SPIRITUAL FITNESS AND RESILIENCE FORMATION THROUGH ARMY CHAPLAINS AND RELIGIOUS SUPPORT

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By

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Catalyzed by my observations as a U.S. Army Chaplain dealing suicide in the military across the past decade, in this study, I explore and more clearly conceptualize social processes of spiritual fitness and resilience formation in a context of plurality. Guiding questions include: Why do some become suicidal through suffering, while others experience “post-traumatic growth” instead? And if this capacity is a product of resilience, how is such a resilience formed?

My research through this interdisciplinary study of literatures of spiritual and social formation through education, has identified three facets of this formation process, entailing 1) socially formed 2) frameworks of meaning 3) that become resilient habitus and habits of mind only through habitual practice, often requiring broad social support, as opposed to being the individual processes often thought. I argue that the integrated components of religious and civic formation, once central to resilience formation through American public education, are now largely ineffective, and have yet to be effectively replaced.

It is that process of formation, cultivation and reinforcement of a core of spiritual fitness in resilience which the research of this dissertation is intended to explore and develop. Potential legal ramifications when the language of spiritual fitness is used by
public institutions such as the U.S. Army, are also addressed. Army Chaplains have effectively fostered pluralistic models of resilience formation and reinforcement through religious support since before the birth of the United States, uniquely equipping Chaplains as resources for intentional spiritual fitness and resilience formation in the pluralistic context.

*Keywords: spiritual fitness, formation, Army suicide, secular age, social formation, spiritual formation, personal formation, socio-cultural change, Constantinian Christian culture, habits of mind, habitus, Chaplaincy, Army Chaplains, Army Chaplain history, Religious Support, pluralism, religious diversity, plurality, resilience, accidie, freedom of religion, First Amendment, Constitutional protections, Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, establishment of religion, overlapping consensus, comprehensive doctrines*
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For those of us who love on and live on words, it’s hard to admit when words escape us. Yet to let this opportunity to express appreciation pass would be unthinkable. As I touched on briefly in the body of the work, the inspiration undergirding the whole of this project has been the many stories of resilience and endurance through the worst of hardships of both Service Members and other tortured heroes, such as those surviving the Nazi death camps. Some of those stories are from ages past, others from our contemporaries in current struggles. Their testimonies are both personal inspiration, and reminders that when ordinary souls are well equipped, that kind of resilience is possible for emerging generations as well. Words cannot express my appreciation for those many inspiring souls.

To the wife with whom I have journeyed through so many adventures, and for whom this adventure was an extreme step of faith and hope, who has put up with so many lonely hours when I’ve been engrossed with this research or writing instead of her, goes my greatest apologies and appreciation. I extend my great appreciation to the academic community, embodied so well in my advisor, Dr. Natasha Levinson, and dissertation committee members, Dr. Averil McClelland, and Dr. Jeffrey Wattles, each of whom challenged me, supported and inspired me in many different ways. And though the guidance and leadership faculty provides is invaluable, it is the student colleagues who journey, struggle, and encourage together, such as Kate Klonowski and many others who have been most important in keeping me pursuing the path.
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Though they may not be aware of it, my kids-- who hate me bringing them into this kind of thing have contributed by being part of my inspiration as well. They, too, have their own paths that will entail their own need for resilience and spiritual fitness, and I hope I have contributed, and continue to contribute to their own spiritual work-outs through this work. My family of choice, Sharon and Harvey Nerhood, and others who have pushed me, pulled me, and spent untold hours being the heart of my editing team, including Drs. Mary Ellen and Glen Atwood, have provided both understanding encouragement and the kicks in the caboose as needed. And to Ernie, Vietnam Marine Recon and Khe Sanh Veteran whose conversations, insights, and wonderful spirit helped set me on this path long before I ever formed any thought in this direction, my undying gratitude. Thank you, one and all. Without you, your insight, support, encouragement and inspiration, I could not have completed this mission. Thank you, and keep being a blessing!
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INTRODUCTION

Roles of U.S. Army Chaplains in resilience, spiritual fitness and formation

Social and personal formation have been important in education at least as far back as the classical writings of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle as they explored mechanism of how virtuous societies and persons are formed. An exploration of those mechanisms in the current, evolving context of a plurality of incommensurate, yet coexisting frameworks of meaning amidst the existential challenges of the U.S. Army in the early 21st century is the heart of this study. Education is here understood in the long tradition of an Aristotelian formative model, shaping both the habits of the mind and the full breadth of *hexis*—those habitual attitudes, dispositions, behavioral patterns and more, which have in more recent discourse, been discussed with the similar language of *habitus*.¹

Though without using the language of *habitus*, resilience, or spiritual fitness, chaplains have fulfilled formative roles to which these terms refer in the world’s militaries for many centuries. Long before the birth of this nation, chaplains were installed in the militaries of the evolving nations across Western culture in order to capitalize on religious resources to form and reinforce warriors across time into resilient

¹ Though I’m not adopting Bourdieu’s critical stance, I find his descriptive model for *habitus* quite helpful, and its further exploration and development for my purposes with spiritual fitness will be an important facet across this study. Also, while the term is drawn from Latin, and in Bourdieu’s work is italicized, the term is not italicized in more recent literature, which will be my habit in this work unless the term was italicized in a quote I use.
and tenacious armies, able to overcome the existential trials of battle. While that need has not changed, the emerging context of secular pluralism is changing how that process and role are manifest.

The task I take up in this dissertation is to explore and more clearly conceptualize the social processes of, and the U.S. Army Chaplain’s role in, the social formation of spiritual fitness dispositions built on a plurality of resilient frameworks of meaning. These two facets of the study—a clear conceptualization of the social processes of spiritual fitness formation in plurality, and the historic and unique role of the Army Chaplain therein—are distinct, yet inseparable due to the nature of the Army and its unique mission. These two facets are closely intertwined across the development of this study, and my exploration of contributing literatures should help clarify the substance of these concepts as the discussion progresses. It will be essential to keep in mind, though, and crucial throughout this study, is the fact in the early 21st century environment, “religious” and “spiritual” formation are not synonymous terms. This important distinction will be addressed in more detail in various places throughout this study, but will be important to keep in mind from the beginning.

The research I present in this dissertation was catalyzed by the emerging crisis of suicide in the U.S. military that has been widely noted by both popular media and

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2 I will follow U.S. Army capitalization conventions across a range of technically defined military terms in this dissertation, including Chaplain, Soldier, Service Member, Religious Support, Army Regulations and more. Likewise in the discussions pertaining to the U.S. Constitution, Constitution and related terms will also be capitalized. Where terms such as “chaplain” or “soldier” are used in this project in reference to those roles beyond the U.S. Army, the terms are not capitalized.

3 While often conflated in reports in both the popular press and in the disciplinary literature, this project strictly makes reference to suicide among military members currently serving at the time of their suicide. This distinction can be quite crucial when reference is made to statistics, numbers, and pertinent dynamic
academic research across the past decade. As a practicing Army Chaplain since 2002, I have played an active role in a variety of ways as a provider, pastoral counselor and coach in both prevention and intervention in suicidal situations, working with the range of efforts the Army has explored toward this end. Among those programs is the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program (CSF), first promulgated across the U.S. Army in 2010. The CSF program was developed to provide tools to enhance Soldier resilience, and provides the great service of wisely bringing and incorporating the language of “spiritual fitness” into more broad usage toward this end. But spiritual fitness remains a generally under-conceptualized facet of resilience, which can be problematic in current usage due to Constitutional issues. Much of this study is built to explore a deeper conceptualization of spiritual fitness as a tool for resilience, in a way that is more appropriate for use in the pluralistic military context.

Resilience itself also often goes unrecognized or unaddressed, and while this work is not intending to delve deeply into that literature, it is a term that has a range of dimensions. Like “fitness,” “resilience” refers to both practices and capacities, and is more a dynamic that is cultivated and formed by attitudes and practices, rather than a body of static knowledge to be acquired, as is implied when one is urged to “get an education.” The Comprehensive Soldier Fitness framework, to be further addressed in

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4 When capitalized, this term refers specifically to how it is used in the CSF program. Where this term is not capitalized, it will be a more generalized descriptive term as is briefly referred to in early Army Regulation language, or as might be used in lay conversation. I ask the reader’s patience at this point to not be overly concerned with the details of how this nebulous term will take shape, as that conceptualization will emerge across the project.
chapter 5, describes “five dimensions of strength” composing “fitness”—addressed under the headings of the social, emotional, family, spiritual and physical-- all of which together are key dynamics for resilience. The focus of this dissertation is to explore the spiritual component of fitness habitus formation within the pluralistic military context, as referenced in, but not restricted to, the limited discussion of the CSF program and its emerging form.

It will be important to note that throughout this dissertation, that though commonly thought of as almost synonymous, in this project and as discussed more fully at various times and ways in this study, the terms “religious,” “spiritual,” and “resilience” and their relationship to formations processes, are used as separate and distinct terms. Note as well, that the concept of “faith formation,” also often thought of in near-synonymous ways, is not being addressed in this project at all, as the term “faith” is alien to various religious and non-religious traditions of which I am here attempting to be inclusive. While these terms are often, but not always, related, the distinctions I will be making are integral to this project, and are quite important in order to avoid the legal, Constitutional entanglements that would otherwise be unavoidable if the terms were thought of as synonymous.

This dissertation will use the older language and domain of “spiritual fitness” grounded in U.S. Army doctrinal Regulations, in order to explore roles of U.S. Army Chaplains in the social formation processes that form, cultivate and reinforce this

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essential domain of resilience Soldiers are often required to find functional ways to overcome the existential crises they face in current military operations, frameworks for which religion has often played a significant role. The new language of “Spiritual Fitness” used by the Army CSF program is distinctly different from this older language, and is built with the language of psychology rather than religion. The intent of the CSF framework offered was to be more helpful for the evolving context of pluralism. But across this dissertation, I intend to demonstrate that how the CSF model of Spiritual Fitness develops the concept inadvertently undermines widely held and Constitutionally protected religious traditions. I will clarify and contrast the two conceptions of spirituality, and will directly identify and address the apparently under-recognized legal issues inherent in the current CSF approach to “Spiritual Fitness.”

The perspectives I take through the research and arguments of this project are inescapably related not only to my role as an academic, but also to my role as a U.S. Army National Guard Chaplain. My experience as a Soldier and a Chaplain across three deployments and extensive involvement in various facets of current military operations pervades this research. Much of what I have brought into this research, though, has long preceded my involvement in the Army, and my research that has grown from that experience.

**Spiritual fitness before spiritual fitness research—the back story**

Long before my involvement in the U.S. Army, I grew up in the post-Vietnam era of *Rambo* popularizing experiences that have come to be known as PTSD that are
perhaps related to spiritual fitness and “moral injury.” I also grew up in a context of questions concerning spiritual fitness as separate from, yet related to religion and religiosity. Growing up with a father who was fired from being a local church pastor because of his alcoholism related to his own issues of spiritual fitness, I learned too young that while religion is usually the home of spirituality, religiosity in and of itself does not create spiritual fitness.

If one could “fast forward” a review of my life fifteen years from the days of Rambo, I could reflect on having joined the Navy and left the Navy due to my own spiritual fitness issues. Some of my most powerful experiences with spiritual fitness had been related to religion, and within those same years, my most terribly scarring experiences had been related to an apparent lack of spiritual fitness, inflicted by piously practicing religionists. But in those same years I had also encountered powerful expressions of spiritual fitness beyond the bounds of the religious.

My favorite example is from a friend whom I'll call “Edward,” who volunteered to go to Vietnam as part of his conflation of religion and patriotism. He had been anticipating coming back after his military service to be a Baptist minister, yet while there, he became a Marine Reconnaissance hand-to-hand killer. After four tours of that duty, he came back rejecting religion altogether, eventually discovering a form of neo-pagan religion that he found to be helpful. In talking about Vietnam, he described what

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6 Edward Tick, *War and the Soul: Healing our Nation's Veterans from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder* (Wheaton, IL, Quest Books, 2005). Tick, Brite Divinity School and others have been building the concept of “moral injury,” related with and seemingly similar to PTSD, other times addressed as distinctly different from the organic, neurological manifestations of PTSD. “Moral injury” will not be addressed in this research project, but may be related to spiritual fitness issues as herein described—but that question is grist for further research.
he observed as a kind of spiritual fitness that, where present, would most often lead to a relative “normalcy” for Veterans in the years following Vietnam, and if absent, would often lead to lives of struggles with PTSD. He neither used the term “spiritual fitness” nor “religion” in any way in that conversation. But through that conversation years before my joining the Army as a Chaplain and my current professional and academic exploration of the concept, he nonetheless provided some of the conceptual foundations for this research. “Edward's” model of spiritual fitness has continued to be a part of my analysis over the years in my own counseling of Soldiers who were suicidal, combat stressed and having other issues.

“Edward's” conceptualizations that have become foundational to what I am describing as spiritual fitness, came from his experiential reflection under the most grueling setting of Marine combat over four tours in Vietnam, augmented by many years following in various professional settings in police and security work. My epistemology has likewise included experiential facets, thoroughly reflected upon and added to from studies in religion-- both as practiced and in its historical contexts-- along with historical studies, years of practical counseling experience in the Army's context of pluralism, and through other insights from a broad range of literature. With this background, I realized long before becoming an Army Chaplain, that whatever spiritual fitness might be--while it is often related to religion-- it is neither always related to religion, nor is it synonymous with religious practice. I also realized that it has very important, practical ramifications, and is a phenomena that extends far beyond any one religion or way of understanding the world.
Presenting problem

In a very real sense, my work on this PhD project began in early 2009 while serving as an Army National Guard Chaplain on my second combat deployment to Iraq. I am a Chaplain in the Ohio Army National Guard, and as such, am among the “first responders” in the U.S. Army in a broad range of Soldier issues, which includes suicide and suicidal behaviors. In this capacity, Chaplains work closely with medical and behavioral health providers, but as the role of the Chaplain is to frequently and regularly intermingle with the troops in their daily contexts. Because of this practice, Chaplains tend to be the most accessible and approachable of “first responders” who intervene and counsel with hurting Soldiers. As a Chaplain, I am also about as close a thing to a professional practitioner and guarantor of religious and spiritual pluralism as exists, based on the well-established guidance through Army Regulations pertaining to the Chaplain’s unique role as advocate, protector of and proponent for Constitutionally protected freedom of religion.7

In early 2009 when the annual report of suicide in the military was released in January of that year, the story of the alarming increase of suicides in the U.S. Army first became big news. Concurrent with that breaking news story across all major media sources, the Department of Defense went into crisis mode, and literally sent down to all units and all personnel all over the world (at least in the Army), orders and guidance as to how to retrain all Soldiers and Department of Defense (DoD) civilian personnel on a new

round of suicide prevention materials. Not that this was really a “new” process, as all personnel in all units across the Army had already been required for many years to go through annual training on suicide prevention and intervention, which had traditionally been led by the Chaplains. I was a Brigade Chaplain on that deployment, and as such, was the senior Army Chaplain on the post to which I was assigned. I therefore became the lead officer entrusted on that post with the promulgation of this new material to all Army and DoD personnel on the post.

By that time in my career, toward the end of my second combat deployment, and with more than seven years as an Army Chaplain, and more than fifteen years as a civilian clergy and pastor, I had already dealt with a fair number of suicides and suicidal situations. In those situations with which I was personally familiar, in approximately 80% or more of those cases, the dynamics leading up to the suicidal behaviors\(^8\) could be identified as what I would call “spiritual” concerns, rather than concerns of “behavioral health” or “mental health.”\(^9\) Having been a professional practitioner and guarantor of religious and spiritual diversity for a number of years, I had become quite sensitive to what functioned as “spiritual” in peoples' lives, regardless of their religious or a-religious upbringing or orientation.

Within days of the breaking of this big news story of the “epidemic” of Army suicides across so much of the media, I encountered the work of Benjamin Pratt on

\(^8\) “Suicidal behaviors” has become a common term to refer not only to suicides and attempts at suicides, but to a range of behaviors, to include talking about suicidal ideations, making plans and preparations, etc.

\(^9\) “Mental health” typically refers to organic chemical or physiological issues in the brain, while “behavioral health” typically refers to empirically observable learned dysfunctional behavior patterns, generally without reference to any meaning systems.
**accidie** as evident through Ian Flemming’s James Bond, 007 novels. A counselor to Washington's political and military elite for thirty years, bibliophile Benjamin Pratt had focused his PhD dissertation on the theme of **accidie**, drawn from the long-standing religious tradition of “the Seven Deadly Sins.” Usually translated into the English as “sloth,” Pratt noted that this pivotal element of “the Seven Deadly Sins” would be more accurately translated as a loss of meaning, the loss of one's spiritual center and drive. The term and concept, Pratt says, is evident in virtually all of Fleming's 007 works, usually related to the antagonists' motivations. Across a lifetime of counseling, Pratt was able to see these same dynamics of **accidie** in his clients' dysfunctional behavior patterns. This framework helps to express what I have been reflecting on for many years as a kind of spiritual fitness (or its lack) often evident with suicidal persons that crosses boundaries of religion, religiosity, and traditional spirituality.

In the face of the ubiquitous news of Army suicides, this reinterpretation of a very old concept became the catalyst to initiating and sustaining the research that led to this dissertation. I have since realized why Pratt's work so grabbed my attention and interest. In effect, through his work, I had “rediscovered” in my current research, what I had found more than twenty years earlier in my undergraduate work on suicide. In that research, I had encountered the work of Emile Durkheim and his concept of “anomie” that grew out of his foundational work in suicide, and work by Viktor Frankl along similar lines, written out of his experiences in Nazi concentration camps in WWII, and his subsequent

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10 Benjamin Pratt, *Ian Fleming’s Seven Deadlier Sins & 007's Moral Compass* (Canton, MI: Read the Spirit Books, 2007).

career in which he developed the therapeutic model of logotherapy.\textsuperscript{12} These authors and their research supported well this new research on \textit{accidie} I was encountering from Pratt.

Several years earlier, at the end of my first deployment in 2006, I also happened onto research by an interdisciplinary Army Social Worker, Thomas Jarrett, which provided further tools and secular language to address the foundational frameworks of meaning often associated in recent decades with language of “spirituality.” In the Warrior Resilience and Thriving” (WRT\textsuperscript{13}) program he developed, Jarrett identified similar “warrior culture” themes that are generally outside of religion, but are found across cultures, continents and time from the ancient Greco-Roman world to the present. The Warrior Resilience Training model Jarrett developed from this research examined frameworks of meaning derived from warrior castes around the world. These frameworks, similar across cultures, developed various paradigms by which to understand suffering in meaningful ways, even to extremes and to death, so that warriors could maintain resilience in the face of that suffering, pain and loss. The clues these four researchers point to pertaining to loss of meaning and loss of spiritual connections (which, as it turns out, are integrally related) seemed to be central to understanding suicide, yet virtually ignored by current research and programs in suicide prevention and intervention.


\textsuperscript{13} The most updated resources for this program are found at its home website, http://www.warriorresilience.com/.
Shaping the guiding questions

As an Army Chaplain with now three combat deployments, I've counseled with, and have had the opportunity to peer into the pain deep in the souls of numerous hurting Soldiers, to include many in suicidal situations. These Soldiers have often described the pain and stressors they've felt as being overwhelming, and it is reasonable to assume an even more complete sense of being overwhelmed in those cases where the suicides have been completed. Yet stories abound from military heroes to presidential candidates and beyond who have overcome much more than what is often described as the contributing factors in many suicides in recent years.

As a history buff and as a religionist,¹⁴ I can recount innumerable biographies of suffering that, rather than being sensed as overwhelming, became foundational to tremendous transformation or growth rather than suicide. Why do some react to suffering by becoming suicidal, while others use it for a source of “post-traumatic growth”?¹⁵ Not only “what” is the difference, but from where does that difference come-- between those who turn terrible suffering into growth-- such as after years of torture in concentration camps or prisoner of war camps—while the seemingly much less traumatic suffering of a broken relationship in others can be cited as leading to suicide? If this capacity is a product of resilience, how is such a resilience formed, and how is it manifest in real life?

The overlapping concepts of Durkheim's anomie, Frankl's concept of an existential

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¹⁴ “Religionist” is not a particularly common term, but helpful when used with the comparative study of religion to refer adherents to any range of religions all at once, such as here, or to indicate commonalities, such as “religionists across many faith systems practice a range of prayer disciplines.”

¹⁵ I first encountered this concept of “post-traumatic growth” with Jarrett’s work, though it is a common theme in the work of resilience. This concept is designed to help people re-frame their stress, suffering and pain as sources for positive growth, strength and resilience, even as “eustress” rather than “distress.”
vacuum, Pratt's re-interpretation of *accidie*, and Jarrett's Warrior Cultures found around the world, were the clues providing the starting point for this the line of research represented by this project.

As is often the case with any presenting problem, what first manifests itself as a central issue is often more a symptom of deeper and more complex conditions or processes. I have found that the same can be said of this emerging crisis of suicide in the U.S. military. While suicide is not at the center of this project as it has evolved, it was the catalyst to the beginnings of this line of study, and is always a shaping concern in the background as I have pursued the work of this research. Coming from my educational perspective and building on insights from psychology, philosophy and education as formation, as well as my experience with suicide from my Chaplain’s perspective, I quickly found myself exploring this problem through the lens of “formation.”

Personal formation is always teleologically instrumental: formation is always built around the question of “formation for what?” For many people and socio-cultural groups, those instrumental questions-- inclusive of what “human flourishing” means-- are necessarily and unavoidably religious in nature. But where “public” socio-cultural infrastructures propound frameworks of resilience and “human flourishing” that are intentionally and systematically exclusive of protected religious frameworks—such as public schools and Army programs like CSF-- a Constitutional challenge becomes evident. The need to identify, clarify and begin to address these challenges, and address them within appropriate Constitutional protections, is therefore integral to this project as well.
Central to an Army Chaplain’s role is the responsibility to address spiritual questions within the Army’s context of diversity, which means that spiritual issues for those of a religious persuasion are often questions addressed through Religious Support.\textsuperscript{16} Both spiritual issues and spiritual support for religious persons are most often related to spiritual formation from pertinent religious frames of meaning.\textsuperscript{17} Where spiritual formation is well fostered (of whatever tradition, whether religious or non-religious), such persons tend to exhibit a stronger sense of resilience in the face of stress, and this has been called “Spiritual Fitness” in recent Army work in resilience.\textsuperscript{18} The same “spiritual” issues pertaining to existential questions or frameworks of meaning for a non-religious person--while equally important--may require support from other, non-religious formational frames of meaning. But because they function in the same way, where effective, they might also be described as “spiritual fitness.”

**Problem statement, and guiding research question**

The problem statement I have developed to further guide my research, and that I will unpack and explore across this dissertation could be stated as follows: In the formerly hegemonic Constantinian Christian culture,\textsuperscript{19} the public socio-cultural

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{16}“Religious Support” is at the heart of the duties of the Army Chaplain. Citations will be provided in chapter 4 and elsewhere as the discussion progresses, but note here that the terms “spiritual fitness” and “resilience” as representing very old and indigenous rooting in various religions, are both part of Army Regulations defining “Religious Support” for Army Chaplains, significantly pre-dating “Spiritual Fitness” as artificially cast in the 2011 documentation describing the Army CSF program.


\textsuperscript{19}First popularized by theologian and ethicist John H. Yoder in the 1970s, a number of researchers in religion and culture have been using versions of this term is recent decades as short-hand to subsume a distinct, hegemonic set of relationships between socio-cultural frameworks of religion, meaning, political and social arrangements, related to the integrally close ties between Church and state, similar to how the
infrastructure\textsuperscript{20} tended to naturally build, cultivate and reinforce personal and spiritual formation frameworks. These frameworks tended to be inclusive of habits of mind\textsuperscript{21} and embodied patterns of disposition rooted in the frames of meaning built through that Constantinian culture. Those habits of mind reinforced by embodied and socially supported characteristic patterns and dispositions, tended to provide a framework in which suffering, pain and moral ambiguity could be understood to be meaningful and valued. But that publicly supported and cultivated frame of meaning has changed to where “happiness” in some form or other is more often paramount, and suffering and pain are often construed as meaningless enemies. The impact of this change on Soldiers is only very recently becoming evident.\textsuperscript{22}

This is not to say that the Constantinian Christian hegemonic culture was without its problems—critical theorists of all stripes have provided ample arguments in that domain to fill a collection of dissertations. But despite what short-comings that cultural paradigm presented, that Constantinian religio-cultural frameworks of meaning often provided a stronger culture of resilience that seems to be much less effectively formed, reinforced and conveyed in the “post-modernity” of the multi-cultural environment of the early 21\textsuperscript{st} century.

\textsuperscript{20} While perhaps appearing to be a new term, nothing more is intended by the use of this term than what its construction naturally suggests. As with the physical infrastructure of any community that systemically provides for certain needs, a “socio-cultural infrastructure” is utilized by any community to provide for the development of social frameworks and habitus pertinent to its given culture.

\textsuperscript{21} Costa’s framework using this terminology will be in some detail in chapter 6.

\textsuperscript{22} This observation by Charles Taylor in \textit{A Secular Age}, will be more fully explored across the breadth of this dissertation.
With the research problem thus constructed, the two prongs of the guiding research question shaping this project could be stated as follows: How is spiritual fitness, its formation and cultivation to be understood and addressed in public, pluralistic discourse? And how can the overarching role of U.S. Army Chaplains in Religious Support be understood and function in the emerging secular age and in relation to evolving concepts of spiritual fitness and resilience, while working within parameters of First Amendment protections of the free expression of religion?

It will quickly become evident that the educational formation, construction and cultivation of distinct habits of mind and dispositional habitus related to spiritual fitness as here discussed, is much more a social process, than is often thought of in relation to the concerns of spirituality. The distinctlty social construction and cultivation of spiritual fitness is thus also integral to the exploration of the spiritual fitness and formation facets of Religious Support for the role of Army Chaplain. Language related to these social dynamics will play an important role in this dissertation, as will the language of pluralism and First Amendment jurisprudence.

As the presenting problem for this study arose from within and is related to the unique perspective of the U.S. Army Chaplaincy, I will be utilizing the long and evolving experience and traditions of the U.S. Army Chaplaincy with public plurality as a backdrop and source for helpful clues in this study. The Army Chaplain brings a uniquely fertile perspective of a professional practitioner of pluralism to questions of formation, religious and spiritual support. As a practitioner of multiple, often incommensurate ideologies at the same time, the military Chaplain works through an
inter-disciplinary set of roles as a counselor and coach. Those roles include the Chaplain as a religious support provider and spiritual facilitator, who explores and provides consultation, insight, and navigational aids for grounded living amidst the clashing of differing pluralistic traditions.

But at least as important as the content of the Religious Support the Chaplain provides, is how that role is manifest through the Chaplaincy following a coaching model, subsumed under the rubric by which the Chaplain must “perform or provide” religious support. As such, the Chaplain must always follow the Soldier’s lead to build on and from the Soldier’s own spiritual traditions, rather than forcing the Chaplain’s traditions on the Soldier. In my own experience as a Chaplain, I often express this approach by first asking of any Soldier coming for counsel, “What is your religious heritage?” How I can help any given Soldier is then guided by that Soldier’s native or preferred religious or spiritual frame of reference. This perspective and approach arises at the junction of the Constitutional, functional, pluralistic, and religious roles of the Army Chaplain. I will provide elaboration throughout the dissertation as to how the roles of the military Chaplain can develop this set of fruitful perspectives, and I will mine them for a range of insights for my argument.

The term “perform or provide” as a guiding rubric for describing roles of Army Chaplains in reference to how they “perform” religious leadership functions of their own religious tradition as defined by their Endorsing body, and “provide” facilitation as needed for other religious traditions by linking Soldiers to resources of their own traditions without compromise nor the creation of some artificial, generic religious or spiritual practice, is often mentioned in the various Army Doctrinal documents referred to in this study, and detailed most clearly at para. 1-4, p 1-1 in Army Field Manual FM 1-05 (details in bibliography).
An overview of the flow of the discussion

The first chapter of the dissertation, begins to build the arguments I will pursue across the dissertation. Part of the work of this chapter will be to begin to develop some of the concepts I will be addressing, and begin to establish where this study fits into the field of education, and some of the social thought I will be tapping into as the discussion develops.

The second chapter begins to explore roles of habitus formation as rooted in ancient thought and developed by Bourdieu, as a guiding framework for the ensuing discussion on spiritual fitness and resilience formation. The chapter will also begin exploring a range of mechanisms for habitus formation as related to resilience formation.

The third chapter explores changes in social formation through education in the United States as related to secularization. Part of those changes are related to how spirituality is understood, and how frameworks of meaning are related to spiritual fitness.

The fourth chapter explores a history of military chaplaincy, then more specifically, roles of Chaplains in the U.S. Army. Through the groundwork laid in the previous chapter, the exploration will continue to how the work of “Religious Support” as traditionally understood has been embodied. This exploration will at the same time lay the groundwork for the following discussion developing the concept of “spiritual fitness” as a new language for long-standing roles of Religious Support through Army Chaplains.

Thus far, I will have been discussing the concept of “spiritual support” without clear and concise conceptual development. This is an intentional part of grounding the argument that spiritual support in the emerging secular age is merely a continuation of
long, familiar practices. The fifth chapter explores similarities of spiritual formation across various religious and secular traditions, and explores how spiritual formation is related to the formation of habitus for resilience.

Building on the work of the previous chapters, the sixth chapter discusses some of the challenges, and some of the potential promise of several paradigms of how the emerging reality of diversity is incorporated into social processes of formation. This chapter moves into the use of the political theory of John Rawls to further develop and clarify these challenges, and how they can impact freedom of religious expression. By the use of both well-established language of Army Regulations, along with Rawls’ language here discussed, I explore a way to continue to provide resources for spiritual fitness and formation in the emerging secular age that remain respectful of religiously rooted concepts of “spirituality,” while at the same time overcoming the challenges to Constitutional jurisprudence high-lighted in this discussion.

My conclusion identifies ways in which the work of this research can contribute to emerging discourse in the Army pertaining to spiritual fitness and formational roles of Chaplains. It is my humble hope, too, to suggest how this contribution to military discourse might become useful for broader “public” concerns related to education as formation, and to spiritual fitness in the broader public arena.
CHAPTER I
EDUCATION AS FORMATION IN THE CONSTANTINIAN CONTEXT

The social products of frameworks of meaning and formation

I am arguing in this dissertation that the growing problem of suicide in the U.S. Army might be largely related to a problem of personal and social formation as related to the formation (or lack thereof) of resources for resilience. Personal and social formation are concerns often construed as within the domain of education. In previous generations, public education in America included integrated, hybrid components of religious and civic formation, alluded to in a variety of ways by many authors, and for which, with significant influence in the domain of public education, Lawrence Cremin used the term “American Paideia.” But as concerns of pluralism have become more pressing themes in education across the end of the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, religious components of formation through public education have been dropping away. Those components had provided a kind of transcendent grounding to formation and identity work that has not been effectively replaced, leading to what has been called an “existential neurosis” with associated challenges to what is here discussed as spiritual fitness.

25 Cremin, Prothero, Martin, Wuthnow, Taylor, Kennedy and Crunden of those discussed in this project, are among the many researchers from a broad range of disciplines who, in various ways, address this change (see bibliography for publication details).
26 Frankl, 131.
I have identified three primary facets this social, educational process of resilience formation that I argue are integral to the formation of spiritual fitness for resilience in the face of the existential challenges of current military operational context. First, the formation and cultivation of the frameworks of meaning\textsuperscript{27} that are foundational to one’s capacity for resilience is a socially grounded, more than an individually engineered process. Secondly, I argue these socially formed capacities and resources for resilience are necessarily rooted in some metaphysical understanding of the world that has traditionally been, and is, for most Americans (regardless of one’s actual practice at any given time), rooted in a religious and spiritual cultural tradition. And thirdly, I argue that the regular, disciplined habitual practice of the attitudes, dispositions, and patterned disciplines of any given spirituality is the primary means by which one’s spiritual fitness and resilience is formed, manifest, cultivated, and strengthened. In other words, the closely related capacities of spiritual fitness and resilience are more a function of actual habituated practice and dispositions, than of what identity labels or “religious preference” one might claim.

While the terms of resilience and spiritual fitness are closely related, they are not synonymous. As mentioned in the introduction, resilience is composed of that full range of support system domains that the U.S. Army describes under the heading of “Comprehensive Soldier Fitness,”\textsuperscript{28} the domains of physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and family. While all of these domains are integral, essential, and can impact one’s

\textsuperscript{27} While various forms of “spirituality” carry much broader content than merely this, it is the foundational framework of meaning that a spirituality provides with which I am most concerned in this project.

resilience in significant ways, the concerns of this project are limited to the spiritual facet. I therefore only mention the full range for completeness, and will only go into detail in discussing the spiritual domain of resilience. Spiritual fitness is therefore only one component of these tools for resilience, but is the component that provides the framework of meaning and associated habits of mind and habituated practices and dispositions by which that framework of meaning is manifest.

As a component of any given Soldier’s resilience, in the same way that a Soldier’s physical fitness is based in disciplined, habituated physical activities and dispositions, a Soldier’s spiritual fitness is fed by that Soldier’s habituated dispositions and activities commonly described by the term *spirituality*, which is usually rooted in a particular religious tradition. It may alternatively come from some secular framework of meaning, such as a “warrior code” as may be found in many cultures around the world.29 Yet in the public military context, spiritual fitness must be nurtured through the pluralistic context and Constitutional protections of religious freedom pertinent to the U.S. military, despite the fact that some of the most basic concepts of differing frameworks of meaning can be mutually exclusive. Therein lies the challenge of the need to foster spiritual fitness as a function of public social discourse.

**The process of public formation through education**

Social and personal formation are always socio-cultural products, largely shaped by predominating socio-cultural institutions, which in turn, shape the dispositional

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29 Warrior codes across cultures as a source for frameworks of meaning and resilience is at the heart of Jarrett’s “Warrior Resilience and Thriving” (WRT) program that will be discussed in chapters 5 and 6.
patterns by which people and societies live. In the ancient world before modern schooling was invented, the primary formative institutions across societies were family, religion, and whatever form of government extracted the taxes and provided what security there may have been, and which determined so much of the lives of pre-modern peoples. Until the advent of what I will now call the plurality of frameworks of meaning that is characteristic of what might be called post-modernity, or a secular age, an essential facet of virtually every governing polity across the long life of what is known as Western Culture and civilization has been a common prevailing foundational framework of meaning. That common framework of meaning has traditionally been fostered by those institutions that functioned religiously and socially for the host culture and governing polity.\(^{30}\)

From an historical perspective, it is evident that the social institutions of government, religion, family, what informal education may have existed, normatively worked together to form and reinforce one hegemonic framework of meaning supportive of those socio-cultural milieux. These combined social dynamics formed the normative, pre-reflexive “background picture” as Taylor describes it,\(^ {31}\) the shape of reality as people come to naturally apprehend it through their formative years. Building on older sources including those from Aristotle in the ancient world, the critical sociologist Pierre Bourdieu analyzed the dynamics of how these institutions shape human behavioral,

\(^{30}\) I recognize that much of the following discussion is only marginally footnoted because it is merely a reiteration of common knowledge. That common knowledge, though, is put together in this distinct way to build a cogent narrative to support my assertions about pluralism, cultural consensus, the conveying of common frames of meaning, and what I am arguing is actually novel about the current version of post-modern “plurality” I am identifying.

dispositional and esthetic patterns in his work on habitus, which will be addressed in some detail across this dissertation.

For the ancient Athenian and Roman polities so foundational to Western culture, centered around the oligarchic “democracy” or “republic” of ruling elites, the “meaning” of one’s role in life was built around one’s place in the *polis*. When the Roman Republic became an Empire, the same was true along with the divinization of the emperor building a theological layer into this sense of meaning. In the centuries of the Roman Empire the hegemonic imperial culture would vary in its relationship to differing religions and peoples, but their meaning was always found in their subservience and homage to Rome, whose elites were generally unconcerned with other people groups and their conceptions of meaning as long as they paid their taxes and did not cause trouble.

The ancient Hebrew world that forms a second foundational strand to what became the Constantinian Christian civilization, likewise identified the populace and their meaning by their relationship to what was understood to be the God of creation, with the meaning of all others as outsiders or “Gentiles,” also defined by this relationship. The breadth of the Old Testament Biblical story—at least from the Constantinian perspective—is the story of a people whose meaning was shaped by their communal loyalty or disloyalty to their God. Where those others were tolerated in their lands, that toleration still assumed that those others were outsiders as defined by their internal hegemonic conception, and usually thought of as a greater or lesser threat to the integrity of the Israelite people and their meaningfulness in relation to their God.

Constantinian Christian culture as the background picture

As the theologically universal Christian worldview came into prevalence and then hegemonic predominance through political alliances between the Church, governing bodies and other social institutions, what has come to be known by some writers as “Constantinian Christian culture” was born. Constantinian Christian Rome, then expanding into Europe, also established a universal, politically endorsed and embraced framework of meaning: The universally applicable Roman imperial rule over all lands and peoples in its sway, merged conveniently with the theologically universal applicability of a Christianity espousing an understanding of an omnipotent God of all creation and all peoples, drawing from more ancient Israelite conceptions of a Divinely privileged “chosen” people to be “a light unto the nations.” This melding of political and theological universalism in the form of Constantinian Christianity meant that the “Christian” rulers-- first of the Empire, then of its subsequent component parts-- held both political and religious power and authority, shared in mutually reinforcing relationship with Church officials. From this universal framework of meaning foundational to the Constantinian culture, the religio-political coalition understood itself to be Divinely called to shape peoples and nations.

This socio-cultural paradigm evolved across many centuries and has been at the heart of Western culture, as well as to modernity. While many of the social challenges it wrought are still being addressed, this Constantinian framework that was formed and

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33 Isaiah 49: 6—this Old Testament prophetic theme, carried over into New Testament theology, was a foundational element to the Calvinist Covenantal theology so important to many generations of leaders in the Colonial and early American periods, in which the new nation being birthed was often thought of as a modern incarnation of “God’s Chosen People.”
cultivated across its societies, carried with it and reinforced at the same time, a
hegemonically common framework of meaning. By use of the language of hegemony, I
intentionally recognize not only the prevailing normativity, but also the sometimes more,
sometimes less (or less overt) coercive nature of those common norms. In earlier times,
this religio-political hegemonic normativity was often coerced on pain of death. In more
recent times, that coercion has lessened, but where present, has often taken more subtle,
even covert forms.

Despite that coercive nature of the religio-cultural norms thus conveyed, that
normativity also provided a strong, commonly reinforced framework of meaning that
arguably conveyed powerful systems of resilience. In the U.S. American context, that
framework of meaning conveyed through religiously grounded public education for the
greater part of American history, provided a powerful habitus of resilience that could be
readily accessed in the face of existential crisis through the high modernity of the mid
and late twentieth century. But with the socio-cultural changes replacing that
Constantinian hegemony with an emerging secularism, that former common resource for
resilience has yet to be effectively replaced.

Following the political breakup of the Roman Empire and its form of
Constantinian Christianity, the “Holy Roman Empire” became a convenient label to
adopt, justifying political expansion as a theological mission, evolving what shape
Constantinian culture would take. Where political instability made larger kingdoms
untenable in “the Dark Ages,” the missions of the Church found varying levels of success
in slowly spreading the Constantinian Gospel. And as this Gospel of Constantinian
Christianity so comfortably nestled political and religious authority together, both religious and political ambitions often worked together to form the larger aggregations and more or less comfortable coexistence of petty kingdoms espousing the conjoining influences of Constantinian Christianity.

Significant challenges to universal frameworks of meaning rooted in this religio-political hybrid came with the limited interaction between Constantinian Christian and emerging Muslim empires, most notably through what we call the Crusades. But if anything, this challenge functioned to further solidify both the socio-political hybridization of Constantinian Christianity, as well as the meaning structures rooted therein. The next major challenge came in the form of the Reformation and its various dynamics.

Luther’s moving the locus of metaphysical theological authority from the singular papal structure to the personal subjectivization of the faith, had political consequence beyond the religious. The Reformation provided religious grounding for petty rulers armed with new technologies, firepower and big ambitions, to be able to construct their own contrasting versions of Constantinian Protestant Christianity. Rather than dislodging the Constantinian Christian hybridization, it fragmented it. Instead of one prevailing Catholic Constantinian Christianity claiming “catholic” or universal influence, a growing number of Protestant groups gained an increasing number of ambitious political sponsors, each claiming religious authority for their eager and gunpowder-fueled political gains. Each was based in and fueled by conflicting Constantinian Christian conceptions now
claiming their own universal application, leading to centuries of bloody religious wars between these conflicting universalistic theological/political frameworks.

To this point but for a few intellectual elites, the Constantinian Christian religio-political frameworks of meaning seems to have been so thoroughly embedded in the cultural “background picture”\textsuperscript{34} as to be unconsciously conveyed and supported as the prevailing formative framework of meaning across the populaces of Western culture. Following the Reformation, this pattern continued to be conveyed in a range of competing, though interrelated denominational dialects. To this point, too, and also but for a few intellectual elites, frameworks of meaning and identity had been integrally and inescapably social conceptions and phenomena, rather than individual.

These traditional, socially formed conceptions of identity as conveyed through the prevailing culture had been stable for perhaps millennia, prior to the invention of concepts of popular individualism. Individuality as understood in early 21\textsuperscript{st} century Western culture is a relatively recent invention, whose emergence is related to these Reformation dynamics. The path is complex from the predominantly social and religious rootedness and conception of identity and meaning as the normative human experience of Western culture before the Reformation, to the modernist conception of normative secular individualism. Whether rooted in, or concurrent with cultural changes catalyzed by the Reformation, the culture’s shifting of the locus of authority from being generally understood and accepted as external, rooted in the Pope through the Church, to evolving toward a locus internal to the increasingly secularized individual, had important

\textsuperscript{34} Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}. 
repercussions in concepts of identity and meaning. This Constantinian Christian culture with hybrid religio-political models of formation that was transformed by the Reformation into a range of similar, though conflicting Catholic and Protestant Constantinian hegemonies, was transplanted for further distinctive development to the New World.

**Early schooling in America—Religious formation or education?**

In traditional American culture centered around a predominantly rural, agricultural economy through the mid-18th century, “education” through what schooling there may have been was primarily vocational in orientation. The population composed largely of farming families, generally trained up their children as workers for their labor-intensive, low-tech lifestyles. But essential, too, to the formation of emerging adults and soon to be citizens of the time, was religious formation as a common theme through even the most mundane of activities: “In virtually everything they thought and did (fishing and farming included), they understood themselves to be in covenantal relationship with God.”35 Where schools started to develop in their now recognizable form, they were most often headed by and taught by the religiously inclined and trained, and an essential motivation for public education was religious. The capacity to read was necessary to provide individuals being theologically formed, the capacity to gain their own personal access to “the Word,” the Logos that was understood to be at the center of reality.36 Such traditional, religiously centered models of personal, social and civic formation seem to

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have been the norm.\textsuperscript{37}

“Back East” in already “settled” areas, early low-tech industrialization generally required a steady supply of uneducated and unskilled to semi-skilled labor, so that while emerging schooling may have provided the “three r’s” of “readin’, ‘ritin’, and ‘rithmatic,” that early schooling, too, was generally vocational in nature. However, Prothero noted that religion was so important in how schooling was understood in early America, that while “the three r’s” of schooling were of course important, “religion was their first R, since in their hierarchy of knowledge theology towered above reading, writing and arithmetic.”\textsuperscript{38}

Growth in early schooling in the Colonies was in what we now call higher education, intended to more readily provide the religious leadership required of the growing colonies. Traditional vocational training for emerging colonial generations seems to have largely been adequate for all but the training of religious leaders for the spreading of religiously-centered communities across the expanding frontier.\textsuperscript{39} In these emerging communities strongly influenced by a cultural Protestantism that later became what was called Judeo-Christian culture, public schools were often staffed by at least moderately evangelical religionists--often evangelical of both religious and culturally assimilating values, who often trained as educators in religious schools. In such a context, it seems that little difference could be distinguished between religious and civic formation under the guidance of the “good Christian souls” who were teachers and

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\item[37] Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}.
\item[38] Prothero, \textit{Religious Literacy}, 74.
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administrators of generally small town and rural schools, in what formation occurred beyond the vocational basics.⁴⁰

The social impact of the Civil War initiated massive socio-economic, political, religious, intellectual, and industrial changes that catalyzed dramatic changes in education across American society. The issue of slavery was both divisive and transformative of the impact of religion on society, and spurred on the broadening and deepening impact of the industrial and communications revolutions. Prior to the Civil War, it is safe to say that most Americans’ lives were largely untouched by “the outside world.” The concerns of the Civil War and the industrial and communications changes it brought to every community were catalytic to broad socio-cultural changes across every domain.

The more traditional, more rural, and more religiously oriented model of schooling slowly evolved through demographic changes to more city-centric and industrialized norms as America moved toward and into the 20ᵗʰ century. Among the changes and concerns becoming evident across the late 19ᵗʰ century through the mid-20ᵗʰ century, was the growth of immigrant populations, often from predominantly Catholic Eastern European countries. This change was seen by many of the more firmly rooted protestant Anglo-centric American population, to be something of a socio-cultural threat. Often motivated by a blend of emerging “civil religion” and patriotism, and eager to capitalize on the socializing power of public schooling, school systems worked with an

⁴⁰ Prothero, Religious Literacy, 59-86 most concisely brings these themes together, but they are common, recurrent themes across a breadth of literature discussing a history of education in America.
evangelical zeal toward the religio-cultural assimilation of the Catholic “other,” through the culturally formative efforts of public schools.  

The evolving face of formation in American education

While many have contributed to and described this stream of education as formation in the American experience, John Dewey is one of the most significant catalysts and exemplars from this perspective writing in the field of Education in the past century. Emblematic of a broad range of educational theorists, John Dewey and his progressivist, instrumentalist, pragmatic perspectives, were pivotal in setting the agenda of educational discourse across the 20th century. His work was instrumental in moving educational foundations from theo-centric to naturalistic mindsets, from positivist to constructivist ways of apprehending the world, from embracing a homogenous, normative culture of evangelical American Assimilationism, to rejecting that paradigm in favor of a pluralistic ideology that has become the prevailing motif of (post-)modern multiculturalism.

Dewey was a prolific writer about whom volumes have also been written, and this is no attempt to distill his educational thought into a brief part of this project. Rather, Dewey is used as a lens to help perceive a significant paradigm shift in how education is conceived. His writing on education is many-faceted, but one reform he offers that is integral to many of the facets he addresses and that he himself even describes as being “revolutionary,” has to do with the focus for education. He uses a vignette of an

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41 Prothero, Religious Literacy, 59-86 most concisely brings these themes together, but they are common, recurrent themes across a breadth of literature discussing a history of education in America.
experience he had with a school supply establishment when he was looking for desks that would be more helpful in facilitating education as he understood it. He described his conundrum:

We had a good deal of difficulty in finding what we needed, and finally one dealer, more intelligent than the rest, made this remark: 'I am afraid I have not what you want. You want something at which the children may work; these are all for listening.' That tells the story of the traditional education.... The ordinary schoolroom, with its rows of ugly desks placed in geometrical order, crowded together so there shall be as little moving room as possible, desks almost all of the same size, with just space enough to hold books, pencils and paper... It is all made 'for listening'... it marks the dependency of one mind upon another....It may be summed up by stating that the center of gravity is outside the child.... Now the change which is coming into our education is the shifting of the center of gravity. It is a change, a revolution, not unlike that introduced by Copernicus when the astronomical center shifted from the earth to the sun. In this case the child becomes the sun about which the appliances of education revolve; he is the center about which they are organized.42

Dewey observed that the predominating views of education before this revolution had their center of gravity outside the child. That center of gravity shifts with the paradigm--whether it be the polis of ancient Greece, the Republic, then the Empire for

Rome, Christ or the Church of Christendom, the family or community in other paradigms-- but all external to the learner, intending to shape the learner toward some model of the ideal self/soul/citizen/ideal member of the workforce, etc. Dewey and this secularizing stream of thought, though, tended to focus on an internal center of gravity, that of the autonomous individual as the driving locus for the educational process:

Save as the efforts of the educator connect with some activity which the child is carrying on of his own initiative independent of the educator, education becomes reduced to a pressure from without. It may, indeed, give certain external results, but cannot truly be called educative.43

A more concise summary might also be offered: “The statement so frequently made that education means 'drawing out' is excellent, if we mean simply to contrast it with the process of pouring in.”44 Rather than “education” as a “data dump” of some sort, filling the learner as efficiently as possible with data deemed necessary or helpful by some group of educational experts, this Deweyan approach makes the child/the learner the expert in shaping the educational process. Yet while others in this secularizing model might go so far as to treat the autonomous learner as a radical individual, Dewey’s version insists on both psychological and social components or needs for education.45 In his understanding, the child is no isolated soul, but the child and the educational process are inextricably linked to the community and its “social consciousness,”46 finding

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meaning in relation to the community in which s/he exists. Dewey discusses at length the place of social experience in education and the importance of community in shaping both the learner and the meaning of the educational enterprise. In reflecting on radical social changes society goes through in the process of modernization, he stated in the conclusion of the most widely read and translated of his works:

> If our education is to have any meaning for life, it must pass through an equally complete transformation...To do this means to make each of our schools an embryonic community life... When the school introduces and trains each child of society into a membership within such a little community, saturating him with the spirit of service, and providing him with the instruments of effective self-direction, we shall have the deepest and best guarantee of a larger society which is worthy, lovely and harmonious.”

Alfred North Whitehead, almost an exact contemporary of Dewey writing on the other side of the Atlantic, and also highly influential in transforming Western ways of thinking in the 20th century, was also quite concerned with a process for formation for students that sounds student-centric in ways akin to Dewey’s American pragmatism. In beautiful language that is almost poetic, he depicts education as an aesthetic process:

> Education is the guidance of the individual towards a comprehension of the art of life; and by the art of life I mean the most complete achievement of varied activities expressing the potentialities of that living creature in the face of its

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actual environment. ... Each individual embodies an adventure of existence. The
art of life is the guidance of this adventure.\textsuperscript{48}

Yet he is not so avid in avoiding the external influence Dewey's emphasis on autonomy implies. For Whitehead, education requires leading students into an encounter with the past by which they apprehend valuable resources that can contribute to their own adventure: “It is the function of the scholar to evoke into life wisdom and beauty which, apart from his magic, would remain lost in the past.”\textsuperscript{49}

\textbf{Jaeger's Greek roots to modern \textit{paideia}}

This same intent of mining the wisdom of the past for the formation of emerging generations has been quite evident across the history of education in America. Rooted in both the wisdom of the Classical era, and in the religious heritage so important to the American colonists and revolutionary era, the ideals of America's Founding Fathers were integrated into early education in the growing new country. Those same strands of heritage were what Werner Jaeger built on in his influential educational writing across the first half of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. Though Jaeger wrote almost two centuries after the Founding Fathers wrote their formative documents, the thought that Jaeger systematically pulls together was the grist of the classical education on which most of the Founding Fathers were raised. The dots may not have been so clearly connected for them, but the substance of the \textit{paideia} that Jaeger later described was part of the raw material from which the American foundational documents and American culture were born.

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\textsuperscript{49}Whitehead, 147.
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Among Jaeger's observations include one sounding like it could have come from the pen of Jonathan Winthrop, as he worked to forge a New Jerusalem as a “city (polis) on a hill” in colonial New England. Writing of the emergence and formation of the Church as a corporate, institutional body in the late first and early second centuries, Jaeger noted:

It is significant that… the ideals of the political philosophies of the ancient Greek city-state entered the discussion of the new Christian type of human community, now called the church, but in Greek ekklesia, which originally meant the assembly of the citizens of a Greek polis. 50

Hence the blurring of distinctions between church and society across Constantinian culture, even into the modern era for which Jaeger was writing. With little semantic, often substantive difference thought of between concepts of ekklesia/Church and ekklesia/people of the polis/city, distinction between formational ideals between church and city are also blurred.

Writing in the early 20th century, the German philologist transplant to America, Werner Jaeger, provided a philosophical bridge between educational and spiritual formational thought, and between earlier concepts of religiously oriented formation and emerging concepts of secular civic formation. In doing so, he set the stage for this discussion of habitus formation as an essential element of spiritual fitness in the early 21st century. Jaeger built on Aristotle’s use of the language of hexis (Greek) for the concept,
which has been translated into *habitus*\(^5\) by writers of Latin across the centuries, whence it has come directly into English and other modern languages (and why the term is sometimes italicized, and sometimes not).

Building on his classical philological training, and from the sources of Aristotle and Plato, Jaeger wrote on this ancient Greek conception of education as *paideia*, a kind of virtuous personal formation, which became essential reading for those interested in education as formation. For Jaeger, *paideia* was a translation of classicist thought into Constantinian Christian high modern educational thought. Through the classical Greek, and how those concepts were then brought into the Latin of the Early Church Fathers, Jaeger traced the development of ideas of knowledge (*gnosis*), education (*paideia*), God/Divine Source (*Logos*), the good (*agatha*), and Providence (*pronoia*) the city/political realm (*polis*) and the church (*ekklesia*), all of which are integrally pertinent to current conceptions of education as formation and their inherent challenges.\(^5\)

**Linking *paideia* in Greek philosophy with modern Christian social formation**

Jaeger traced the early Christian appropriation of Greek philosophical heritage in which Plato is thought of much as a pagan Moses, and in which in the Providence (*pronoia*) of God (*Logos*) is “the true *paideia* is the Christian religion itself,”\(^5\) and in which the knowledge/*gnosis* that education/*paideia* conveys is the knowledge/*gnosis* of God. The universal and universalizing nature of Christianity and its Christian *paideia*, is

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\(^5\) I have continued the practice italicizing *habitus* as a term borrowed from another language where authors I’m drawing from do so, but as the term has become more familiar, it has for many been adopted wholesale into English, so following the lead of more recent authors, I have also not been italicizing the term where not quoted in that form.

\(^5\) Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*.

directly rooted in the universal and universalizing character of Hellenistic culture in which and on which Christianity was built.\(^{54}\)

Jaeger traced the connection between the Christian *paideia* and the enduring essential, if often hidden and only partial, goodness of the cosmos by building on Plato whom Jaeger says “stood like a rock with his conviction that the seed of the good is to be found in everything and in the nature of being itself. Only that which he calls the *agathoid* element in all things really ‘is.’”\(^{55}\) *Paideia*-- education as formation-- is here conceived of as the process and art of discerning the God-initiated, *imago dei* that is the good/*agathoid* from the bad. In embracing Plato, biblical thought, and later Stoic thought pertaining to Divine Providence/*pronoia* (language which is also borrowed by the Founding Fathers), Jaeger describes Origen's embracing of Plato's thought:

Christ to Origen was the great teacher, and... Christianity (should be thought of) as the *paideia* of mankind... But Jesus is not a self-appointed human teacher; in him is embodied the divine *Logos*... the coming of the *Logos* to man not only as a human effort but as proceeding form a divine initiative…. God is the pedagogue of the universe, *ho theos paidagoget ton kosmon*. ... Christ is for Origen the educator who transfers these sublime ideas to reality... *Paideia* is thus the gradual fulfillment of the divine providence.”\(^{56}\)

Jaeger’s assessment of the significance of Jesus as God’s agent in the world, then, was not centered on Jesus as personal salvific event, but as the *Logos* made flesh-- the

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\(^{54}\) Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*, 63.

\(^{55}\) Jaeger, *Early Christianity and Greek Paideia*, 64.

great teacher of the Mind of God as the art of Divine living -- thus the role of religion as the formation of humanity into the image and *Logos* of God. The *paideia* of the Church was in this way, to form individuals into Godly ways, following the mind/*Logos* of Christ, which would naturally then follow the moral and ethical example of Christ. Or in Bourdieu’s language, the *paideia* could be described as the social process of formation through religion of moral habitus that must then be subjectivized by the individual, and when thus subjectivized in lived habitus, thereby enfleshes the *Logos* of God in society and its individuals as “redeemed” through this education in *paideia*.

Jaeger thus traced through Origen the moral agency of the individual that is often thought of as the ground of human dignity in secular Western thought. The humanist conception of universal human dignity follows this line of thought in tracing its roots from classical Greco-Roman thought on education, through its evolution into modes of Christian formation in Origen, beginning to take recognizable form through the Enlightenment, and growing into popular Western culture across the 20th century. Across more than fifteen centuries of Constantinian Christian culture, Jaeger asserts that personal formation was understood in this way as the process of growing into the likeness of Christ. In Jaeger’s high modern emphasis on the intellectual life, formation/*paideia* come to be understood as growing into the knowledge and habits of the Divine Mind.

With this intellectual focus, Jesus as Divine Model for humanity and “great teacher,” could readily survive the disenchanting of the world57 that has been a central

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57 “Disenchanting” of religion and culture as a key theme of secularization is a theme of many thinkers, notably Max Weber, and explored most fully in this project through the work of Charles Taylor to which I will later return.
facet of secularization across a Western culture “divested of its more numinous qualities.” That disenchanted Jesus could still hold popular relevance for a non-theistic emerging modernity that has led to secularism. Jaeger’s understanding of paideia can thus readily translate his understanding of the process of spiritual formation into secular personal formation through education: The secularized imago dei becomes foundational to the “universal human dignity” central to non-religious moral frameworks, and becomes the content of philosophy-become-education/paideia, that could be described as the guiding theme Jaeger offers for education in the modern world. From this universal and universalizing paradigm that is characteristic of Constantinian Christian religion and culture, Jaeger and his culture would have assumed that this paradigm of formation was universally applicable to all persons and societies.

Writing from assumptions of early twentieth century “Christian” Europe—or perhaps more accurately, “Constantinian Christian” Europe, in which religion, politics and culture are inextricably interwoven—Jaeger did not seem to think of the hybridization of Christian and secular civic formation to be problematic. He thought it instead, to be the substance of public education and at the heart of the Constantinian Christian cultural form embraced in his time. Largely developing his thought in Germany between the two World Wars, the suffering caused by clashing Constantintian step-children significantly undermined Jaeger’s cognitive, logo-centric foundation. Some might then conclude that the devastation wrought by 20th century Constantinian Christian

58A handy, if understated phrase used by Peter Berger in The Sacred Canopy (p. 111), specifically in reference to a disenchanting of the sacraments, but an applicable concise rendering of the broader idea of disenchantment.
culture is ample evidence that Jaeger’s framework might be less than adequate.

**From Aristotelian paideia to Bourdieu’s habitus**

From Jaeger’s highly rationalized early 20\textsuperscript{th} century context, perhaps it was easy for him to focus on the merely cognitive end of Aristotle’s work. Jaeger seems to have been most concerned-- perhaps almost exclusively--with the formation of the mind. However, Aristotle-- who provided many of the foundation stones of both Jaeger and Bourdieu’s work-- was concerned with the practice (hexis/habitus) of virtue in two forms:

Virtue, then, is of two sorts, virtue of thought and virtue of character. Virtue of thought arises and grows mostly from teaching, and hence needs experience and time. Virtue of character [i.e. of *eethos*] results from habit [*ethos*]; hence its name 'ethical', differing slightly from 'ethos'. Virtue comes about, not by a process of nature, but by habituation-- Hence it is also clear that none of the virtues of character arises in us naturally.\textsuperscript{59}

While seemingly unrecognized by Jaeger, it is this distinction Aristotle makes between merely knowing what virtue is, and becoming virtuous, that seems to have been a part of what Bourdieu in the late 20th century was addressing in his work on habitus. If Jaeger had had the benefit of Bourdieu’s conception of habitus, this distinction might have instead been highlighted in embracing not only Jesus as Divine Logos and moral teacher, but Jesus as source and substance for social virtue as well. Had Jaeger and Bourdieu been able to have a discussion, Jaeger may well have described this virtuous

Jesus as the pedagogue of Divine habitus in the world. Such an understanding of formative education seems to be a bridge between the Classical influence that was so important to the Founding Fathers, the parallel Christian worldview of the time, and education as formation/paideia in the modern secular world. Consistent with the emphases of the times, though, Jaeger’s focus was more on intellectual formation and was less overtly concerned with the behavioral patterns of virtue.

Thinking and writing the foundational documents of modern democratic politics out of their classical education steeped in ancient Greek and Roman images, the Founding Fathers brought Aristotle’s hexis, which became “habitus” in Latin for the Church Fathers, into early modern discourse. This is the heritage of the term that Bourdieu brought into academic discourse in the late 20th century. But Aristotle was writing more as an educator than as the sociologist Bourdieu was, so he wrote of hexis/habitus as an intentional tool of education and formation. Aristotle concisely summarized his concept of formation as follows:

*The importance of habituation (hexis)*--

To sum up, then, in a single account: A state [of character] arises from [the repetition of] similar activities. Hence we must display the right activities.... It is not unimportant, then, to acquire one sort of habit or another, right from our youth; rather, it is very important, indeed all-important.

*What is the right sort of habituation?*

Our present inquiry does not aim, as our others do, at study; for the
purpose of our examination is not to know what virtue is, but to become good...\textsuperscript{60}

Aristotle’s ancient work on \textit{hexis}/\textit{habitus} has had great impact on education across the centuries, becoming an integral facet of what has been called the “background picture” of Western Culture, the substance of which tends to be taken for granted as common knowledge.\textsuperscript{61} But as we have seen, Aristotle was insistent that \textit{hexis}/\textit{habitus} was necessarily formed in both virtue of thought and virtue of practice, both facets of which are important for a more full apprehension of the practice/\textit{hexis}/\textit{habitus} of virtue. Later in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, Bourdieu reclaims that essential, \textit{embodied} facet of the \textit{practice} of virtue in his use of the term habitus. This distinction and emphasis between and inclusive of the formation of both habits of mind and the dispositional, behavioral habitus Bourdieu describes, is central to the insight I build on in this dissertation. The core argument I make in this study is that it is this embodiment of virtuous living and dispositions-- even more so than the merely cognitive exercise of coming to know about virtue-- that is at the heart of spiritual fitness and the resilience it conveys.

Though Jaeger did not explore the more recent usage of habitus that Bourdieu brought into academic discourse, the common sources in early thought on \textit{hexis}/\textit{habitus} that both Jaeger and Bourdieu more recently built upon suggests connections for fruitful exploration. While Pierre Bourdieu certainly didn’t invent the concept of habitus, he further developed the term for the modern context and helped popularize the term in academic discourse in recent decades. Bourdieu scholar Omar Lizardo summarized the

\textsuperscript{60}Aristotle, \textit{Nicomachean Ethics}, 35, 2.11, 2.12, italics in translation.

\textsuperscript{61}Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}. 

lineage of the term:

Habitus is a concept originally introduced by Aristotle, re-worked by Thomas Aquinas and used sporadically and unsystematically by some 19th century European social theorists. The notion was revived and recruited for understanding the practical embodied bases of action by the French sociologist Marcel Mauss and the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty. But it was only in the work of the French sociologist/ anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu that the concept was re-introduced with a more systematic intent into social theory as a viable analytic tool for the job of accounting for the cognitive components of action. 62

Shaped in part by influences of French “social history” movements prevalent in his day-- lenses also focused on impacts of social milieux and phenomena as product of social processes-- his writing might appear to suggest that habitus merely “is,” rather than that habitus can be intentionally shaped by social institutions. Bourdieu also brought the term of habitus into recent academic discourse in the service of his critical agenda, but the descriptive and analytic nature of his observations lend his model of habitus well to the description and analysis of formative processes that is important in this study. His emphasis on the embodiment of habitus into attitudinal and behavioral dispositions, into a person’s “second nature” tastes and inclinations and behavioral patterns, along with the shaping of the mind, is a very useful analytical tool that goes far beyond most cognitive

or educational models I’ve thus far encountered. It is for this reason that I have found his framework so useful for shaping and fleshing out this project.

Bourdieu was a critical sociologist, though, rather than an educator, so was more concerned with description and critique, rather than with developing tools for formation as I am here. His oft quoted description of habitus, seemingly removing it from the realm of “free will,” can seem to be problematic for those invested in personal autonomy:

*Habitus* is neither a result of free will, nor determined by structures, but created by a kind of interplay between the two over time: dispositions that are both shaped by past events and structures, and that shape current practices and structures and also, importantly, that condition our very perceptions of these….In this sense *habitus* is created and reproduced unconsciously, ‘without any deliberate pursuit of coherence… without any conscious concentration.’  

As he elaborated this concept, he clarified his language of the objectivization of social groups and the “unconscious” embedding of habitus, depicting how the “social order is progressively inscribed in people’s minds (through) ‘cultural products’ including systems of education, language, judgments, values, methods of classification and activities of everyday life.”  

And as with any set of learned patterns, any set of habitus is neither necessarily virtuous nor problematic, but merely a description of such characteristic patterns, all of which together, when they become expressed and embodied

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64 Bourdieu, *Distinction*, 471.
65 Habitus is both the singular and plural form of the word—one can explore a single type of habitus, or a range of many habitus with the one spelling covering both fronts.
as pre-reflexive “second nature,” can be described as habitus. The term can be a very helpful analytic and descriptive tool, yet it merely describes patterns, tendencies and dispositions without value judgment.

As a descriptive tool of a range of embodied characteristics, the term could be just as readily used to describe habitus of felons as of saints, as capable of describing the habitus of die-hard Nazis as of describing the habitus of patriots who bleed in red, white and blue, as descriptive of observable patterns in professional soccer player or academics. Habitus in and of itself, it is not a word conveying any ethical value one way or another, but is intended as a useful tool for describing formed and embodied cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral patterns, tendencies, dispositions and tastes.

The content and processes that Bourdieu describes with the language of habitus that is often quoted as defining the term:

The objects of knowledge are constructed, not passively recorded…the principle of this construction is the system of structured, structuring dispositions, the habitus, which is constituted in practice and is always oriented toward practical functions (in other words)…The conditionings… produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations … without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends…”

Or more concisely put, “The habitus, a product of history, produces individual and

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67 Bourdieu, Logic, 52-53.
collective practices—more history—in accordance with the schemes generated by history.”

Bourdieu’s critical approach can perhaps overshadow other essential facets of his insights on habitus as a useful, descriptive term as distinct from his critical model. Through his sociological lenses, he observes primarily what happens “to” the subjects and people groups he studies as products of their social milieu. As a sociologist rather than an educator, Bourdieu’s disciplinary inclination was to be descriptive of what he observed, hence his concern more with the description of what he saw as the fact of habitus formation. His concern was not primarily with understanding how to engineer an intentional content of habitus in the formation and shaping of social groups, as is the concern of educators. His intent does not seem to have been focused on exploring agentive efforts of subjects, people groups or their institutions whose impact his work describes. However, the descriptive lenses he provided can certainly be put to use for that purpose, as is my intent. As such, where Jaeger’s concept of paideia helps build bridges to connect the domains of educational and spiritual formation, Bourdieu’s formulation of habitus provides a helpful fleshing out of the necessarily embodied facets of formation toward resilience much more effectively than other work on formative education I have been able to find. To the mechanisms of habitus formation I will return across this project, but especially in the following chapter.

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68 Bourdieu, Logic, 54.
**Formation and challenges in resilience**

When those exploring education within a paradigm of “formation” all use language that embraces resources of the past and of various strands of culture in various ways, it is easy for a mirage of commonality to appear amidst their discourse. For most people across most of time and human experience, their development or formation of what might be called “spiritual fitness” has not been so much “intentional” as it has been traditional-- raised in ways that are functional to form emerging lives to fit as numerous cogs in the great machine of human society. Many educational thinkers would not even call this “education,” but something else entirely. Cultural or religious paradigms have provided the models toward which the student on the popular scale was to be molded for most of those many centuries. Yet “education” that had been intended to form persons into more than uncritical human cogs—though not accessible on the popular scale as it is today-- has been functional for thousands of years. Only relatively recently have mechanisms and frameworks of meaning emerged for the larger populace, in which ideal models for formation are not drawn exclusively from traditional or religious sources.

If formation is shaping the habits of mind and dispositional habitus of who people are as selves/souls who are active, purposive agents in the world, much of that “purposiveness” of human agency is guided by the forming society toward forming the self/soul for its social role in the continuation and advancement of its society. For many centuries across Western culture, the common good of society toward which these formation processes were aimed (at least on the popular scale), had been shaped by one relatively homogenous religio-cultural framework of “civil religion” so visible in various
forms across the 20th century, herein described as Constantinian Christian culture. Though bringing its own baggage and closet full of skeletons, I argue that the relatively unified set of formational ideals organic to and cultivated by that culture, was broadly supportive of a common habitus of resilience that had been reinforced by a range of socio-cultural infrastructures.

Lawrence Cremin traced the evolution of education in America in his extensive works on the history of education that are together sometimes called *American Paideia*. He traced the changes from a more religious/public hybrid form of formation, to the ascendance of values of personal autonomy in education. His broad narrative also explores challenges coming with this evolution—primarily traced along three domains of popularization, multitudinousness, and politicization. He noted that the debate over what education should provide is at the same time, a debate over what vision of the country might prevail. But along with the “multitudinousness” of sources and forms of education, notions of individualism and consequent notions of pluralism have become more central features of public formational frameworks in emerging secular culture. This consequent pluralization of frameworks of meaning has splintered the former social support for a relatively unified framework for resilience. While such a pluralism can be eagerly embraced for many reasons, the loss of common social support for resilience has yet to be broadly recognized or addressed in effective ways.

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CHAPTER II

HABITUS AS A LENS FOR EXPLORING MECHANISMS OF FORMATION

Intentionality in habitus formation

Bourdieu’s disciplinary inclination as a sociologist was to be merely descriptive of social phenomena--but built on Classical and Aristotelian sources exploring virtuous formation-- the field of Education has the intent to go beyond mere observation to the shaping of souls and society. When reading Bourdieu’s work with the eyes of an educator intentionally attempting to discern the source of formation, rather than with sociological lenses aimed at merely describing the facts of formation, a somewhat hidden picture becomes visible.

Revisiting Bourdieu’s concise depiction of what he meant by habitus with the eyes of an educator, the difference in disciplinary perspective becomes more apparent:

The objects of knowledge are constructed, not passively recorded…the principle of this construction is the system of structured, structuring dispositions, the habitus, which is constituted in practice and is always oriented toward practical functions (in other words)…The conditionings… produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations … without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends…”

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If habitus is “constructed” as Bourdieu described, what might be mechanisms of that construction be, and where might a creative source and intent be inserted? If the dispositions described by habitus are “shaped,” who might be able to take a hand in the sculpting, and how? If how subjects perceive the world as “conditioned,” who might have the capacity to condition them and how? If these habitus are “reproduced” and “inscribed in people’s minds,” what are the mechanisms of reproduction and inscription, who might be able to contribute to the shaping those mechanisms, and how?

In Bourdieu’s using terms such as “constructed… structured… constituted… conditionings” to describe the “transposable dispositions” of habitus as quoted above, Bourdieu makes clear that habitus of any kind is always learned-- sometimes through intentionally engineered, formal methods, at other times, by mere social happenstance. He notes that while much of any habitus is “unconsciously inscribed” in people’s lives, that habitus is also shaped by social institutions which include many having the capacity to be intentionally formative.

Further supporting the assessment that Bourdieu’s framework can be applied to both the intentional efforts of formative institutions as well as to accidental habitus formation, is his well-known concept of “fields.” Bourdieu describes these fields as various social contexts, each with its own ends: “which are the various social and institutional arenas in which people express and reproduce their dispositions, and where they compete for the distribution of different kinds of capital.”

71 Bourdieu, Distinction, 471.
institutions in different “arenas” of life “reproduce their dispositions.” As pointed out by Navarro, these various fields are often institutions with distinct, intentional agendas in which an integral part of their institutional life are engineered and active means of self-replication and reproduction, examples of which he offers: “a network, structure or set of relationships which may be intellectual, religious, educational, cultural, etc.” So while it may well be true that habitus are unconsciously developed or inscribed from the subjects’ perspective, shapers of many of these fields intentionally design and develop distinct habitus for those fields by intentional agentive action.

The fields of education, religion, sport and military ethics are all clear examples of fields with distinct and intentionally developed habitus. The habitus of these fields can become “unconsciously inscribed” into the lives of participants, but are nonetheless intentionally designed and developed by the leaders of the institutions in which those participants take part. All of these fields are what could be called “intentional institutions” which design their systems in various ways to produce and foster given dispositions, tastes, attitudes, disciplines, habits of mind and behavioral patterns within their respective fields. These fields usually also entail intentionally designed systems, tools and processes of self-replication that are essential and are an integral part of their design. Public schools, religion and the military are all intentional shapers of habitus which clearly engineer particular formative experiences in order to develop sets of habitus for particular and institutionally defined purposes.

Where Bourdieu shaped his language of habitus to merely describe what is observable, the formative agenda integral to each of the fields of the military, education and religion is to intentionally shape, cultivate and reinforce those same dispositional characteristics Bourdieu includes in his understanding of habitus. In that sense, while following Bourdieu’s descriptive model, dispositional characteristics of habitus are “unconsciously inscribed,” onto souls and society-- the product of that inscription is often intentionally engineered by the educational and religious institutions that Bourdieu describes as impacting habitus. It is the intentionality of habitus formation of this class of fields of intentional institutions—most specifically those fields of the military, public schools and religion—that is the primary concern of this study.

I recognize that not all fields could be described in this way, and so I recognize that not all types of habitus are intentionally shaped. The social life of a prison or a playground, pedestrian habits in a large city, the habitus of homelessness and more, could not be considered such “intentional institutions”—yet those contexts still produce distinct habitus. While these, too, are some of the “fields” Bourdieu had in mind, these could be described as that class of “accidental, unintentional” fields, as distinct from those intentional fields I mentioned above. I hope it is clear by this discussion that I am making no attempt at re-defining or adapting the concept of habitus as Bourdieu has brought it into recent discourse. My intent is to merely clarify Bourdieu’s description of observable habitus as being shaped in at least two distinct ways—formed with intentionality through what I’m identifying as intentional institutions, and through formation by socio-cultural accident.
The intentional institutions of public education, religion, and the U.S. Army, each carries its own habitus of formation, all of which are intentionally designed and inculcated in their participants. It is probably safe to say that all social fields carry with them ranges of habitus such as fashions and fads that are unintentionally formed alongside those habitus that may be intentionally formed. In that sense, where some habitus are merely accidental, unintentional products of social dynamics, other habitus across a range of fields can be—and often are—distinctly and intentionally engineered with the express purpose of inculcating distinct dispositions, tastes, habits of mind, and embodied reactions to given contexts.

**Mechanisms for intentionality in habitus formation**

While at first glance Bourdieu seems to focus more on the accidental acquisition of the dispositions he refers to with the term “habitus,” Lizardo helps to clarify this limited understanding of Bourdieu’s paradigm of habitus. Lizardo provides a study of original documents in which he well demonstrates that both Aristotle and Aquinas assert that the central role of education and formation is the intentional engineering of processes toward the acquisition of this same collection of dispositions. And as pointed out in the previous chapter, while Bourdieu’s habitus is often thought of as merely unintentional conveyance of social forms, I argue that his paradigm is, like Aristotle’s, inclusive of intentionally engineered transmission of embodied habits and dispositions. Lizardo’s scholarship points out that Aristotle’s language of *hexis* (translated into Latin as “habitus”) refers to “an acquired, trained disposition to engage in certain modes of activity when encountering particular objects or situations.” He goes on to indicate
Aquinas’s rendering, in which “the full virtuous personality is one who has, through effort and training, cultivated the proficiency to act in the morally required manner without effort; that is, a person for whom moral behavior becomes second nature.”\(^{74}\)

Whether with Bourdieu’s paradigm in which social structures structure structuring habitus, or with Aristotle’s model of virtue formation exhorting people to choose to cultivate habituated patterns, these resultant cultivated habitus then form the substance of virtuous or resilient action. It is then the habituated and habitual exercise of these habitus that reinforce the habits of mind and embodied dispositions to exercise those same virtuous and resilient habitus. Four specific domains of mechanisms for forming, cultivating and reinforcing resilient and virtuous habitus are explored in this chapter. These mechanisms include:

1. The disciplined, embodied practice of physical habits and dispositions shaped by particular contexts, such as athletic practice,

2. The regular, often embodied practice of spiritual disciplines, such as through prayer and or the use of scripture,

3. The *anamnetic* shaping and conveying of meaning, as through the use of ritual and icon, and

4. The conviviality of shared experience and conversation by which that shared, communal experience is ingrafted into socio-cultural frameworks of meaning.

Note, too, that all of these mechanisms of habitus formation are socially grounded, defined, prescribed, and--even when individually practiced--gain their meaningful

\(^{74}\) Lizardo, 1,2, Lizardo’s italics.
substance only through their social shaping and context.

Returning for a moment to Aristotle as mentioned in the previous chapter, Aristotle makes clear that this kind of virtue is of two sorts, shaped by two parallel processes, one centered on the mind, one on embodied action, that is, in character:

“Virtue of thought arises and grows mostly from teaching… virtue of character results from habit.”\textsuperscript{75} Aristotle’s \textit{hexis/habitus}, is a matter of cultivated habits shaped by series of decisions that build and reinforce those virtuous \textit{hexis/habitus}: “virtue, then, is a state that decides…”\textsuperscript{76} to develop \textit{hexis/habitus} supportive of patterns of virtuous action through “the repetition of similar activities.”\textsuperscript{77} If resilience is conceived of as being a product of a habitus of resilient mindsets and lifeways, not only are \textit{hexeis/habitus} capable of being formed throughout one’s life, by an intentional reordering of cognitive and behavioral frameworks, non-resilient habitus can be transformed into newer, more resilient patterns of thought and action, that, in their continued practice and habituation, are continually cultivated and reinforced to develop a new inertia of resilience. Mechanisms for shaping both cognitive and behavioral patterns and dispositions will thus be here explored.

**Intentional habitus formation in the field of sports**

The field of sport is an easily accessible field of intentional habitus formation, and can provide some familiar and helpful examples. In my earlier school years, physical fitness was never stressed, to the extent that it was never really talked about at all. Among the school athletes, though, the story was different. Physical fitness habits were

\textsuperscript{76} Aristotle, \textit{EE}, ii.6.
\textsuperscript{77} Aristotle, \textit{EE}, ii.1.
both taught intentionally by coaches, as well as being informally reinforced and expanded on by peers. The dispositions and tastes toward more interest in working out were further reinforced by that fact that those who excelled due to heightened physical fitness and skills had more playing time and became school heroes for it. But outside of the school athletes, “physical fitness” was often foreign to the whole mindset, habits of mind, and dispositions the habits and patterns of behavior fostered by the school, and therefore, were not organically formed in students by the school.

Then the first “fitness craze” of the 1970s started making its way through ordinary culture, which included both the growing emphasis of physical exercise, and the growing emphasis on the food put into the body. “Junk food” was seemingly discovered as a fitness issue, so social language, habits of mind and dispositional habitus started changing. Now, whether a person follows any exercise or dietary regimen, the mentality and habitus of physical fitness have become second nature or common sense.

I argue in this project that the same kind of social change has been happening across the same time period in terms of spiritual fitness, but in reverse. Spiritual concerns, prayer in public settings, public sentiments of “God bless America” were once commonplace, making spiritual habits of mind and habitus a part of the common sense background picture of the culture. The broad range of dysfunctional social issues that also came along with that Constantinian culture, are not here being overlooked or ignored. The emphasis here, rather, is to highlight a seemingly under-recognized or under-appreciated by-product of that change from hegemonic Constantinian culture, that of a shift from a commonality in spiritually inclusive habitus and language, to a common
language and mindset in which the formerly natural use of spiritual or metaphysical language is now rare, out of place, even perhaps eccentric. That language has been all but completely removed from public space, and along with it, the “second nature” sense of spiritual language, concepts, and resources.  

It might help to imagine an example of a neighborhood soccer game in progress. Those already playing have been trained in the habitus of the game, and whether successful or not, whether they choose to follow the rules or not, have a “scheme” laid out in which they not only “know” what to do, but their bodies are trained to the dispositions according to the habitus they have formed. When a ball comes flying through the air toward a well-habituated player, the player “unconsciously” might let the ball hit the ground first before kicking it, or without thinking about it, heads the ball in the direction of the goal or another player in a pass. The same ball coming to another player new to the game might “instinctively” grab for the ball with hands, but when called on the penalty, readily recognizes that she is not following the “scheme” of the game.

A friend new to the neighborhood stops by and is invited to play, but this friend has not been brought up in the “habitus” of the game, and neither “knowing” the scheme of the game, nor having the habitus embodied into her muscular rhythms, struggles to keep up. Another player-- this time the bully of the group, fully aware of and habituated to the schemes of the game, frustrated with the newcomer and eager to show his dominance-- kicks the ball several times into the new player’s face, and then intentionally

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78 Taylor, *A Secular Age.*
bowls the new player over. In both instances, the bully “knows” such behaviors do not follow the scheme nor habitus of the game, but as a free agent, chooses to break the rules.

Bourdieu’s understanding of institutionally rooted habitus formation can be seen in this illustration with the example of soccer, where habitus within various fields and contexts often functions “unconsciously” with the force of “second nature.” But the intent here is to demonstrate the fact that, in many fields, this same “unconscious” and “second nature” functionality of habitus can, often is, and should be intentionally engineered.

I demonstrate in what follows how a habitus of resilience based in a “public” form of what could be called spiritual fitness, had been engineered and built into the hegemonic Constantinian socio-cultural infrastructure. That publicly conveyed form of resilience through spiritual fitness was sustained, cultivated and reinforced by Western Culture for more than a millennia through a common public habitus inclusive of a purposive hegemonic framework of meaning. I demonstrate at the same time, though, that this habitus of resilience with which this study is concerned-- though previously grounded in religion-- need not be necessarily tethered to religion. I demonstrate in this way that habitus of resilience through a variety of models of spiritual fitness—just as a variety of habitus of soccer—can and should be intentionally engineered and inculcated appropriately through institutions of “public” agency, such as public schools and the U.S. Army.

All persons come into the world and are “unconsciously” formed into contexts that have posited physical, social, economic, moral, and cultural frameworks and habitus
which function as posited while persons grow into their worlds. Both soccer and the U.S. Army are such contexts, or “fields” in Bourdieu’s terminology, that function with distinctly posited habitus. While the individual participants in each of those fields may be unintentional or unconscious in their habitus formation as a soccer player or as a Soldier within that field-- the distinct habitus of those fields are, nonetheless, quite intentionally formed. The coaches and military leaders who convey those fields across time and place are quite intentional in conveying specific and appropriate habitus to those fields, and are equally intentional in their efforts to squelch habitus inappropriate to those fields. The “how” of that habitus conveyance is in the domain of education and training in the broader sense.

“Education” is the process by which one generation of parents, coaches, leaders of whatever field, intentionally engineer and form a framework of habitus in order to bring up contributing participants within the given “field” in which they live. Whether for soccer or schooling, military or artistic fields-- while many domains of habitus are merely imparted by practical social accident, education of various sorts is a domain by which the distinct habitus of given fields are intentionally conveyed:

Education is such a natural and universal function of society that many generations accept and transmit it without question or discussion: thus the first mention of it in literature is relatively late. Its content is roughly the same in every nation-- it is both moral and practical. It consisted partly of commandments...partly of ancient rules of practical wisdom and prescriptions of external morality; and partly of those professional skills and traditions which ...
the Greeks named *techne*.\(^79\)

If a social context is such that the community provides formal “education,” that formal locus of education can become central to intentional habitus formation in various given fields for better or worse, as has been the case with current models of public schooling. In the world of the 21\(^{st}\) century, public institutions of schooling, sports, religion, and the military have become ubiquitous domains of the social structures which “inscribe” habitus of various forms onto emerging generations.

**Religious habitus formation practices as a Chain of Memory**

I am building in this study on the much older, constructive uses of the concept of habitus found in Aristotle and others on which Bourdieu grounded his thought, which were used to understand how both secular and religious persons and communities are formed. But I am at the same time, building on Bourdieu’s more holistic descriptive model of habitus to help flesh out embodied aspects of resilience through spiritual practices and habits of mind, rather than merely focusing along the lines of Bourdieu’s critical perspective. As such, I’m using the term to be inclusive of learned patterns of various sorts—embodied patterns of behavior, dispositions, taste, mindsets, and attitudes, all of which together form a given habitus.

Intentional habitus formation in sports entails both the formation of cognitive components (learning rules, strategies, etc.) as well as embodied physical habits and dispositions. Embodied frameworks of meaning such as religion and sports have this set of characteristics in common, hence functional similarities are evident between...

intentional and disciplined practices as related to habitus formation between sports and religion. Neither sports nor religion are organic to human biology, nor autonomously developed, but as Wittgenstein showed, all meaning systems, from individual concepts to sports to metaphysical meaning structures such as religion, are socially constructed.\textsuperscript{80}  

Sociologist of Religion Danielle Hervieu-Leger, has pointed out that meaning systems are not only socially constructed, but conveyed from person to person, generation to generation, through socially constructed, maintained and conveyed “chains of memory.”\textsuperscript{81}  

In her insightful work \textit{Religion as a Chain of Memory}, Hervieu-Leger focused on roles of memory and material and ritual components of re-constituting memory in theorizing mechanisms by which modern Catholicism is, and is not, being conveyed across generations in modern France. A concise summary of her framework is as follows (italics in original):

All religion implies that collective memory is mobilized... All of them have at their base the essentially \textit{normative} character of religious memory... In the case of religious memory, the normativity of collective memory is reinforced by the fact of the group's defining itself, objectively and subjectively, as a \textit{lineage} of belief. And so its formation and reproductiveness spring entirely from the efforts of memory feeding this self-definition. At the source of all religious belief, as we have seen, there is belief in the continuity of the lineage of believers. This continuity transcends history. It is affirmed and manifested in the essentially


\textsuperscript{81} Daniele Hervieu-Leger, \textit{Religion as a Chain of Memory}, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2000).
religious act of recalling a past which gives meaning to the present and contains the future. The practice of *anamnesis*, of the recalling to memory of the past, is most often observed as a rite. And what characterizes a religious rite in relation to all other forms of social ritualization is that the regular repetition of a ritually set pattern of word and gesture exists in order to mark the passage of time... with the recall of the foundational events that enabled the chain to form and/or affirm its power to persist through whatever vicissitudes have come, and will still come.”82

*Anamnesis* is a key theme in this framework, and is a term related to memory, but not merely memory itself. As Hervieu-Leger mentions above and describes in her work, *anamnesis* is “the recalling to memory of the past, most often observed as a rite.”

Familiar paradigmatic rites through which this occurs include the Mass for Roman Catholics, communion for Protestant Christians, Passover, or *Pesach* in Judaism, and the rituals of the *Hajj* in Islam. It is not the past of mere history or mundane memory that is the substance of *anamnesis*, but the intentional, habituated recalling of formative elements of the past around which religious identities are built and by which the resources of the religion are apprehended by the individual participant. Central to this concept of religion as a chain of memory, is not merely the conveyance of traditions through the passing of mere intellectual content across time, but the more holistic conveyance of a habitus, a way of being, as Bourdieu described. The concept also concerns what may enable “the chain to form and/or affirm its power to persist through

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82Hervieu-Leger, 124-125, author's italics.
whatever vicissitudes have come, and will still come.”\textsuperscript{83} This is the capacity for which Bourdieu uses the term “subjectivizing,” and what may also be referred to as the individual’s apprehension\textsuperscript{84} of the resources of the faith. This personalizing of religious phenomena is what provides the functional “connectivity” with those resources through whatever existential vicissitudes a person will face across the struggles of life.

Without using the terminology of this chain of memory, others seem to describe much of the same idea. Bourdieu’s description of the conveyance of habitus, Michael Polanyi’s concept of “conviviality,” and Gottleib here, all refer in various ways to what could be called the habitus of spiritual practice:

There is hardly any form of spirituality, traditional or contemporary, that does not emphasize the importance of spiritual discipline expressed in the repetitive performance of prayer, meditation, physical postures, activities of service, intensive study of religious texts, chanting, systemic moral self-examination, trance work, or the like. Without practice, Sufi teacher Idries Shah suggests, all we can get from sacred texts and philosophical abstractions is like someone ‘sending you a kiss by messenger.’\textsuperscript{85}

In their habituated use, these practices form the links in the religious chains of memory, practiced through the spiritual disciplines and habitus of “spiritual fitness.” They are the key elements of spiritual fitness this study explores.

\textsuperscript{83} Hervieu-Leger, 125.
\textsuperscript{84} “Apprehension” of spirituality as subjectivizing, making personal, taking on as one’s own.
\textsuperscript{85} Gottleib, 93.
Returning to soccer to explore mechanisms of intentional habitus formation

Returning to the image of exploring soccer habitus formation in the familiar field of sports may help clarify. The rules of the game of soccer and the knowledge of the techniques of the sport constitute the cognitive substance of the habitus of soccer. As with other educationally formed subjects, the process of players learning the game includes a “subjectivization” over time of those objective rules and parameters into the habitus of the individual player. The embodied physical expressions of the techniques and parameters of the game—kicking rather than hitting or grabbing, running rather than walking, embodied signals and dispositions such as relating to staying within boundaries and the like, constitute some of the physical behaviors and dispositions of the habitus of soccer.

Whether more or less intentional, each of these different habitus are, as Bourdieu describes habitus, socially and culturally inscribed. For each team and each game, it could be rightly said of soccer with Bourdieu’s language:

The habitus—embodied history, internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history—is the active presence of the whole past of which it is the product. As such, it is what gives practices their relative autonomy with respect to external determinations of the immediate present.  

Most of the play in most games, despite the clear intent to play hard and win, is played from ingrained habitus rather than intentional thought. Players generally don’t “think” when the ball comes their direction, or when they see an opponent break free.

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86 Bourdieu, Logic, 56.
from other blockers and charge for an unprotected goal— they react with the “relative
autonomy” of an ingrained, practiced habitus. Within the ingrained habitus pertaining to
parameters and dispositions defined by the game, the league, and the teams’ respective,
often overlapping habitus, each player capitalizes on his or her own skillset in each given
situation almost entirely without intentional thought.

The common habitus of the game—not merely the rules, but the embodied
“second nature” of using feet and head but not hands (unless a goalie, or throwing the
ball in from out of bounds), the visceral desire to make a goal, to block opponents trying
the same, to “give 110%,” and more-- remain the same across cultures, demographics and
geography. The habitus of the game that makes the game “soccer” are intentionally
conveyed by coaches through organized practices, defined individual drills, team and
league cultures and more, habitus conveyed by the same means across cultures, age
groups and across the globe.

Whether with soccer or with other fields shaped by education, habitus
subjectivization is an important facet of what Bourdieu describes with the processes of
habitus and the intent of effective education. That intent toward individual
subjectivization or apprehending of the habitus at hand is not a foregone conclusion of
any context. Many know the game of soccer, and many of those-- though far from all--
have subjectivized the dispositions, tastes, desire and such of the sport. Many “know”
the game but don’t have the drive, disposition, tastes nor motivation to get out and play—
those could be said to have obtained an intellectual understanding of the game, but not
acquired the habitus. The same, of course, could be said of any other field.
Once the game is well-learned, players in soccer don’t have to think about following rules and techniques—in large part they merely follow embodied habituated behavior patterns. Likewise, habitus in any field is inclusive as well of dispositions and both cognitive attitudes and embodied reactions that shape, or at least lend the weight of the inertia of a habituated pattern, to distinct potential courses of action in the face of given sets of stimuli. Generally without thinking about it, a player sees the trajectory of a ball in relation to her own position on the field, to team-mates, to opponents and to the goal. Certain courses of action or reaction form unbidden to the trained mind, while the player at the same time, might consciously think of other, more unexpected but beneficial tactics that she may or may not follow, all within split second timing.

Habitus of soccer or in any other field, are of course not formed merely by reading a rule book, watching a video depicting the game, nor shaped alone by posters on walls proclaiming motivational slogans. Each of these may be important components to any given habitus cultivation, but, alone, are insufficient. Hence the need to now explore avenues and mechanisms of habitus formation.

The following mechanisms of habitus formation, while discussed in terms of formation of habitus for spiritual fitness, are like unto the mechanisms for the formation of the habitus of soccer. Keeping in mind how the function in soccer might help clarify how they apply to spiritual fitness habitus formation. Habitus for soccer are developed via intentional and regular disciplines of practice that entail both habits of mind and body, and shape dispositions as well, and are qualitatively related to the regularity of the practice of the disciplines. The regular practice of “spiritual disciplines” soon to be
discussed, functions in the same way in relation to the formation of habitus of spiritual fitness. The institutional and social expression of leagues, playing seasons, tournaments and such, function to provide socially expressed, formed and embodied “chains of memory” that carry the sport, its meanings, content, and experience across time and place.

**Bourdieu’s clues in habitus for how religious chains of memory function**

The institutionally shaped and warranted rites of religion functions as a “chain of memory” for religious and spiritual identities and meanings in the same way. The shared experiences and conversation around the experiences of soccer invests and reinvests meaning into the experience, while at the same time forming the fiber and substance of the soccer community in the same way that the “conviviality” and *anamnestic* ritual forms the community and shared experience of religion and spiritual fitness. And lastly, the endurance of soccer as a distinct sport across time and challenges, is also a function of the habits of mind related to the sport, in the same way that habits of mind shape and give substance to spiritual resilience.

Bourdieu provides clues scattered throughout his work of the who and how of the intentionality of these processes, including in the domains of religious and spiritual formation. Some of the mechanisms of habit shaping identity to which Bourdieu refers, are tools that in some religions are thought of as holy remembrances, sacraments or

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*Anamnesis*, to be further discussed presently, is a term used in the Christian tradition to describe how ritual brings to memory and to experience again, the formative and identity content that the ritual conveys. Eucharist, baptism, scripture reading, pilgrimage and more, function *anamnetically* to both bring again to mind, and re-invest with meaning, formative and identity generating and re-enforcing experiences of the faith.
sacramental experiences. As with worship, these various forms of religious experience can function in all traditions through habituated practice to build, reinforce and maintain identities, values and dispositions:

One of the fundamental effects of the harmony between practical sense and objectified meaning \((sens)\) is the production of a common-sense world, whose immediate self-evidence is accompanied by the objectivity provided by consensus on the meaning of practices and the world, in other words the harmonization of the agents’ experiences and the constant reinforcement each of them receives from expression—individual or collective (in festivals, for example), improvised or programmed (commonplaces, sayings)—of similar or identical experiences.\footnote{Bourdieu, Logic, 58. In Bourdieu’s words, this represents a technical description of how anamnesis as earlier described functions.}

The icons and elements of the Mass may have non-sacred, vernacular meanings as well—wine, bread and cup all have mundane meanings outside of religion— that are transformed into tools of spiritual formation and succor within the meaning framework and habitus of religion. Similarly, a ball, a field and a metal-frame-called-a-goal, can have meanings outside of the habitus of soccer, but are given their particular shape with associated habitus when associated with the meaning framework of the game. In both fields, that meaning is objectified—in the globally common rules of soccer, and in the globally common liturgy of the Mass. But the common-sense production and reproduction of either world of soccer or the Roman Catholic religion are only built by long-term, intentional formative processes. And it is by and through those intentional
formative processes that these meanings are “unconsciously inscribed” on the minds of the participants. The agents of the fields of soccer and religion responsible for the perpetuation and promulgation of those fields are quite intentional in their engineering and reproduction of the meanings through intentional formative efforts of applicable habitus.

These dispositional habitus of sport and religion also support apprehension of the “habits of mind” and frameworks of meaning conducive to resilience as fostered by spiritual disciplines. Those uninitiated into either field of soccer or the Roman Catholic faith can often still participate, even if in limited ways. The uninitiated may merely observe before participating, or may be invited onto the soccer field or into the worship service, and learn by doing—either in the kicking of the ball and running it downfield, or in the rites and experiences of the worship service. Meanings are conveyed and habitus are formed in the doing as in the hearing—when a participant goes out of bounds on the soccer field or in the church, that faulty habitus is identified and defined as such by co-participants or coaching personnel. With further participation and practice in either field, further substance and formation in the pertinent habitus is progressively learned and embodied into the emerging player or soul.

These spiritual disciplines across traditions, the rules and practices of particular sports could be described in the language of Bourdieu in his classically complex description of how habitus works:

The conditioning associated with a particular class of conditions of existence (which) produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured
structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate organized practices and representations…without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them…The practical world that is constituted in the relationship with the *habitus*, acting as a system of cognitive and motivating structures, is a world of already realized ends—procedures to follow, paths to take…\(^89\)

The *habitus* of what functions as “spiritual disciplines” across traditions and sports practices across various games are thus “structured structures.” In religion, these “durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures” may take the form of the highly structured “Lord’s Prayer,” the *Shema*, or “The Five Pillars of Islam”—designed as “structuring structures” intended to help religionists subjectivize “a system of cognitive and motivating structures (and)…procedures to follow, paths to take,” by which their spiritual fitness is exercised. In sports, the standard drills designed to foster particular skills and dispositions are evident in every practice, before every game, and are evident as interspersed throughout games in their actual performance.

The objective nature of a sport or a religion is evident in its stability of meanings and *habitus* across contexts, even across the globe. Whether persons are playing soccer in their home town, or watching the World Cup, much of the *habitus* is the same. Whether persons are participating in the Mass in their home town or in Rome, much of the *habitus* is the same. In both contexts, too, the practice of the *habitus* only comes by

\(^89\) Bourdieu, *Logic*, 53
and through intentional formative practices shaped by coaches, monitored by agencies entrusted with the promulgation of right practices of formation and habitus—whether the Papal agencies of the Roman Catholic Church, or the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

**Habitus as a link between spiritual formation and spiritual succor**

In terms of spiritual formation, the habitus of the Mass is formed both by the educative processes of Confirmation as well as by the intentional and regular practice of the rite itself. The practice of the rite is formative, but it also provides spiritual succor, whether on the battlefield or in the hospital room, whether in times of spiritual transformation, or in times of spiritual desperation. Prayer functions in the same way. Across various religious expressions, prayer is taught and shaped by educative means, by description of the processes and substance in classes and documentary sources, but by practice as well. Whether in the first words spoken over or to a newborn child as in some religions, whether in the shared teaching and practice of “bed time prayers,” “saying grace” at meals, or the public calls to prayer five times a day heard every day on every street in some places, the habitus is formed by the repetition of socially shaped practices. The habitus is given substance and “objectified meaning” by its teaching and learning through appropriate and socially recognized authoritative sources.

Like the Mass, prayer, meditation, or what functions similarly across whatever religious or secular tradition conveying frameworks of meaning-- is both formative and providing of spiritual (or personal, emotional) succor. The capacity for spiritual succor of any rite, though, is necessarily contingent upon prior formation with the traditions and
meanings of that rite. Christian prayer for a wounded Hindu would probably not provide much succor in that wounded Hindu’s time of need, because that Hindu would not have been formed in that tradition whereby that particular practice or rite of prayer would otherwise convey powerful support. But as formation comes largely by and through practice, it is the prior and continued practice of whatever rite that provides its “objectified meaning” and subsequent “common-sense…immediate self-evident” sense of spiritual succor.

For persons formed in religious communities for which particular habitus are formed, the material and practiced elements of that habitus both reinforce the identity formation wrought by that habitus, and provides the comfort and succor of that community. Each of the four tools of spiritual fitness habitus formation here explored are both formative, and--especially as practiced in their embodied forms--bring comfort from the familiarity of their practice by which the nonsensical experiences of existential ambiguity can be captured again into a meaningful framework.

That spiritual framework of meaning accessed through embodied practice of habitus, brings with it as well, rational, cognitive substance through which experience is filtered and given integrated form. The embodied practice of scripted reactions to bring shape to the chaos of existential challenge--as with repetitive athletic practice--paves the way for reactionary behavioral patterns that assist in the coping with unfamiliar experience. Growing out of habituated practice and teaching, ingrained spiritual disciplines are often engaged as if “automatically” in the face of existential challenges, fear or chaos as in battle. These spiritual disciplines are often given integrated shape into
the person’s organic, spiritually shaped framework of meaning by how they are consequently in-corporated through *anamnetic*, often religious chains of memory. And as is often the case with either literal war stories, or the convivial conversation by participants following any shared experience-- whether a battle, a soccer game, a wedding, or a test-- the shared experience becomes the focus of conversation by which the experience gains a consensual content of meaning for the participants.

This is why common tools of military chaplains include material, practiced, or symbolic icons of the pertinent faith and its habitus—they provide an embodied link between formed frameworks of meaning, and the need for spiritual succor in times of extreme stress. Worship services replete with symbolic icons in a field setting—while not providing the full impact of a home religious community, serve as iconic, *anamnetic* tools to reinforce prior formative resources for the participant. In doing so, they also provide the comfort or spiritual succor conveyed by the pertinent faith and framework of meaning. Similar in function is the practice of Chaplains to provide material icons to wear or carry into battle. The material icon, whether a cross around the neck or a yarmulke worn under the helmet, is a continuation of formative practice, and as such, conveys spiritual comfort and succor. Such material icons with their *anamnetically* formed meaningful content, are reminders of the formed identity, whose ethic is shaped by the pertinent framework of meaning.
CHAPTER III
SECULARIZATION AND ITS IMPACT ON HABITUS FORMATION

Secularization in America

The conveyance of the relatively universal locus meaning based in (various) Constantinian Christian comprehensive doctrines with the full weight of social support, seems to have been normative across Western culture through the American and French Revolutions. The socio-cultural change from socially located, Constantinian Christian frameworks of meaning that had been central to the normative frameworks of social and personal formation, to a real plurality of competing and mutually exclusive comprehensive doctrines, peacefully (relatively speaking) coexisting in the same political space with at least some claim to “equal” validity, is dramatic.90 I argue that this complex, multi-dimensional socio-cultural transformation in how formation is understood, and how people are formed in to public sphere, is highly pertinent to our current concern with Army suicide.

Despite the thoroughly Christian rootedness91 of American culture from before the Founding Fathers and into Jaeger's era, a parallel, secular narrative leading to a foundationally different understanding of education as formation has also been evident

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90 However, on the global scale, the forced imperialism of the modern era, the Cold War of the 20th century, the ideological terrorism of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, are all exemplary of where mutually exclusive comprehensive doctrines fuel deadly conflict—the kind of ongoing conflict liberalism attempts to overcome—but that’s another project!

across the life of these United States. The roots of this branch of formation go much deeper than the twentieth century, but are most broadly evident and recognizable as the 20th century progressed. Peter Berger brought the term “secularization” into popular discourse since the 1960s to describe these dynamics, while Charles Taylor summed up this broad paradigm shift with the title *A Secular Age*. Most of these processes are quite familiar, yet their individual and combined roles in moving society and culture away from being thoroughly religious to being noticeably secular for all, and thoroughly secular for many, may not be so evident.93

1. Emergence of revivalism-- while religious in orientation, also moved the heart of epistemology from church, scripture, reason, to individual emotionalism, subjectivism, and to leadership that is charismatic and sensationalist more so than rooted in stable religious institutions.

2. The Romantic movement, then the indigenous American Transcendentalism-- also moved popular epistemology toward emotionality and led to the introduction of new religious movements, hence opening culture to spirituality outside of institutional churches, and broadening the concept of “choice” in religion, while continuing to embrace what is to later be called the “spiritual.”

3. The “closing of the frontier” and the emergence of industrialization--both in its “sensationalism” and non-traditional/religious epistemology, as well as its emphasis on future rather than past, and worldly leisure and wealth rather than

93 This list is merely representative, not exhaustive, as noted by many observers.
suffering, directs minds away from religiosity. As industrialism and its impact
grew in the United States, associated urbanization, massive immigration starting
mid-19th c. and a plethora of other phenomena changed the way people and
communities existed, which reduced social and cultural homogeneity and
dependence on traditional and religious habits of mind, ethos, etc., and
contributed to the move of society further away from religio-centric living.

4. The emergence of the Common School movement provided a new realm of
common social experience in school rather than in church, where the focus was on
assimilation and preparation for future life more so than a primary emphasis on
conveying religious content.

5. With industrialization, pluralization, and emergence of growing
“scientific/naturalistic” worldviews, emphasis on “spiritual” formation moved to
personal formation; ekklesia citizenship became democratized to be inclusive of
others outside of the homogenous Calvinistic Protestant ekklesia.

6. Emerging communications technologies, from telegraphs to trains, telephones,
movies and emerging electronic media, linked communities as never before and
increased the influence of secular brokers of opinion and experience (as opposed
to communal attitudes being largely shaped by religion and religious leaders) and
of predominant leading voices in education, moved the center of intellectual and
attitudinal influence further from religious sources.

7. The emergence of humanistic disciplines in 19th c.—those that are focused on the
human experience rather than the Divine Order-- medicine, political science,
economics, anthropology, sociology, and the continued evolution of those
disciplines, as well as the development of psychiatry, psychology and social work
in 20th c. all as distinct from religion-- exploring a-religious processes dealing
with human issues, problems and organization, and exploring a-religious solutions
pertaining thereto—all shifted the intellectual world to predominantly secular
habits of mind.

8. Broad social changes in religion weakened its unified hegemonic voice, related to,
but not limited to the emergence of “scientific” worldviews in predominance in
popular culture.

9. Popular media growth and affordability at the popular level-- novels, magazines,
newspapers, movies, radio, led to more time, energy and focus expended away
from theo-centric thought.

10. Popular media of various sorts glamorizing everything urban, de-legitimating
rural and traditional life ways, where religious, communal and traditional
frameworks have always held the most sway.

11. Similar processes of secularization taking intellectual root more broadly in Europe
earlier in the 19th century provided alternative ways of thought that, while they
had fed American intellectual elites across the American experience for
generations, merely provided foundations for popular American secularization,
which has become much more evident toward the end of the twentieth century.

12. WW I, and WW II both broadened common popular experience in many ways,
facilitating “cosmopolitanization.” “Christian nations” at war with one another,
causing untold death and suffering, fomented an “existential vacuum”\(^{94}\) growing in all parts of Western culture, though earlier in Europe and later in America.

All of these facets of social change have been both reflected and are manifest in changes in social, cultural and personal habits of mind and dispositional habitus. The predominant socio-cultural shift away from habitus centered on social faith practices and dispositions fostered and validated by institutional forms of religion, toward more individualistic and secular habitus in which religion in both its institutional and subjectivized “spiritual” forms was growing less central and more optional for social life, is the paradigm shift Taylor identifies as the move to a “secular age.”\(^{95}\)

While the above list is drawn mainly from the American experience, they follow the pattern of the European processes of secularization which preceded these phenomena in America. These processes included movements of social focus away from church life,\(^{96}\) changes in conceptualizations of how both “religion” and “spirituality” themselves are understood, and included as well, the roles of religion and spirituality in individual and social life. All of these shifts together set the stage for, and are manifestations of the sociological changes reshaping American culture and the process of secularization that followed.\(^{97}\)

\(^{94}\) Frankl, 108.

\(^{95}\) This is in a nutshell, the theme of Taylor’s argument in his book, \textit{A Secular Age}.

\(^{96}\) This brief comment summarizes an analysis I have systematically traced in more detail in earlier study, bringing together a range of interdisciplinary sources also cited in this work, and all listed in the bibliography, to include Taylor, Berger, Kennedy, Wuthnow, Crunden, Pratt, Durkheim, Cremin, Hervieu-Leger, and Sweet.

Characteristics of a secular age

In *A Secular Age*, Charles Taylor takes on the daunting task across disciplines and across centuries to explore the changes in the human socio-cultural experiment to which I am here referring primarily in the American context. He uses the years 1500 and 2000 as landmark dates to explore what he asserts is a unique move in culture to a secularism previously unknown. His observations have helped clarify and elucidate the framework I’ve been groping with across the range of my studies since my interest in this arena was first piqued in 2009. He summarizes the difference between these landmark dates as follows:

the difference would then consist in this, that whereas the political organization of all pre-modern societies was in some way connected to, based on, guaranteed by some faith in, or adherence to God, or some notion of ultimate reality, the modern Western state is free from this connection…. Put in another way, in our ‘secular’ societies, you can engage fully in politics without ever encountering God… but this would have been inescapable in earlier centuries in Christendom… In those (pre-1500) societies, you couldn’t engage in any kind of public activity without ‘encountering God’… in these societies, religion was ‘everywhere,’ was interwoven with everything else, and in no sense constituted a separate ‘sphere’ of its own.98

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98 Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 1, 2.
He described how dramatic the differences between the socio-cultural context where belief and living within a theistic framework was inescapable, to where that undergirding framework is not only absent, but where maintaining metaphysical frameworks become difficult and often problematic.\textsuperscript{99} Built into the argument across this project is the assertion alongside Taylor’s, that this form of a “secular” age is a new cultural development:

Against this kind of story, I will steadily be arguing that Western modernity, including its secularity, is the fruit of new inventions, newly constructed self-understandings and related practices, and can’t be explained in terms of perennial features of human life.\textsuperscript{100}

He goes on to discuss in depth how these differences are manifest in the changing social habitus and habits of mind across what he describes as “a secular age.”

Taylor observed in his work on secularization that “Every person, and every society, lives with or by some conception(s) of what human flourishing is: what constitutes a fulfilled life, ‘what makes life really worth living,’ what would we most admire people for?”\textsuperscript{101} He likewise observed that these frameworks and conceptions have been historically rooted in and essentially tied to religious belief. But that the predominant public framework has changed from a condition in which belief was the default option, not just for the naïve but also for those who knew, who considered, talked about atheism; to a

\textsuperscript{99} Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}, 3.
\textsuperscript{100} Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}, 22.
\textsuperscript{101} Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}, 16.
condition in which for more and more people unbelieving construals seem at first blush the only plausible ones….the presumption of unbelief has become dominant in more and more (social) milieu.\textsuperscript{102}

Taylor summarized the impact of these changes not merely in terms of interesting social facts, but as deeply impacting the viability of frameworks of meaning formed by public socio-cultural infrastructure:

It is this shift in background, in the whole context in which we experience and search for fullness, that I am calling the coming of a secular age….we have to understand the differences between these options not just in terms of creeds, but also in terms of differences of experience and sensibility.\textsuperscript{103}

This reflects a foundational sea-change from the background picture of Aristotle and his heirs through the many centuries and up to 20\textsuperscript{th} century Christendom, in which the world’s apex and center were found in the Divine,\textsuperscript{104} to a world without a meaningful apex or center at all.

Central to and accompanying those changes in theo-centric and religio-centric habitus, were changes in understanding and habitus of religion itself as well, reflected in the increasing move away from the central place in religion of any doctrinal orthodoxy, toward a centrality of subjectivized personal, often merely esthetic experience as the heart and soul of religion. This move is both integral to the development and evolution of that which is now called “spiritual,” and becomes in large part a product of, and

\textsuperscript{102} Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}, 12, 13.
\textsuperscript{103} Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}, 14.
\textsuperscript{104} Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}, 60.
contributing to “constructivist” or “post-modernist” ideas about religion in the late twentieth century, in which “The signal attribute of the modern stage of religious evolution, according to Bellah, is cultural and personal freedom.” But while this paradigmatic change certainly has its merits and its champions, I argue in this project that it is also foundational to the issues I identify in this project with the concept of accidie, at the heart of growing challenges to what is now being called “Spiritual Fitness” in the U.S. Army.

Taylor described how this move from a common socio-cultural center and apex to no common socio-cultural center has impacted and changed public socio-cultural discourse and how we think, which I here extrapolate in this discussion of formational frameworks. Building on Taylor’s foundation, I argue in this study for what appears to be an under-recognized relationship between these changes in public formation processes and what is now being observed as an increased rate of suicide in the U.S. Army. A result of the emerging secular age becoming more thoroughly established in and conveyed through public school classrooms, seems to be a loss of consensus on and cultivation of common frames by which suffering, moral ambiguity and existential crises could be cast as meaningful in public discourse. I argue that this loss of consensus on habits of mind and dispositional habitus seems to have begun to undermine the capacity for resilience and increase the vulnerability of emerging generations of Soldiers to the heightened frequency and intensity of the existential challenges indigenous to military operations.

105 Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 42.
Religion’s loosening monopoly over spirituality

In the cultural paradigm of Catholic Christendom\textsuperscript{106} up until the 16th century Reformation, through the lenses of Western culture, the world in all its facets was understood to be not only theo-centric, but Church\textsuperscript{107}-centric as well. Reflecting a move away from this hierarchical and communal, church-centric culture, the beginnings of secularization were rooted in the ideas of the Renaissance and the Enlightenment,\textsuperscript{108} and brought into popular manifestation through the sixteenth century Reformation. Integral in this process was the radical thought coming from the Reformation, wrought first by Martin Luther, in which the grounding of legitimate authority for “Truth”\textsuperscript{109} moved from the hierarchical Church centered in the authority of the Pope, to the emergence of a concept of the individual as a legitimate arbiter of Truth. And from the Enlightenment heritage, secularization started by shifting the focus of human eyes, first from God in Heaven to God immanent, which eventually moved more completely from God and the things of God, and onto merely temporal and human concerns.\textsuperscript{110}

It is within this world of Truth, accessed through Christian scripture as

\textsuperscript{106} I earlier used the broader term “Constantinian Christian Culture,” which would be inclusive of the centuries of various forms of “established” Protestant regimes. This term would be related to but distinct from “Catholic Christendom” as here used, which was shattered by the Reformation.

\textsuperscript{107} Church with a capital “C” in this project will refer to the Roman Catholic Church as a human, socio-political institution, without reference to it as a theological entity.

\textsuperscript{108} Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}.

\textsuperscript{109} Truth with a capital “T” is also used intentionally in this project as in reference to the concept of a distinctly positivistic Divine Truth, which was understood to be radically different than what might today be understood as a merely relative, contingent, constructed and contestable “truth” claim. I hope my practice of capitalizing the term to make this clarification is less distracting than the frequent use of quotation marks would otherwise be.

\textsuperscript{110} Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}.
individually discerned through the essential tool of reading, that American civilization and its concurrent cultural assumptions was born:

The most important single fact about American civilization is that it began in England as a revolutionary religious and political movement. This conjunction of British background, political means and religious ends proved capable of survival in a wilderness, and of dominance over a large geographical area... to set a cultural tone accepted in most quarters as 'American' until well into the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{111}

Struggling for literal survival in the American wilds, far from European intellectual centers, the predominance of religiously legitimizing language in popular and academic culture, suggests that American civilization stayed focused much more on scriptural Truth accessed through individual literacy, than showing much interest in Enlightenment rationalist and empiricist developments in the Old World. Additionally, the first Great Awakening in the less-than-staid American frontier, and with significant influence from emotional evangelicalism, set the cultural stage for a highly subjective and individualistic culture.\textsuperscript{112}

The Transcendentalists and their European Romanticist roots, through the emergence of secular print industry across the 19\textsuperscript{th} century,\textsuperscript{113} contributed to the shift in

\textsuperscript{111} Crunden, xv.
\textsuperscript{112} Crunden.
\textsuperscript{113} I made a rather extensive study of this dynamic in an earlier study preparatory, but not a part of this dissertation. In a nutshell, “popular literature” and widespread literacy spread dramatically across the United States as a part of the communications revolution in the 19\textsuperscript{th} c., so that from the mid-18\textsuperscript{th} c. where “popular literature” barely existed, and the only literature popularly familiar may have been the Bible, a range of literatures, genres, newspapers, magazines, novels and were common and accessible in even frontier towns by the end of the 19\textsuperscript{th} c.
popular epistemology from scripture and rationality to subjective emotional experience. In Emerson’s words, “The foregoing generations beheld God and nature face to face; we, through their eyes. Why should we not also enjoy an original relation to the universe?”

Their emphasis on the individual and variability of human experience, to include a range of means for accessing the Divine, also introduced the exploration of “Eastern spirituality” into the American experience. With the massive immigration across the 19th century, the end of slavery, and the rise of industrial cities, America experienced the beginnings of real demographic diversity. All of these shifts together set the stage for the sociological changes reshaping American culture and the process of secularization that followed.

Modern thought in public education is rooted in philosophies of pragmatism that emerged in the late 19th century, in which early thinkers continued relocating grounds of meaning. As distinct from former religious rootedness, “Pierce gives the community of inquiry a large role to play in determining the ultimate meaning of reality itself.”

William James further developed the anthropocentric framework of pragmatism, carrying Pierce's foundational thought further:

The educational consequences are immense. First, if essences are but teleological weapons of the mind, then what of the essence of human beings? The answer is

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115 Wuthnow, 24-25.
obvious; we do not have an antecedently existing essence. Instead, each individual must work out the essence of their existence within the culture they happen to find themselves.\footnote{Garrison, 24.}

By John Dewey's time at the end of the 19th and in the early 20th century, it would seem that the broader populace generally still held to a rather holistic religious worldview. But Dewey made significant moves, both in furthering the groundwork for the discourse of an untethered spirituality throughout his writing, and in moving the locus of meaning formation to education. He was overtly attempting to lay the groundwork for an untethered discourse of the spiritual in his work, \textit{A Common Faith}:

A religion... always signifies a special body of beliefs and practices having some kind of institutional organization, loose or tight. In contrast, the adjective 'religious' denotes nothing in the way of a specifiable entity, either institutional or as a system of beliefs. It does not denote anything to which one can specifically point as one can point to this and that historic religion or existing church. For it does not denote anything that can exist by itself or that can be organized into a particular and distinctive form of existence. It denotes attitudes that may be taken toward every object and every proposed end or ideal.\footnote{John Dewey, \textit{A Common Faith}, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934), 9-10.}

Or as Dewey summarized earlier: “there is a difference between religion, a religion, and the religious; between anything that may be denoted by a noun substantive and the quality of experience that is designated by an adjective.”\footnote{Dewey, \textit{A Common Faith}, 1-3.} That distinction today might
be reflected in the newer language of “spiritual but not religious,” or what, in 2003, Alexander and McLaughlin began describing as “untethered spirituality.”

Dewey's description includes what is now the common reference to “religion” as having an institutional basis. However, that need not be construed as “institutional” in a brick and mortar sense, as being related to a physical or legal social location. The Supreme Court Torcaso v. Watkins decision in 1961 in what is probably the most well-known of case law to do so, builds jurisprudence that recognizes such “institutions” need not be distinct legal nor social entities. Their opinion made precedent in that case that the lack of corporate status is no hindrance to an “institution” being construed as being a “religion”: “Among religions in this country which do not teach what would generally be considered a belief in the existence of God are Buddhism, Taoism, Ethical Culture, Secular Humanism, and others.”

Diversity, plurality and pluralism

Secularization, secularism, pluralism and diversity are all related terms relevant to this broader cultural move from Western culture built and centered around religion, to the relatively recent invention of a secular liberal democracy. These often overlooked dynamics are quite relevant to the changing shape of formation through public education. The literature pertaining to education and growing diversity is in itself, quite broad. This exploration of literatures of diversity in education in no way attempts to be complete, but again, merely an overview of leading voices and related concepts to provide further

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context for the discussion on pertinent First Amendment jurisprudence that follows. Many voices have contributed to the discourse on the junction between religion, diversity, secularization and formation, those already mentioned, reflecting only a part of the discussion.

Peter Berger was a leading voice among academics in the 1960s who started to popularize a paradigm shift from predominantly positivist ways of understanding the world to predominantly constructivist ways of doing so. For many academics, Berger's observations were nothing new, but through a series of social, educational and media changes in the mid-20th century, his observations were being received by much broader audiences than ever before. A key theme of Berger’s writing that helped popularize the changes he described, could be summarized:

The 'stuff' out of which society and all its formations are made is human meanings externalized in human activity.... Society, then, is a product of man,\textsuperscript{122} rooted in the phenomenon of externalization. (Thus)… the humanly produced world attains the character of objective reality.\textsuperscript{123}

Martin Marty is one of the most prolific of authors on religion in America over the last half of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century. In his work, he distinguished “diversity” as the fact of variety, from “pluralism” as what a society does with that variety.\textsuperscript{124} Many authors

\textsuperscript{122} Many of the authors cited in this review wrote at a time when the generic use of the term “man” was the accepted norm. Recognizing this usage is not the norm at this writing, yet in order to avoid distraction of repeated notations to this effect, I note here at the beginning that this will be a recurring issue. But in order to appropriately quote authors, I will be quoting authors as they wrote at the risk of unavoidable offense to the reader. My apologies for such unintended offense.

\textsuperscript{123} Berger, 9, 10.

discuss pluralism as an outgrowth of assumptions of individual autonomy, such as the “minimalist autonomy” that Reich posits as foundational to “the good:” the “right” of individuals to make their own un-molested choices, including choices pertaining to religious matters.\textsuperscript{125}

Focusing on public schools, many authors see no difficulty with religious education in schools, and often suggest that schools are falling down on their responsibilities when they do not provide such emphases. Stephen Prothero is one such author, identifying serious shortcomings and social handicaps when “Religious Literacy” is not an integral part of public education.\textsuperscript{126} Wuthnow\textsuperscript{127} and Rosenblinth\textsuperscript{128} are well-known writers in the field, both positing the absolute need for public engagement between differing religions as an integral need for democratic pluralism, though Rosenblinth is committed to much deeper forms of engagement, even suggesting that public school teachers address the “thorny” issues of epistemology as a part of a student's exercise in critical thinking.\textsuperscript{129} Other varied perspectives on religious pluralism have been fruitfully explored as well, but little by way of agreement or consensus pertaining to how society might appropriately manage diversity is evident across such study.

Though consensus does not seem apparent in the terms or definitions being used, nor on how to live in diversity, a rough consensus seem apparent in the distinction

\textsuperscript{125} Rob Reich, “Minimalist Autonomy,” in Bridging Liberalism and Multiculturalism in America, Chapter 4, pp. 89-112, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).
\textsuperscript{126} Prothero, Religious Literacy.
\textsuperscript{127} Wuthnow.
\textsuperscript{129} Rosenblinth, 107-121.
between “pluralism”—cast in various ways as some form of intentional engagement between persons and groups of various perspectives— and “diversity” or “plurality.” Both “diversity” and “plurality” are often used to describe a “mere” coexistence of differing perspectives in the same political space, which may or may not involve a range of forms of engagement between groups. Feinberg described a common form of this distinction:

Political and educational plurality take different forms, and some of these must be distinguished from normative, democratic pluralism. In normative pluralism multiple communities, existing side by side and whose members have equal status regardless of their communal affiliation, are recognized as a desirable social state and promoted both politically and educationally. Mere plurality may exist where one group maintains political, legal and economic dominance while providing limited rights to other cultural or religious groups.¹³⁰

Philosophers and educators often insist on languages of prescribed normativity—in some version or other such as described here by Feinberg, asserting that the public sphere “must” embrace, move toward, and engage in—various stripes of “pluralism,” in preference to the “mere plurality” as here pejoratively cast.

**Spirituality becoming untethered**

For most of human experience across cultures, societies have developed formal religious institutions that addressed areas and questions of life which we commonly

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describe with words like “spiritual,” and many thinkers have gone so far as to identify the domain that can be termed the spiritual as being a universal human concern. Conveyed through formal institutions that generally include versions of orthodoxy for their foundational meaning systems, those institutions are generally referred to as institutions of “religion.” However, society and cultures have changed to where religious institutions no longer have the same roles in society.

For most of the history of Western culture, regardless of one’s affiliation or regularity of religious participation, religious institutions have provided the normative frameworks of identity and meaning for the populace, as well as habits of mind, of how people perceive and think about their world and experience. But as depicted with Taylor and others in discussing how the process of secularization has transformed ways of experiencing the world, the emergence of the secular age has changed this normative religious cultural mindset, without emplacing a new normative mindset that has any comparable cultural consensus. As societies have become more complex and removed from traditional communities and institutions by which persons have been primarily defined, among those changes has been a much broader range of human choice and areas of involvement and identification. This broad process provides the background for the emergence of untethered spirituality as here discussed.

Emerging as a part of this process of secularization has been the intentional and overlapping discussions in education, in medicine, and other fields addressing religion

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131 This assertion is in a nutshell, the argument Taylor makes in *A Secular Age* that has provided a common reference across this project.
and spirituality as distinctly different domains. But for a relatively few philosophers, scholars, and humanists, the “spiritual” questions of identity and meaning for most people have been traditionally shaped and addressed from within institutions of religion. Yet those for whom religious institutions have become less relevant still have the existential questions of meaning to address. Researchers from many fields express the universality of these concerns in a variety of ways, regardless of religio-spiritual heritage.

Parks is exemplary of this line of thought:

To be human is to seek coherence and correspondence. To be human is to want to be oriented to one's surroundings.... The mind does not passively receive the world but rather acts on every object and every experience to compose it, organizing its various parts into a whole.\textsuperscript{132}

Parks’ research argues that these frameworks of meaning and coherence are in the domain of faith and spirituality. While philosophical thought has fulfilled that place of meaning-making for some, the language of the “spiritual” seems to have a much broader resonance and receptivity across popular culture. That being the case, the language of “spiritual fitness” in relation to lived integrity with foundational frameworks of meaning, would seem to be more broadly useful and appropriate than language of “philosophical fitness.”

Alexander and McLaughlin first wrote using the term “untethered spirituality” in 2003\textsuperscript{133} to describe the distinction between religious and spiritual discourse that has become integral to a broad interdisciplinary conversation in recent decades. I would


\textsuperscript{133} Alexander and McLaughlin.
make further clarification, though, to Alexander and McLaughlin’s significant observation of the distinction between religious and spiritual language. From this untethered way of thinking, spirituality tends to be thought of in many fields as rather nebulous, highly subjective, and a phenomenon of individuality. However, I argue that the social\textsuperscript{134} rootedness and expression of practices and language pertaining to that which is referred to as religion and the spiritual, is inextricably intertwined with the concerns for spiritual fitness that are central to this study.

I would certainly agree with Alexander and McLaughlin that it can be helpful and quite appropriate, sometimes even necessary, to distinguish the two concepts of religion and spirituality, and that spirituality can, in fact, be untethered from religion. However, based on consistent observations from a range of demographic studies both in the United States and world-wide, it is accurate to say that most people consider themselves religious in some way.\textsuperscript{135} And as spirituality is a consistent, integral theme in the language of all predominating religions,\textsuperscript{136} it seems to be much more reasonable to assume that for most people, spirituality is not untethered, but integrally linked, either to the religion they practice, or at least rooted in how spirituality is understood in the religion of their own personal or cultural heritage, even if that religion is no longer

\textsuperscript{134} That these changes are social dynamics, rooted and conveyed as part of the “public” socio-cultural infrastructure, as opposed to merely “private and personal” individual tastes as the religious and spiritual domains are often construed, is a central theme to this project.

\textsuperscript{135} Diana Butler-Bass, Christianity After Religion: the end of church and the birth of a new spiritual awakening (New York: Harper-Collins, 2012), a range of surveys from Pew and others, all point to the ongoing broad popularity of religious practice and identification across traditional religions, both within the United States and on a broader global scale.

\textsuperscript{136} Not that the CONTENT of spirituality is consistent across religions, but the consistency lies in the concept of spirituality as having the function of the personalized, subjectivized practice of religious piety that is related to, but distinct from the external and institutionalized forms of any given religion. I go into more detail in demonstrating this common theme in previous work leading to this dissertation.
regularly practiced.\textsuperscript{137} This clarification is essential in reference to the central shortcoming of the Army’s newer version of Spiritual Fitness in resilience, and will be further discussed in the following chapter.

The Therapeutic Arts “discover” spirituality in frameworks of meaning

The rapidly growing field of the humanistic, as distinct from the organic or medicinal domains of the healing arts, has in recent decades been the home for a growing literature on spirituality, as exemplified by contributions from psychology, nursing, occupational therapy and social work. Early reference to the connection between frameworks of meaning from the field of philosophy into the therapeutic disciplines comes from the work of Albert Ellis in Rational Emotive Therapy.\textsuperscript{138} I mention these roots here to point to the modern bridge Ellis provides between philosophy and the healing arts, based in the ancient notion from Aristotle, Chrysippus and others who thought of philosophy as “an art concerned with curing the diseased soul, and that the philosopher is the physician of the soul.”\textsuperscript{139}

Many researchers in these areas have been exploring functions of religion and spirituality in various kinds of healing and wholeness. Because of their emphases on tools for healing and wholeness, they have been able to focus on the more common and observable functions of religion and spirituality, rather than getting lost in the plethora of

\textsuperscript{137} Wittgenstein.
varying subjective content of the spiritual, where so much confusion and ambiguity arises.

Many from these therapeutic disciplines distinguish between that which is “religious” and that which is “spiritual” as two different sets of social phenomena that are related, but not synonymous. Authors typical of this perspective whose work I've explored also tend to include as central to their concerns, the task of making or discerning meaning and purpose in life as being a central organizing theme of that which is spiritual. These authors include: Donica, Farrar, Wong and Vinsky, Greasley Chiu and Gartland, Zinnbauer and Pargament, Park, Moreira-Almeida & Koenig, Tanyi, and the American Occupational Therapy Association. Each one of these in their writings cite additional lists of authors writing along similar lines, suggesting that the work from their colleagues in this direction is quite rich and extensive. While differing in various ways, these authors tend to have a strong strand of continuity in what I would call the socio-functional roles of spirituality. I selected the following examples of this line of discourse for their clarity and conciseness, and in order to depict similarities across two different medical disciplines. Ruth Tanyi writes from a nursing perspective:

> Spirituality is an inherent component of being human, and is subjective, intangible, and multidimensional. Spirituality and religion are often used interchangeably, but the two concepts are different. Spirituality involves humans’ search for meaning in life, while religion involves an organized entity with rituals

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140 To avoid an overly cumbersome footnote here, please see bibliography for further reference for these works cited.
and practices about a higher power or God. Spirituality may be related to religion for certain individuals, but for others, such as an atheist, it may not be.\(^{141}\)

Tanyi’s description explicitly states two essential facets of this discourse that others often assert as well, though less concisely or less directly: Spirituality is quite often, though not always connected with or rooted in religion, and secondly, that spirituality is a language with which many atheists are often comfortable, though they might otherwise object to or reject the use of religious language.

Wong and Vinsky's discussion intentionally sums up other research in order to develop and offer a critical language for spirituality as distinct from “religion”:

Despite acknowledging the difficulties in defining terms like ‘spirituality’ and ‘religion’, many social work authors begin their discussion by marking spirituality off from religion... Canda and Furman (1999)—two leading scholars in spirituality and social work— write ‘Spirituality relates to a universal and fundamental aspect of what it is to be human—to search for a sense of meaning, purpose, and moral frameworks for relating with self, others, and the ultimate reality.’\(^ {142}\)

They further clarify by stating that what is usually called “religion” is discussed as being inherently connected to human institutions that generally include, but are not limited to, facets of spirituality. While this discussion specifically references social work, virtually

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identical language and themes are expressed as being at the heart of the socio-functional role of spirituality across the range of medical fields I explored.

I describe that which is spiritual here as being a socio-functional domain in order to highlight two points: Firstly, the foundational meaning-making function spirituality plays in persons’ lives on both the personal and social levels, and secondly, highlighting the distinctly social character of the construction of the language and concepts of various expressions of spirituality. Though one's spirituality may be thought of as highly personal, both philosophers and social scientists often emphasize that inherently social tools are inescapable in constructing that which can be called spiritual. Peter Berger concisely expresses the social nature of language and concepts such as what we call the “spiritual”:

*Homo sapiens* is a social animal. This means very much more than that surface fact that man always lives in collectivities.... Much more importantly, the world-building activity of man is always and inevitably a collective enterprise.... Men together (Berger's italics) shape tools, invent languages, adhere to values, devise institutions, and so on. 143

Therefore, even when conceptual language is used to describe private internal processes, the language used is still a social product, and must have some broader resonance beyond the individual using it, lest it be meaningless and useless in shaping and conveying thought.

143 Berger, 8.
Spirituality as the domain for frameworks of meaning

My research in this area suggests that this growing crisis of suicide in the Army may be related to unintended inadequacies in publicly conveying functional meaning systems to emerging generations that are related to secularization. Viktor Frankl suggested this correlation more than fifty years ago:

The existential vacuum which is the mass neurosis of the present time, can be described as a private and personal form of nihilism; for nihilism can be defined as the contention that being has no meaning....There is a danger inherent in the teaching of man's 'nothingbutness,' the theory that man is nothing but the result of biological, psychological and sociological conditions, or the product of heredity and environment. Such a view of man makes him into a robot, not a human being.  

Within the formerly hegemonic American “Christian culture,” meaning structures had been constructed, maintained and conveyed across generations through the chains of memory of established religions. Hervieu-Leger discussed this role of religion rather extensively, and began to provide some conceptual clarity between the institutional and sociological structures of distinct religions as related to, but separate from, the substantive role religiosity, piety, or spirituality holds of providing foundational frameworks of meaning.  

But in the current pluralistic framework of American liberalism, jurisprudence cannot support that continued social practice.

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144 Frankl, 131.
145 Hervieu-Leger, 9-81.
An additional product of this same secularization is the emergence of the domain of the spiritual as being distinct and not necessarily tethered to the domain of religion in which it had formerly always resided as an undifferentiated facet. But “neither the atheist teacher nor the atheist pupil can legitimately claim to be able to side-line spirituality. On the contrary, the rejection of God makes the question of the ultimate meaning and purpose of life all the more significant.” Frankl's lifetime of research suggested this need for functional meaning structures is an inherent facet of our humanity:

The most fundamental questions of life such as those dealing with the origins, meaning, and purpose of life; with how we are to live together; with the nature of human possibilities and limitations; with how people learn; and with what are our responsibilities to each other are essential and central elements of spiritual discourses.

Spirituality seems to quite often be thought of as rather nebulous, subjective, and as a highly individualized experience. Echoing Frankl’s work in post-WWII Europe, I have found in the American context decades later, a common, observable, functional social use of terms related to spirituality across a range of fields. Through that common function of spiritual language, spirituality seems to most often be used in reference to where foundational frameworks of meaning are grounded, sometimes referred to as the domain of existential concerns. Therefore, rather than making any attempt to define the

146 Alexander and McLaughlin.
term or to explore spirituality in any broader sense, “spirituality” is only being addressed in this study in terms of the function of the apprehension or construction, cultivation and support of foundational frameworks of meaning found in the domain of that which is called “spiritual.”

“Spiritual fitness” is a relatively new way to describe what is and has always been at the heart of the religious support work of military chaplaincy in and beyond the U.S. Army for many centuries. However, what spiritual fitness means as a descriptive term for religious support in this relatively new secular age Taylor discussed and in which Chaplains now serve, merits further investigation. How recent dynamics of secularization have impacted the Chaplains’ primary role of religious support and the spiritual fitness through which that support is rendered, seems to have been poorly understood and explored. What follows in this chapter is an attempt to further understand and develop some of the dynamics of spiritual fitness to begin to address this shortcoming.
CHAPTER III

ARMY CHAPLAINS AND RESILIENCE THROUGH TIME

Ancient and medieval roots forming and reinforcing a foundational identity

After identifying this dissertation as a project in a facet of formative education and laying a groundwork for particular mechanisms through which religious and spiritual habitus are formed, the purpose of this chapter is to explore a glimpse of how those specific tools of formation have been manifest through chaplains over time, and most specifically, through U.S. Army Chaplains. I argue in this chapter that an essential, defining facet of Army Chaplaincy has always been and continues to be the formation of the range of habitus and habits of mind that ground, cultivate, and reinforce a practical habitus of spiritual fitness in Soldiers. This chapter is not built to merely take a waltz through time with military chaplains, but to explore how roles and duties of chaplains have functioned through time as mechanisms of resilience formation through habitus of spiritual fitness.

I argue with this project that a key facet of resilience through the domain of spiritual fitness is grounded in spiritual identity that is reflexively related to its habitus. In colloquial usage in the context of “postmodernity,” that which is “spiritual” is often thought of as “personal and private.” I argue contrary to that perspective, however, for

149 As noted earlier, my typical usage of the capitalized term “Chaplain” follows current U.S. Army practice for U.S. military Chaplains. Where the term is not capitalized, I will be following the lead of the authors I am quoting, or referring to the role of “chaplains” more generally, rather than as a specific title pertinent to U.S. military format.
the formative and essential role of socio-cultural infrastructure\(^{150}\) on the formation of that which is often termed “spiritual.” True to Bourdieu’s model, I am asserting that a distinct habitus of spiritual fitness is both formative of and formed by, both cultivates and is cultivated by, both reinforces and is reinforced by-- a spiritually grounded identity. But let the reader be aware that while I’m using Bourdieu’s concept of habitus as an analytical tool, I am using the term itself as a value-neutral descriptive tool. As such, it can just as appropriately be used to describe the formation of habitus that are\(^{151}\) virtuous, as to describe the formation of manipulative, dysfunctional or destructive habitus, as Bourdieu’s critical approach more commonly uses the term.

Yet I am also arguing that this “spiritual” identity for resilience may or may not be related to “religion,” and may or may not fit typical “spiritual” language. Throughout more than fifteen centuries, spiritual identity for most Westerners has been thoroughly and normatively rooted in Constantinian Christian culture, spiritual identity that was built, cultivated and reinforced by the habitus formation processes that were the business of clergy and chaplains across time. This exploration of how chaplains have been coaches in military contexts of Constantinian Christian spiritual habitus for centuries, is explored as an historically based model. This model provides a launching point to help explore dynamics of formation through chaplains, and then how spiritual fitness might then be coached in the “secular” context of the 21\(^{st}\) century.

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\(^{150}\) The intent is not to create a new term here, but to use language that can concisely encapsulate the range of social dynamics involved in the formation of distinct habitus per Bourdieu’s holistic paradigm.

\(^{151}\) Please note that the term “habitus” can be used as both a singular and a plural term.
This exploration primarily examines the closely interrelated mechanisms of habitus formation that were the focus in the last chapter, specifically, those of spiritual disciplines, sociological chains of memory through acts of *anamnesis* in religion, the conviviality described by Polanyi, and the habits of mind discussed by Costa. The chapter will first explore how chaplains have exercised, built and cultivated these habitus across time, and will then analyze how these dynamics have functioned in the past, and into current practices of Army Chaplains. As has already been touched on, the Western Constantinian Christian culture that grounds so much of American social and individual experience has shaped the Chaplaincy as well. Official Chaplaincy history sources state “The Chaplaincy of the United States Army has its spiritual roots deep in the pages of the Old Testament…The tradition of a specially appointed clergyman accompanying soldiers into battle dates from the Pentateuch.”

This ancient heritage of integral religious leadership in times of war has evolved over time, yet shows remarkable continuity over time in many of its facets. Bergen’s study of military chaplaincy from the first to the twentieth centuries across Europe and North America “reveals an astonishing face: military chaplaincy has existed in a recognizable form for more than sixteen hundred years.”

Ancient though it is, the broad outlines of that guidance remains relatively unchanged and

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has largely shaped the role into its currently recognizable form. But even by the time and context of that traditional name, “there was nothing new about priests ministering to soldiers on campaign. Relics were paraded and masses said as far back as the days of the Roman legions. After 742, however, those chaplains gained a significantly enhanced role.”

In the era of the Crusades, the common practice of the veneration of saints evolved for many warriors into the veneration of saints and angels with military significance, such as St. Michael the Archangel. Practices commonly associated with relics entrusted to early Chaplains going into battle “reinforced among warriors the christomimetic strain of contemporary spirituality.” Whether with what might be thought of as functionally anamnetic as merely superstitious tools, similar practices continue into the twenty-first century in the form of Chaplains distributing religious medallions, tokens, Bibles and such to troops. Even for those not thoroughly initiated into a given faith, ties between religion, culture and practice were powerful enough in the days of the Crusaders that “The gestures of the rites themselves, the army’s chanting of the litanic refrains, conveyed their sense even to those who had little Latin.”

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155 Note this term’s link to that of “anamnesis” that I use throughout, but here in reference specifically to the reinforcing of “Christocentric” memory and identity. This identification with the suffering of Christ in the warrior cult is depicted in countless ways in art, iconography and statuary with the sign of the cross evident through the crossed hilt of the sword, in which “Christian” warrior is thought to be incorporated into Christ and his battle against the forces of Satan, iconically depicted in the cross.


157 McCormick, 55.
Soldiers in the 21st century who do not claim a religious heritage, it is also quite common to see evidence of this kind of culturally conveyed spiritual comfort, or not-so-religious persons describing spiritual experience or comfort even from unfamiliar practices.158

Colonial and Revolutionary War period—formative roots in America

By and through social dynamics of the sixteenth century Reformation, dramatic changes were wrought in European culture, politics and religion from the period of the Crusades toward the Enlightenment. The deep religious rootedness of Constantinian Western culture continued, though evolving slowly, and eventually becoming the soil in which American culture was rooted. Many of those roots were established in English soil, which also provided the foundation from which the incipient American Army Chaplain sprouted:

During this period of great religious fluctuations among English peoples before…1688, the only known ‘job description’ of a chaplain’s duties was spelled out in an ecumenical spirit indicating the pluralism of the era… ‘The preacher, be he priest or minister, whether Lutheran or Reformed or Roman Catholic…His duty is to have the care of souls,’ and it is well if he meddle with no other business, but make that his only care.’ This concept, the care of souls, will limit and define the prescribed duties of chaplains in both the British and American armies until the nineteenth century.159

158 I have seen and heard this kind of reaction many times over my years of being an Army Chaplain, and expect that my experience in this way is far from unique.
159 Thompson, p. xiii.
The culture of the Founding Fathers of what has become the United States, was integrally shaped by Scotch Presbyterian Covenantal theology in which the “Christian” state is the New Israel, the Chosen People of God. Crunden describes this mindset, sculpted in large part by John Winthrop and the Puritan leadership who built their colony in the “city on a hill” ideology grounded in Covenantal theology: “America as a civilization was founded to fulfill God's intentions and thus peculiarly set apart to provide the rest of the world with guidance. The religious, economic, and political practices were to be an example to everyone, even those who were not Christian.”

A breadth of research shows that religious participation does not alone shape influence in culture, as exemplified by Kennedy: “Worldviews are mental habits; they are unrelated to explicit acceptance or rejection of any particular dogma or belief system. Robert Bellah has described them as ‘cultural codes.’ But our cultural codes are... very largely derived from religious belief.” With this cultural backdrop, it was in the early colonial period of Winthrop’s day that military chaplains in the colonies are first documented: “What appears to have been the first instance in the English colonies of settled civilian pastors being selected officially to serve as military chaplains in an emergency was in the spring of 1637,” with continued scattered reference to military chaplains throughout the colonial period.

Though only about 17% of the colonists by the time of the Revolution were actually “members” of churches, the worldview of those early Americans was largely

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160 Crunden, 4.
161 Kennedy, 14.
common with a great deal of cultural unity: “America's religious origins were well over 95 percent Protestant, and at least 90 percent Calvinist... Indeed 85 percent had been English-speaking Calvinist Protestants.” Religious leadership was ubiquitous and influential among the broader community during the Colonial and Revolutionary War periods. They were among those who were often eager supporters of the revolt, so much so that chaplains were among the first present at the earliest battle where was fired “the shot heard 'round the world” at the Battle of Concord: “When the battle lines formed, fears ate deep in the very human soldiers. Chaplain Emerson, firelock in hand, walked along the ‘front’ strengthening these first American infantrymen.”

The Continental Army was formed in 1775 with the establishment of the first infantry units before the Declaration of Independence. The Infantry was the only recognizable branch of the Army that was formed before the birth of Army Chaplaincy on July 29, 1775. Glimpses of the historic roles and activities of Chaplains are often found in their personal writings, where it is amazing to see how stable and similar roles and habitus of Chaplains have remained over time:

Diaries and journals provide an abundance of materials, giving insights into the life style of chaplains… Certainly there was much preaching, and daily prayer services were conducted by chaplains in provincial units… Pastoral duties included visiting the sick and wounded, and care for the dying.

Concerns for religious pluralism were different in many ways in Washington’s

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163 Kennedy, 35.
164 Thompson, 91.
165 AR 165 1-5 a.
166 Thompson, 114-115.
day than today. Straddling the religious and emerging Enlightenment thought worlds, and perhaps learning from his Masonic tradition in which religious tolerance was already a central theme in the late 18th century, Washington had the wisdom to also build an early form of pluralism into his Army Chaplaincy. This intent and wisdom is clearly documented through Washington’s letters, his early General Orders, a range of excerpts from all three branches of the Federal Government, documenting how his form of pluralism helped the young country navigate a number of early challenges.

These concerns were important enough for Washington that he addressed them numerous times across his writings—often with strong wording. Such was the case when he made reference to religious conflict between differing groups of American and Canadian troops during the American invasion of Canada, in a letter he wrote to Col. Benedict Arnold in September, 1775. As quoted by Thompson, he directed as follows:

‘I also give it in Charge to you to avoid all Disrespect to our Contempt of the Religion of the Country and its Ceremonies. Prudence, Policy and true Christian Spirit, will lead us to look with Compassion upon their Errors without insulting them. While contending for our own Liberty, we should be very cautious of violating the Rights of Conscience in others, ever considering that God alone is the Judge of the Hearts of Men, and to him only in this Case, they are answerable…. As far as lays in your power, you are to protect and support the free Exercise of the Religion of the Country and the undisturbed Enjoyment of the rights of Conscience in religious Matters, with your utmost Influence and
Authority. ’167

With similarly strong language, Gen. Washington wrote a letter in June of 1777 to the Continental Congress pertaining to funding for Chaplains. This letter as cited by Thompson, depicts Washington’s profound insight on the utmost need to respect the practiced pluralism of the day:

‘Among many other weighty objections to the Measure, (is)…that it has a tendency to introduce religious disputes into the Army, which above all things should be avoided, and in many instances would compel men to a mode of Worship which they do not profess. The old Establishment gives every Regiment an Opportunity of having a Chaplain of their own religious Sentiments, it is founded on a plan of more generous toleration…’168

The “old Establishment” to which Washington here referenced, was to provide one Chaplain per regiment, rather than the more cost-effective “Measure” here mentioned. That “Measure” Congress was considering, and that Washington was arguing against, would provide only one Chaplain per brigade. Brigades ranged in size from four to six regiments each, hence this proposal by Congress would have provided many fewer Chaplains with less local denominational affiliation, hence hindering the “generous toleration” Washington was eager to foster. Summarizing this background, Pepperdine University's Hans Zeiger stated: “The constitutional history of the chaplaincy is consistently affirmative. Early challenges were rejected by Congress. Far from an

167 General George Washington, as quoted in Thompson, 121-122.
168 Thompson, 159.
establishment of religion, the chaplaincy is an essential bulwark of religious liberty.”

Formational and educational roles of chaplains across time

The U.S. Army Chaplaincy has grown along with the Army and the newly birthed country, grounded on this firm foundation and the precedents set through the experience of Chaplains across the Revolutionary War period. These precedents have foundationally shaped every Chaplain in the Army since. In a powerful foreshadowing of current practice, Pope Innocent III in the early 13th century, distinguished the two guiding facets of the chaplains’ roles between the sacramental and the formational, in which “They were required to exhort the men to behave properly as Christian soldiers, and they were supposed to teach the troops by example to maintain a proper spirit of Christian fear of God.”

As already alluded to in the above description of Chaplains in the colonial and Revolutionary War period, the long-standing formational role of Chaplains has centered around the formation of an identity firmly grounded in an ethical character. For centuries, that ethical character was understood to be grounded in religion, but the formational roles of Chaplains over the years demonstrates that such an ethical character was not merely one of religious piety, but was holistic in nature.

While spiritual formation and spiritual comfort or succor are analytically distinct facets of role of religious support chaplains have historically provided across nations and

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centuries, they are as integrally intertwined in spiritual fitness as are physical fitness and formation. Any soldier first puts on a uniform with a starting spiritual and physical formation that must be continually enhanced throughout the soldier’s career. Just as the physical fitness, endurance and resilience of a new recruit is different from, and must be cultivated toward, that of a well-seasoned combat veteran, so too does the soldier first put on a uniform with one level of spiritual fitness that also must grow and be cultivated across the military career. Likewise, while Last Rites and Mass could provide great spiritual succor to a soldier formed in a Catholic faith, the same efforts at spiritual succor for a Muslim, a Buddhist or atheist soldier would be empty, if not offensive, without that soldier having been shaped by that version spiritual formation.

Continuing formation and cultivation of chosen spiritual paths is therefore inseparable from and essential to any spiritual succor that might be provided as needed. Centuries of applying spiritual fitness and support practices to a growing plurality of religious, spiritual and ethical frameworks, has provided current U.S. Army Chaplains fertile ground for the cultivation of a plurality of paradigms of spiritual fitness.

Formal roles of character formation and this relationship between formation and succor have been alluded to many times in the historical literature pertaining to Chaplains, so that this discussion is in no way exhaustive. Examples, though, include almost from the birth of the United States Military Academy in 1802, the assignment of Chaplains to teaching duty at West Point from 1816 “as professor of geography, history, and ethics.” 171 Chaplain duties were inconsistent across the 19th century, especially in

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171 Honeywell, 79.
more peaceful years, but the fact and importance of their formative roles were also attested by their absence. In the 1830s, noting moral challenges among Soldiers, Secretary of War Lewis Cass had concerns for Soldiers on the frontier that were noted: “Though the American soldier was well fed and clothed, he said his moral culture was wholly neglected, and added, ‘As he becomes a better man he will become a better soldier.’”

In response to such concerns, and in formally reinstating previously common practices of Chaplains, Congress re-established permanent Chaplains at certain outposts in 1838. In their legislative act toward this end, the House of Representatives “stipulated that he (the chaplain) should act as schoolmaster (and)… Later references to this law seem to indicate that its sponsors attached a major importance to the chaplains’ duties as schoolmasters.” Such concerns were not limited to the House, nor to that decade:

When the Mexican War broke out, several regiments were sent to the theater of operations without chaplains. Supporting a motion for their appointment to all regiments, Senator Hannegan declared that if chaplains had been provided for those which had gone into Mexico, the crimes and disorders of which so much had been heard would have been as 1 to 100, because no power on earth was so well calculated to maintain order, propriety, and decency in camp as the chaplains.

In reference to a discussion on the kind of “judgmental training,” or training in the

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172 Honeywell, 79.
173 Honeywell, 79-80.
174 Honeywell, 80-81.
use of good moral judgment in the combat environment of the early 21st century, the Chaplain’s role is described in contributing in various ways, so that, whether in peace or in war: “The roving chaplain… has a particular role to play in reminding (the Soldier) of his home and humanity.”\textsuperscript{175} The moral character of the Chaplain plays an integral role forming and reinforcing the character that helps shape how Soldiers face the horrors of battle, helping equip the Soldier so that s/he can

use force judiciously, can be predisposed towards correct action… it is also about forming and sustaining the character of the soldier so that his judgment can withstand corrupting situational forces… (across the century) Chaplains were seen as having a religious role to play in such character training. Even their less evidently spiritual work—hosting concert parties, organizing sporting events, distributing cigarettes—could be interpreted in terms of building relationships between chaplains and soldiers and thus making the latter more amenable to the Church’s influence.\textsuperscript{176}

The more commonly referenced formative role of Chaplains has to do with how Soldiers face the challenges of the battlefield. In that sense, the meaning of the “morale” with which Chaplains have traditionally been concerned, has much to do with “the importance of prior training to offset the horrors of the battlefield.”\textsuperscript{177} However else “spiritual fitness” might be understood, this theme of moral character as equipping Soldiers for what is now called “resilience” in the face of battlefield challenges is broadly

\textsuperscript{175} Totten, 30.  
\textsuperscript{176} Totten, 31.  
\textsuperscript{177} Totten, 24.
consistent across time. It was not long after WW II that the common theme and need for this kind of battle-related spiritual fitness was translated back into the Chaplain’s long-standing role in character formation in times of peace:

In the late 1940s, chaplains developed a program called Character Guidance to provide religious, moral, and citizenship instruction to all army personnel…. The lectures… inculcated a wide range of ‘personal and civic virtues,’ including not only religious faith, but also self-reliance, courage, obedience, fair play, and persistence. The stated objective was ‘to develop the kind of soldier who has sufficient moral understanding and courage to do the right thing in whatever situation he may find himself.’  

These traditions of religious support, support of discipline, morale, character and more, set in these early years was and continues to be “so valuable that chaplains have been considered an essential part of the military organization in all emergencies (since, and)…The spirit of interfaith comity, of mutual respect and cooperation, has persevered and grown…”

Formative and anamnestic tools for habitus cultivation

The socio-cultural infrastructure of the formation of spiritual habitus preceded and surrounded the birth and raising of emerging generations through the Constantinian Christian Western culture for many centuries. From the Carolingian era to the “Judeo-Christian” American cultural paradigm of the mid-20th century, whether through

179 Honeywell, 74.
established religions in many Western countries, or by cultural consensus, the hybridized role of military chaplains as functionaries of both state and religion seems to have been largely non-problematic. Emerging generations were raised in and through the habitus shaped and supported by such a Constantinian infrastructure long before members of those generations became soldiers, hence the usefulness of the term. Once initiated into the identity of a soldier in that Constantinian Christian culture, the character of the Warrior identity was an integral, accepted and honorable part of a culture for which the context and “moral ambiguities” of war-fighting have arguably been more normative than the more ambiguous moral framework of a relatively stable peace. While not always lived up to, it was the role of the military chaplain to shape and reinforce that character, and bring healing and reconciliation within that context through the acts and liturgy of religious support.

The liturgy, the physical and communal architecture that formed the rhythm of life for emerging civilian generations, was the context and architecture that the military chaplaincy continued to cultivate and reinforce. The recognizably similar religious support chaplains have consistently provided across time, was a continuation of that formative work of social identity and meaning making within the context of military and warrior service. Liturgical work-- at least within the Christian traditions through which Western culture has been formed and manifest for centuries-- was never merely an enacted social esthetic experience as is sometimes thought. Rather, it has always been intended (if not always experienced as such) to be formative and cultivating memory work-- shaped to re-incorporate the participant into the habitus and framework of
meaning and identity of the community.

In reference to his studies of chaplains from antiquity through the Crusades, McCormick sums up a significant facet of this role of Chaplains that I would argue is still quite relevant today, with the term “the liturgy of war.” In McCormick’s description, the liturgy of war… both reflects and shapes the society from which it emanates….in the liturgy of war, we observe in action the men entrusted with the spiritual care of warriors, and we can begin to explore how their rites shaped the warriors’ self-understanding.”

But along with this liturgical facet of the chaplain’s role, was the moral and pastoral role that is also recognizable in the 21st century chaplaincy. That moral and pastoral role has been reflected in many ways, and enacted through countless expressions of the work of Chaplains. While most of those expressions have been of a much less dramatic nature, a well-documented instance that can be emblematic for this discussion is depicted in what is often called the story of the Four Chaplains. It is worth sharing in some detail:

On Feb. 3, (1943) at 12:55 a.m., a periscope broke the chilly Atlantic waters. ... The U-223 approached the convoy on the surface, and after identifying and targeting the ship, he gave orders to fire the torpedoes, a fan of three were fired. The one that hit was decisive--and deadly--striking the starboard side, amid ship, far below the water line. ... Aboard the Dorchester, panic and chaos had set in. The blast had killed scores of men, and many more were seriously wounded....

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180 McCormick, 47.
Others, stunned by the explosion were groping in the darkness. Those sleeping without clothing rushed topside where they were confronted first by a blast of icy Arctic air and then by the knowledge that death awaited.

Men jumped from the ship into lifeboats, over-crowding them to the point of capsizing, according to eyewitnesses. Other rafts, tossed into the Atlantic, drifted away before soldiers could get in them. Through the pandemonium, according to those present, four Army chaplains brought hope in despair and light in darkness. Those chaplains were Lt. George L. Fox, Methodist; Lt. Alexander D. Goode, Jewish; Lt. John P. Washington, Roman Catholic; and Lt. Clark V. Poling, Dutch Reformed. …

One witness, Private William B. Bednar, found himself floating in oil-smeared water surrounded by dead bodies and debris. ‘I could hear men crying, pleading, praying,’ Bednar recalls. ‘I could also hear the chaplains preaching courage. Their voices were the only thing that kept me going.’ When there were no more lifejackets in the storage room, the chaplains removed theirs and gave them to four frightened young men.…

'It was the finest thing I have seen or hope to see this side of heaven,' said John Ladd, another survivor who saw the chaplains' selfless act. Ladd's response is understandable. The altruistic action of the four chaplains constitutes one of the purest spiritual and ethical acts a person can make. When giving their life jackets, Rabbi Goode did not call out for a Jew; Father Washington did not call out for a Catholic; nor did the Reverends Fox and Poling call out for a Protestant. They
simply gave their life jackets to the next man in line.

As the ship went down, survivors in nearby rafts could see the four chaplains--arms linked and braced against the slanting deck. Their voices could also be heard offering prayers.\(^{181}\)

Though forgotten by many, this is sometimes thought of as one of the great depictions of moral leadership and the product of formation processes from recent history. Formation is about building human souls. In our current day, seemingly driven by dynamics of secularization, we might prefer to use more (allegedly) neutral terms such as “selves” and “development.” Yet to do so would suggest the false conclusion that spirituality is either irrelevant or immaterial to most people. However, both in the U.S. American context and worldwide-- with limited exceptions in Western Europe and parts of Asia, demographic studies consistently depict the fact that most, even the large majority of humanity, identifies themselves as either religious or spiritual in some way.\(^{182}\)

A central concern in the formational work of the chaplaincy has to do with inculcating into Soldiers the wisdom, the will and the capacity, as this guidance states, “to do the right thing in whatever situation”\(^{183}\)– regardless of one's personal opinion or preference, and regardless of how one feels about any of the elements of a situation. The heroism depicted by The Four Chaplains is an ideal example of the formation of souls-- not only of teaching about what “the right thing” to do may be-- but in demonstrating

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\(^{182}\) Butler-Bass, *Christianity After Religion*, a range of surveys from Pew and others, all point to the ongoing broad popularity of religious practice and identification across traditional religions.

\(^{183}\) Loveland, 234.
with their very lives in the most harrowing of experiences, the capacity, the commitment and the will to “do the right thing.”

Formation involves not only right thought, but also wisdom to be able to discern what is “right”-- despite a frequent milieu of moral ambiguity-- as well as the discipline and disposition to do what is right. Regardless of any other belief, the “fog of war,” or what one might “feel like” at the time-- regardless of very real threat and cost to life and limb-- that discipline and disposition is essential to the identity of the Soldier. The capacity to discern that which is right has to do with morals, with ethics, which have both been historically based for most people in religious teachings from various traditions. This religio-spiritual rooting for moral character grounded Washington's desire and precedent to build into his army the role of the Chaplain as religious and moral leader and practitioner.

Formation entails the whole person, mind, body, emotions, and spirit, in multi-sensory ways, and engages the whole person down to the adrenal glands, even under such deadly circumstances as bullets and bombs whistling and bursting overhead, or a ship sinking out from under one's feet in frigid Arctic waters. That kind of embodied habitus is an essential facet of the model of habitus that Bourdieu describes: “What is ‘learned by body’ is not something that one has, like knowledge that can be brandished, but something that one is.”184

Textbook and Power-Point presentations that are common “teaching” tools in the early 21st century Army-- even for concepts of resilience-- do not gird the soul for the

184 Bourdieu, Logic, 73.
capacities for right action in the face of combat. Consistent experience and documented recollections of the right action of Chaplains and others in harrowing contexts, provide powerful models for spiritual fitness that both demonstrates what spiritual fitness means, and inspires people to courageous action. Whether in providing religious ritual on the hood of Jeeps or on cases of rations, slogging through the mud and blood of battle in the Civil War, in words not fit for academic publication, one Chaplain Assistant I worked with would train ministry teams by indicating that the best place for the ministry team to do their work is wherever the circumstances and situation is the worst.

Chaplain Father Emil Kapaun, despite suffering torture and death for simple acts of kindness, provides one such example, and example for which he was only very recently and posthumously recognized with the U.S. military’s highest award, the Congressional Medal of Honor. It is in “accompanying the men on combat missions, living in the dust and mud with them, eating the same rations, sharing the trauma and losses of battle-- that kind of intimate association, apart from their performance of the usual priestly and pastoral duties,” that earns Chaplains the “spiritual authority” necessary for their work of formation.

186 Word of my own Chaplain Assistant, Staff Sergeant Ross Carter, used many times as we trained young Chaplains and Chaplain Assistants.
188 Loveland, 236.
189 Shattuck, 112.
Conviviality of spiritual sensibilities through Chaplains

Polanyi’s concept of conviviality reminds us, though, that it is not the thing in itself that is formative, but that commonality of the experience and the ongoing conversation about shared experience, that has socially formative power. The role of “conviviality” in social and personal formation—of common experience and conversation about that experience—is well presented both in the emergence of what we now know as Memorial Day, and in the use of the experience of suffering and death in the Civil War in the popular literature that followed. There is a vast literature of the impact of the Civil War on popular culture for the generations that followed, coinciding with the birth and social construction of “Memorial Day” as we now know it, during and shortly following the Civil War:

Scenes of death and dying… represented a staple of Victorian fiction, and consolation literature was an enormously popular genre throughout the nineteenth century… The appalling casualty rate in the Civil War presented a not unwelcome opportunity for American Christians to add to this literature, and in their writings clergy and devout lay people regularly reflected on the meaning of religious faith for soldiers who were killed in battle… In the postwar period, moreover, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps’s extraordinarily popular novel, *The Gates Ajar* (1868), helped answer the spiritual needs of many who had lost sons, brothers and husbands during the war.\(^{190}\)

The vernacular icon of war stories, used in so many ways as an idiomatic

\(^{190}\) Shattuck, 118.
expression of how conviviality is manifest, is truly rooted in the common experience of soldiers sharing stories of common experiences in war. And it is in the sharing of such stories that meaning is socially ascribed to experience, which is then subjectivized into those sharing the stories. But it is only themes-become-repeated-motifs within those stories that accrue such meaning. One of the few Catholic Chaplains from the Civil War provided the grist for some of those war stories that were repeated for generations. The following scene unfolds from the memoirs of Father William Corby, a Roman Catholic Chaplain with the Union Army at Gettysburg: Before advancing on the attacking Confederate troops at Cemetery Ridge:

Corby climbed onto a nearby boulder and, exposing himself to enemy fire, stood up and pronounced the absolution of sin on every man he saw. He later claimed that all the soldiers in the brigade, whether Catholic or not, knelt solemnly in front of him as cannonballs exploded and bullets whistled over their heads. Sustained by their own prayers and the priest's benediction, the troops then joined the battle and bravely risked death in defense of the Union position.... Veterans of the Irish Brigade never forgot the courage their chaplain had displayed at that critical moment in the conflict, and nearly fifty years after the event, they erected a bronze statue of the priest, his right hand raised in blessing, on the Gettysburg battlefield.  

The drama expressed in several dimensions in the story of Chaplain Corby and that of The Four Chaplains, is of the same genre of anamnetic meaning-making, and

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191 Shattuck, 112-113.
these dramas are rich in many ways. They are particularly rich in reference to conviviality, depicting as well the role of memorials and even tourism\(^{192}\) in the shaping of a culture and habitus of spiritual fitness. As a Roman Catholic, “Corby was hardly representative of the several thousand (Civil War Chaplains, yet)… the man, his public gesture, and the monument his bravery inspired have come to symbolize the highest ideals of the American military chaplaincy.”\(^{193}\) These Chaplain stories within this genre of meaning-making and habitus formation through memorializing death and suffering, are often overtly rooted in religious and spiritual traditions. But their use and repetition into language and images common to the more secular context of the U.S. Army in the early 21\(^{st}\) century can be useful in helping to develop the emerging yet ambiguous concept of spiritual fitness integral to this study.

Despite the changes in technology and the outward form of contexts, the core of the Chaplain’s duties in the midst of it all, remains:

It may be precisely the chaos and terror of such moments (in battle) that make the chaplain so important as a symbol that somehow, even in the midst of death and fear, there is meaning. That role of the chaplain—to embody courage, hope and steadfastness in the face of alienation and destruction,,\(^{194}\)

That formative and anamnetic role, a role that is both formative and in its publicly

\(^{192}\) In addition the Chaplain Corby statue at the Gettysburg battle site frequented in popular tourism, there are at least eight stained glass windows memorializing the Four Chaplains at other sites also on tourist routes frequented by both military and civilians. Those icons-become-artifacts of spiritual fitness become substance for contemporary common experience and conversation about those historic experiences, becoming a part of the anamnetic social chains of memory for those icons of spiritual fitness habitus.

\(^{193}\) Shattuck, 113.

\(^{194}\) Bergen, 13.
evident expression, provides spiritual strength and succor at the same time, has always and everywhere remained the same across time and cultures wherever those functioning as chaplains have had a military role.

**The need for spiritual fitness in the post-hegemonic era**

The Constantinian Christian socio-cultural infrastructure provided a relatively uncontested formative framework for hundreds of years for those emerging generations who would one day become Soldiers. The Army Chaplaincy had served as an important facet of the socio-cultural infrastructure supporting a habitus of spiritual fitness formation. But moving into the post-hegemonic era, sometimes referred to with the theme of secularization, “since the middle of the twentieth century, however, the goals chaplains pursue and the meanings attached to their work have begun to change, quietly, but nevertheless significantly.” Among the changes, the chaplain’s task is usually no longer conceived in terms of the intent “to rouse men to battle, but instead, “to help them cope with the challenges,” the horrors, the complexities of the moral ambiguities inherent in postmodernity, and the tedium of waiting.

But without the socio-cultural infrastructure forming and supporting a common habitus of spiritual fitness, and especially in light of the “informationism” mentioned earlier in which habits of the mind are shaped to construe life with the moral value of a video game, the real need for spiritual fitness has rarely been more apparent. An excerpt from the blog of a well-educated young Iraqi known to her readers as “Riverbend” from

195 Bergen, 4.
196 Bergen, 6.
early in recent conflict in Iraq, attests to the continuing common need for a kind of spiritual fitness appropriate to the current context:

*Tuesday, November 14, 2004--*

*I'm feeling sick-- literally. I can't get the video Al-Jazeera played out of my head... The mosque strewn with bodies of Iraqis-- not still with prayer or meditation, but prostrate with death-- some seemingly bloated... an old man with a younger one leaning on him... legs, feet, hands, blood everywhere... The dusty sun filtering in through the windows...the stillness of the horrid place. Then the stillness is broken-- in walk some Marines, guns pointed at the bodies...the mosque resonates with harsh American voices arguing over a body-- was he dead, was he alive? I watched, tense, wondering what they would do-- I expected the usual Marine treatment-- that heavy booted foot would kick the man perhaps to see if he groaned. But it didn't work that way-- the crack of gunfire suddenly explodes in the mosque as the Marine fires at the seemingly dead man and then come the words, 'He's dead now.'*

Regardless of whether that Soldier was even aware of Spiritual Fitness issues, he was perceived and interpreted for a world audience as being a sick murderer, rather than a professional Soldier, allegedly in the service of values of Democracy. In the world's perception of him, that Soldier may well have been “fit” in many ways-- being

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198 Riverbend describes this story with Marines, though I will use the term “Soldier” for simplicity and clarity: in this case, the Service Member was a Marine, though the dynamics and concerns would be the same regardless of branch of service.
physically fit, socially fit, emotionally fit, and well-connected with his family support
systems-- those facets of his fitness do not apply to his decision to shoot a downed,
wounded, and unthreatening other. Yet almost universally, it is probably safe to assume
in a vernacular sense of morality, and most assuredly according to formal military ethics,
that Soldier’s actions were not a manifestation of fitness in any way, but a clear example
of something gone wrong in that Soldier.

Did that Soldier claim some version of Christian, Muslim, Jewish or Wiccan
heritage? Was he an atheist, agnostic or Druid? That religious preference or lack thereof
does not matter to his conception of, or living of, the professional ethics grounding and
defining his role. Whatever religious preference that Marine may or may not have
claimed did not matter to the one he shot, nor to Riverbend nor to her audience who now
sees him as a sick murderer. Nor would that Soldier’s religious preference matter in
terms of the fitness of that Soldier’s actions. Regardless of one’s religious or spiritual
background or piety, spiritual fitness could be described as where boundaries of right and
wrong are established, subjectivized and preserved, and where the will to “do the right
thing” comes from. Where there is evidence of a loss of moral behavior, I would argue
that there is evidence of a lack of spiritual fitness, or more concisely, what might be
called accidie, to be further discussed presently.

Had that Soldier been better trained in concepts, exercises and requirements of

199 In such a context, there is no way to know if the wounded one fired upon was a potentially threatening
belligerent, a subdued belligerent, or merely an innocent bystander representing “collateral damage.”
However, Army doctrine is quite clear, that Soldiers are to render aid to wounded belligerents and others
wherever practicable, even at the risk of the Soldier's own life, if those wounded do not appear to be an
imminent threat.
spiritual fitness, regardless of his religious preference, would that have made a
difference? Had he taken such training to heart, it certainly would have made a
difference his victim, to Riverbend, to Al Jazeera which televised this scene and all their
viewers. The Soldiers' world of unambiguous enemies and clear battle lines has changed
dramatically, and with it, clear conceptions of spiritual fitness that provides persons under
the extreme stress of combat situations the moral fiber to “do the right thing” and resist
hateful, vengeful impulses.

Riverbend’s blog points to the importance of the soul-deep formation of second-
nature habitus and dispositions of spiritual fitness in contexts such as the post-battle
scene she described. In his typically round-about and obtuse way, Bourdieu describes the
role of the habitus so sorely missing in that scene, in which it should have resulted in the

shaping of social and individual *modus operandi* (which then) becomes something

of a ‘spiritual automaton,’ unconsciously guiding the organism… And this *habitus*

and its spiritual automaton, is shaped by the institutions that shape the society and

its persons: This durably installed generative principle of regulated

improvisations is a practical sense which reactivates the sense objectified in

institutions. Produced by the work of inculcation and appropriation that is needed

in order for objective structures, the products of collective history, to be

reproduced in the form of the durable, adjusted dispositions… the *habitus*, which

is constituted in the course of an individual history…is what makes it possible to

inhabit institutions, to appropriate them practically… Or rather, the *habitus* is
what enables the institution to attain full realization.²⁰⁰

Had that habitus of spiritual fitness been guiding the Soldiers depicted in Riverbend’s blog, it would have been a very different story. That habitus would have provided a “durably installed generative principle” successfully objectifying the warrior ethics and rules of engagement under which that team should have been functioning. Had that been in place, the Soldiers in question would have followed their second nature dispositions to aid, rather than fire upon, the fallen and no-longer threatening souls on the floor of that mosque. Yet in the current post-hegemonic plurality, the formerly functional socio-cultural infrastructure for the successful formation of a habitus of spiritual fitness no longer exists.

This assessment suggests a need for a new form of spiritual fitness habitus formation appropriate to the post-hegemonic context of late modernity’s emerging new form of secularity. This secularity based in First Amendment dis-establishment has always been the case in theory since the first years of the United States. But Charles Taylor makes explicit in *A Secular Age*, the subtle and largely unrecognized change that grounds my argument across this dissertation. Taylor identifies this as the change from the common and hegemonic background picture of Constantinian Christianity, to a non-hegemonic real plurality of distinct, often mutually incompatible underlying comprehensive doctrines. I further develop this line of thought in the coming chapters, but highlight it here to help clarify the argument. I have argued in this chapter, that an essential, even defining facet of Army Chaplaincy, has always been and continues to be,
that of the formation of the range of habitus and habits of mind that ground, cultivate, and reinforce a practical habitus of spiritual fitness in Soldiers.

**The changing and perishable nature of particular habitus**

The habitus of spiritual fitness and resilience are capacities, sets of dispositions, as well as skillsets—sets of the skills needed for applying their capacities in any given situation. But they are skillsets that are perishable, skillsets that if not regularly practiced, atrophy and become inaccessible, or perhaps not as readily accessible as needed in the compressed timing requirements of combat. Much of the capacity for the habitus of resilience and spiritual fitness must become as reflexive as the “muscle memory” trained into Soldiers to face the split-second contingencies both of combat, and of the stress and boredom of much less action-oriented operations such as the keeping of the peace. Though Soldiers may (or may not) have been raised and formed into some level of fitness and resilience, historical observations, as well as those from current operations such as will be depicted shortly from the diary of Riverbend in Baghdad quoted below, demonstrate the ongoing need for continuous and intentional formative efforts on the part of military institutions and personnel.

Spiritual formation and spiritual succor are also inseparably intertwined as discussed in the previous chapter. The role of Chaplains in reinforcing formed spiritual fitness and resilience can only happen where that fitness has been formed and exercised, and where the Chaplain has been present in the life of the Soldier as a living icon of spiritual fitness. That role is important regardless of either the Soldier or the Chaplains’ religious identification. From at least the beginning of the American Army, the long
tradition of the Chaplain habitus of a “ministry of presence” where the Chaplain serves alongside the Soldier in the mud and blood of all types of operations, has made the Chaplain an icon-in-the-flesh of formation, succor and remembrance of the values and capacities of spiritual fitness and resilience.

Where a religious tradition has formed in a Soldier, particular religious or spiritual practices as being iconic of the whole of that Soldier’s religious support system, regardless of either the Chaplain or Soldier’s religious preference, the Chaplain becomes an icon of that support system. The Chaplain’s daily and liturgical duties reinforce the Soldier’s formed identity, even as mere reminders in cases of religious difference. And in time of need when the Chaplain would “perform or provide” religious or spiritual support, those same habitus that the Chaplain has helped form or reinforce, when practiced or re-presented for the Soldier at the point of his or her need, becomes a source of spiritual comfort and succor. The roles of military Chaplains in terms of formation and spiritual comfort have ever been and continue to be thus inextricably intertwined.

It must also be noted that the needs of habitus change and are not the same for all Soldiers. The spiritual fitness and resilience required of a young adult shortly out of high school first transitioning into military life, is distinctly different than that of the Soldier knocking on doors on patrol in an area where the child on the other side may be an innocent, or may be a terrorist with a grenade ready to kill the Soldier’s team. The spiritual fitness and resilience needs of that young Soldier on patrol is not as intense as that of the sergeant who must decide which Soldier must take point and likely die, and which Soldiers stay behind to fight another day.
The spiritual fitness and resilience needs of that platoon sergeant is less intense yet than the young commander deciding what building to target with artillery or for an airstrike, that may have a terrorist leader in it alone, or a terrorist leader hiding behind family or school children. The needs for resilience and fitness are different still for the Special Operations Soldiers and snipers who must blindly trust in the data, targeting and guidance of leadership far removed from the combat situation, yet who call on the snipers to fire on individuals lost in their mundane daily lives a mile away, or the Special Ops midnight raids on suspected households.

Thus, as the intensity and depth of fitness and resilience needed thus grows and changes as a Soldier moves up the ranks or into differing positions of authority or combat intensity. Complicating matters is that the Soldier’s duties and levels of intensity can change at a moment’s notice. A soldier who is mopping floors in an office one day, may be transferred the next day to doing combat-intense patrol duties in populations in which terrorists and civilians are intermixed and the difference may be indiscernable. Spiritual fitness formation and reinforcement is therefore both an on-going process, and one that the Chaplain must adjust to fit the differing levels of maturity of Soldiers, and differing levels of responsibility and combat intensity for those whom the Chaplain serves through these formative efforts.

This formative role essential to the spiritual facet of resilience has always been uniquely fulfilled by the Chaplaincy. However, the social context of both the broader American culture and the changing operational context, is reshaping how the Chaplain’s roles must be understood and developed. Where the socio-cultural infrastructure
provided a relatively stable framework of meaning and culture reinforcing resilience from that commonly held, hegemonic context, that common frame of reference is dramatically changing. In the new context of contested plurality, the Chaplain must still serve the function of formation coach, but now in a non-hegemonic context. Yet despite these changes, the long-standing guiding rubric for Chaplains providing religious support encapsulated in the phrase “perform or provide,” effectively grounds and equips Chaplains to serve appropriately in this new version of plurality, as is has across the pluralism of the past. The consequent changes and practical adaptations from the former hegemonic pluralism of worldviews to how Chaplains must now function through this rubric in a real plurality of often mutually incompatible worldviews, is guiding theme of the remaining chapters to which we now turn.
CHAPTER V

SPIRITUAL FITNESS HABITUS FORMATION IN PLURALITY

Formation of spiritual fitness habitus across traditions

The discussions already developed in chapter 2 from Hervieu-Leger’s chain of memory and anamnesis work, as well as Polanyi’s work with conviviality discussed in the previous chapter, are equally applicable to all religious and spiritual traditions I have explored. The emphasis in this study is on spiritual fitness formation as a facet of resilience through practiced and apprehended habitus. As akin to spiritual disciplines in what might be more familiar Christian traditions, and as opposed to membership or other forms of identification with religion, spiritual fitness can be explored within each religious, as well as within non-religious traditions. Within particular religious frameworks, “religious support” is often conveyed through acts of anamnesis\(^\text{201}\) that are also both foundational to and reinforcing of personal identity and religious and spiritual resources for resilience. Acts of anamnesis—inclusive of but not limited to the sacramental administrations of Chaplains—reinvest the experience of daily life with spiritual content, meanings and context.

The roots of the current dynamics of secularization impacting how Chaplains provide “Religious Support” though, go much deeper than recent generations, as the

\(^{201}\text{Anamnesis is a key element of religious support related to “formation” and “spiritual fitness.” As such, while not often used in secular contexts, I will more fully develop in the dissertation the relationship between the concepts and how the term can be helpfully used in secular contexts as well in the formation and support of spiritual fitness both secular and religious.}\)
previous discussion on secularization suggests, nor are concerns with pluralism new. But the context of evolving secularization and pluralism is emerging in distinctly different ways in the early 21st century with younger generations coming into military ranks who have been shaped more by the values of pluralism than by the habits of mind conveyed through Constantinian Western culture. The changes being wrought by emerging post-Constantinian pluralism, though, seem to have thus far been poorly understood and as yet inadequately addressed by military practice and policy. This challenge might be better addressed with a more intentional exploration of these changes, and consequent adaptations that might be called for by changing understandings and public discourse around the distinction between religion and spirituality, and how changing social infrastructure and discourse might impact the formation of spiritual fitness toward resilience.

I have been using the term spiritual fitness thus far without as yet providing an overt definition. I’ve realized in the course of this study, that defining certain terms may not always be helpful nor appropriate when focusing on the function rather than the substance of a term. I think this is certainly the case with spiritual fitness as here used. Demographic studies from a range of sources consistently demonstrate that a significant majority of the American population always has, and continues to, identify with their own particular religious or spiritual heritages. All of the predominating religious heritages in America include languages of spirituality as integral, essential components, and have traditionally provided foundational identity frameworks for the heritage’s progeny. They also each convey an identity framework inclusive of powerful, socially conveyed spiritual
tools for individual and communal resilience and meaning-making through struggles and suffering.

Secular, non-religious traditions can also provide frameworks for meaning, and as discussed in the third chapter, whether rooted in religion or some secular system, it would seem that grounding frameworks of meaning feed a universal human need. And since such frameworks do not grow organically within the human soul, any framework of meaning must be fostered, cultivated and formed. This has traditionally been an inherent role of religion. As this formative role is not always clearly evident, but is clear in concepts that may be familiar from the Christian tradition of the predominant culture, an exploration of the formation process of frameworks of meaning from this point may be helpful.

**Spiritual formation in Christian traditions as a starting paradigm**

I turn now to a model of spiritual formation from within an ancient Christian tradition as a distinct example of habitus formation. I argue in this project toward a sense of spiritual fitness in plurality, recognizing that, while various religions can differ dramatically in content, all religious and spiritual traditions predominant in the United States\(^\text{202}\) carry with them their own language, conceptualization and function of what could be described as being analogous to Christian “spiritual formation” in this

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\(^{202}\) Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, U.S. Religious Landscape Survey, http://religions.pewforum.org/reports (accessed January 13, 2013) Indicates the predominating religious affiliations in the United States by group are as follows: Christian, 78.4%, Jewish, 1.7%, Buddhist, 7%, Muslim, 6%, Hindu, 4%, Other world religions, <.3%, other faiths, 1.2%, don't know/refused to answer, .8%, unaffiliated, 16.1%. These numbers represent those “affiliated” with religious institutions, not indicating spiritual heritage, which for the purposes of this study, would suggest that most of the 16.1% “unaffiliated” would still have a religiously oriented spiritual heritage in their “background picture,” altogether suggesting that the Christian traditions are an appropriate starting point for this discussion.
discussion. My years working with a plurality of more and less religious and secular persons as an Army Chaplain resonates with Wuthnow’s conclusions about “most Americans.” His research has indicated “In surveys and personal interviews, most Americans identify themselves as adherents of some Christian denomination or tradition and most claim that they feel most comfortable seeking God through the distinctive beliefs and practices of Christianity,” hence validating my approach to use Christian traditions as a common starting point for this discussion. The version of Christian spiritual formation here discussed is drawn from and representative of the heritage of a large majority of the U.S. Army Soldiers with whom this discussion is most concerned. Whether currently practiced or not, this discussion should be able to provide a relatively familiar model and language, helpful to be used as a beginning point from which to further develop my argument.

For Christians, as with all the predominating religions in America, the framework of meaning and its apprehension by emerging generations functions much like the language into which people grow. Such frameworks have a social objectivity formed by their history as conveyed across generations, that provides much of the background picture that emerging generations are raised to recognize in the stories they are told and of which they become a part. From when children are brought up in a church nursery, for example, many of the toys or story books the form the fabric of the child’s shared experience and conversation—what Polanyi described as “conviviality”—are toys, stories and images of the religion. The images and concepts of Noah’s Ark, of animals, boat and

203 Wuthnow, 110.
rainbow, of right and wrong, of judgment, of provision and promise, of a claiming of persons as belonging to the family of God—these images and concepts are built into toys, stories, and the decorations of the literal and linguistic space into which children grow, becoming furnishings of the background picture, the common sense work children grow to inhabit from the earliest age.

This same process is replayed over and over again through countless concepts and images that form the furnishings of the conceptual world, the framework of meaning into which persons grow and are formed. And this formation from the earliest ages often has overlooked facets that contribute to, or fail to contribute to the resilience of persons by the time they become Soldiers. Where the common-sensical background picture into which a person is formed from the time she or he is an infant, and consistently cultivated, fostered and reinforced for twenty years or more, builds into a soul that s/he is loved, cherished, belongs to a community that transcends time, that the soul has a place and purpose in the cosmos, and has an identity in which suffering and pain can be meaningful, this background picture provides a substantial capacity for resilience. In like manner, where the elements of formation are absent, or worse, where the background picture into which a child is brought and fostered is one in which that child is unwanted, unloved, where the child is blamed for all imaginable ills, as is sometimes the case, this, too, has an impact on one’s capacity for resilience.

In addition to the basic stories of the faith, as a person matures, faith formation includes other dynamics that can be practiced with more or less intentionality and frequency. Again in Christian traditions, for example, these would include practices such
as prayer, worship, sacraments—some of which take the form of rites of passage, others as regular tools of communal re-incorporation, such as the Mass or Communion, festivals, celebrations, and pilgrimages to holy places or places of sacred experience. All these practices have long-standing, even ancient histories of evolving practice into which current practitioners are incorporated as they are re-enacted.

A well-known and very accessible classic in Christian spiritual formation is known as “Practicing the Presence of God” that essentially derives from interviews with a humble monk, Brother Lawrence, who worked as a cook in his order.204 It might be described as a recipe for a deeply spiritual life, in which, by use of the imagination, one manages the scriptural injunction to “pray without ceasing.” Brother Lawrence wrote that by imagining one is ever in the presence of God, one can continue to carry on a non-stop conversation with that ever accessible Presence of God.205 This sample of informal habituated practice of presence with the tool of the imagination portrayed as a theme in spiritual formation, is replayed through various methods many times over the breadth of the body of Christian spiritual formation practices I have thus far explored. Throughout time, cultures and social conditions, from intellectual giants to humble cooks, the net result seems to be the same with the range of Christian worldviews, experience and expression: Spiritual formation is the result of intentionally opening oneself to what is construed to be the “fact” of the omnipresence of God through varieties of tools of

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204 Lawrence was either unable to write it himself, disinclined to, or otherwise too occupied, as he was the cook for his monastery, hence the interview form and the occasional confusion in authorship of the work.
socially supported and reinforced habituated practice, some of which are formal, others more informal.

Richard Foster is said to have been the catalyst for Protestant and Evangelical interest in traditional spiritual disciplines in the late 20th century through his extensive work in exploring the themes of traditional Catholic tools for spiritual formation, reflecting on literally thousands of years of work in this area. He identified three predominant styles of spiritual disciplines in his work categorizing them as inward, outward, and corporate. Within these categories he identified a variety of themes of many traditional disciplines. The Inward Disciplines he described as meditation, prayer, fasting, and study. The Outward Disciplines he described as simplicity, solitude, submission and service. The Corporate Disciplines he described as confession, worship, guidance and celebration.\textsuperscript{206}

Both before and after looking into Foster's work, I had explored a number of the classical writers in the Christian world working across the breadth of Christendom over the centuries. While the labels and specifics used by the range of writers to describe the practices varied, the consistent theme evident through their writings was that the depth of spiritual experience was gained through habituated and subjectivized practice. Other commonalities included terms such as “dryness,” and “vitality” to describe a range of qualitative emotional differences across practice, and the recurring wisdom that measuring effectiveness by the quality of emotional experience was misleading.

Practicing a consistent level of discipline in the habituated practice of these tools of whatever sort, was generally identified as the key to their effectiveness. These observations parallel and hence provide historical grounding for the experiential observations I was making as a practicing Chaplain dealing with suicidal issues.

I found it ironic that in one of the resources I explored dealing specifically with religious formation, the authors seemed to think that the recent emphasis on religious identity formation was “new:”

According to a growing number of religious educationalists...the aim of religious education is, or at least it ought to be, to contribute to the formation of a religious identity. But precisely because this is a rather new orientation to religious education... hardly any attention has yet been given to the relationship between education and identity formation. How may educational processes actually contribute to identity formation?²⁰⁷

Apparently these authors were somehow not able to see or make the connection between “religious education” and the tradition of writing on spiritual formation that is many centuries old, which offers in many ways, a common answer to their question. These writers over the centuries have pointed to the exercise of a variety of habituated practices by which educational processes could (and have countless times over) “actually contribute(d) to identity formation.”²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ Vermeer and Van Der Ven.
Similar dynamics and functions of habitus formation across religions

While these examples have been drawn from Christian traditions and experience, and while content can vary dramatically, the processes of how religious and spiritual formation is wrought, and the functions of spiritual fitness across traditions, have many similarities. A brief overview of spiritual habitus organic to various traditions will provide a launching point for considering how those habitus might fit an emerging discourse of a functional “spiritual fitness” for the pluralistic military context.

Important to reiterate here is that the purpose of this project is not to examine these religions in depth, nor to explore the distinct belief systems of these religions to any extent. The intent is quite limited: to briefly explore predominant contemporary practices of these religions, in reference to how those practices might function as “chains of memory” by which these religions and their spiritual habitus might be apprehended in persons' lives. It becomes evident with comparative study that the form, function and process of formative spiritual disciplines in Christian traditions, share similarities with other predominating religions in how their models of spiritual habitus are formed, and all express their versions of spirituality in functionally similar ways as well.

A common theme of all varieties of Islam is known as “The Five Pillars of Islam,” all of which are defined by and manifest in habituated practice. The most familiar of these are the prescribed practice of prayer five times a day, and the pilgrimage to Mecca,

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209 Each of these traditions entails hundreds, if not thousands of years of history and religious documents, most of which are valuable in many other senses, but much less valuable in helping to apprehend how currently relevant predominating practices shape current understanding of what could be construed as “spiritual formation.”

210 Hervieu-Leger.
known as the *Hajj.*\(^{211}\) All these pillars function *anamnetically* as spiritual disciplines. It is fascinating to note that Sufism is often thought of as the most “spiritual” form of Islam, with the common, defining theme of Sufism being “an adherence to the religion of Islam and a sincere desire for a spiritual path with a view to a deeper understanding of the outward religion.”\(^{212}\) Though this construal of spiritual formation is built around a deeper understanding, its method is through habitus of practice, overtly linked to memory and resilience: Though the content of the spiritual path is an esoteric “deeper understanding,” the way to deeper spiritual understanding is through outwardly visible habitus that leads to inward resilience:

The Sufi spiritual method par excellence is the *dhikr,* …has the dual meaning of 'remembrance' and 'mention'…. The doctrine of the *dhikr* is that the Divine Name (*Allah*) directly vehicles the Principle, and when the believer unites himself with the Divine Name in fervent invocation, he inwardly frees himself from manifestation and its concomitant sufferings.\(^{213}\) These disciplines become links in the religious “chain of memory” per Hervieu-Leger’s language, and provide both experiential and conversational grist for the conviviality Polanyi describes as essential and formative of communities, which certainly includes faith communities.

\(^{213}\) Stoddart, 53.
Judaism, and more so Hinduism and Buddhism, each contain such a breadth within them that they would probably be more appropriately referred to as families of religions, rather than in the singular. The categories of Judaism have been described as differing primarily along the four axes of ethics, beliefs, ritual practices, and lifeways,\(^\text{214}\) easily described as the habitus of the faith. Likewise, Hinduism refers to a group of religious people with a vast array of beliefs and practices, many of whom would not see Hinduism as a religion at all, but a spiritual way of life, entailing acceptance of many different religious paths.\(^\text{215}\)

Content and specifics of practice vary greatly, but the specifics in each case are manifest through practices of worship and ritual which, by their habituated practice, provide avenues of vital spirituality. Buddhism is a non-theistic religion for some, but can alternatively function for others more as a spiritual philosophy of life. Some forms have expressions that are akin to worship in other religious traditions, yet all have habitus expressed in the form of the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism: “The means, through the Noble Eightfold Path: right views, right thoughts, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.”\(^\text{216}\) Note that in this much older language, all facets of this path depict well what Bourdieu describes as habitus, and at the same time, expresses the heart of the concept of the “habits of mind” that Costa has much more recently developed.

\(^{216}\)Rankin, 32.
A plurality of religious spiritual fitness habitus

Across religions, worship is defined and practiced in many ways and is often thought of as a key element to that which is understood to be religious. It is often the apparent superstitious nature and superficiality of much of observable practices of worship in the various traditions to which many modernists and secularists object. Yet the same process of ritualized *anamnetic* practices function similarly in modern and secularized meaning frameworks too, from patriotic ceremonies to informal sports rituals that may be public, semi-public and private.

The Pledge of Allegiance with hand over heart and habits of reverence and respect when the National Anthem is played, the somber mood, darker colors and rituals associated with funerals, the rituals of standing up, loud cheering and distinctive gesticulations, along with the imbibing in sacramental beverages and foods associated with cheering the success of one’s favorite sports teams are all prime examples. Often called worship, such ritual provides important functions that would seem to share common motifs for apprehending pertinent frames of meaning for both religionists and secularists as well. The specific details of expression and meaning of such rituals varies a great deal across religious and secular frameworks of meaning. But how they function, and the processes by which persons are formed into those habitus, the processes by which the re-enactment of the rituals re-incorporates, embodies and functions in the *anamnetic* apprehension or subjectivization of pertinent frames of meaning, have strong similarities.

Worship across religions tends to normatively (though not exclusively) be social in orientation. It is often built around prayer and the reading or recitation of some
Authoritative sources, often referred to as something analogous to the familiar scriptures of Christianity, Judaism and Islam, and often includes some reflection on or application of those authoritative works to contemporary living. Prayer or other meditative acts functioning much like prayer, often has normative forms that convey and reinforce the authority of tradition, either built around a structured, scripted or formulaic expressions, such as the *Lord’s Prayer* for Christians, the *Shema* in Judaism, or *salat* in Islam, or a more free expression of communication with the Divine. Holy pilgrimages as well as a range of formulaic rites such as the Mass, circumcision, prescribed offerings, dietary restrictions or fasts, Passover meals, a range of festivals, holy days and the like, are also often used across religions as spiritual practices of habitus.

These rites function in Bourdieu’s language as “structuring structures” that, as they become a part of the socially defined lives of emerging souls, structure the identity and meaning markers for each community and soul, and as repeated across time, functions to re-incorporate the person into the meaning-structures of the religious community that structures their lives. When habitually repeated, becoming a part of the habitus of the religion, these rites all function as signposts, as reminders of the person and community’s connection to the Divine, their identity and meaning as shaped by their relation to the Divine. In its own way, each rite is patterned behavior that also shapes dispositions and cognitive frameworks, tastes, identity and meaning for the participant within each distinct habitus.

The social and reflexive nature of the self or soul has long been understood to be reflexively formed by ritual and meanings apprehended through the social environment
and “through interaction with others.”

That formative reflexive interaction through many forms of worship and rituals across religions, functions in similar ways to serve as triggers to elicit religious experience. They also form much of the “shared experience and conversation” Polanyi describes as formative of identity, and Hervieu-Leger’s “chain of memory” by which frameworks of meaning in religion are conveyed and apprehended. Bourdieu may well have had this in mind in his discussion of habitus, as he clearly indicates the role of social habit in forming religious and other identities: “It is, then, habit that convinces us and makes so many Christians. It is habit that makes Turks, heathen, trades, soldiers, etc.”

Bourdieu also refers to some of the mechanisms of habit shaping identity, using tools that in some religions are thought of as holy remembrances, sacraments or sacramental experiences. As with worship, these various forms of religious experience can function in all traditions through habituated practice to build, reinforce and maintain identities, values and dispositions:

One of the fundamental effects of the harmony between practical sense and objectified meaning (sens) is the production of a common-sense world, whose immediate self-evidence is accompanied by the objectivity provided by consensus on the meaning of practices and the world, in other words the harmonization of the agents’ experiences and the constant reinforcement each of them receives from

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218 Rankin, 53-77.

219 Bourdieu, Logic of Practice, 48.
expression—individual or collective (in festivals, for example), improvised or programmed (commonplaces, sayings)—of similar or identical experiences.\footnote{Bourdieu, Logic of Practice, 58, while awkward and unclear is Bourdieu’s special and characteristic way, this represents a technical description of what anamnesis as earlier described does.}

These dispositional habitus also support apprehension of the “habits of mind” and frameworks of meaning conducive to resilience as fostered by spiritual disciplines. These spiritual disciplines across traditions could be described in the language of Bourdieu in his classically complex description of how habitus works:

The conditioning associated with a particular class of conditions of existence (which) produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate organized practices and representations…without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. …The practical world that is constituted in the relationship with the habitus, acting as a system of cognitive and motivating structures, is a world of already realized ends—procedures to follow, paths to take…\footnote{Bourdieu, Logic of Practice, 53}

The habitus of what functions as “spiritual disciplines” in various traditions are thus “structured structures”—such as the highly structured “Lord’s Prayer,” the Shema, or “The Five Pillars of Islam”—designed as “structuring structures” intended to help religionists subjectivize “a system of cognitive and motivating structures (and)…procedures to follow, paths to take,” by which their spiritual fitness is exercised.
Religion and spirituality: often intertwined, yet distinct

The global studies Diana Butler-Bass has used on an international scale, and numerous studies in the American context as well, consistently demonstrate that most people identify with some religion, religious heritage, or spiritual tradition most often rooted in various traditional religious practices.222 Drawing from Wilfred Cantwell Smith’s landmark work in comparative religion written more than fifty years ago, Butler-Bass describes how the Latin root, religio, of our current word for religion, rather than ritual or institutional form as is often intended with early 21st century use of the word, instead “meant faith—living, subjective experience including love, veneration, devotion, awe, worship, transcendence, trust, a way of life, an attitude toward the divine or nature,”223—often what fills the content of the term “spiritual” as currently used. And integral to all the predominating traditions usually identified in religious discourse, is language that in current discourse refers in some way to that paradigm of spirituality, spiritual practices, and what could be described as “spiritual fitness.”

It is therefore more reasonable to assume that when most people refer to spirituality, they generally have the language of spirituality organic to, and as understood in their religious heritage in the forefront of their minds. This seems to be a more reasonable way to understand the language of spirituality rather than some artificial, secular, and distinctly non-theological construction as developed by the authors behind the Army CSF model. These insights thus help to identify a systemic weakness of the

222 Butler-Bass, 91-99, and a range of surveys from Pew and others, all point to the ongoing broad popularity of religious practice and identification across traditional religions.
223 Butler-Bass, 97.
CSF version of “Spiritual Fitness” as defined by Pargament et al in its exclusion of traditional understandings of the function and content of “spirituality” for the resilience CSF intends to foster. At the same time, these insights provide an academic bridge to the broader sense of “spiritual fitness” rooted in frameworks of meaning conveyed through traditional religious as well as a range of “secular” spiritual frameworks and “chains of memory.”

Spirituality, while often an important part of practiced religions, is not necessarily a function of religion in this set of constructs either, nor would one require a religion in order to act or be “spiritual.” Diana Butler-Bass cited studies from both 1999 and 2009, with well-populated categories of “spiritual only,” “religious only,” “both religious and spiritual,” and “neither spiritual nor religious,” but in dramatically changing proportions across that recent decade.\textsuperscript{224} This indicates both the widespread understanding of a distinction between the terms, as well as indicating significant change in relation to these categories, even across such a short time as a decade.

With the distinction of “religion” entailing an institutional form, many people might be said to be “religious” in their connection to a religious institution, which may involve greater or lesser involvement in the practices of that religion, thus be “religious but not spiritual.” Many eagerly embrace their connection to a religious institution, and practice their faith in meaningful ways, hence could describe themselves as “both religious and spiritual.” And the now famous claim to “spiritual but not religious” might be made by those who have left their “religion,” or who have never had a religious

\textsuperscript{224} Butler-Bass, 92.
connection, but engage in “spiritual practices.” Some of this category would engage in spiritual practices firmly rooted in some identifiable religion, while others may borrow *a la carte* from extant religions or “secular” meaning structures which might also function to provide a foundational framework of meaning.

Essential to spirituality and spiritual fitness here, though, is the act of apprehension—claiming objects or practices of faith as one's own, regardless of what faith structure(s) (or secular meaning systems) to which those objects or practices might belong. And of course, some of the population always have and always will have no religious affiliation and engage in no spiritual practices, hence would be described as “neither spiritual nor religious.”

**Apprehending a habitus of connectivity**

While content, form, substance and numerous details can vary dramatically, virtually all major religions could be described as having two functionally similar facets, comparable to what many Americans would refer to as “institutional religion” and “spirituality.” All the predominant religio-spiritual traditions currently practiced in the United States convey their foundational framework through social religious institutions designed to provide and reproduce “chains of memory” by which to convey their spiritual

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225 Note that many of these claiming “neither religious nor spiritual,” could readily be described by an observer to be still living as if they have apprehended some integrating framework of meaning—even if it might be described as the most raw form of hedonism.

226 With Stephen Prothero, in *God is Not One*, I make this comment to clearly distinguish what I’m doing here with what has often been done in the field of comparative religion following the Smith tradition, of either straining to posit an apparent commonality of “the Divine” across religions—often called “perennialism”—or alternatively, striving to develop some form of a “generic,” individualized spirituality as a common grounding for discourse pertaining to “the spiritual.” My argument recognizes that while the range of religions are substantively and dramatically different in their understandings of foundational reality, they do have similar *functions* as related to the role of habits of mind and dispositional habitus in terms of what could be described as spiritual and identity formation in each.
substance. These institutional religions most often shape the specific content, form, and apparatus of social infrastructure. These various facets of socio-cultural infrastructure all together, provide the capacity—the “hardware” as it were in computer language—for groups and persons to apprehend the resources of the religion.

But I argue here that the connectivity itself—the subjectivized ongoing apprehension of the resources of either religious or secular spiritualities, is expressed through the practice of the habitus of the traditions. These habitus may be practiced through the institutions of the religion, or independently—as untethered from any institutional infrastructure. Where one practices those spiritual habitus to a limited extent, that one might be said to have a lower level of spiritual fitness. Where one practices those spiritual habitus more regularly, intentionally, and extensively, that one might be said to have a higher level of spiritual fitness, therefore, likely expressing a stronger sense of resilience, in the face of challenges, pain and suffering, regardless of the religious or secular source of that framework of meaning.

The habitus of spirituality of whatever religious or secular tradition\textsuperscript{227} provides connectivity to the resources of a religion or secular meaning framework in much the same way as we talk about “connectivity” in terms of the computer and internet. Avenues of connection may be regularly accessible through appropriate hardware, operating systems and network infrastructure. But unless those avenues of connection are activated and maintained through habituated practice of utilizing the technology of connection, while constantly following protective procedures to prevent obstacles to connectivity, the

\textsuperscript{227} Such as the cross-culturally similar, secular “Warrior ethos” described by Jarrett’s WRT program.
“connection” itself is not functioning. The long tradition of spiritual disciplines in the Christian tradition with which I am most familiar, in like manner, suggests that spiritual connectivity is activated through the habituated practice of the spiritual disciplines. With both religion and computers, one's connectivity is manifest through habituated practice. Without functioning connectivity, the capacity to provide for effective chains of memory exists, yet where the connection alone exists without the habitus by which connectivity is actuated, chains of memory fail.

As with internet usage, both religion and spirituality require infrastructure as well, but in terms of social tools, rather than through the tools of a network infrastructure. Any further understanding of whatever spiritual fitness means, then, must entail its inescapable rootedness in a socio-cultural infrastructure. Individual subjectivization of spiritual resources is necessarily more an apprehending, as distinct from merely a comprehending—which, as with any version of physical fitness—requires personal exercise of the tradition. Merely claiming a religious preference or genealogical heritage in a tradition is not what subjectivizes the function and resources of spiritual fitness. That would provide about as much fitness as merely claiming a preference for maintaining physical fitness by playing soccer rather than by running—but without ever actually playing soccer nor going for a run.

For example, as a practicing Christian, I might have a solid comprehension of another religion, without in any way claiming or practicing that other religion. At the

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228 This is the unifying, common theme across the many Christian spiritual formation classics of the Medieval, Renaissance, and modern periods.
same time, by acting to convert to any faith, one would be apprehending that faith--
making it her or his own. The novice to a newly adopted religion, though, would not
necessarily be expected to have a thorough comprehension of the tenets or practices of
that tradition. One can also practice a religion without any sort of apprehension of that
religion. This is often described as hypocrisy, an empty faith, or merely going through
the motions. This might be thought of as a kind of imitation of a religious piety, but
such empty, non-apprehending behavior is rarely thought of in relation to spirituality, or
whatever spiritual fitness might mean. Thus a central theme to spiritual fitness rooted
in any tradition, must entail some extent of subjectivization or apprehension of that
tradition, as opposed to merely claiming a religious preference, going through the
motions, or citing some heritage in a faith family that might seem to function somewhat
like genetically transmitted characteristics.

Habitus is then a key element in effective perpetuation of both the distinct chains
of memory which conveys each religion as a human institution from generation to
generation, and is also a key element in manifesting the conviviality and experience of
spiritual fitness appropriate to any framework of meaning. Jarrett discusses and applies
to the 21st century military context, how Aristotle and other secular frameworks of
meaning develop “virtue ethics”229 and other tools for resilience outside of religious
frameworks.230 These “secular” philosophical grounds provide the same sense and
function of spiritual fitness I’ve been discussing. Thus it might be said that practice of

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229 Aristotle, *NE*.
the habitus of the tools of religious or secularly based frameworks of spirituality are key to a concept of spiritual fitness.

When personally apprehended by Soldiers through education and inculcation, a habitus of spiritual fitness might instill and internalize in a Soldier as second nature, the resources of the pertinent spiritual tradition for dispositions and patterns of resilience, even in times of high stress. In the face of highly stressful situations, the habits of mind and embodied dispositions toward resilience fostered by internalized spiritual frameworks, thus functions in the same way that the inculcated behavioral habitus of “muscle memory” functions for a Soldier grappling in hand-to-hand combat for his life, or a soccer player when a ball is kicked her direction.231

And as with any form of physical fitness, it is in the disciplined practice of the habitus that builds the fitness—not the mere talking about it, or the labeling of oneself as being “into fitness” that makes it happen. And as the fitness is practiced and grows, so the resources of resilience that come from any given spirituality or framework of meaning grows and becomes a part of the Soldier’s life.

Taylor, self and soul—inclusive of the religious and secular

Though I was far along the path in my studies by the time I encountered the works of Charles Taylor that I have used extensively in this project, taken together, they have provided a powerful framework and language by which to integrate my efforts in this research. He is a rare academic whose interdisciplinary work equips him to bridge the chasm between the scientific naturalist, the religionist, and the humanist, and who is

comfortable navigating through more metaphysical language, without discounting the empiricist. While not entirely synonymous, Taylor points out the functionally synonymous role of the terms “self” as the preferred secular term, and “soul” as the preferred religious term (at least in the Christian religion providing the predominant and most popularly familiar religious language in the American context) in relation to the individual personal identity that is socially formed in any given culture.

As his *Sources of the Self* title suggests, Taylor works extensively with the language of the “self”—typically a term scientific naturalists might use. But he also uses the term “soul” almost synonymously in both *Sources of the Self*, and his later work, *A Secular Age*. From within a pluralistic paradigm, he at the same time embraces “spiritual” language in the more traditional sense. Taylor contributed to this bridging facet of the conversation by developing a discussion around human identity issues built on one’s moral and spiritual proximity in relation to that which is variously construed as “the good.” This discussion can both be readily understood as being akin to the concept of “spiritual fitness” that is the unifying theme of this project, and at the same time, contributes to further conceptual clarity of the term.

Taylor indicates that Augustine sets the paradigm for most of the breadth of Christendom to follow in moving the ground of being from the Platonic Idea, so that “the place (where) that all-structuring Idea is now taken by God himself…(and where) now the ultimate principle of being and knowledge together is God…”232 Taken together with

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his already mentioned concept of the moral and spiritual importance of being “rightly placed in relation to the good”—with that good in many traditions being construed as God-- the role and functions of religion and spirituality are to continually bring and return persons and communities into a closer “spatial” relationship to God. He, too, is interested in frameworks of social identity and meaning. But where the religionist is formed with habits of mind inherently linking social identity, meaning, and “the good” to God or to that which functions as the Divine, Taylor provides a way to think of these concepts that functions well for both the religionist and the secularist:

I want to explore various facets of what I will call the ‘modern identity.’ To give a good first approximation of what this means would be to say that it involves tracing various strands of our modern notion of what it means to be a human agent, a person, or a self. But pursuing this investigation soon shows that you can’t get very clear about this without some further understanding of how our pictures of the good have evolved. Selfhood and the good, or in another way, selfhood and morality, turn out to be inextricably linked.233

Taylor also makes the further move to speak of “the good” in terms of the “moral.” He recognizes what few seem to be willing to address-- the apparent aversion of the scientific naturalist to dimensions of belief that seem ever elusive of “naturalistic” investigation. But he is able to get past this aversion and explores the “background

233 Taylor, Sources of the Self, 3.
picture” inherent in culture that is inclusive of beliefs.\textsuperscript{234} He is thus able to cast the dynamics around the social and individual apprehension and manifestation of these habitus in terms of the “spiritual”:

More broadly, I want to explore the background picture of our spiritual nature and predicament which lies behind some of the moral and spiritual intuitions of our contemporaries…. (but) much contemporary philosophy has ignored this dimension of our moral consciousness and beliefs altogether and has even seemed to dismiss it as confused and irrelevant…. In fact, I want to consider a gamut of views a bit broader than what is normally described as the ‘moral’. In addition to our notions and reactions on such issues as justice and the respect of other people’s life, well-being and dignity, I want also to look at our sense of what underlies our own dignity, or questions about what makes our lives meaningful or fulfilling…. What they have in common with moral issues, and what deserves the vague term ‘spiritual’, is that they all involve what I have called elsewhere ‘strong evaluation’, that is, they involve discriminations of right or wrong…\textsuperscript{235}

A common function of most of the predominating religions is their casting of the “strong evaluations” of moral grounding in religious molds, history and mythology, either from the primordial beginnings such as in creation myths, or from the beginnings of the Tradition, as is the case with Buddhism. In Western culture, inescapably grounded in

\textsuperscript{234} Taylor’s use of the language of “background picture” functions similarly to Rawls’ language of “comprehensive doctrines,” and as the substance of that which Bourdieu describes as being “taken for granted” in habitus.

\textsuperscript{235} Taylor, Sources of the Self, 4.
Christianized Jewish constructs, from at least as far back in the mists of time as the formulation of The Ten Commandments, the “strong evaluations” of moral concepts have been rooted in religion. Likewise, from even further back to the Abrahamic covenant, and the formulations of the covenants of Noah and even Adam and Eve, cast back to the very beginning of time, personal and communal meaning has been rooted in religious identity. And as spiritual traditions seem to be virtually always rooted in, even when untethered from religious traditions, these strong evaluations related to frameworks of morality, identity and meaning as Taylor describes them, even untethered spiritualities tend to be closely related to the strong evaluations of their religious heritages.

The challenge of a public spiritual fitness in 21st century pluralism

I have argued that “spiritual fitness”—through whatever content it may carry—functions akin to fitness in soccer where more frequent and regular disciplined practice brings growth in that area of fitness. As such, spiritual disciplines of whatever tradition are tools of anamnesis—tools for remembering and reclaiming that Divine connection: “Thus within certain religious traditions, ‘contact’ is understood as a relation to God and may be understood in sacramental terms or in those of prayer or devotion.”

All religious traditions are expressed through sacred acts, language, symbols and places. The performance of acts of religious and spiritual support tend to be expressed through these acts and anamnetic cues, whose symbolic use and meaningful content are already pre-reflexively established by and through the “conviviality” of the religious communities into which emerging generations are born or adopted. As such, rites and

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236 Taylor, Sources of the Self, p. 44.
conviviality of the tradition are grounded into emerging souls by repeated ritual use from an early age. The foundations of spiritual formation function in the same way that children learn the basic habitus components of soccer--usually from childhood, long predating the child’s developmental capacity to apprehend abstract meanings and symbols. These sacred acts, terms, symbols, places and rituals gain normative, pre-reflexive power for conveying meaning to initiates of the given tradition. They do so by providing and functioning as symbolic “landmarks,” bringing persons back into contact with those meanings through the use of the given sacred iconic, anamnetic tools--whether the Mass, a cross, a pilgrimage, a relic, a scripture reading or more.

“Orientation in moral space turns out again to be similar to orientation in physical space. We know where we are through a recognition of landmarks before us…”237 And by the use of these “landmarks” of anamnetic cues, persons are not only reminded “where they are,” but by them, are also brought back into closer proximity to “the good.” In these ways, the acts of conviviality--of spiritual conversation and shared experience, which are in turn shaped, cultivated and reinforced by conversation--are integral tools for anamnesis of religious or spiritual substance and fitness. In the presence of acts of conviviality, shared meanings, identities, relationships and location in relation to the Divine are anamnetically cultivated, re-invested, and reconstructed.

In religious contexts, acts of religious anamnesis continually reinvests a spiritual language and content into daily life through a spiritually inclusive conviviality. Where society and religion have coexisted in a functionally overlapping “public” space, public

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237 Taylor, Sources of the Self, p. 48.
discourse inclusive of commonly held religious language and imagery could organically support the spiritual fitness of a common, publically conveyed spiritual habitus conducive of resilience. This overlapping of public and religious space had been the public context across Constantinian Christian western Culture and across American history up to and through most of the 20th century. The emerging distinction between that which is termed “religious” and that which is termed “spiritual” often centers on this universal domain of meaning, regardless of one's claimed religious heritage, or absence thereof. Because spirituality is an integral part to most religions, for many religionists, their “spiritual” domain—addressing concerns related to ultimate meaning is most often construed through their religion.

But this discussion suggests that where there is a lack of a public spiritual conviviality—a publicly shared conversation and experience conveying “spiritual” concepts and tools for resilience—the absence thereof necessarily creates a “public” sense of accidie: Where the use of religio-spiritual language in public discourse is anemic or absent, that public discourse is not able to be spiritually or religiously “neutral” as some may claim, but instead, functions to form persons in accidie—with an absence of a sense of the spiritual. The resultant lack or absence of spiritual connectivity and shared meaning, I argue, inadvertently though necessarily undermines a spiritual

238 The large body of the literature of secularization across a range of fields supports this notion, well encapsulated by Taylor’s work as I often refer to it in this study.
239 I will be using the term “religio-spiritual” in this project as a form of short-hand to elicit the embrace of metaphysical perspective common to most religious and spiritual discourse, as distinct from the merely “naturalistic” language and frameworks often thought of as necessary for “pluralistic” discourse. This is not to suggest a conflation of the two, as while “religious” and “spiritual” discourses often overlap, they are also often quite distinct from each other. This relationship will be further discussed in the dissertation.
apprehension of life as lived, thereby undermining Constitutionally protected religious habits of mind.

In the early 21st century American context, public schools are assigned a large role to play in this identity formation, whether of self or soul. As has been discussed, religion is an important facet of the soul-in-formation for most Americans. Numerous demographic studies both across the United States240 and across the world demonstrate that “a vast majority of the world’s people believe in God and say that religion plays an important role in their lives.”241 It is therefore not only unconstitutional in this country, but also intellectually dishonest, to exclude traditional religious understandings of spirituality from this important discussion of, and attempt to, tap into resources of spiritual fitness for resilience. The term “self” need not be understood as a spiritually or religiously empty term. In practice, though, in public contexts where religious and spiritual language is almost entirely lacking, the term has become emptied of spiritual and religious content.

While religious neutrality may be intended in a public language empty of spiritual content, spiritually empty public discourse functions instead to form a secular “establishment” that undermines religious ways of apprehending the world. Unless, of course, an intentionally inclusive language is somehow utilized which manifests the overt recognition of the integral religious or spiritual facets of formation, which would be necessary to respect the pluralism required by public discourse in the early 21st century.

241 World Values Survey, as quoted in Butler-Bass, 96.
CHAPTER VI

CHALLENGE AND PROMISE: CLUES FOR AN OVERLAPPING CONSENSUS

Changing pluralisms

As had been mentioned in the fourth chapter, from the beginning of the U.S. Army Chaplaincy in 1775—even prior to the birth of the United States—concerns of meeting religious needs in religious diversity was a distinctly new essential role of the Army Chaplaincy as General George Washington formed it. Yet at the same time, religious and spiritual support in the pluralism of the secular age of early 21st century U.S. Army is distinctly different than it was in the “pluralism” of Washington’s day, and of the Constantinian Christian culture that held sway through most of the 20th century.

The work of Berger, Taylor and other secularization theorists already explored suggest an emerging new paradigm of “secularism” that is distinctly different than the context of “pluralism” within religious hegemony under which the U.S. Army Chaplaincy was organized and has been equipped for its more than two centuries of common service.

Prior to what Taylor described as this “secular age,” regardless of one’s personal commitments, membership, or level of participation, what Taylor described as the background picture that undergirded socio-cultural habitus, was an enchanted, religious world, variously described as flowing out from the ontological Divine, posited center. Various comprehensive doctrines described the various religious construals of reality as thus understood, but a religious ontology was experienced as both the norm and
normative for socio-cultural interaction. The emerging background picture of this secular age, though, is one that—because of the naturalistic, empirical framework emerging adults are marinated in at public schools across almost all of the two decades of their lives prior to adulthood—is becoming all but entirely dis-enchantment, non-religious, merely naturalistic, and largely constructed in pragmatic ways. I argue alongside Taylor in this project that this secular age is becoming more thoroughly manifest in the habits of mind and habitus of the populace through years of religiously “neutralized” public discourse, as opposed to merely remaining a function of political policy or academic discourse.

While some would celebrate this emerging, common-sensical background picture of secularization, how it is manifest in public discourse brings about what I assert are largely unrecognized challenges. Both in traditional and emerging frameworks, many spiritual or religious ways of apprehending the world often assert some analogy to a Divine permeation of both physical reality, as well as through the fabric and dynamics of human experience. But for a light seasoning of “God bless America” scattered through political speeches, though, public discourse through popular media and especially in public schools is forming emerging generations in ways that are largely emptied of religious or spiritual content. This merely naturalistic public habitus functions to “establish” through practice and policy of public institutions such as public schools, both practical norms and normative habits of mind that are anemic or even virtually devoid of

242 Taylor and Kennedy as already discussed, are two writers of note who make this point abundantly clear. 243 Taylor, *A Secular Age.*
religious or spiritual ways of describing the world.\textsuperscript{244}

I argue that this kind of secular public discourse and its religiously “neutral”
language, does not function in a benign way, but intentional or not, functions to
undermine Constitutionally protected religions and their integrally spiritual ontologies.
The foundational depth and breadth of this change in relation to personal formation
through education seems to have gone virtually unnoticed. I have been, therefore,
arguing a thoroughgoing analysis of the function of the Chaplaincy in the current context,
changed from pluralism under hegemony to a plurality more accurately representative of
the current context.

I would assert with Taylor as he argues in \textit{A Secular Age}, the capacity to have
mutually coexisting but non-hegemonic background pictures vying for influence in the
same political space is a relatively unique condition of late modernity.\textsuperscript{245} It is this very
difference and mutual, non-hegemonic coexistence of varying communities, sometimes
holding mutually exclusive foundational values, that has brought with it unique new
challenges for habitus formation in public contexts. What Taylor calls a “background
picture” seems to function similarly to Rawls’ use of “comprehensive doctrines,” and
what elsewhere might be referred to as “worldviews” or “ideologies.” I am not
suggesting these terms are necessarily synonymous, but that each term is a sign for what
functions as a grounding, foundational framework for persons and communities to use in
their guiding habitus, beliefs, ways of apprehending the world, ways of discerning the

\begin{flushright}
244 Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}. \\
245 Taylor, \textit{A Secular Age}. \\
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“rightness” or “wrongness” of life choices or courses of action. This could be described as that dialectical domain where individual and community interact. In Taylor’s terms, that interaction building “our sense of what underlies our own dignity, or questions about what makes our lives meaningful or fulfilling… (is) what deserves the vague term ‘spiritual.’”

Formation of selfhood would seem to be a process inextricably intertwined with the dialectic between communal concepts of “the background picture,” the comprehensive doctrines that are at play, and the development of the individual in his or her integrity with an undergirding framework of meaning. In the formerly hegemonic background picture of Constantinian Christian Western Culture, questions of soul formation or selfhood and the undergirding and unambiguous socially common sense of morality and common, religiously oriented framework of meaning were relatively uncontroversial. They seem to have been by and large implicitly understood, and readily conveyed through socio-culturally endorsed and supported “chains of memory.” However, this formerly self-supporting and integrated, multi-faceted framework of “spiritual fitness” is changing, and I argue these changes are having unanticipated and poorly understood consequent impacts on the social conveyance of “spiritual fitness.”

Prevailing frameworks of pluralism have not as yet been able to bridge the gap between pluralists and traditionalists of various stripes, and therefore do not carry with them any functional consensus on a moral ontology. They therefore cannot adequately support any common sense of, nor formation toward a cultural consensus in “spiritual

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fitness.” But to even suggest that such a challenge is inherent to most forms of pluralism is difficult. Recognizing this fact, Taylor asserts:

It will be my claim that there is a great deal of motivated suppression of moral ontology among our contemporaries, in part because the pluralist nature of modern society makes it easier to live that way, but also because of the great weight of modern epistemology (as with naturalists evoked above) and, behind this, the spiritual outlook associated with this epistemology.\(^{247}\)

Taylor could win the award for understatement of the year when he indicates in this discussion that “This articulation can be very difficult and controversial.”\(^{248}\)

**Where pluralism can become a Constitutional challenge**

The emergence of pluralism presents a challenge for First Amendment concerns if an ideology of pluralism, as opposed to a merely practical framework pluralism, were to become the new hegemony “established” with the support of public institutions, as Constitutional protections are adamant that no one perspective be “established” by public endorsement. In a very real way, the First Amendment to the Constitution was not only developing jurisprudence, it was also developing and implying new religious theory which is foundational to what has only recently emerged as clearly distinct domains of “religion” and “spirituality.” The First Amendment reads as follows:

\(^{247}\) Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 10.

\(^{248}\) Taylor, *Sources of the Self*, 9.
Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.\textsuperscript{249}

While not fully elucidated, the religious theory this text was tacitly grounding was further developed in extra-Constitutional writings of the Founding Fathers. Those documents expressed personal opinions rather than ratified thought, so are not Constitutionally binding. Probably the most significant of these in terms of the First Amendment was what has become known as Jefferson's Danbury Church Letter, from whence the (in)famous term “wall of separation between Church & State” came into jurisprudence. The meat of that rather short letter follows:

\begin{quote}
Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man & his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, & not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should "make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," thus building a wall of separation between Church & State.\textsuperscript{250}

“Establishment” in that day meant the corporate institutions of denominational Christian churches as political units, some of which functioned at the same time as
\end{quote}


government entities with distinct power and financial relationships with political states. That concept of “religion” was significantly different than the plurality of non-political socio-anthropological expressions of religion in 21st century America. Religion now often refers to an unincorporated, nebulous cultural field, inclusive of a broad range of “religions,” but at the same time, it can refer to institutional religion as clearly and qualitatively different from “spirituality.” The broader term sometimes refers to a particular religion with many differing institutional expressions, or to a class of socio-cultural institutions that may be called many “religions.” Religion may refer to a general spiritual domain, sometimes to a range of spiritualities, sometimes to a distinct form of spirituality. It sometimes refers to an individual’s “personal and private” institutional affiliation, sometimes to an esthetic motif, sometimes to a personal, perhaps political ideology, or in Rawls’ language, to a “comprehensive doctrine.”

**John Rawls: pluralism and comprehensive doctrines**

Perhaps John Rawls had this train of thought in mind when he pointed out that pluralism can be its own comprehensive doctrine or worldview,251 and as such, “pluralism” may not be particularly pluralistic. As a political philosopher, John Rawls has been one of the most significant thinkers exploring this motif in the last quarter of the 20th century, exploring how it is even possible to exist in a culture of political liberalism. Political liberalism is generally assumed to rest on a concept of pluralism, yet in his research, he has noted that such a thing in practice is hard to find:

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One of the deepest distinctions between conceptions of justice is between those that allow for a plurality of reasonable though opposing comprehensive doctrines each with its own conception of the good, and those that hold that there is but one such conception to be recognized by all citizens who are fully reasonable and rational.... Plato and Aristotle, and the Christian tradition as represented by Augustine and Aquinas, fall on the side of the one reasonable and rational good.... By contrast, we have seen that political liberalism supposes there are many conflicting reasonable comprehensive doctrines with their conceptions of the good, each compatible with the full rationality of human persons... So the question the dominant tradition has tried to answer has no answer: no comprehensive doctrine is appropriate as a political conception for a constitutional regime.252

Rawls used the language of “comprehensive doctrines” where others might use terms like “background picture,” “worldview,” “metaphysics,” “habits of mind,” or “ideology”—that set of ideas of what is most ultimately real and of highest value, on which all other social arrangements are based. Predominant forms of most current leading religions function in this way as their own, often mutually exclusive comprehensive doctrine.253 But Rawls subtly pointed to what few seem to realize—that ideas of “pluralism” typically suggest that varieties of comprehensive systems can coexist. For pluralism to be grounded in this one overriding claim—that a multiplicity of

252 Rawls, 134, 135.
253 I address the demographics behind this statement in note 199. While all theist religions come in a variety of forms—traditionally accepted versions of these religions are generally understood to provide their adherents foundational ontological frameworks inherent to their belief systems, and thereby act as “comprehensive doctrines” as Rawls uses the term.
legitimate meaning systems can coexist, is to at the same time, assert that any mutually exclusive comprehensive system either cannot exist, or cannot have legitimate voice in the public arena.

Pluralism by intent or manifest normative practice, whether understood thusly or not, can function as an ideological comprehensive doctrine, fostering by its normative use, the assumption that no ideology has a corner on the market of “Truth,” nor can legitimately insist on a universal posited reality. Such a notion erodes, and therefore cannot comfortably coexist with any worldview that does insist on a universal posited reality, as is often the case with traditional and religious frameworks. Predominating religions tend to foster and convey frameworks of meaning typically understood to describe the universally applicable fabric of reality. Functioning in this way, each religion provides its own comprehensive doctrine, but differing religiously formed visions of reality are often mutually exclusive with one another. Where either by design or by mere practice of not using religious language, pluralism or secularism by default, becomes the normative, accepted and established public comprehensive doctrine. Such a pluralism thereby functions in a religious capacity to re-define the fabric of reality and human experience. The U.S. Supreme Court recognized this religious function of some secular frameworks of meaning, recognizing that such ideologies and subsequent habitus oversteps Constitutional protections of religious expression.254

**Political liberalism and overlapping consensus**

John Rawls offers a model of “overlapping consensus”\(^{255}\) that may well provide helpful insight into the discussion of pluralism. Building on Rawls’ thought on political liberalism, I argue that any conception of public discourse, policy and undergirding philosophy, necessarily entails public political philosophy and related First Amendment jurisprudence on questions of “establishment.” This connection, though, seems to be often overlooked. Rawls argued in *Political Liberalism* that those on all sides who had claimed to embrace the hopes of “political liberalism” were doing so using a pretense of “pluralism,” but with hidden underlying agendas.\(^{256}\) Similar for Enlightenment liberals, Marxists or apologists for Christendom-- each in its own way carried the “hidden agenda” of working toward bringing their opponents to “see the light.” The idea being that once their opponents eventually were “enlightened,” they too, would come to the one reasonable conclusion that the one comprehensive doctrine-- be it of Marxism, liberalism or Christendom\(^{257}\)-- was the only legitimate, “one reasonable and rational good.”\(^{258}\)

In order to address this challenge, Rawls developed what he calls an “overlapping consensus,” in which “the reasonable doctrines endorse the political conception, each from their own point of view.”\(^{259}\) In other words, each comprehensive doctrine from

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\(^{255}\) Rawls, 35ff.
\(^{256}\) Rawls, 134.
\(^{257}\) Some might suggest that our list of mutually incompatible comprehensive doctrines should include “ideological terrorists” of Iran's Islamic Revolution, Al Qaeda, and others gaining infamy in recent years from bloody news stories or the “Global War on Terror.” These certainly represent incompatible comprehensive doctrines. But where those systems overtly state their intent to, and actually do act to violently force their own system across political arenas, these acts disqualify such doctrines from being “reasonable” in Rawls’ thought. This emerging phenomena certainly merits further academic study, but is a tangent stretching beyond the scope of this project.
\(^{258}\) Rawls, 134.
\(^{259}\) Rawls, 134.
within its own internal structure and without compromising their doctrines with other coexisting doctrines, temporarily suspends its insistence on systematic application in order to peacefully coexist in a common polity with others holding to mutually exclusive worldviews:

Now to state the main point: in the overlapping consensus... the acceptance of the political conception is not a compromise between those holding different views, but rests on the totality of reasons specified within the comprehensive doctrine affirmed by each citizen.\(^{260}\)

By “reasonable” comprehensive systems, then, he essentially means those systems which are able to live with this temporary suspension of belief, without efforts to force their doctrine on others,\(^ {261}\) so that those with competing worldviews may still be able to peaceably coexist.\(^ {262}\)

Where pluralism might assert its own cosmopolitan agenda as a competing comprehensive doctrine, that kind of pluralism would be functioning in a religious capacity. As such, it would thus contravene First Amendment protections of freedom of religious expression, where the perhaps uncomfortable mutual coexistence of conflicting doctrines in plurality would not. However, a public acceptance of the fact of diversity without forcing any ideological agenda by formative educational policy in reference to

\(^{260}\)Rawls, 171.
\(^{261}\) The case of ideological terrorists claiming religious identity is here instructive: where such terrorist use IEDs or abortion clinic assassins to “force” their doctrine, they are by Rawls definition “unreasonable,” whereas those claiming the same religion, where they coexist peaceably with others despite their differences, they would be defined in Rawls terms here as “reasonable.”
\(^{262}\)Rawls, 134.
competing groups, can appropriately serve the requirements of Constitutional
jurisprudence where pluralism as a comprehensive doctrine cannot.

A discussion of Kraevskii’s pertaining to public civic formation yields what might
be a clue to this seeming conundrum. Kraevskii pointed out: “It is the task of education,
responsible for preparing for life in that society, to form the kind of personality that is
capable of compassion, the kind of individual who is prepared to make free,
humanistically oriented choices...”263 Writers I’ve studied across this project representing
various conflicting comprehensive doctrines could probably agree with virtually every
word of such a statement—with the exception the qualifier “humanistically” for a range
of traditionalists or religionists. That term “humanistic” denotes a particularistic
perspective in relation to “human” (as opposed to “Divine”) concerns, and often to
“personal autonomy” (as opposed to priority of religious or communal loyalties).

Were that term replaced with the term “meaningfully,” however, such a problem
might not arise. “Meaningful” choices can be built around radically different frameworks,
and though conflicting systems can be “humanistic” in their concern for human issues, to
be centrally oriented around “humanistic” foundations as Kraevskii implies, rather than
allowing for that central orienting theme to be around theistic, cultural, traditional or
other foundational values, undermines many comprehensive doctrines. As alluded to
earlier, “humanism” -- or at least “secular humanism” --though not necessarily having the
institutional trappings usually associated with “religions,” has even been identified as a

263 V. P. Borisenkov, V. V. Kraevskii, and B. I. Pruzhinin, “The Role of Education in the Formation of a
Civil Society: A Roundtable of the Journals Voprosy filosofii and Pedagogika,” Russian Education and
distinct “religious” perspective by the U.S. Supreme Court, subject to the same limitations against public enshrinement and endorsement as any other “religion.”

Where pluralism thus constructed becomes established “public” policy through public education, military usage, or other public agency, it therefore directly contravenes Constitutional protections of free religious expression.

**CSF: “Spiritual fitness” appropriate to the public context?**

The Army’s Comprehensive Soldier Fitness (CSF) program developed in recent years to help address Soldier stress issues in the changing social context provides a distinct, concrete example of the problematic kind of pluralism that is not so pluralistic.

The CSF version of “Spiritual Fitness” was a very helpful way to start recognizing the importance of the habits of mind and related habitus of spirituality for the fitness of Soldiers in military operations. However, the language with which that framework was adopted does not adequately support First Amendment protections of religious freedoms. Despite its more noble intentions, the net result of the CSF model of “Spiritual Fitness” seems to attempt to force a largely artificial re-definition of “spirituality” to something “secular”– but unrecognizable to, and de-legitimizing of the religiously rooted spiritual heritages of most Soldiers. In doing so, the CSF definition of “Spiritual Fitness” inadvertently seems to embrace the same ideological version of “pluralism” that has been established by U.S. Supreme Court Constitutional jurisprudence in *Torcaso v. Watkins* as functioning in a religious way.

I contend in this project that this language of spiritual fitness touched on in recent

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264 *Torcaso v. Watkins.*
years by the Army in its “Comprehensive Soldier Fitness” program, is closely related to what Taylor also described in *Sources of the Self*, as the formation of selfhood. The U.S. Army's Comprehensive Soldier Fitness system has been an attempt to function within the challenge of pluralism and still provide resources for spiritual fitness. That this program has brought the spiritual into public discourse in relation to resilience represents uncommon wisdom, and has provided some initial conceptualizations helpful in opening the door and paving the way for further, more in-depth research in this area. However, their formulation of Spiritual Fitness as expressed in CSF presents some challenges.

The January 2011 issue of the American Psychologist journal is a special issue dedicated entirely to the development of the Army's Comprehensive Soldier Fitness, and conveniently provides a collection of Army thoughts on this issue, attempting to address issues of why now, what concepts are involved, and what it takes to build a holistic range of resilience in Soldiers, a part of which is the Army's concept of Spiritual Fitness. *Comprehensive Soldier Fitness* is built around five domains: Physical, Emotional, Social, Spiritual, and Family. Most of these dimensions of *Comprehensive Soldier Fitness* are well-described with distinct conceptual content. All of these dimensions have distinct denotations, connotations, and proponents in the Army by Army doctrine. But the dimension of Spiritual Fitness-- despite its distinct denotations, connotations, and having the Chaplaincy identified by Army Regulation as the proponent branch for these concerns, is conceptually underdeveloped and unnecessarily controversial.

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265 Further developed throughout the study based largely on the Jan. 2011 APA Special Issue focused on CSF.
The new Army CSF program describes Spiritual Fitness, in the same way as physical fitness, as a universal need of all Soldiers, yet is manifest through a variety of religious and a-religious expressions. How, then is “Spiritual Fitness” or its lack to be understood and recognized? How, too, can Commanders ensure all their Soldiers are regularly working their “Spiritual Fitness” regimens as conscientiously as they are regularly working their physical fitness regimen? And who can be qualified or expected to somehow facilitate the vast breadth of spiritual disciplines that could conceivably be a part of a unit's breadth of religious or spiritual diversity? These are some of the challenges of religious pluralism in the context of Army Spiritual Fitness.

Pargament and Sweeney are among the theoretical sources for the Army CSF program, and begin their Spiritual Fitness discussion by clarifying what they mean by the term. But their project dramatically redefines the terms in a way that completely severs “Spiritual Fitness” from any religious groundings, despite the fact that the term “spirituality” and the related term “spiritual fitness” already convey a plurality of deep, rich, and extensively nuanced meanings. Pargament and Sweeney unambiguously state: “[I]t is important to be clear about the ways in which the terms spirit and spirituality are being used in particular projects. Here, we are speaking about spirit, spirituality, and spiritual fitness in the human rather than theological sense.” As psychologists, these researchers have a disciplinary need to attempt to understand and describe phenomena solely in empirical terms. Thus in continuing with efforts at non-religious language, they state:

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266 Pargament, and Sweeney, 58, authors’ italics.
On the basis of these pragmatic criteria, we define *spiritual fitness* in terms of the capacity to (a) identify one’s core self and what provides life a sense of purpose and direction; (b) access resources that facilitate the realization of the core self and strivings, especially in times of struggle; and (c) experience a sense of connectedness with diverse people and the world.\textsuperscript{267}

With this linguistic twist, these authors believe they are able to provide a conceptual foundation on which to build within the Army's pluralistic context that avoids religion altogether. But in packaging their discussion in this way, not only are they overtly severing spiritual discourse from the theological roots integral to the majority of Soldiers, they may also be inadvertently distracting the reader from the subtle, but quite significant difference toward which their underlying assumptions logically lead.

**Exclusivist and inclusivist secular frameworks**

The distinctions these authors make in discussing the term “in the *human* rather than theological sense” (my emphasis added) can be readily missed when they move so quickly into the traditional (though redefined) religious concepts that follow. The discipline of Positive Psychology from which this discussion is drawn is a facet of the broader field of psychology, yet it is still within the field of psychology: a science self-defined as focusing on empirical observations of the material world. Thus, when discussing the “spiritual” as restricted to the “human spirit,” distinctly and intentionally separated both from the religious roots of the term, and “in the human rather than the theological sense” within a framework of empirical, materialistic psychology, then all

\textsuperscript{267}Pargament, and Sweeney, 59, authors’ italics.
further discussion is also qualified in terms of this broader, distinctly and intentionally empirical, materialistic framework.

Without dwelling on the significance of this caveat, the authors go on to further clarify their meaning by stating:

In this project, we define spirit as the essential core of the individual, the deepest part of the self, and one's evolving human essence. As Sweeney, Hannah, and Snider (2007) noted, 'Human spirit is thoroughly manifested in who we are.'

These authors seem to intend to provide the foundation for a well-thought out and thoroughly pluralistic and non-sectarian conception of Spiritual Fitness by this a-religious distinction of a spirituality defined strictly by empirical psychology. However, in casting the term thusly, they are rather, positing a distinctly exclusivist version of spirituality that invalidates the majority of those Soldiers claiming a religious heritage.

The exclusively humanistic assumptions underlying this definition of the “spiritual” as against commonly held, traditional theological understanding of the terms, though not recognized as such by CSF, seems to be legally problematic. In stating that the normative definition of the domain of “Spiritual Fitness” is explicitly not referring to anything religious, this approach posits an “establishment” of a particular, strictly naturalistic, secular comprehensive doctrine that functions in a “religious” way, to the exclusion of all theo-centric comprehensive doctrines. For a government-endorsed program to dramatically redefine a term integral to the majority's Constitutionally

268 Pargament and Sweeney, 58.
269 Pargament and Sweeney, 58.
270 Torcaso v. Watkins
protected religious experience as being explicitly irreligious is both unnecessary and problematic. As such, the definition of “spirituality” offered by the Army CSF program thereby directly infringes upon, even eliminates, rather than protects the Soldier’s “free expression” of religion, and is thus not legally tenable within First Amendment constitutional parameters.

Something of an improvement on this original version of CSF came with an entirely new Army Regulation, entitled “Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness,” just published in June, 2014. Still attempting to define spirituality, hence being restrictive in ways seem to impinge upon Constitutional protections, this version is at least not intentionally exclusive as is Pargament and Sweeney’s version. Published in an Army Regulation, though, “establishes” this definition as public policy. Despite the fact that the area of “spiritual well-being” is clearly an element of the Chaplaincy and its proponency, I find it both out of place and disconcerting that this “spiritual dimension” of Comprehensive Soldier Fitness is not addressed directly in Chaplaincy regulations. The spiritual dimension is instead, defined in the new CSF regulations under the proponency of the personnel offices of the Army.

Quoted in full, it is an improvement over Pargament and Sweeney’s earlier version, but it still defines and limits spiritual fitness to cognitive processes and claims:

Identifying one’s purpose, core values, beliefs, identity, and life vision define the spiritual dimension. These elements, which define the essence of a person, enable

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271 AR 165-1 2015, 1-5b, 1.
one to build inner strength, make meaning of experiences, behave ethically, persevere through challenges, and be resilient when faced with adversity. An individual’s spirituality draws upon personal, philosophical, psychological, and/or religious teachings or beliefs, and forms the basis of their character.273 This definition is a good attempt at being inclusive of both secular and religiously rooted frameworks for what could be called spiritual fitness. Yet it is still exclusive of a broad range of traditional religious understandings of spirituality, despite the fact that many traditions describe spirituality in more experiential or relational terms, often as well in terms of integrity of claimed beliefs and lived attitudes, dispositions and behaviors. When these merely cognitive beliefs and values “define spiritual fitness,” this operational definition invalidates those traditions in which spirituality and spiritual fitness go beyond cognitive beliefs or positions, hence again presenting Constitutional challenges. Yet when as other writers across disciplines offer more loose renderings that are inclusive of components experiential, relational, and having to do with integrity, these Constitutional challenges can fall away, so that addressing spiritual fitness in concise ways is not an impossible conundrum.

**Potential volatility from secularism**

Many scholarly and popular works have offered and sometimes argued for a variety of definitions, understandings and functions for the concept of pluralism. These offerings range from the less controversial recognition that differing people groups bring with them a range of practices and ways of comprehending and apprehending their

273 AR 350-53, 2-5, 8.
worlds, to what might be called an ideological version of pluralism. Diana Eck and others argue for a distinction between civic and theological forms of pluralism that is foundational for a commonly held pragmatic, non-ideological pluralism. For many of a more secular bent, this distinction seems quite natural and seems to make a great deal of sense. However, the experience she describes from a trip to Indonesia in 2005, demonstrated all too clearly that pluralism is not always thought of in that more benign way. Unrelated to but concurrent with that visit, she described a *fatwa* that was issued in Indonesia denouncing pluralism, secularism, liberal forms of Islam, interfaith prayer and more,\(^274\) that reflects a common global theme in which such a distinction between civic and theological pluralism is incomprehensible for many people and people groups.

The secularism characteristic of much of Western culture in which a civic and theological distinction is even capable of being made in terms of religion and public life, is often what is at issue for people such as those who issued the *fatwah* Eck mentioned. This distinction that seems so natural, comfortable, appropriate and inoffensive for those shaped for generations by Western culture, can be perceived by others as an imperialistic attack against certain forms of religion, and against indigenous cultures, against which many people and people groups feel obligated by religious injunction and cultural self-defense to fight. For many, this fight is cast or merely expressed as a “culture war.” For others, the war is desperate enough to be fought with bombs, bullets and blood.\(^275\)

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\(^{275}\) This set of assertions is drawn from a variety of sources, so is difficult to foot-note in a concise way, but they are central to and brought together in the thesis for my unpublished Liberal Studies Masters degree I completed at Kent State in 2009.
This challenge of a deep, violent hatred of secularism is at least acknowledged within some scholarly circles dealing with political science, religion, cultural studies and terrorism. But it is a challenge seemingly invisible to, or at least underplayed by many academic circles in which concepts of secularism and pluralism are celebrated and embraced as essentially inoffensive. The diversity of comprehensive doctrines at stake, too often cast in merely esthetic terms of “religious preference,” is often as deep as the soul of a culture. This chasm of a cultural divide can be either deepened-- or perhaps narrowed-- by how the context of pluralism is discursively cast, hence the importance of clarity in terms of what “pluralism” does and does not mean. That can literally be a matter of life and death, or might make the difference between war and peace. While the kind of clarification between “plurality” and “pluralism” being made in this project may seem unnecessary to some, for others, how the term is used can make the difference between the capacity to build bridges of peace or the need to go to war.

This dynamic of the volatility of religious discourse, and roles religion plays in conflict, has been tacitly recognized by the Department of Defense across the experience of conflict for the past ten years. The Department of Defense and its military branches have developed a range practices, policies and training in pertaining to roles of Chaplains in “Religious Leader Engagement” and “Key Leader Engagement” in recent contexts that I have addressed more fully elsewhere, that demonstrate this vital role for Chaplains as pluralism professionals in the global context. Clarity in what pluralism does and does not mean as a policy and practice both on the battlefield and on the world stage, is what makes the unique training, background and role of Chaplains so essential in their role as
“pluralism professionals,” and more close to home, as spiritual fitness and resilience coaches as well in the current military milieu.

Pluralism is quite functional and appropriate as one ideology among many, as one comprehensive doctrine among the many religious and secular comprehensive doctrines-functioning-as-religion,\textsuperscript{276} which are all vying for socio-cultural influence within the broader context of plurality. But as with any comprehensive doctrine within the American political context given legal parameters by Constitutional jurisprudence, it must still seek to exist within a Rawlsian “overlapping consensus” alongside other comprehensive doctrines, rather than taking place of First Priority, wherein it would be merely replacing the former Constantinian hegemonic culture with a new hegemony of pluralism.

Rawls’ framework of an overlapping consensus is an attempt to provide a way to somehow share the common space of the playing field. Reiterating his words, “

Now to state the main point: in the overlapping consensus... the acceptance of the political conception is not a compromise (my own italics) between those holding different views, but rests on the totality of reasons specified within the comprehensive doctrine affirmed by each citizen.\textsuperscript{277}

Using this overlapping consensus to address the pluralism of the playing field, Rawls would seek a way for the Soccerists to still play soccer according to the game’s own rules, the Golfers to play golf according to its own rules, and so on, in a way that the

\textsuperscript{276} 
Torcaso v. Watkins

\textsuperscript{277} 
Rawls, 171.
space could somehow still be shared, but without forcing a compromise of any given system.

Taylor would describe this problem as one of the foundational challenges of social change, yet challenges that often go unnoticed. He makes this clear by stating “the moral ontology behind any person’s views can remain largely implicit. Indeed, it usually does, unless there is some challenge which forces it to the fore.”\textsuperscript{278} Frameworks of pluralism, where used as a practical, political arrangement as Rawls suggests with an overlapping consensus, may be acceptable to most across comprehensive doctrinal divides. But for the many committed believers among the competing frameworks—most of which would garner Constitutional First Amendment protections—no amount of pluralistic engagement, compromise or mutual understanding among various competing groups can or should change their foundational, if mutually exclusive, comprehensive doctrines. “Defining” religion or spirituality in this way and not that, and as fitting or not fitting various paradigms or comprehensive doctrines relating to religion’s role in the political world, can thus be problematic. Describing religion and spirituality in terms of function instead, though, might be able to bypass these challenges.

\textbf{The function of spiritual fitness in plurality, and the WRT example}

As the mere act of defining religion or spirituality might impinge upon First Amendment protections of freedom of expression, I would offer a clear and concise working understanding of the function of spiritual fitness for the 21\textsuperscript{st} century context of plurality. “Spiritual fitness” might best be understood as functioning similar to “physical

\textsuperscript{278} Taylor, \textit{Sources of the Self}, 9.
fitness,” which is a multi-faceted term used to express a condition, a measure of one’s capacity, and exercises by which that capacity is cultivated, to do and endure through physical challenge. Spiritual fitness would here refer to that function inclusive of the condition, capacity, and processes related to the formation of habitus of the foundational frameworks meaning that provides the lens by which persons perceive and struggle through life’s existential challenges.

Evidence from a range of demographic studies pertaining to religion, and roles all the predominant religions active in the United States played in providing foundational frameworks of meaning and identity for persons and social groups,\(^{279}\) demonstrate that a large majority of persons can derive large portions of their frames of meaning and consequent spiritual fitness from their religious heritage. Whether currently practiced or not by any given person, one’s religious heritage, habits of mind and dispositional habitus-- hence their consequent capacity for spiritual fitness-- is a distinctly social product of formation and education.

CSF’s definition of “Spiritual Fitness” is an example of the kind of pluralism that unnecessarily renders the Army vulnerable to legal challenge in ways that this study does not. Jarrett’s “Warrior Resilience and Thriving” (WRT) framework that pre-dated CSF, on the other hand, is an example of a different model that is equally “secular” in orientation, but does not present the same Constitutional challenges as does CSF. Jarrett’s WRT\(^ {280}\) model is built on a more pragmatic version of pluralism, rather than the more ideological

\(^{279}\) This common function of providing foundational frameworks of meaning across predominating religions has been addressed more fully in previous research I have done for the comprehensive exams for this PhD work.

pluralism that hampers CSF’s model, demonstrating an alternative model of how a plurality of philosophical and spiritual frameworks can be appropriately endorsed in public contexts such as the Army. WRT is also deeply rooted in history and locates an essential element of resilience in habits of mind and dispositional habitus formation, as do traditional religiously oriented tools of spiritual resilience. Where the CSF model is inescapably linked to the context of Western secular humanism, Jarrett’s WRT model is intentionally cross-cultural in its construction, exploring, building on, and offering as examples for resilience, a range of warrior culture and philosophies from across time and around the globe.

WRT too, while also rooted in the field of psychology, is more concerned with the function of frameworks of resilience through a range of habits of mind, rather than with defining terms in exclusivist ways. As such, Jarrett explores a range of warrior cultures spanning time and space as examples of sets of resources for the habits of mind that build, foster and cultivate resilience.\(^{281}\) This approach fits much more comfortably with a broader range of resources for resilient habits of mind, inclusive of those from various spiritual and religious traditions. In doing so, this approach functions well with Constitutional protections of free religious expression, rather than presenting the challenges CSF’s exclusively humanistic definition of spirituality does.

While Jarrett’s model does not use the language of “spiritual fitness,” WRT is an intentionally parallel framework, built in a way that provides “secular,” philosophical language, functioning in the same way as the resilience that is described as “spiritual

fitness” in this study. Unlike the CSF model of “Spiritual Fitness” that seems to require a non-theological frame that excludes traditional religiously grounded spirituality, the WRT model of resilience and thriving provides secular resources that can readily work with and alongside similar religiously oriented resources.282

Habits of mind as mechanisms of cognitive habitus formation

Where Bourdieu as a social scientist built his observations of behavioral patterns into a theory of habitus, as an educator, Arthur Costa performed a similar service with a focus on what could be called cognitive habitus, resulting in his work on habit of the mind. But unlike Bourdieu, whose sociological role was to remain as observer, as educator and educational philosopher, Costa moved from observations of cognitive habitus to building a formational framework and educational program around an intentional reproduction of what are cast as “the characteristics of what intelligent people do when they are confronted with problems.”283

Like Bourdieu’s concept of habitus, Costa builds from observational research, on which he then bases the model he develops. His research team looked not only at observable patterns of behavior as expressed, but at dispositional tendencies as well, and building from observations of extant dispositions that:

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282 I had the privilege of being in one of Jarrett’s early WRT training events in early 2006, several years before my intensive work with the Army suicide prevention programs that were catalytic to this research. CSF’s version of “Spiritual Fitness” had not yet been conceived, nor had I been working in this direction yet, but I had already had significant experience with suicides in the Army, and readily saw the connection between the philosophically oriented habits of mind he was referring to in WRT, and familiar tool of spiritual resilience rooted in religion. I spoke with Jarrett at the time specifically on these parallels, and he was eager to validate my observations about the two mutually supportive frameworks of secular philosophical and spiritual tools for resilience.

were drawn from research on human effectiveness, descriptions of remarkable performers, and analyses of the characteristics of efficacious people. These habits of mind can serve as mental disciplines… These habits of mind transcend all subject matters commonly taught in school. They are characteristic of peak performers in all places… The goal of education, therefore, should be to support ourselves and others in liberating, developing, and habituating these habits of mind more fully.\textsuperscript{284}

While I hope to have effectively demonstrated that the domains of habitus Bourdieu describes are not merely socially shaped accidental patterns, but can be intentionally engineered as such, as an educator, Costa started from this assumption of exploring not only what might be evident patterns, but what can be developed into models of effective habits of mind that can then be intentionally taught to emerging generations. Costa’s work is primarily in the context of school aged children, but the habits of mind he observes and develops into a formative model can be readily adapted to be mechanisms of habitus formation for the military formation context as well.

And also like Bourdieu’s concept of habitus, Costa is not only interested in expressed behavior, but dispositional tendencies as well, and building that can be used to form in students certain dispositional tendencies: “the habits of mind view intelligence as dispositional. A disposition is a propensity to act in a certain way. Viewing intelligence dispositionally says that intelligence is expressed as characteristic patterns of intellectual

\footnotetext{\textsuperscript{284} Costa, 39.}
behavior in everyday situations."  

But just as training on the soccer field shapes both 
habitus of body and habits of mind for everyday situations, such training also prepares 
the player to be ready and prepared for those opportunities that don’t come every day, but 
that can be expected to come on the more rare occasion, and that where certain conditions 
might lend themselves to shaping a given situation.

For purposes of resilience in the context of the U.S. Army, habits of mind can 
certainly be used to shape dispositions for mundane daily contingencies, but where 
Costa’s framework of the habits of mind were designed specifically to help students bring 
an “intelligent” mindset to the educational environment in order to be an effective 
problem solver, the same can be said for habits of mind for Soldiers who also function as 
problem solvers. While the daily mundane contingencies of the Soldier’s life may not 
require a great deal of resilience, it is predictable that Soldiers will face contingencies 
requiring a great deal of resilience, to include in the face of great suffering and real risk to 
life and limb.

Built to form intelligent and effective problem solvers in “public” contexts, the 
dispositions that can be fostered through Costa’s framework are not merely based in 
certain decisional algorithms, but are based in formed identity and habitus: “The habits of 
mind are based on a character-centered view of intelligence that emphasizes attitudes, 
habits, and character traits in addition to cognitive skills.”  

And as the habits of mind 
are built to be intentionally and systemically conveyed through the tools of the intentional

“Discovering and Exploring Habits of Mind,” Book 1 in Habits of Mind: A Developmental Series, 
286 Tishman, 51.
institution of the school, it builds on a similarly systemic context to that of the U.S. Army, that also has the capacity as an intentional institution with broad formative reach to build on a range of institutional tools. When thought of as an educational and formative intentional institution, the comprehensive environment of the Army is perhaps even better situated than typical schools for the incorporation of this framework: “The emphasis is on internalizing these dispositions as individual and community-wide norms, and all staff members plan for such dispositions to be encountered and transferred across various disciplines and learning situations.”

Also contributing to the potential efficacy of this framework as a mechanism for habitus formation in the Army is the voluntary nature of the organization that is even more foundational to the Army context than most public school contexts: “As individuals, we organize around identities and beliefs. When we voluntarily join groups, we usually want to be identified with the values that group represents.” This description is most apt for the current “all-volunteer Army,” both in its voluntary constitution, and the distinct values the organization represents, and that is often so integral to the decision to join on the part of so many Soldiers.

Habits of mind and resilience in the U.S. Army

The nature of organizational dynamics around both intentionally and

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“accidentally” shaped habitus, inclusive of habitus of the mind, allows for at least the potential, too, of an organically reinforcing dynamic to grow to further reinforce given habits of mind. While in practice, this natural reinforcement and replication does not always manifest itself in desired or predictable ways, Costa shows that the capacity exists with predictable social dynamics in relation to the habits of mind he describes:

As individuals share meaning, they negotiate and build a culture. As groups become more skillful in employing the habits of mind, the habits… (start)

pervading the value system. This change results in the changing of practices and beliefs of the entire organization.289

Costa’s research identified sixteen distinct habits of mind particularly helpful for the public school context for forming cognitive habitus for effective problem-solving students in the school community. Costa pointed out that the habits of mind he developed for this framework usually work in inter-related, mutually supportive interaction, so while conceptually distinct, they are rarely so distinct in practice: “These habits of mind seldom are performed in isolation; rather, clusters of behaviors are drawn forth and employed in various situations.”290 His framework is intentionally “secular,” not using “spiritual” language at all. Nevertheless, as a part of personal formation, the habits of mind he described can fit well within a framework of spiritual fitness of either a spiritual or a secular heritage. His research was for the specific context of public school settings, but six of the habits he described seem particularly useful for the Army context of resilience,

to which I have added a seventh. As quoted from a chart to summarize his habits of mind, Costa’s habits of mind particularly appropriate to the Army context of and need for resilience are expressed as follows:  

1. Managing Impulsivity: Take time to consider options; Think before speaking or acting; Remain calm when stressed or challenged; Proceed carefully.

2. Thinking about Thinking (Metacognition): Being aware of own thoughts, feelings, intentions and actions; Knowing what I do and say affects others; Willing to consider the impact of choices on myself and others.

3. Thinking with Clarity, Precision and flexibility: Strive to be clear when THINKING; Avoid generalizations, distortions, and deletions when speaking, and writing. Ask myself, “How do I know?”; Consider the obstacles needed to resolve. Able to change perspective; Consider the input of others; Generate alternatives; Weigh options.

4. Finding Humor: Willing to laugh appropriately; Look for the whimsical, absurd, ironic and unexpected in life; Laugh at myself when I can.

5. Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations: Use what is learned; Consider prior knowledge and experience; Apply knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.

6. Taking Responsible Risks: Willing to try something new and different; Consider doing things that are safe and sane even though new to me; Face fear of making

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mistakes or of coming up short and don’t let this stop me.

And my addition: Endurance through suffering: Bring the attitude from ancient wisdom into all situations: We can find joy and meaning even in the midst of troubles and suffering, because we know that troubles produce endurance, they help us learn to not give up. Endurance builds character, and character gives us hope, even in hopelessness, and in the midst of the most trying circumstances (paraphrased from Romans 5: 3-4). While this expression of resilient wisdom is drawn from the Christian tradition, all the predominating religions discussed provide their own versions of wisdom for the fostering of resilience rooted in their own traditions.

Bourdieu’s framework of habitus is inclusive of cognitive, behavioral, and dispositional habitual patterns. The illustration of intentional habitus formation in relation to the game of soccer through familiar models of intentional education and coaching of targeted behavioral and dispositional habitus, depicts well an intentionality of habitus formation. Taken together with Costa’s description of the formation of a set of cognitive predispositional habitus, depicts well I hope, some of the elements of the framework for the formation of a habitus of resilience through spiritual fitness.

I have made no effort to be exhaustive in discussing mechanisms of spiritual habitus formation. An exploration of five distinct mechanisms evident across the history of religious and spiritual support by military chaplains, though, expresses the process well for the pluralistic military context: 1) traditions of the intentional practice of spiritual disciplines, 2) Hervieu-Leger’s model of religion as a chain of memory, 3) Polanyi’s model of community formation through conviviality as deepened by Taylor, 4) a focus on
tools of anamnesis, and 5) Costa’s paradigm of Habits of the Mind. All of these mechanisms are indigenous in some way within the religious traditions studied, and can provide common functions of spiritual fitness across traditions that can be used in a public discourse cultivating a plurality of spiritual fitness traditions.

These five mechanisms of habitus formation, cultivation and conveyance of frameworks of meaning, can be used throughout a plurality of spiritual and religious traditions to foster the development and reinforcement of a “second nature” expression of habitus for spiritual fitness that is essential in the functioning of resilience in the face of existential challenges. My intent through this dissertation has been to flesh out these mechanisms of habitus formation for spiritual fitness in ways that will make my argument abundantly clear. The breadth of history of religious and spiritual support from within frameworks of Christian formation, has been a helpful, hopefully somewhat familiar context, from which to further explore and demonstrate my argument across religio-spiritual traditions.

The foundational frameworks of meaning conveyed by comprehensive doctrines of whatever sort, be they religious or secular in orientation, are often referred to in “spiritual” terms, and are hence integral to the “spiritual fitness” of each system’s adherents. As discussed earlier, defining the “spiritual” in distinctly non-theological terms inherently undermines and delegitimizes any theologically-centered comprehensive doctrine—and the obverse is equally true-- thereby infringing either way on Constitutionally protected freedom of religion. This study’s approach of not “defining” spiritual fitness either way, but focusing on the function of spirituality in terms of the
habitus of frameworks of meaning, bypasses this issue altogether. Yet this focus does so, neither ignoring this integral concern, nor attempting to create and emplace an artificial framework in the place of the natural language of the “spiritual” that reflects cross-cultural conceptions deeply rooted in civilizational history.
CONCLUSION--SPIRITUAL FITNESS IN THE SECULAR AGE

There and back again—integrating the fragmented frameworks of meaning

Catalyzed by concerns with the alarming increase of suicide in the U.S. Army, the clues of my research led to issues in education, formation and spiritual fitness. As discussed in this project, the concept of “spiritual fitness” finds its value in its role in helping to understand the relationship between individuals and their social formation, and the tools pertaining to frameworks of meaning and their ultimate concerns as they are formed through education. Tools of existential meaning and how those are related habits of mind and dispositional habitus are conveyed apprehended and practiced through formative social processes. Habits of mind and behavioral and dispositional habitus are at the heart of spiritual fitness, whether based in religious, spiritual, philosophical or other secular frameworks of meaning. Whether or not individuals believed in or ascribed to the Constantinian Christian background picture, throughout that era lasting more than a thousand years, the broader socio-cultural infrastructure organically and systematically supported the formation of a culture of resilience based in the framework of meaning indigenous to Constantinian Christian habits of mind and dispositional habitus.

The cultural “Americanism” predominant through most of the 20th century was an outgrowth of that Western culture, and provided the American Soldier with a strongly emplaced social infrastructure by which to build, convey and cultivate an unambiguous and (practically) uncontested framework of meaning. In that context, the Soldier’s pre-
dispositional habitus, identity and frame of meaning had been that of a “peacemaker,” an agent of God’s justice “for God and country,” and sometimes in the broader world. The socio-cultural infrastructure of that environment provided readily accessible and organically formed habits of mind and consequent spiritual fitness habitus which prepared Chaplains and Soldiers alike with deeply rooted tools for resilience in the face of hardship and suffering. That resilience through spiritual fitness has never been a finished product to be at some point achieved, but has always been a perishable skillset and capacity requiring life-long investment in the same ways as is physical fitness. As such, despite organic support through socio-cultural infrastructures, it has always had to be intentionally fostered and cultivated, as has ever been within the roles of military Chaplains. The net result of that organically formed habitus of spiritual fitness is evident in countless vignettes depicting resilience in the face of hardship and suffering based in these habitus and habits of mind as portrayed throughout military history.292

These once clear frameworks of meaning, identity and morality were based in a common, socially supported ideology that is no longer publicly constructed, cultivated, nor reinforced. In the newly emerging “Secular Age” as described by Taylor and other theorists of secularization, this formerly stable grounding of resilience in a socio-culturally reinforced culture of “spiritual fitness” seems to be dis-integrating.293 No formational paradigm seems to have as yet gained broad public consensus that can provide similar public consensus of support for the plurality of frameworks of meaning.

292 Note in reference to such collections—put them in bibliography
293 Not in the sense of merely “disintegrating”/falling apart, but in the sense of a loss of integration between social paradigms and their socially formative frames, and the lived experience of Soldiers facing life and death contingencies in current operations.
required in this changing early 21st century American context. Despite the fact that spiritual resources of resilience—often religiously rooted, other times not— is frequently cited by Service Members as the source for their strength to endure, such resources are commonly underutilized in discourse of resilience. With this new “established,” publicly endorsed secularist approach to resilience in mind, I echo Prothero’s concern:

I share with philosopher Warren Nord the conviction that our current inattention to religion in secondary and higher education today is a failure of the highest order—that ‘current American education is profoundly illiberal in its refusal to take religion seriously.’

To which I would of course add the equally public arena of the U.S. military as too often embracing this “profoundly illiberal” exclusion of religion to resources of resilience.

**Values and social dynamics cultivating spiritual fitness**

The habitus and habits of mind persons develop are necessarily formed and cultivated by socio-cultural infrastructure. If the socio-cultural infrastructure does not effectively provide solid rootedness in foundational frameworks of meaning, those frames of “spiritual fitness” are not functionally available to be incorporated and apprehended in personal formation. As has been evident through my years of experience as an Army Chaplain dealing with Soldiers on formative issues, Soldiers are now often ill-equipped (if equipped at all) with moral identity, guidelines and fitness supports once

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295 Bourdieu and Costa both describe these processes in depth as discussed.
296 Central to the Army Chaplain’s role is counseling around these very issues, and a large majority of the counseling issues I and the Chaplains I’ve supervised have dealt with—validated by much of the military Chaplain literature pertaining to counseling—have been related to moral formation issues.
organically provided by common socio-cultural infrastructure. Without the socially supported resources for facing moral choices, suffering, hardship and trauma that virtually all religions once broadly conveyed—the vulnerability of Soldiers to more frequent existential crisis is all the more profound.

Unlike the broader overarching “civilian” public multi-culture of early 21st century U.S. America that has no clear normative public value system, the parameters of the U.S. Army's mission has necessarily required the development of a clear and normative public value system undergirding all Army Doctrine, policy and action. That system is concisely stated in “The Army Values” framework, and is expressed by the terms “Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless service, Honesty, Integrity, and Personal Courage.” This foundational system of values is widely disseminated, promulgated, and expounded at all levels in the Army through numerous tools and experiences. The Army Values provide the “chains of memory” by which every effort is intentionally made to help Soldiers internalize these values and the consequent moral, meaning and identity frameworks, and thus provides the beginning of a public language of spiritual fitness. The term “spiritual fitness” is used here to describe the condition where there is an integrity between those normative structures and foundational frameworks of meaning that shape the habits of mind claimed, the behavior patterns and the dispositional habitus persons exhibit.

The values system foundational for identity and moral framework formation for Soldiers is clearly stated in these Army Values, and further elaborated for many through

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frameworks of meaning as understood and cultivated through a range of religio-spiritual traditions, inclusive of “secular” traditions. In the emerging “secular age,” that which pertains to the “spiritual” is generally understood to somehow be the domain of how persons apprehend their foundational frameworks of meaning. As such, “spirituality” is commonly understood to be something at least distinguishable from, sometimes even distinct from religion.

In the same way that the habitus of any given spirituality is distinct from, yet related to its institutional packaging in a legal entity called “religion,” the habitus of physical fitness can be described as distinct from, yet related to, any legally branded or trademarked, distinct gym or system of physical fitness. In generations past, schools, popular media and voices in public health had about as little to say about physical fitness as is heard today in public discourse pertaining to spiritual fitness. But current and frequent discourse and imagery in the public sphere now embraces norms of physical fitness habitus, without “establishing” any particular gym or trademarked system of attaining physical fitness. The same could be true of the domain of spiritual fitness in public discourse as well.

In the same way that in generations past, a notable absence of any language or symbols related to physical fitness in public discourse served to actively invalidate the importance of physical fitness in the public mind, to create or maintain a public discourse neutered of “spiritual” or religious language also functions to publically undermine the value and role of religion or spirituality for followers of such traditions. But the public embrace, endorsement and support of spiritual fitness for military duty is just as
important, and important in the same ways, as the U.S. military publically embracing, endorsing and supporting physical fitness for military duty: The regular practice and cultivation of habits of mind and dispositional habitus of both forms of fitness, reinforce the framework of “Army Values” foundational for all Soldiers.

Individualistic, highly subjective, often emotionally oriented expressive forms of spirituality are often the focus of discourse and research on the numinous that attempt to provide pluralistic spiritual conceptualizations. But such efforts have yet to, and may never gain widespread public acceptance, as so much of religious spirituality of various religions is neither personal nor private, and is often more externally, socially mediated process than it is an individual process. But because those kinds of efforts tend to be subjective, individualistically oriented, and often exclusive of spiritual disciplines as traditionally understood, they are of limited use in settings requiring a common public language and a breadth of legitimacy and pluralistic applicability, such as the U.S. military settings.

The focus in this study is on a common language pertaining to the functions of spirituality and the behavioral patterns of “spiritual disciplines” which can be addressed separately from the distinct content and affiliation with any range of comprehensive doctrines, be they of a “religion” or otherwise. Some spiritual disciplines are familiar across a range of religious and spiritual traditions, others may be more specific. Examples could include prayer, meditation, yoga, tai chi, “communing with nature,” philanthropic giving, altruistic service, inspirational or scripture reading. These are representative of the practice and cultivation of habits of mind and dispositional habitus
which, across religious, spiritual and philosophical traditions, function to intentionally
exercise and develop frameworks of identity, meaning, moral or ethical practice, or in
short, “spiritual fitness.”

I argue in this study that the functional language of spiritual fitness and the range
of habits of mind and dispositional habitus conducive thereof, can be used and cultivated
in “public” settings without controversy or impinging upon Constitutional parameters
pertaining to freedom of religion expression. “Community service,” for example--often
an integral component of personal and spiritual formation within a range of religious,
spiritual and philosophical traditions-- has long been a common sentencing option in
many courts, and is becoming a more common facet of public school practices in
character education. Many traditions include various forms of prayer and meditation, as
well as investing habits of philanthropic giving with spiritual value, providing those
terms common “public” currency too.

This understanding of spiritual fitness built around the formation of intentional
habits of mind and dispositional habitus, can thus not only provide a common language
for meaningful public discourse in the spiritual, but can provide the military Commander
a range of tools to cultivate and better equip her or his Soldiers with tools of resilience
based in spiritual fitness “skill sets” with which to face the intensity of combat and
operational demands.

**Physical and spiritual fitness: similarities in formation and cultivation**

Just as expectations and patterns of physical exercise do not guarantee adequate
physical fitness for long-term mission completion, neither can measurable spiritual
disciplines “guarantee” spiritual fitness. However, centuries of experience indicates that regular patterns of physical exercise tend to greatly improve physical fitness, and centuries (if not millennia) of experience indicates that regular patterns of religious or spiritual disciplines tend to greatly improve religious or “spiritual fitness” and resilience, rooted within any given tradition.

The intentional cultivation of universal practices conducive to Physical fitness by military commands has long-standing cultural support within the Army. This culture also validates roles of various forms of coaching and accountability that are a natural part of such physical fitness programs. “Spiritual Fitness” as constructed from most religio-spiritual traditions, like physical fitness, is similarly based on discreet and repetitive behavioral patterns that can be trained, coached, and meaningfully measured. Varieties of recognizable theories and patterns of physical exercise regimens that can be used with great success. This line of research suggests that, just as it is non-problematic to use a common language of physical fitness that can encourage regular exercise through a variety of regimens without “establishing” any one format, a public language of spiritual fitness can provide the same universally relevant function without “establishing” religion that would be contrary to constitutional parameters in any way.

Functioning similarly to “physical fitness” then as described above, “spiritual fitness” could be said to function in at least three ways, to express: 1) a varying condition, 2) a measure of one’s capacity, and 3) exercises by which that capacity is cultivated to do and endure through various challenges to one’s sense of identity, meaning and moral integrity. And in the same way that physical fitness is a perishable capacity, it is more a
variable condition that is achieved and maintained through an on-going process, rather than a state that one either “has” or “has not.”

Each year as a Soldier, I go through a “physical fitness test” that measures my capacities at that given time, that may or may not be up to par by some “physical fitness” standard. Each week I “do” my “physical fitness” by pushing myself through various “physical fitness” exercises to cultivate that capacity which can be measured, either by formal annual tests, or by life’s contingencies, which as a Soldier, I must be always prepared to face. I must often describe my variable state of “physical fitness” on medical paperwork and such, often with a check box indicating an approximation along the spectrum from “very good,” “good,” “average,” “poor” to “very poor.” And like with physical fitness, regardless of the tradition followed, fitness is a perishable habitus and capacity. Where formative efforts are not intentionally fostered and cultivated in both spiritual and physical fitness—in the same way that physical fitness is perishable-- so, too, are the capacities, habitus and dispositions of spiritual fitness--both of which will atrophy with lack of exercise.

Built as they already are to cultivate habits of mind and dispositional habitus in other areas of Soldiers’ lives, this research suggests that the Army's comprehensive educational and training systems can appropriately explore and use similar processes for cultivating spiritual fitness as well. This model of spiritual fitness focuses on the function, rather than the content of spiritual language as pertaining frameworks of meaning, formed by dispositional habitus development processes shaped by comprehensive doctrines which could represent any range of religious, spiritual,
philosophical or other secular content. Spiritual fitness as described in this project is much akin to physical fitness too, in that both can be achieved through a variety of means. Where physical fitness can find common a place in public discourse and can be appropriately endorsed in “public” contexts without “establishing” a particular form or approach to physical fitness, so, too, could the diversity of expressions of spiritual fitness allow for the same without First Amendment concerns. As such, this model of spiritual fitness formation can be endorsed and cultivated through “public” policy and practices without infringing of Constitutional protections of freedom of religion.

Building on my research for this study, I have stated that all the major religio-spiritual traditions²⁹⁸ convey along with their heritage and traditions, an identity framework inclusive of powerful, socially conveyed spiritual tools for individual and communal resilience and meaning-making through struggles and suffering. I have been arguing that one’s sense of identity, meaning and moral integrity is always a social product of “formation,” developed and cultivated through educational processes.²⁹⁹ Those spiritual fitness habitus and capacities are necessarily shaped, cultivated and reinforced by intentional efforts of formation and support—often called “Religious Support,” inclusive of the provision of “spiritual” support outside of religious frameworks by those appropriately trained. But where this formation and support is

²⁹⁸ As described in note 199.
²⁹⁹ Referring here to “education” in the broader sense, inclusive of both public and private, formal and informal formative efforts. The “spiritual” domain of education has traditionally been provided through both private religious, and public “civil religion” formation efforts. But in the current environment, intentional formation efforts in frames of meaning have fallen off due to a range of issues including pressures of “secularization” as well as the mundane and mutually shared discomfort with pressures from “standardized testing,” economic limitations, and the need for more educational time and energy being focused on economic development of students.
absent, the spiritual fitness that is so necessary for appropriate and resilient functioning in the existential ambiguities of military demands is often lacking.

The capacity to address these evolving pluralistic demands necessary for these formation and support processes have traditionally and continue to be an organic and unique part of the role, training and experience of Army Chaplains. And that distinctly religious function also uniquely qualifies Army Chaplains for roles in resilience through spiritual fitness appropriate to no other military professional.

**Summarizing the theoretical grounding of spiritual fitness**

Changes in U.S. American civilian culture, such as the breakdown of community traced by Robert Putnam in “Bowling Alone,” by the deterioration of religious “chains of memory” as traced by Gabrielle Hervieu-Leger, and less stable meaning structures that are inherent in the globalizing “post-modern” and multicultural world, make Soldiers more vulnerable to existential crisis than ever before. Additionally, lacking ideological consensus and in a context of heightened expectations on individual judgment, these more vulnerable Soldiers are required to act quickly, decisively, and with deadly precision, often against ill-defined “enemies” in operational contexts filled with moral ambiguity, where morally devastating “collateral damage,” despite the best of efforts, is sometimes unavoidable.

The synthesis of my research and the work of Taylor, Bourdieu, Costas, Berger, Polanyi, Hervieu-Leger and others suggests that the domain of foundational “meaning-

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301 Hervieu-Leger.
making” must be formed, cultivated, conveyed, and reinforced through a socio-cultural infrastructure, and concurrent processes of education. Until very recent generations, the social-cultural infrastructure in place, grounded in the American version of Constantinian Christian Western culture, provided and reinforced that foundational framework of meaning for most of the American population. It is from this educational context that those persons joining the U.S Army are drawn. I hope to have demonstrated that the changing public context-- often referred to with the language of secularization-- in not being intentional in the public support and cultivation of a range of frameworks of meaning, has had significant impact on the trend of recent growth in suicide in the U.S. Army that first catalyzed this line of research.

Using somewhat different language, Emile Durkheim from the founding of the discipline of Sociology, Viktor Frankl from the Nazi death camps of World War II and his psychoanalytic practice thereafter, and Benjamin Pratt from his counseling office outside Washington in the last decades of the twentieth century, all pointed to this same social phenomena. Durkheim used the term “anomie,”302 Frankl used the term “existential vacuum,”303 Pratt used the term “accidie”304 to identify and address this social loss of foundational meaning structures. The language of “spiritual fitness” has emerged as a framework by which to address this phenomena.

Though cited in reference to the work of Chaplains in the Civil War, the same

302 Durkheim
303 Frankl discusses a range of social and individual dysfunction tied thereto, which include suicide and alcoholism, sexual issues, criminality, and if PTSD were a term in use in his day, it is likely he would have included this in the list as well, 109.
304 Pratt.
could be said as the overarching theme of Chaplains into the era of postmodernity as well:

According to anthropologist Clifford Geertz, religion represents a powerful ‘system of symbols’ that, in the face of the ambiguities of human existence, gives meaning to the world in which people live. Although pain, destruction, and death raise the disturbing notion that life is fundamentally meaningless, religion fashions a context or ‘cultural system’ in which men and women are able to see coherence in the universe. Religion especially helps resolve the problem of suffering, Geertz writes, by showing believers ‘how to suffer, how to make of physical pain, personal loss, worldly defeat… something bearable, supportable.’

Based on this sociological reasoning, the principal responsibility of the Civil War Chaplain was clear: to posit and sustain a worldview in which the maiming and death of comrades, the results of battle, the imminent threat of a Soldier’s own demise… had a recognizable moral purpose.305

My research in this project depicts how this defining role of the Chaplain, cast specifically in the form of “Religious Support” as traditionally understood, goes far beyond the merely esthetic version of “religion” that so many seem to think provides the “comfort” of pastoral care for Soldiers in times of stress. In helping the Soldier through the rites and language of “Religious Support” to personally apprehend, to live in and to die in the foundational frameworks of meaning that are at the heart of how spirituality is

305 Shattuck, 115.
currently understood, Geertz’s work as here depicted helps to bridge the gap between “religious” support, and spiritual fitness.

I argue that this facet of cultural capital called “spiritual fitness” is of a kind of resilience in the face of suffering and death that, when present, is cultivated and socially reinforced through the social dispositional habitus inclusive of what Costas describes as “habits of the mind,” and the dispositional behavioral habitus as described by Bourdieu. The task of shaping those habits of mind and dispositional habitus are largely tasks of the socio-cultural infrastructures in which both secular and religious educational processes play a large part. I maintain throughout this project that “spiritual fitness” is an integral facet of “cultural capital” in the domain of foundational frameworks of meaning. Thus neither religion nor spiritual fitness are merely personal concerns as often cast, but are necessarily formed, cultivated and reinforced by public socio-cultural infrastructures—or more often the case, are not formed--where socio-cultural infrastructure required to cultivate spiritual fitness are not in place.

The Chaplain as pluralism professional

Concisely summarized, then, the guiding question at this point could be asked: How can the U.S. Army appropriately develop a common language in which to discuss “spiritual fitness” within the constitutional parameters of religious pluralism? Such a language must be able to provide a functional framework through which to educate, form and train Soldiers in disciplines required for spiritual fitness and resilience within a chosen framework of meaning. Such a language too-- respecting the range of religious

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306 Jaeger, paideia discussion, rooted in both Jaeger works.
and non-religious doctrines by which various Soldiers apprehend their tools for resilience—must be intentionally inclusive of religious and spiritual language, without endorsing any one version of such language.

The role of the Chaplains in the U.S. military rests squarely on the Constitutional mandate to protect and ensure “free exercise of religion,” on the part of all Soldiers, inclusive of whatever understanding of “spiritual fitness” any given Soldier claims, thus establishing the Chaplaincy by Army Regulation, rather than those from other disciplines, as the proponents for “spiritual fitness.” Army doctrine also addresses what might be called the unique Chaplain’s role as proponent of pluralism, or as pluralism professional.

Positive Psychology assuredly has a great deal to offer to Soldiers from within the therapeutic disciplines in the domains of regaining a lost homeostasis of mental and behavioral health. Medical personnel may sometimes support religious pluralism and secular spiritual concerns in this ancillary way. As such, those Soldiers claiming no religious heritage or preferring version of secular spiritual or formational support might request it of providers in the therapeutic arts as well. But being resident within the domain of the therapeutic disciplines, whose role is to return the wounded to an assumed prior state of more stable extant formation, this therapeutic role is thus contingent upon those formative processes started in childhood, and fostered through continuing formative

\[307\] AR 165-1, 2015, 1.
\[308\] AR 165-1, 2015, 10.
\[309\] As a practicing Army Chaplain, the need and resources for cross-referral between various providers is an important part of both Chaplain and other professional providers’ training, and while perhaps not frequent, is a standard practice between providers.
efforts in spiritual fitness from whatever given source. However, the primary proponency of these ongoing formational, usually spiritual concerns as depicted in this project, and the related concern for Constitutional protections of free religious practice, gives the Chaplain the role of pluralism professional.

Likewise, just as important as the healing and therapeutic arts are to the full functioning of the military, the discipline of education and its function of personal formation provides essential tools for the military context. Yet without the distinct role of pluralism professional as is essential to the Chaplain, the educational agenda propounding pluralism can present obstacles to the Constitutional practice of pluralism. An attempt by Feinberg to clarify what pluralism does and does not mean for public education highlights this challenge.

One might appropriately say that there is quite pluralism (or is it more a plurality?) of understandings of what these terms pluralism and plurality actually mean. Feinberg recognized this plurality of pluralisms, and advocates for a more stringent clarification. In discussing the two terms, he argued that among the range of meanings for the terms, while “plurality take(s) different forms, (they)... must be distinguished from normative, democratic pluralism...(which) depends upon internalizing a number of values that extend beyond the immediate group... all value systems, including their own, have their limitations.”

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where one group maintains political, legal, and economic dominance while providing limited rights to other cultural or religious groups.”

Though Feinberg quotes the same Rawls text I’ve been using in this discussion, Feinberg’s normative democratic pluralism “requires not only that I hold these norms, but that you hold them as well.” Feinberg’s normative democratic pluralism embraces not only the fact of a coexisting plurality of comprehensive doctrines—all held to be equally valid in their social or ethical interaction in society—but that this fact and its understanding as the good of society “must be a feature of the internal disposition of citizens.”

While perhaps not intended to be making any religious or theological claim, this facet of normative democratic pluralism still functions in a religiously substantive way, advocating for a publicly endorsed change of individual internal dispositions and consequent behaviors with religious value. Were differing religions merely a matter of esthetic taste, such a normative pluralism pertaining to the substantive claims of differing religions might be Constitutionally appropriate. But as it is a function of a range of religions to shape both social behavior and internal dispositions impacting social behavior in relation to other religious groups and their claims, this form of normative democratic pluralism is thus distinctly unconstitutional.

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311 Feinbeg, 154.
312 Feinberg, 155.
313 Feinberg, 155.
A long tradition of “perform or provide”

The pluralism that the U.S. Army Chaplaincy supports, though, advocates for a pluralistic coexistence of a plurality of competing, often mutually exclusive religious comprehensive doctrines, without insisting on re-shaping either religious claims, nor re-shaping internal dispositions of one group toward another. Actual practice of pluralism within Army Chaplaincy also follows a plurality of pluralisms, which follows a blurred middle ground between the two ends of the spectrum as Feinberg described it. The pluralism that Army Regulations require Chaplains to foster is more akin to Rawl’s “overlapping consensus,” in which each comprehensive doctrine in its entirety—inclusive of whatever version of exclusivity it may entail—is supported in its coexistence with others which may hold mutually exclusive view—as long as that coexistence is maintained peaceably without coercion.

As such, an Army Chaplain might be seen as being somewhat akin to bar tender at the Buckeye Spirits bar in downtown Columbus-- an avid Buckeye fan, who happily serves visiting Wolverines fans just as readily as he serves his co-religionists in scarlet and gray. Such a barkeep performs the great service and components of “religious” ritual surrounding the sacramental festivals of Game Day, while at the same time, providing needed support for the mutually exclusivist religionists’ needs of competing sects.

For many of both sects, there is no doubt in their minds as to the Absolute Truth and Superiority of their faith as opposed to that of the Other, nor does there probably exist in their minds any remote sense of “equality” between the two faiths. Yet they can get along relatively peaceably—with perhaps voices raised in heated, perpetual
argument--within the realization on both sides that blood is not to be spilt in their competing religious fervor. The insistence on qualitative equality between cults and the re-shaping of the internal dispositions of cult practitioners of both scarlet and blue camps toward one another that Feinberg’s version of pluralism advocates, would not only dampen the spiritual fervor of those “religionists,” but would require a substantive change in their belief systems. Such a democratically normative pluralism would establish in the place of those distinct belief systems, a watered-down faith of preference rather than passion, a mediocre faith of a “trophy generation” mentality where those competitive differences don’t really matter. That kind of “pluralism” would be abhorrent to both cultic camps. In other words, such pluralism would necessarily short-circuit the plurality it is designed to ensure. It would eliminate real difference in the service of what Prothero called the “Pretend Pluralism”\(^\text{314}\) that posits a meaningless diversity of “different paths up the same mountain” in service of a common ideology of metaphysical relativism.

The educational agenda focusing more on forming people who will get along, can easily obscure the distinct and competing formational needs of differing cultic camps. Yet while the protection of society from violence associated with difference is, of course, important and fostered by other laws, Constitutional First Amendment protections of free religious expression are in place to ensure the capacity and right to formative practices toward distinct, and mutually incompatible religious comprehensive doctrines. Ensuring that balance is foundational to the DNA of the American culture, and, recognizing the

\(^{314}\) Prothero, \textit{God is Not One}, 5.
complexity and sensitivity of this task, is established by Army Doctrine as part of the role of the Army Chaplain.

In practical short-hand, the “perform or provide” rubric established by Army Regulations that defines the Chaplain’s role expresses how Army Chaplains have long functioned to support the range of “comprehensive doctrines” of spiritual traditions peacefully coexisting together in the Army, and provides substance to what pluralism means in this context. Chaplains “perform” Religious Support within their own Traditions’ parameters, and, without questioning or undermining the legitimacy of other Traditions outside their own. At the same time, Chaplains “provide” resources and the facilitation of appropriate religio-spiritual leadership and infrastructure to meet the needs of Soldiers from other, often mutually exclusive Traditions.

Despite the frequent language of pluralism in relation to the various religions practiced in both civilian and the U.S. Army contexts, religion as lived in the Army reflects more of the peaceful coexistence in diversity that the term “plurality” might better reflect. The agenda of deep engagement and active, intentional efforts toward mutual understanding and validation between religious groups that some common uses of that term “pluralism” might suggest should happen, does not seem to be much of a priority of religionists of most types.\textsuperscript{315} In this sense, and as prescribed by established

\textsuperscript{315} Wuthnow, 74, and others such as Eck, Feinberg, and Rosenblinth note this observation in various ways, identifying this “mutual indifference” (Feinberg, 154) as being at least problematic, if not dangerous to the needs of a liberal democracy. However, while seemingly a problem to these thinkers, this study suggests that the “mutual indifference” of their concern that seems a common feature to persons of various religions, is just as Constitutionally protected a framework as the more “reflective” pluralism such concerned writers advocate.
Army policy and Doctrine through Army Regulations, Chaplains have always been and remain primarily providers of religious and spiritual support.

**Soul formation: “secular” roles of the Chaplain toward holistic resilience**

Life is stressful. Whether that stress is “eustress” or “distress,” whether the vicissitudes of life's stressful experiences are construed to be destructive or constructive are functions of the social formation of the development of the whole person--what can be referred to as “soul” or spiritual formation. Regardless of one's religious or a-religious identity, regardless of one's spiritual tradition, spirituality is understood by a large majority of the population as a large and foundational part of the human experience. Additionally, and even for those who prefer a more “secular” language, whether recognized or not, persons invariably function under some existential framework of meaning, the description of which often best fits within the language of the spiritual. Despite the fact that it seems people very often tend to think of and talk about “spirituality” and the existential meaning structures they convey in highly personal terms, the formation or absence of functional frameworks of meaning is an inherently social project. Because these frameworks of meaning have been traditionally rooted in religion, and if, when, and how existential issues are discussed, becomes then, an issue of Constitutional jurisprudence. When the language of “public” socio-cultural infrastructure is virtually exclusive of “spiritual” terms, what may be an attempt at “neutrality,” becomes a *de facto*, non-pluralistic language of exclusion. Exclusive of spiritual terms, such a language thus undermines spiritual ways of apprehending and understanding the

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316 AR citations, 165.
world. The lack of spiritual language in public discourse, then, inherently endorses some secular perspectives at the expense of others.

The role of the Chaplain in the U.S. Army\textsuperscript{317} is a recognition of the “soulish” nature of much of human life, and the lived experience of a large majority of persons. The functional pluralism of Army Chaplaincy throughout history as is manifest in their practices described by the regulatory language to “perform or provide,” ensures freedom of religious expression while neither endorsing nor “establishing” any one perspective. The Chaplaincy is the only branch in the Army that is both iconic of that holistic concern of the Army for the “soul of the Soldier,” while at the same time, embodying and manifesting that public commitment to First Amendment jurisprudence that protects the freedom of religion for all persons, regardless of the spiritual or secular tradition and identity they may claim.

As discussed in chapter three, the broad medical community has long recognized that the “spiritual” domain covers that essential facet of health and well-being based in foundational frameworks of meaning. I have been endeavoring with this project to demonstrate that the “spiritual fitness” referred to in recent years by the Army CSF program, has across history, cultures and spiritual traditions, virtually always been rooted in religion, even if no longer always tethered thereto. Hence “spiritual fitness” and its formation in the Army is a domain most appropriately addressed by Army Chaplains,

\textsuperscript{317} The same could be said of similar “public” roles of religion and religious actors in civilian public space.
appointed by Army Regulation as proponents and providers for the domain of religious support and spiritual fitness.\footnote{“Spiritual fitness” is actual language in older Army Regulations, which was changed to “spiritual health” in the 2009 version of primary Army Chaplain guidance in AR 165-1 at para. 1-5b., and to “spiritual well-being” in the 2015 version of AR 165-1, also at para. 1-5b.}

This study has been built on both the history of religious and spiritual support through Chaplains from before the birth of the U.S. Army, while exploring the socio-cultural infrastructure by which spiritual support has long been rendered, and through which understandings of what spirituality is has been changing in recent decades. The foregoing analysis of a history of formation and Religious Support by Army Chaplains across the broad range of religio-spiritual traditions also shows how essential and integral those formative roles of Chaplains are to Religious Support, though they may not often be thought of in those terms. As an Army Chaplain for many years, I've dealt directly with a significant number of persons in suicidal situations. A large majority of the suicidal behaviors I have dealt with have been related to challenges and issues in the domain this study has been depicting with the language of spiritual fitness. Various spiritual, religious, and secular traditions provide ample resources for resilience in the face of extreme hardship and suffering that could be appropriately fostered through public discourse without fear of legal infraction. Yet if those resources are not a part of the formative background, substance and development of Soldiers throughout their military careers, the rich resources of these traditions are inaccessible.

Throughout history, chaplains across many of the armies of the world have been lead providers of these resources through their efforts in formation, fostering and
cultivating spiritually based habitus and habits of minds for resilience in the face of suffering. The changing socio-cultural context in the 21st century where public resources for formation are anemic in spiritual content across the spectrum of plurality, makes these roles for military chaplains all the more essential.

Part of an anonymous poem scrawled on the wall of a Nazi concentration camp, well depicts both the spiritual substance of resilience, as well as its formative roots:

I believe in the sun even when it is not shining. And I believe in love even when there’s no one there. But I believe in God even when he is silent. I believe through any trial there is always a way.319

After having been imprisoned in such a place, the substance and strength of those words could not have spontaneously arisen from the heart of an inspired poet. It was, rather, an enduring source of strength that could only have been implanted in the soul of the suffering writer by an intentionally formed habitus across years of formative education. It is that process of formation and cultivation of a core of spiritual resilience that has ever been at the heart of the role of military chaplains across time. And it is this formative process, necessarily rooted in socio-cultural infra-structure that is in need of continued cultivation and reinforcement, which the research of this dissertation is intended to support.

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