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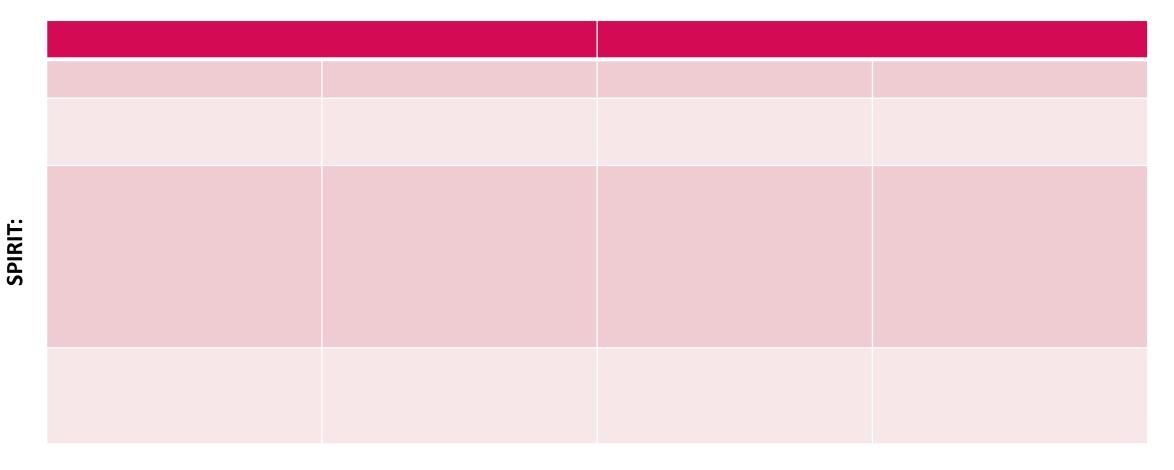




Spiritual care in a secular age: its risks and rewards

Rev Dr Andrew Cameron
Director, St Mark's National Theological Centre





Naturalist / materialist			
'hard'			
illusory			
not worthy of rational thought			

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	'hard'	'soft'
	illusory	a form of emotion
		experience of wonder at the fact of existence, beauty in various forms, relationships of love
	not worthy of rational thought	participation by various informal means

Naturalist / materialist		Supra-naturalist	
'hard'	'soft'		personal God (or gods)
illusory	a form of emotion		not of this natural order
	experience of wonder at the fact of existence, beauty in various forms, relationships of love		the way God mediates self-in-relationship makes mortal 'flesh' into a 'spiritual' being
not worthy of rational thought	participation by various informal means		many 'low' and 'high' religious & contemplative expressions

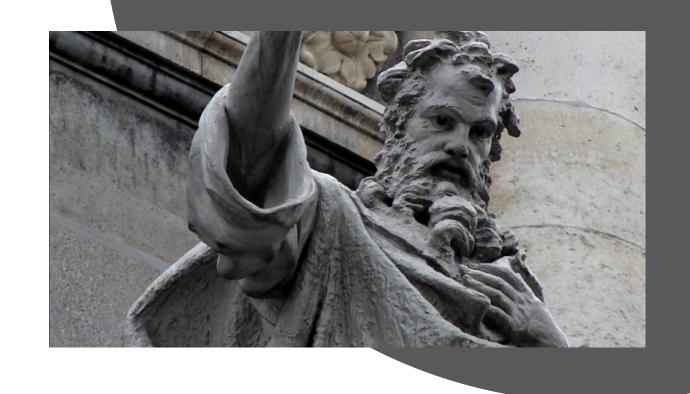
Naturalist / materialist		Supra-naturalist	
'hard'	'soft'	non-personal	personal God (or gods)
illusory	a form of emotion	emerges from the natural order	not of this natural order
	experience of wonder at the fact of existence, beauty in various forms, relationships of love	a force that somehow interpenetrates everything around us	the way God mediates self-in-relationship makes mortal 'flesh' into a 'spiritual' being
not worthy of rational thought	participation by various informal means	participation by various informal means	many 'low' and 'high' religious & contemplative expressions

Trajectories toward change ...

- individual rights and informed consent
- 'consumer' preference choice
- awareness of diversity, checks against majoritarianism
- suspicion and prohibition of 'proseletysing' discourses
- unfortunate experiences
- risk-aversion and risk mitigation

... become perceptions of risk

- individual rights and informed consent
- 'consumer' preference choice
- awareness of diversity, checks against majoritarianism
- suspicion and prohibition of 'proseletysing' discourses
- unfortunate experiences
- possible exploitation and distress



Irenaeus of Lyons (2nd century AD)



'May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.' (1 Thess. 5:23 NRSV)



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Project: 'End of Life Care for Salvation Army Officers'

- Rhonda Shaw et al., 'Differential influences of the facets of religious and spiritual beliefs on Salvation Army officers' quality of life,' *Journal for the Study of Spirituality* 8.1 (2018).
- Bruce Allen Stevens et al., 'Unique needs: Salvation Army officers in retirement and end-of-life care,' *Journal of Religion, Spirituality and Aging* 30.1 (2018).
- Andrew Cameron et al., 'Towards a "Social Anthropology" of End-of-Life Moral Deliberation: A Study of Australian Salvation Army Officers,' Studies in Christian Ethics, [online first], doi:10.1177/0953946819847996 (2019).



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'Perhaps with full-span lives the norm, people may have to learn how to be aged as they once had to learn how to be an adult. It may soon be necessary and legitimate to criticize the long years of vapidity in which a healthy elderly person does little more than eat and play bingo, or who consumes excessive amounts of drugs, or who expects self-indulgent stupidity to go unchecked. ... [A]ge does not exempt them from becoming despicable.' Ronald Blythe

Our reluctance to question or challenge older people 'may subtly remove them from the human race. It pretends, in effect, that they are moral non-entities; it treats them condescendingly as though they were toys. We will take an important step toward re-entry into community with the aged when we are willing to attend to them seriously enough as moral beings to approve and reprove their behavior.' - William May

'May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and in right standing with others at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

Making non-intrusive spiritual care cultures ...

- Regular Conversation Corner about spiritual journeys
- Practices of spiritual reminiscence
- Spiritual care needs inventory every six months
- Weekly bible study
- Multisensory worship service
- Seminars in [Christian] contemplative practice.
- Memoranda of agreement with spiritual carers that expect and performance manage around collaboration, skills at engaging with distress, and competence in offering meaning and hope.
- Opportunities for staff to explore issues, fears and spiritual 'underskilling'



