknowledge that while the notion of spirituality is implicitly imbedded in the content of many courses and in the research agendas of faculty members within these three faculties, I am exploring an emerging agenda in teaching and research agenda that explicitly addresses the notion of spirituality as the primary focus.

Phase Two of the review consisted of conducting literature searches on several data bases (e.g., ERIC, Proquest, Academic Premier, Business Source Premier, and Social Work Abstracts Plus). Criteria for the review included the following: a) the articles/texts/must come from scholarly journals or scholarly books, b) they must have as their primary focus on some aspect of spirituality associated with one of the three identified professional faculties, and c) the authors must be full-time faculty members located in one of the three identified faculties within a secular Canadian University. While I acknowledge that there is emerging scholarship and teaching in the area of spirituality from faculty members outside these three faculties, such as nursing and medicine, and/or from part-time and sessional faculty, I am placing these limitations around this preliminary review as it serves to launch me into

Phase Two of this study. In the next phase, I will conduct a qualitative research study where I will interview several full-time faculty members from the professional faculties of business, education, and social work. My intention is to explore participants' experiences and perceptions of engaging in teaching and/or research in the arena of spirituality within the context of their respective faculties.

Analysis of the resulting data in this preliminary review was conducted in two stages. *Stage One* review concentrated on the representation of spirituality within "for credit" courses and engaged in a thematic analysis of course outlines within the respective faculties across Canada. *Stage Two* of the review involved a thematic analysis of the articles and books retrieved from the literature search and identified themes that were consistent across the faculties and unique to a specific professional faculty represented in this study. The findings of this study are preliminary and are limited to the professional faculties identified within this research, the time frame of the literature, and course offerings review.

Findings

Course Mapping

As mentioned previously, an electronic search was conducted for undergraduate or graduate level credit courses which included one of the following words – *spirit*, *spiritual*, or *spirituality* – in the title, within the three faculties in this study. While it is acknowledged that there may be courses that have some aspect of spirituality imbedded in the course content, I wished to limit the initial survey to those courses that explicitly have spirituality as its central content focus. The following description and analysis is based on the retrieval of seven full-course outlines and university calendar descriptions for two courses.

In summary, two social work faculties across Canada are teaching two courses that focus upon spirituality; two education faculties are teaching eight courses linking spirituality and education; and finally none of the business faculties across Canada are instructing courses that have a central focus on spirituality. All courses offered are at the graduate level and are program electives. The following table provides a breakdown of course offerings as of February 2008.

Faculty	Institution	Course Title
Social Work	St. Thomas University	The Spiritual Dimensions of Social Work: Graduate Elective
Social Work	York University	Spirituality and Critical Social Work: Graduate Elective
Education	University of Calgary	Spirituality in the Workplace: Graduate Elective
Education	University of Calgary	Spirituality in a Postmodern Age: Graduate Elective
Education	University of Calgary	Love, Spirituality and Leadership: Graduate Elective
Education	University of Calgary	Spirituality of Inspired Leadership: Graduate Elective
Education	University of Calgary	Spirituality and Moral Leadership: Graduate Elective
Education	University of Calgary	Spirituality of Teaching Excellence
Education	University of Toronto	Spirituality in Education: Graduate Elective
Education	University of Toronto	Spirituality and Schooling: Sociological Implications Graduate Elective

Figure 1: Spirituality as a Focus in Course work.

In reviewing the calendar descriptions and/or course outlines for the aforementioned courses, one over-arching premise emerges: instructors who offer these courses, and to some extent their faculties by implication, see spirituality as an important and acknowledged dimension of being a social worker and an educator. For example, the *Spiritual Dimensions of Social Work* course outline pre-amble states "since the historical foundation of the profession, many social workers have recognized that a holistic perspective requires taking into account the biological, psychological, sociological, and spiritual aspects of human needs, strengths, and experience" (Furman, 2007, p. 1). The *Spirituality and Education* course calendar description indicates that "this course first explores the nature of spirituality. There is also an examination of how spirituality can be part of the school curriculum in a non-threatening manner" (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Calendar, 2007). The term *non-threatening* reinforces the perception that spirituality is limited to religious beliefs and in turn can be perceived as exclusionary. In response, these course descriptions make an extra effort to situate themselves as being inclusive, acknowledging

multiple ways of addressing spirituality, both through religious and secular pathways. For example, the course entitled *Spirituality in a Postmodern Age* begins with the pre-amble "we are all in search of 'more spirit' – a dimension of everyday life that is accessible to everyone. Being a 'spiritual' person is no longer synonymous with being a 'religious' person. Many spiritual people today do not practice a traditional religion" (Bohac-Clarke, 2007, p. 1).

This would then lead to the key question: How do these courses define spirituality? While only one of the course outlines includes a definition of spirituality, a comparison of the readings, outcomes, and concepts within the other courses reflect the following definition:

The term spirituality designates the human striving for a sense of meaning and fulfillment through morally satisfying relationships between individuals, communities, the surrounding universe, and the ontological ground of our existence ... often spirituality is expressed in religious forms ... however, spirituality may be expressed without adherence to a religion. (Groen, 2007)

This definition mirrors commonly held perceptions of spirituality within the fields of education (Bailin, 2004; English, Fenwick, & Parson, 2003), social work (Graham, Coholic, & Coates, 2006) and, to some extent, business as revealed in the following statement: "Yet introducing ethics and spirituality into the workplace, the first more rational, the second more transcendent, could meet a fundamental human need: a need for meaning, a need for integration, a need for establishing roots, a need for transcendence" (Pauchant and Associates, 2002, p. 1).

Delving more deeply into the nine course offerings, two common foci emerge within the course content. The first focus has course participants look inward to reflect upon and cultivate their own spirituality and the second focus moves outward to consider the implications of spirituality within their practice. This inward and outward view is demonstrated in the course objectives of the *Spirituality in the Workplace Course*:

Learners are expected to have developed an awareness of various dimensions of spirituality in the workplace: a) at a personal level through their understanding of vocation and interconnectedness and b) at an organizational level as we analyze the practices of spiritually infused organizations. Learners will have also explored their own beliefs, understandings, and practices about spirituality in the workplace and identified ways to apply their insights into their own workplaces. (Groen, 2007, pp. 1-2)

By looking inward these courses encourage their students to do critical work as posited by English, Fenwick, & Parsons (2003). "One place to

start is by examining our own biography. For many of us it is important to acknowledge and perhaps reconcile the impact of our religious upbringing on our current spiritual preferences and resistances" (p. 46). The accompanying outward focus of transfer into practice is endemic and foundational to these faculties. Both social work and education are mandated to prepare their students to engage in practice within their profession. "The main purpose is to develop a principled leadership suited to your growing sense of self and to the setting to which you live and work" (Jones, 2007, p. 1).

It is noted that credit courses linking spirituality and business are not offered at this time. Two courses that at first glance might be a fit in this faculty make the connection between spirituality and the workplace; but they are housed within an education faculty (University of Calgary) and religious/continuing education faculty (St. Mary's University). However, the Sobey Business School at St. Mary's University in Halifax is home for the Centre for Spirituality and the Workplace (<http://www.smu.ca/institutes/csw/>). Its purpose is: "Positively and strategically influencing the conversation and accomplishments about spirituality and the workplace globally." Reading further in their mission statement, they also navigate the balance of acknowledging both religious and secular pathways of connecting spirituality in the workplace:

Because of the interdisciplinary and multi-faith nature of work and spirituality, the Centre works with faculty from numerous departments and programs at Saint Mary's University and its affiliate, Atlantic School of Theology, as well as with other universities and religious organizations, to develop lectures, courses, and programs. The Centre celebrates and promotes Saint Mary's goal of personal development and well-being of all students. (Centre for Spirituality Workplace - Our mission <http://www.smu.ca/institutes/csw/>)

Finally, in addition to considering the variance of openness amongst the three disciplines in providing a hospitable space for courses that focus upon spirituality, it should be noted that Figure 1 also highlights one faculty and university that is particularly receptive to course offerings in this area – the Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary. Dr. Tad Guzie, a professor of Religious Education as well as a respected theologian in the Catholic tradition, launched the first course entitled *Spirituality in a Postmodern Age*. This course transcended the

boundaries of a particular religious construct as demonstrated in the introductory sentences of Guzie's course outline:

We are all in search of "more spirit" – a dimension of everyday life that is accessible to everyone. Being a "spiritual" person is no longer synonymous with being a "religious" person. Many spiritual people today do not practice a traditional religion. (1998, p. 1)

This first course led to the development of five additional graduate courses within a particular specialization, *Educational Contexts*, which takes an interdisciplinary approach to the study of education. An overt recognition of the importance of spirituality in graduate courses and research focus is demonstrated in the program overview as outlined by the components of the interdisciplinary philosophy. "Such interdisciplinary inquiry asks, for example: how do culture, spirituality, social class, gender, and ethnicity influence the perceptions, policies and practices of education as a process and as an institution?" (Program Description, <http://www.educ.ucalgary.ca/gder/htdocs/specializations/item.php?id=6>).

Literature Mapping

Initial analysis of the research and publications focusing on the topic of spirituality for these three faculties focused upon their respective chronological development. Looking at the fairly recent past, especially during the 1970s and 1980s, there was little attention paid to the links between spirituality and these professional faculties, reflecting the growing societal secularism and decreasing interest in church attendance (Bibby, 1987). However, during the 1990s, a gradual emergence of spiritually grounded scholarship emerged in the Canadian faculties of social work and education, but not in Canadian business faculties. It should be noted that the lack of scholarship linking spirituality and business here in Canada did not mirror the larger trend that was evolving in the United States which saw an emergence of scholarship in this area (i.e., Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Renesch, J. & B. DeFoore, 1998). However, before exploring the recent scholarship, it is important to go further back, prior to the 1970s, to determine if and how spirituality was located in these professional faculties in Canada.

The religious heritage in professional faculties of social work and adult education. Going further back into the earlier writings, particularly in the first half of the 20th century, one begins to realize that spirituality was an underlying value and force for both the field of social

work and the sub-field of adult education (within the broader area of education). Early spirituality for both of these fields of study was grounded in the religious heritage of Christianity as noted by two seminal articles by Canadian faculty members, Leona English (2005) and John Graham, Diana Coholic, and John Coates (2006), from *Adult Education and Social Work* respectively. In both articles the authors highlighted their respective fields' late 19th century and early 20th century engagement in social change that was rooted in a particular Christian orientation, the Social Gospel Movement. For example, Graham et al. revealed "after 1850 there emerged a loose constituency of social work personnel, affiliated with religious traditions ... along with people committed to an emerging trade union movement, the emerging women's movement and immigrants" (p. 5). English, in a parallel discussion on the historical underpinnings of adult education, indicated that:

From the very early years, those who promoted social change causes were propelled and supported by their spirituality or religion and not infrequently by their understanding of the social gospel, a movement that had its heyday in the very early decades of the 20th century. (p. 1176)

Both English and Graham, Coholic, and Coates continued to describe influential writers and educators within their fields, further demonstrating their deep rooted connection to a Christian heritage that saw engagement in social change as a foundational cornerstone of their respective professions. For example, Graham et al. profiled the underlying beliefs and writings of four key Canadian social workers, researchers, and writers who grounded their work within religion and philosophical underpinnings: a) E.J. Urwick (1906, 1920, 1912, 1927, 1948) who had a "deep spirituality that embraced the world and others" (p. 6); b) Charles Eric Hendry (1974) who spent much of his work career, and to a lesser extent his social work career that followed, preaching to Protestant congregations (p. 6); and two Roman Catholic Priests who were also social work educators, c) The Reverend Shaun Govenlock (1958, 1966); and d) The Reverend Frank Swithun Bowers (1954) "published several [articles] on religion and spirituality and these merit particular attention" (Graham et al., 2006, p. 7).

While English (2005), extended her focus beyond the boundaries of Canada, she highlighted the actions and writings of several early Canadian adult educators and movements such as adult educator Roby Kidd (1975) who argued that early adult educators were deeply

influenced by the social gospel movement. "It was Kidd's observation that some of those who did talk of religion acted as if religion were an activity for everyday living and concerned with jobs and racial discrimination and politics" (p. 229). Also profiled were two Roman Catholic priests, Father Jimmy Tompkins and Father Moses Coady (1939), who were well known for founding the Antigonish Movement of the late 1920s and early 1930s in eastern Nova Scotia. "The main thrust of the Antigonish Movement was education for economic development through projects such as co-operatives and credit unions" (Gillen, 1998, p. 273). "The Antigonish Movement was not affiliated with any single religious denomination, although its founders drew from the wisdom of their religious past" (p. 275). English (2005) also noted that early Canadian adult educators "whose stories are told in an edited collection from the early 1950s (Rouillard, 1952) almost all had spiritual impulses for their community development, adult educational and justice work" (p. 1181).

Social work and adult education research and publications since the 1990s. Not surprisingly, since the emergence of spirituality as a focus for research from the 1990s onward, it is the field of social work and the sub-field of adult education that have been the most prolific in this area of research and writing. While both fields have broadened their definition of spirituality beyond their religious heritage they have both kept the value of social change and social justice as a pivotal underpinning. For example, a seminal article in the field of adult education from the 1990s, written by Tara Fenwick and Elizabeth Lange (1998), engaged in a critical assessment of spirituality in the workplace. While they raised numerous questions and cautions concerning the potential co-opting of spirituality for the corporate agenda, they argued for the inclusion of a spirituality in our workplaces that focuses on "service to the community, particularly to those suffering any form of human impoverishment. In this way, spirituality and justice are mutually constitutive and fully connected to one's social, cultural, economic and natural worlds" (p. 84). In the field of social work, linkages between spirituality and an outward ethical response can be noted through the review of guiding principles listed on the web-site for the Canadian Society for Spirituality and Social Work (<http://w3.stu.ca/stu/sites/spirituality/terms.html>) as it indicated that spirituality "deals with inner experience and can have ethical and behavioral expression but also is concerned with social justice."

In tracking the focus of spirituality as a research agenda within these two fields, the trends noted in the field of social work by Graham, Coholic, and Coates (2006) are quite similar to those in adult education. "The topics examined by Canadian contributors [in social work] can be grouped into three broad themes: Social justice work and community organizing, social work pedagogy, and social work practice which includes historical analyses of the profession and early workers" (p. 11). Mirroring this observation then, adult education has focused on historical and theoretical understandings (Fenwick, English, & Parsons, 2001; English, 2005), applications within various contexts such as the workplace (Fenwick & Lange, 1998; English, Fenwick & Parsons, 2003; Gockel, 2004; Groen, 2004a), community development (Bean, 2000), higher education (English, Fenwick, & Parsons, 2003b) and spirituality and adult learning approaches (English, 2000; Groen, 2008). The majority of articles listed above reflect the contextual and applied nature of social work and adult education, which Graham et. al. (2006) supported "given that the impetus to include spirituality in the profession derives from, in large part, social work's practitioner base and client demands" (p. 12).

Finally, in both fields, there is a small but emerging empirical research agenda again reflecting the contextual nature of these disciplines. For example, in social work there is a qualitative study of grief and HIV/AIDS (Cadell, Janzen, & Haubrich, 2006) and in adult education studies have focused on adult education and the workplace (Groen, 2004b), global adult education (English, 2001), and spiritual transformation within higher education (Groen & Jacob, 2006).

Kindergarten to grade twelve education and business: A cautious emergence. Having been restrained by their historical roots and values respectively, the proliferation of adult education and social work research and publications focusing on spirituality is not reflected to the same extent within the general Canadian education literature nor in the field of business. For example, until recently the association between education – from Kindergarten to Grade Twelve – and spirituality had been compartmentalized to the religions teachings within the Catholic School system and is only recently taking its place within the public education system discourse. "Public schools in Canada generally exclude the spiritual or transcendent dimension of human life. They have bought into a brand of secularism that proscribes the consideration of spirituality as well as religion" (Van Brummelen, Kool, & Franklin, 2004, p. 237). As well, while Vokey (2000) saw a compelling need for the

inclusion of spirituality in public schools, he presented several obstacles with a particular challenge being to agree on what would be an alternative world view world. "We lack consensus on the substantive criteria of genuine human development that responsible public education in spirituality would require" (p. 29).

Therefore in contrast to the religious and social justice heritage which has informed an expanding research agenda within social work and adult education, this exclusionary view of spirituality relegated to religion within the Catholic school system, has translated itself into a fairly small research agenda in Canadian education faculties. However, there are emerging position papers arguing for the importance of spirituality within the secular system, particularly a concept of spirituality that is more inclusive. For example, Van Brummelen, Kool and Franklin (2004) suggested that "the scope of spirituality is broader than that of religion. Religion does not encompass all of spirituality. It is possible to be spiritual without being religious" (p. 238) and Bailin (2004) posited "the ways in which we transcend our material condition are, however, of central importance, both philosophically and educationally" (p. 234). As well, there are a small group of Canadian education professors who have taken up this focus by linking spirituality to practice. John Miller (2000), a pioneer and significant researcher in this area, in his book *Education for the Soul: Toward a Spiritual Curriculum*, compelled educators to take care of their souls through contemplation, journaling, and creative pursuits. Miller is also a facilitator for the Holistic Learning and Spirituality in Education Network. This network:

Is based on the principle of interconnectedness and wholeness. Thus the student is seen as a whole person with body, mind, emotions, and spirit. Holistic Learning seeks to develop approaches to teaching and learning that foster *connections* between subjects, between learners, through various forms of community.
<http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/field-centres/miller-ascd.html>

Other education voices include Veronika Bohac Clarke (2002) and Brummelen, Kool, and Franklin (2004). Bohac Clarke espoused an inclusive view of spirituality and made connections to school leadership; Brummelen, Kool and Franklin demonstrated how spirituality can be incorporated within the public school system's curriculum.

Finally, Canadian business faculty members are in the very beginning stages of linking spirituality to their research and writing; with fewer than ten publications in the form of conference proceedings

thus far. This faculty's most profound barrier to engaging in this strand of research is the perceived clash of values between the field of business and spirituality. Grzeda (2003) was helpful in explaining this tension: "[an] even more insurmountable issue is the nature of business organizations and their commitment to scientifically-based measures of profitability ... profitability remains for the most part, the prime directive for organizational leaders" (pp. 63-64). An interesting binary has been created in that an important business focus of determining how to create the optimal conditions to enhance profit is perceived to be diametrically opposed to the inclusion of spirituality. However, Grzeda did provide a useful research agenda for management researchers by arguing that spirituality enhances the agenda and values of business. "Investigate and document the obstacles to implementing a spiritual management practice and analyze and generalize from successes that can be found. Management education research that will support a transformation of curriculum and pedagogy should be encouraged" (p. 64). As well, there is a perception that the most effective way to enter into the discourse that links spirituality and business is to build upon the concepts of ethics and values. "Integrating ethics and spirituality into all facets of management and leadership of organizations has become an urgent need expressed by managers themselves. How to reconcile economic value and ethical or spiritual value becomes the fundamental question" (Pauchant & Associates, 2002, p. 1).

Discussion and Conclusions

This preliminary review of emerging courses and literature in the area of spirituality in the three faculties of business, education, and social work provide a window into their perception of and receptivity to the discourse surrounding spirituality. Academic fields in the earlier stages of linking research and courses to the concept of spirituality are cautiously focused on developing their understanding of this new terrain as they first create definitions and dimensions of spirituality and secondly, by assessing the challenges of moving into this arena. Those fields that have increased their comfort level and acceptance of the validity of spirituality as a legitimate arena of teaching and research have moved on and are engaged in conducting and presenting research on this topic. For example, as demonstrated by this review of Canadian researchers, during the 1990s, the fields of adult education and social work devoted the majority of their scholarly work in spirituality grappling with its dimensions, arguing that spirituality is inclusive as

it transcends religion, and finally positioning spirituality as a deeply rooted fundamental principle in their respective fields. For the most part, spirituality as a research topic had taken its place as part of the mainstream discourse within these fields.

In contrast, in the business faculty and the component of the education faculty that is focused on public education kindergarten to grade twelve, the topic of spirituality is newer terrain. While there are hospitable spaces in the academy for teaching and research that focuses on spirituality, these spaces are not the norm. According to Grzeda (2003), a business professor, "many of these obstacles may stem from resistance on the part of organizations and the academy. Because the academic community predominantly sees itself as a community of scientists, it is hard to imagine that a community of mystics will easily emerge" (p. 63).

Grzeda's observation is an important one as he reminds us to pull the lens back on these three academic disciplines and situate them within the broader university culture and its receptiveness to an emerging research and teaching agenda focusing on spirituality. When Shahjahan (2005) compels us to bring spirituality away from the margins of the academy and move it into its very centre he reminds us that spirituality as a research and teaching focus outside the discipline of religious studies is indeed situated at the margins as it is not equated as legitimate knowledge associated with rational and positivistic discourse. As well, Vokey (2000), while advocating for the inclusion of spirituality in education, also argues that we are situated in a paradigm of knowledge that supports a mechanistic view of the world that assumes that the only way of knowing is through that which can be supported objectively through the scientific method. "Once science conceived positivistically is accepted, as the paradigm of knowledge, spirituality – along with morality and aesthetics – is seen to fall on the wrong side of the objective/subjective divide" (p. 28).

Therefore, one is led to wonder why, despite the historical positivist worldview in higher education, the academic disciplines of social work and adult education are developing such a robust research and teaching agenda focusing on spirituality. While all of these professional faculties are greatly influenced by societal forces beyond the gates of the university, it is the disciplines of social work and adult education that have the strongest spiritual heritage, albeit a Christian heritage informed by the social gospel movement. In comparison, societal forces for both the kindergarten to grade twelve public education and business

discourse reinforce caution in moving into this arena as spirituality is associated with religious exclusivity and/or a threat to a profit agenda for business in particular. And yet, it is important to note that even the most hospitable academic disciplines still feel the broader university tensions as they move into this area of teaching and research. "Many [social work] researchers, students, and practitioners continue to worry that their interest in spirituality has been ignored, marginalized, and at times actively discouraged" (Coates & Graham, 2003).

In conclusion, while Shahjahan (2005) noted that there are gate keepers of academic knowledge in the form of peer review funding, peer review publishing, and ethical reviews systems, this review demonstrates that the gate is beginning to open a little. Slipping through are peer reviewed theoretical and empirical research articles and books, study proposals that have received ethics clearance, successful research grants, and emerging credit courses that link spirituality to three professional faculties here in Canada, indicating a gradual movement away from the margins of academic discourse.

This crack in the academic barrier leads me to wonder whether the emergence of spirituality as an emerging area of research and teaching, not only within these three faculties, will have an impact on the type of discourse within the university setting. Indeed in the following quote by Shahjahan (2005), he suggests the infusion of a spiritual lens within the university setting could stretch us beyond the pre-dominantly rational and cognitive way of engaging in teaching and research.

One wonders what our epistemology and methodology and theories would be like in the academy if it were based on a spiritual worldview. The pursuit of such a question would allow us to explore other dimensions of knowledge production that have been largely ignored in the academy. (p. 696)

While this review of the emerging discourse of spirituality within the business, social work, and education faculties is preliminary, I am led to consider this question: what is the impact of this emerging spiritual agenda and is it altering and broadening the academic discourse within the university. While my intuitive response is to suggest that spiritual discourse and its inclusion could lead to a more holistic way of knowing and being within the university setting, this review compels me to respond to this question by moving onto the next phase of this research: the exploration of faculty members' experiences and perceptions of engaging in teaching and/or research in the arena of spirituality and the impact on their faculties and in turn, the university.

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