

SYLLABUS

YM696 (SW503) Youth Ministers and Social Systems
CUME
January 11-19, 2008

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Aim of Course

This third, in our sequence of certificate courses for street and urban youth workers surveys the important social systems affect youth and demand our attention as youth workers. Its aim is to make clear to students the functioning and dysfunctioning of urban family, community, educational, law enforcement, criminal justice, and social service systems (with a sense that suburban and rural life share the toxicity and dysfunction of our whole society). It will approach social systems with a method of systems thinking, and suggest youth ministers understand paraprofessional “social work” functions expected of them along with their other responsibilities.

Goals of the Course

1. to understand and be able to explain social systems as a context for youth ministry,
2. to understand the way God’s Law and the principles of Christ apply to our secular world and its systems,
3. to understand the interrelatedness of social systems and their function and dysfunction,
4. to be able to use systems thinking in explaining the function of social systems,
5. to be able to use social systems for the good of youth and train them to be able to change and use these systems,
6. to grow as an increasingly effective para-professional social worker,
7. to teach holistic ministry and explain how piecemeal people-helping and piecemeal social reforms can do more harm than good.

Course Texts and Bibliography

Files in the neXus Boston Resource Room provide articles on every aspect of this course. Students receive a packet of pertinent readings. Check Encyclopedia (www.centerforyouth.org)

Norma Kolko Phillips and Shulamith Lala Straussner (2001) *Urban Social Work: An Introduction to Policy and Practice in Cities*, Allyn & Bacon, 352pp. This text utilizes a social systems perspective and helps students recognize the linkage between social welfare policy and social work practice in the context of urban social problems.

Larry Brendtro and Scott Larson (2006) *The Resilience Revolution: Discovering Strengths in Challenging Kids*, Solution Tree, 158pp. This text examines strength-based approaches to working with high-risk youth who are in complex and often damaging social systems.

Course Assignments

(Extra credit will be given for your use and citing of articles and information gained from the nexus Resource Room)

1. Prompt attendance at all sessions is very important as is active participation in discussions.
2. 5-8 page paper on your, or someone close to you, experience in a particular social system (family, neighborhood, school, social agency, foster care, or juvenile detention) showing the interaction among systems and how a person can escape social dysfunction.
3. 6-10 page paper on your reading emphasizing the function and dysfunction of social systems and the need of the youth minister to act as social worker.

Suggested Tentative Schedule

Session 1 Fri pm	Introduction of Course Student Introductions giving one experience with one social system (all systems should be covered) Systems thinking about social systems
Session 2 Sat am	Discussion of course and its assignments Review of social systems and systems thinking The Family as a social system; types of urban family systems Youth minister as social worker to families
Session 3 Sat afternoon	The Neighborhood and the streets (Anderson's decent and street folk) How do urban communities function?
Session 4 Mon pm	Social Services and Agencies DSS and Welfare DYS
Session 5 Tues pm	Health and Mental Health Services
Session 6 Wed pm	Education I Boston's Public School Reforms Positives and Negatives of the System Where to Go from Here?
Session 7 Thurs pm	Education II Truancy, Drop-outs and Delinquency Programs that Work and What it Takes

- Session 8 Criminal Justice System I
 Fri pm Theory and Realities: How it works
- Session 9 Criminal Justice System II
 Fri pm- Reaching and Helping Felons
 Sat am Straight Ahead
- Session 10 Local Churches and Social Service
 Sat am
- Session 11 Youth Ministry and Social Work
 Sat afternoon

Further Bibliography by Systems

Family

- Andrew Billingsley (1992) *Climbing Jacob's Ladder: The Enduring Legacy of African-American Families*, Touchstone Book of Simon & Schuster, 446pp. In part an answer to negative response to the Moynihan Report, this study counters negative stereotypes and dispels common myths. It highlights strengths historically and looks toward the future with hope in the Black church.
- Roberta L. Coles (2006) *Race & Family: A Structural Approach*, Sage Publications, 317pp. this text looks at ethnic minority families through the structural factors: demographic, economic, and historical. It examines current research in assessing family structure, gender relations, intergenerational relations, family violence, acculturation, interracial marriage, and adoption. It also provides readers with resources for further study and group discussions.
- Harriette Pipes McAdoo, ed. (4th ed. 2007) *Black Families*, Sage Publications, 364pp. An amazing collection of scholarly essays on "Historical Conceptualizations of Black Families, Theoretical Conceptualizations, Spirituality and Religion, Family Patterns, Socialization, Gender Relations, and Family Policies and Advocacy."
- Willie Richardson (1996) *Reclaiming the Urban Family*, Zondervan, 272pp. Dr. Willie Richardson is senior pastor of Christian Stronghold Baptist Church in Philadelphia and president of Christian Research and Development. Strongly Evangelical, this pastor lays out the problems, and gives pastors and leaders methods that can make inner-city churches a powerful force for restoring, training, and strengthening families. It is said that his church has reduced the divorce rate to zero, helped families become debt-free, and trained men to be competent fathers and leaders.

Education

- Gilberto O. Conchas & Pedro A. Noquera (2006) *The Color of Success: Race and High-achieving Urban Youth*, NY: Teachers College Press, 147pp.
- Frederick M. Hess (1998) *Spinning Wheels: The Politics of Urban School Reform*, Brookings Institution Press, 210pp.
- Paul Thomas Hill, Christine Campbell, James Harvey, Paul Herdman, Janet Looney, Lawrence Pierce, Carol Reed, Abigail Winger, (2000) *It Takes a City: Getting Serious About Urban School Reform*, Brookings Institution Press, 2005pp.
- Pedro Noguera and Jean Yonemura Wina, eds. (2006), *Unfinished Business: Closing the Racial Achievement Gap in Our Schools*, Jossey-Bass, 336pp.
- Gary Orfield, ed. (2004) *Dropouts in America: Confronting the Graduation Rate Crisis*, Harvard Education Press, 306pp.
- S. Paul Reville with Celine Coggins (2007) *A Decade of Urban School Reform: Persistence and Progress in the Boston Public Schools*, Harvard Education Press, 325pp.
- Abigail Thernstrom and Stephan Thernstrom (2004) *No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning*, Simon & Schuster, 352pp. The conservatism of these authors move them to deny most institutional racism. But this is part of the public dialogue.
- New Directions in Youth Development: "Blurring the Lines between Schools and Communities," Jossey-Bass.

Social Welfare Systems

- B. Chetkow-Yanoov (1997) *Social Work Practice: A Systems Approach* (Haworth Social Work Practice), Haworth Press, 171pp.
- Arthur J. Cox (1984) *A Black Perspective on the American Social Service System*, Carbondale.
- Almaren Gunnar (2006) *Health Care Politics: Policy and Services: A Social Justice Analysis*, Srpinqber Publishing Co., 347pp.
- Alfreda P. Iglehart (2000) *Social Services and the Ethnic Community*, Waveland Press, Inc., 292pp.
- Edward J. Loughran (1997) *The Massachusetts Experience: a historical review of reform in the Department of Youth Services* (Losing a Generation: Probing the Myths & Reality of Youth... Violence), Crime and Social Justice Associates, 170pp. (available digitally for \$5.95)

Foster Care

- Al Desetta, ed. (1996) *The Heart Knows Something Different: Teenage Voices from the Foster Care System: Youth Communication*, Persea Books, 232pp.
- Betsy Krebs & Paul Pitcoff (2006) *Beyond the Foster Care System: The Future of Teens*, Rutgers University Press, 238pp.
- Martha Shirk & Gary Stangler (new ed. 2006) *On Their Own: What Happens to Kids When They Age Out of the Foster Care System?* Perseus Books Group.

Criminal Justice

- Clemens Bartollas & Stuart Miller (5th ed. 2007) *Juvenile Justice in America*, Prentice Hall.

Rolando V. del Carmen & Chad R. Trulson (2005) *Juvenile Justice: The system, Process and Law*, Wadsworth Publishers, 512pp.

Clarence Augustus Martin (2005) *Juvenile Justice: Process and Systems*, Sage Publications, 480pp. I like the way this is organized and approaches subject.