

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

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Department of Community Care and Counseling, Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

School of Behavioral Sciences

Liberty University

2024

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**Abstract**

Pastoral care has existed in some form for generations, dating most precisely back to the New Testament writings of Paul, the Apostle. Religious people-helping approaches thus endured in some form until a dramatic shift occurred in the late 1700s, with the onset of the Enlightenment. This historic phenomenon resulted in an aggressive cultural adjustment to understand the self and its distresses apart from religious orientation, instead favoring a humanistic orientation. Yet, pastoral counseling has endured and adapted in an effort to remain a viable means of serving people in distress. In modernity, pastoral care and counseling now exists within a larger cultural framework for people-helping, much of which that has been influenced by the secular humanistic, materialistic infiltration of thought that has characterized the last three centuries, with secular humanistic categories being widely used throughout. This research seeks to determine if modern pastors and pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of secular humanism in their counseling approaches.

*Keywords:* humanism, *DSM*, pastoral counseling, Kraepelin

### **Dedication**

This study is first dedicated to Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith. For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

It is further dedicated to my wonderful family, of whom I could not have accomplished this investment without. Thank you, Anne, Ellie, and Grayson. Your encouragement, motivation, and our family goals put the fuel in my tank to complete this lofty task. You have earned this as much as, if not more than, I.

### **Acknowledgments**

I will firstly acknowledge and profusely thank Chris and Julie Starr. Quite literally, this dissertation and all that comes from it would not exist if not for the two of you. Thank you for your support, friendship, and personal investment(s). Words cannot express my gratitude. In whatever ways the Lord uses this investment for His glory, humanly speaking, you are among the main reasons it occurs.

I would also like to thank and acknowledge the staff at Liberty University's School of Behavioral Sciences for their involvement in my development. Most specifically, it was a privilege to grow under the guidance of Dr. Kristin Kellen through this dissertation process. Your personal support and investment in this project remain among the foremost highlights of my entire academic process.

Finally, I would like to thank Reigning Grace Institute and Bethel Church and Ministries for their support of this initiative, for without their investment in me, this would not have been possible.

**Table of Contents**

Abstract..... 3

Dedication..... 4

Acknowledgments..... 5

List of Tables ..... 11

List of Abbreviations ..... 12

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION..... 13

    Overview..... 13

    Background..... 18

        Social..... 20

        Theoretical ..... 21

    Situation to Self..... 22

    Problem Statement..... 24

    Purpose Statement..... 26

    Significance of the Study ..... 26

    Research Questions..... 27

    Definitions..... 29

    Delimitations and Limitations..... 31

        Delimitations..... 32

        Limitations ..... 33

    Summary..... 33

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW..... 35

    Overview..... 35

Theoretical Framework.....	40
Related Literature.....	42
The Humanistic Foundation of the DSM and Mental Health Systems.....	42
The Humanistic Foundation of Modern Therapeutic Thought.....	48
The Results of Humanism on the Modern Mental Health System .....	52
The Chemical Imbalance Theory.....	55
The Secularization of Pastoral Counseling.....	57
Summary.....	76
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS.....	77
Overview.....	77
Design .....	77
Research Questions.....	79
Participants.....	80
Setting.....	82
Procedures.....	84
The Researcher’s Role .....	86
Instrumentation .....	88
Data Collection .....	89
Interviews and Online Survey.....	90
Case Study Interview Questionnaire.....	90
Online Survey Questionnaire.....	94
Data Analysis .....	97
Trustworthiness.....	99

Credibility ..... 99

Dependability and Confirmability ..... 100

Transferability..... 100

Ethical Considerations ..... 101

Case Study Interviews..... 101

Online Survey ..... 101

Summary ..... 102

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS ..... 103

Overview..... 103

Participants..... 104

Case Study Interview ..... 104

Online Survey Participants ..... 111

Results..... 112

Theme Development..... 113

Research Question Responses..... 125

Summary ..... 137

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION ..... 139

Overview..... 139

Summary of Finding..... 139

Research Question 1: How Informed Is the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor  
on the (Humanistic) Etymology of the Modern Mental Health System? ..... 140



Research Question 2: How Informed Is the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor on the (Humanistic) Etymology of Modern Mental Health System Tools, Such As the *DSM*, Its Codes, and Contributing Theories? ..... 144

Research Question 3: Does the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor See Any Areas of Their Practice or Referral-Making That is Currently Influenced or Informed by Humanism? ..... 145

Research Question 4: How Would the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor: Counsel or Refer to a Licensed Professional Differently, If at All, If They Were Acutely Aware of and Trained on the Contributing (Secular Humanist) Etymology(s) to the Modern Mental Health System and Its Tools and Theories? ..... 148

Discussion..... 151

    Novel Contributions..... 153

    This Study in Light of Previous Research ..... 153

    Theoretical Framework..... 154

Implications..... 155

    Theoretical Implications ..... 155

    Empirical Implications..... 156

    Practical Implications..... 158

Recommendations for Future Study ..... 159

Summary..... 161

References..... 164

Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter ..... 181

Appendix B: Case Study Interview Questionnaire ..... 182

Appendix C: Case Study Interview Field Notes ..... 185

Appendix D: Online Survey Questionnaire ..... 211

Appendix E: Online Survey Data ..... 214

**List of Tables**

Table 1. Participant Demographic Data.....105

Table 2. Repeated Concepts for Theme Development .....114

Table 3. Awareness of the History of Modern Psychology and Modern Evidence-Based Practices  
.....142

Table 4. Awareness of the History of Modern Psychiatry and the Enlightenment.....142

Table 5. Knowledge of Major Secular Humanist Influences on Pastoral Counseling.....143

**List of Abbreviations**

*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)*

*International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD)*

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Overview

Adams (1979) wisely wrote that:

From the beginning, human change depended upon counseling. Man was created as a being who is very existence is derived from and dependent upon a Creator, whom he must acknowledge as such and from whom he must obtain wisdom and knowledge through revelation. (p. 1)

His point was that God-focused and derived counsel is foundational to the existence of humanity. The axiom Adams (1979) highlights here is echoed throughout Scripture, with ample examples of God providing ongoing counsel through ambassadors, namely judges, prophets, kings, Apostles, and others (Adams, 1979; *English Standard Version Bible*, 2008/2011, Judges, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Acts). However, this has not remained an unchallenged reality. The axiom fell under scrutiny in the late 1700s, with the onset of the Enlightenment, where humankind endeavored to aggressively remove itself from such God-dependent thoughts. Instead, humanity (increasingly) abandoned a religious, let alone biblical, orientation as a framework for its very existence, etymological origins, and ethics considerations, in favor of secular humanism, etymological naturalism, and a belief in scientism. As a result of this shift in framework, humankind has moved toward secular humanistic and materialistic constructs to define and understand itself in counseling as well (Brown, 2017; Jovanovic, 2021).

That noted, biblical thought has not been extinguished. However, secularistic constructs have seeped their way into various places of Christian thinking. Pastoral counseling and its approaches for counseling and care have, in particular, not been exempt from a drift toward the secular. In fact, humanistic categories have widely influenced Christian counselors, becoming

commonly used (Emlet, 2017; Johnson, 2021; Welch, 2022). As a result, ample scholarship has been written regarding the integration of Christian theology, and secular, psychological and psychiatric constructs (which will be demonstrated throughout the study; Emlet, 2017; Hathaway & Yarhouse, 2021; Welch, 2022). Yet, precious little research has been engaged in to examine how influential secular humanistic constructs have become in and on pastoral care and counseling. More alarmingly, little to no research has been cultivated to determine if the average pastor or pastoral counselor is aware of how humanistic their approaches have become. These realities breed essential questions and reveal a considerable research gap to consider on behalf of pastoral counseling as Enlightenment thinking and philosophy, at its core, is anti-God in origin (Berger, 2016; Brown, 2017; Jovanovic, 2021). Not the least of these would be regarding the compromise of biblical truth in a knowing and/or unknowing manner through the use of secular humanist (anti-God) constructs within the realm of pastoral counseling (which represents the opinions and authority of God). As such, this is paramount for pastors and pastoral counselors to consider.

The aforementioned *essential* questions informed the guiding research questions then, surrounding this study. They include: (1) How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of the modern mental health system?; (2) How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of modern mental health system tools, such as the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)*, its codes, and contributing theories?; (3) Does the average pastor or pastoral counselor see any areas of their practice or referral making that is currently influenced or informed by humanism?; and (4) How would the average pastor or pastoral counselor counsel or refer to a licensed professional differently, if at all, if they were acutely aware of and trained on the

contributing (secular humanist) etymology(s) to the modern mental health system and its tools and theories?

Considering these questions led to an exhaustive review of literature. This review touches on what (little) research has been done in related fields, and examines, in detail, the following: the humanistic foundations to the modern mental health system, including a number of specific influential individuals, the humanistic foundation to modern therapeutic thought, the results of the influence of humanism on the modern mental health system, and the secularization of pastoral counseling.

This study would be built on one primary and several secondary hypotheses. The primary hypothesis is that pastors and/or pastoral counselors lack an acute awareness of how much influence secular humanism has on their pastoral counseling. A first secondary hypothesis is that this lack of acute awareness of humanistic influence results in wrongful use of humanistic interventions (likely unknowingly) or referral to humanistic professional agencies that either knowingly or unknowingly provide humanistic approaches and recommendations, based on the prevalence of humanism in modern therapeutic practices (as will be outlined in the details of this literature review). Another secondary hypothesis would be that if pastors and pastoral counselors become aware of the history of the modern counseling movement, dating back to the Enlightenment, it would inform their pastoral practice, approaches, and referrals in such a way to, in so much as it depends on them, influence how they utilize or refer to secular humanist sources. A final secondary hypothesis would be that if pastors and pastoral counselors become aware of the history of the modern counseling movement, they would become better students of themselves and their community resources to provide the highest quality of biblically accurate

pastoral care possible, avoiding humanistically compromised approaches when and where they can.

The implications for this study are significant. First, if the hypothesis is verified, then a gap in academic preparation for pastoral ministry, particularly pastoral counseling, has been identified and can subsequently be addressed. Secondly, in the process of conducting research, study participants will be illuminated to information they may not have been previously aware of. This creates a possibility for self-examination and the examination of one's pastoral care, which may, by implication, cause an immediate enhancement to participants' knowledge base and resulting pastoral care initiatives.

The primary objective of this study is to determine if, and to what degree, pastors and/or pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of humanism on their pastoral counseling endeavors. The second primary objective is to determine if additional education on the history of pastoral counseling and care, from the Apostolic era to the modern age, would produce more confident, competent pastors and pastoral counselors. Furthermore, a secondary objective to this study is that it could act as a next step in the form of a scholarly research foundation for future researchers to generate academic opportunities, environments, and research, for institutions to develop content on the history of pastoral counseling based on a defined need. A third objective, born of the second, would be the opportunity for pastors, pastoral counselors, seminary students, and interested parties in related fields to subsequently gain enhanced knowledge in an academic setting for the purpose of creating more informed and equipped pastoral counsel in current or future pastoral counseling venues for the glory of God and the good of humankind.

The means by which the hypothesis will be tested, and the viability and necessity of the intended objectives to be determined, is via a collective case study research method. This



researcher will utilize multiple case study participants (pastors), via interview, to determine if the hypothesis of modern pastors and/or pastoral counselors' awareness level of the influence of humanism on their pastoral counseling is, in fact, low. This research design complements the hypothesis because it draws relevant experiential data from research subjects themselves, allowing themes, relationships, academic gaps, and future research opportunities to be determined based on the data provided by the research population most affected. Additionally, this researcher will utilize a broad-spectrum survey with internet distribution to pastors and/or pastoral counselors comprised of appropriately adjusted versions of the questions on the interview questionnaire, that can be distributed to a wider population, for the purpose of corroborating validity or differentiation from the case study interviews. This will enable a wider population to contribute to the research data, create future opportunities for further research, and complement the primary method of study: case study interviews, without creating the essentiality for descriptive statistics. Further yet, to the extent it is useful within the collective case study method, this researcher would gather documents from academic institutions that provide training in pastoral counseling to identify if there is specific academic preparation to prepare pastors and/or pastoral counselors to be aware of the influence of humanism on pastoral counseling.

Knowing this, the remainder of this chapter will outline the following. First, a summary of relevant literature, including historical, social, and theoretical background will be explored. Second, the situation and motivation of this researcher will be outlined in detail, followed by, third, comprehensive problem statement. The problem statement will build into the fourth component, a purpose statement, which identifies the goal of the research. Fifthly, the significance of the study and its practical contributions will be explored. Then, the research questions will again be outlined. Finally, pertinent definitions and terms will be provided to

enhance reader understanding and support the study. The chapter will then conclude with a summary of the below contents.

### **Background**

While the whole of Scripture speaks to the reality of what is now understood as pastoral counseling, the Apostle Paul provides a pointed statement in Acts 20:28, where he instructed the leaders at the church of Ephesus to *pay careful attention to the church, and care for it*. These were specific exhortations to *shepherd*, involving the work of Gospel-centered counseling and one-anothering (*English Standard Version Bible, 2008/2011, Acts 20:28*). This means that the work of Christ-centered counseling is intrinsic to the pastorate, and thereby must be as reflective of Christ-like principles (found in the Bible; *English Standard Version Bible, 2008/2011, John 1:1, 2 Timothy 3:16-17*). However, with the onset of the Enlightenment and a steady cultural embrace of secular humanism, research shows that pastoral counseling is not as Christ-centered or biblically focused as it once was, with pastors, instead, embracing forms of humanism (whether knowingly or unknowingly; Clebsch & Jaekle, 1964; Clinebell, 1966; Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023; Holleman & Chaves, 2023; Lyngstad, 2022; Ratner, 2019; Schneider, 2010). This is a significant matter for research on the influence of secular humanism and pastoral counseling, given the pastors and/or pastoral counselors, have a moral imperative, to avoid compromise with anti-God philosophy (*English Standard Version Bible, 2008/2011, Colossians 2:8*). Noting this, the section will thus outline the relevant literature, expanding on these realities, and noting the historical, social, and theoretical contexts that result of this research phenomenon.

### **Historical Context**

Historically, this study will rely heavily on the influence of a number of figures who had a prominent post-Enlightenment mindset that heavily influences the modern mental health

system to this day. These include Emil Kraepelin and Wilhelm Wundt, who are among the most prominent and influential individuals in historical psychiatry (Kraepelin) and psychology (Wundt), with their influence extending to this day (Berger, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020; Jovanovic, 2021; McGorry, 2022). Kraepelin has been heralded as the grandfather of the *DSM* and Wundt as father of psychology (Bergen, 2015, p. 158; Ebert & Bär, 2010). Both men are recognized as devout materialists and influential secular humanists (Berger, 2016, pp. 64–65; Berger, 2018, p. 124-125; Breggin, 2015, p. 102; Jovanovic, 2021; Straus et al., 2016). Their influence cannot be understated, as, combined, they are responsible for the *DSM*, the *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD)*, and multiple fields of modern practice, all of which rely on secular humanism as their foundational worldview, and are subsequently used and integrated within the realm of pastoral counseling—making them highly relevant to this research (Berger, 2016, 2018; Breggin, 2015; Hippus & Müller, 2008; Jovanovic, 2021; Straus et al., 2016; World Health Organization, 1993).

As a result, research now shows a concerted effort to perpetuate secular humanism's prominent standpoint within the modern mental health system. Hansen et al. (2014) assert that humanism is not just at its foundation but *animates* the entire field of professional counseling (Hansen et al., 2014, p. 173). Hansen (2017) later elaborates, further asserting that humanism should continue to play a prominent role in the shaping of the modern mental health system (Hansen, 2017, p. 3). Even more recently, DeRobertis (2021) writes that ongoing effort to highlight the value of humanistic approaches within modern practice and research is essential in order to maintain humanism's *helpful* position in modernity (DeRobertis, 2021, p. 28).

This effort has been effective, as, increasingly, secular humanist constructs have infiltrated pastoral thought and counseling. A 2023 study found that most clergy believe in

medical causation, the chemical imbalance theory, and genetic causation, all of which, as this study will demonstrate, find their origin in Enlightenment humanism (Holleman & Chaves, 2023, pp. 270–273). In other recent research, Papaleontiou-Louca and Kitromilides (2023), writing on the needs of theology to be utilized within modern practice, repeatedly emphasize the priority of mental health constructs over theological insight, relegating it to a distant second chair. With each point, importance is assigned to the secular humanistic categories as the primary approach (Papaleontiou-Louca & Kitromilides, 2023). Elsewhere, in a pastoral counseling journal, Lassair (2020) advocates for pastoral care to be informed, at the least, by a universal religious awareness that includes humanistic principles of psychology and psychiatry (p. 28). As such, the historical influence of secular humanism on modern pastoral practice should not be understated and reflects a need for this research.

### **Social**

With the aforementioned historical research recognized, the social context exists by extension for the field of pastoral counseling. Most prominently, the longer secular humanism has an unrecognized, yet prominent influence on the field, the more normalized it becomes therein—which thus explains what research reveals can be easily discernable within the realm of pastoral counseling, creating the phenomenon being researched. For example, influential biblical counselors Pierre and Reju (2015) describe liaising with the secular humanistic mental health community as a *natural* part of pastoral practice in their primer for pastoral counselors, yet note nothing regarding the influence of humanism on these systems. Relatedly, Bernau (2021) outlines that where once the pastorate had a *monopoly* on the field of counseling, its influence has been reduced due to the *helpful* rise of neurology, psychology, and psychiatry (Bernau, 2021, p. 362). He further asserts that this has resulted in an alteration of the language utilized within

pastoral care and counseling to reflect the influence of the sciences and the modern mental health system (Bernau, 2021). Just recently, to the time of the study's composition, a large 2023 study involving a national representation of clergy within the United States demonstrates that the vast majority of participants endorse medical/genetic causation to mental illness (Holleman & Chaves, 2023, pp. 270–273). These realities breed questions of how worldview has developed based on the influence of humanism on culture, in addition to the social indoctrination of humanism and its concepts represented in such places as modern counseling practices. As this research will demonstrate, this is so to an extent where it is no longer even recognized as such, and is, instead, seen as natural, progressive, helpful to, and explanatory of issues seen in counseling that would not have been categorized in the way they modernly are if humanism had not attained such prominence.

### **Theoretical**

An important based research consideration for this research is the continued effort on the part of the modern mental health system to ensure secular humanism remains the dominant voice of the moment. McLaughlin (2019), for example, strongly advocates for humanistic third-wave behaviorism to have a prominent place in modern practice, touting it as all but essential for relevancy. As noted, Hansen et al. (2014) believes humanism *animates* the entire field of counseling, noting that its origins, history, and philosophical foundation are humanistic in nature (ignoring a full history before the late 1700s; Hansen et al., 2014, p. 173). DeRobertis (2021) writes how humanistic psychology is among the only needed, inclusive means by which individuals can find their true selves. As these thoughts are continuously propagated, they will continue to be demonstrated as forgone conclusions. It is further theoretically probable that, should this continue, pastoral counselors will not be able to recognize Enlightenment secular

humanism and its constructs for what they are. This can already be seen in some bleeding edge studies (Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023; Holleman & Chaves, 2023; Murphy et al., 2022; Pies, 2019). As such, for pastoral counseling to remain within a biblical framework and to prevent this theoretical context from worsening, this study is critical in nature for the purpose of generating some awareness.

### **Situation to Self**

It is this researcher's belief that Adams (1979) is correct, and that since our creation, humankind has been dependent on revealed knowledge from God (p. 1). This knowledge has been revealed in two forms: special revelation (direct information revealed directly from, through, and by God), and general revelation (indirect information revealed through things God created; Jensen, 2017). Both data sets are indispensable, but the leaning of the follower of Christ, most-assuredly a pastoral counselor, should always be toward special revelation, given that this is information God Himself directly conveys. Yet, since the late 1700s, when secular humanism became the prevailing cultural framework for human understanding, general revelation has become increasingly prominent. The field of counseling is no exception from this influence. And, in this researcher's observation and dialogues, Christian counselors are not either. As the world continues to progress in its understanding of itself through the scientific processes, new concepts and ideas evidence themselves often that affect the counseling movement. Often yet, these are asserted as fact, even when there is clear evidence to the contrary, as can be seen by the now highly speculative chemical imbalance theory (Berger, 2016, 2018, 2020; Ghaemi, 2009; Pies, 2019). Many of these theories and practices are rooted in secular humanist constructs, such as the biopsychosocial theory, which is part of why they are ultimately disproven. Yet, due to their convincing nature and cultural scientific backing, this researcher has observed that pastors

and pastoral counsels often hold to beliefs that are unfounded (such as the aforementioned chemical imbalance theory). In exploring this with those this researcher interact(ed) with, it became apparent that most had given little to no thought to the origin of many of the theories they believed. These observations led to research, which revealed that secular humanism has become influential on pastors and pastoral counselors, where many have embraced secular theories as fact without realizing they are, in fact, outpourings or expressions of anti-God humanistic theory (Holleman & Chaves, 2023). This is significant to this researcher as it is their belief, based on Scripture, that humankind exists as a creation of God, and that pastors and pastoral counselors must ensure that the counsel they provide is in line with what God has revealed of himself, and not based on what humanity has distorted in its aggressive moves away from a religious etymological framework (Brown, 2017; Jovanovic, 2021). As such, this researcher has a desire to discern if the average pastor or pastoral counselor is informed on the etymology of the modern mental health system, its tools (such as the *DSM*), if they understand and utilize secular humanist criteria (such as *DSM* diagnostic descriptions, codes, and theories), and are doing so in an informed fashion in their pastoral counseling practice and referral making. As, if they are not, this research could be used as a platform then to create mechanisms to better educate pastors and pastoral counselors to be more informed to provide Godly counsel less influenced by a framework that is antithetical to its existence.

The philosophical assumption guiding this research will be epistemological in nature, as this research is designed to discern reality, and the relevance of reality to the researcher and the participant (Heppner et al., 2016; O'Reilly et al., 2021). Through this, the interpretive framework that will be utilized is social constructivism, as the research is primarily focused on the objective

reality of the participants and their understanding(s), namely, their awareness of the impact of humanism on their knowledge base and pastoral counseling practice (Andrews, 2012).

### **Problem Statement**

The problem this research seeks to address is the determination of if modern pastors and/or pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of humanism in their counseling approaches and applications. This is a problem worthy of research as, since the Enlightenment, humankind has moved away from a religious framework of etymology and ethical considerations toward secular humanism, materialism, and scientism (Berger, 2016). Since then, society has increasingly adopted these humanistic and materialistic concepts to understand the nature of reality and how to interact with it (Brown, 2017; Jovanovic, 2021). Sadly, research has shown that the pastorate and its approaches to counseling have not been exempt from the move toward humanism, with its theories becoming widely adopted in culture (Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023; Holleman & Chaves, 2023; Klaasen, 2018; Stanford & Philpott, 2011; Vaidyanathan et al., 2021). Accordingly, there is ample scholarship committed to biblical explanations and recommendations for the use of humanistic categories under the banner of integration of religion and humanism, as well as the impact of this over time (Johnson, 2021; Welch, 2022). This is demonstrated as far back as 1964 and the writing of Clebsch and Jaekle, who, in focusing on pastoral care, assert that pastors should be open to insights from conflicting psychological theories to their beliefs. They state that humanity's troubles may be too nuanced and complex for pastoral work alone (Clebsch & Jaekle, 1964, p. 79). And, more recently (Holleman & Chaves, 2023) with regard to the impact of this, a clergy-study with nearly 900 participants revealed that most of the research sample believe in what amounts to materialistic and genetic causation and treatments for mental illness, a theory that finds its origins patently in secular humanism (Berger,



2016, 2018; Holleman & Chaves, 2023, pp. 270–273; Schwartz & Begley, 2002; Welch, 2011).

Yet, there is little research examining if the average pastor or pastoral counselor is actually aware of humanistic influence on their approaches, or if they are aware of how influential secular humanism and its tenets have become in and on their pastoral care and counseling, given that that Holleman and Chaves's (2023) data treat humanistic theories as foregone conclusions, with no attention given to the etymology of the influencing theories behind the research itself.

What little research that does exist on this matter is woefully insufficient as it only alludes to the research problem proposed here. Powlison (2007), while writing on the need for theology to retake a place of prominence in therapeutic discourse as a primary source of healing for people over that of secular constructs, only alludes to the influence of humanism as having increased over generations while (primarily) exhorting the church to retake its rightful place in counseling-discourse and people-helping (Powlison, 2007). He does not address this researcher's question in any detail. Otherwise, there are the works of Berger (2016, 2018, 2019, 2020), who touches on a wide array of subjects, but focuses most prominently on psychiatry and the negative impact thereof. He certainly addresses the impact of humanism, but given the breaths of his work and its focuses, it is far from cohesive or concise (Berger, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020).

Given these realities, it creates ample opportunity for this research to be beneficial in multiple ways. First, because this research will be a mixed methods intra-paradigm qualitative study, it creates the means to gain broad insight from a large population, including eight to 10 case study interviews with pastors or pastoral counselors to gain specific insight, and as many online qualitative survey responses as possible to gain a broader sense of this phenomenon. From this, it provides a platform for future research to better equip pastors or pastoral counselors, provides a foundation for academic institutions to potentially assess and enhance their training

for pastors and pastoral counselors, and/or, at the very least, to give research participants pause to consider the influence of secular humanism on their pastoral counseling practices, which may result in more biblical, competent counsel in those venues.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this mixed methods intra-paradigm qualitative case study and survey is to discover whether or not the average pastors and/or pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of secular humanism in or on their counseling approaches and applications in either a case study interview via Zoom or via an online interview questionnaire. At this stage in the research, awareness of the influence of humanism on counseling will be generally defined as accurate awareness of the nature of humanism, its influences, and its effect on pastoral counseling, as evidenced through the case study interview or the online survey. The theory (guiding this study is epistemological in nature, utilizing social constructivism, which was advanced by Lev Vygotsky (1934, 1968, 1987). This is wise as this theory relies on communication via language in directive communication or collaboration for the purpose of learning about a phenomenon (Vygotsky, 1978, 1987). Given that this research focuses on the phenomenon of humanism and its impact on pastoral counseling, from the perspective of participants, this theory is exceptionally relevant and applicable to generating helpful research outcomes (Akpan et al., 2020).

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant for a number of reasons. First, there is very little existing research regarding the influence of humanism on pastoral counseling in a measurable way. What research does exist is not measurable, broadly scoped toward other subjects (like psychiatry), and not focused on the pastorate (Berger, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020; Powlison, 2007). As such, it adds

awareness to the field of pastoral counseling on a subject it is very much influenced by (Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023; Holleman & Chavez, 2023). Second, because pastoral counseling is an inherently theological initiative, examining the average pastor or pastoral counselors' awareness and utilization of humanism will create expanded means by which one can determine if their counsel has wandered too far from its theological core into anti-God theory (Adams, 1970, 1973, 1979; Pierre & Reju, 2015; Powlison, 2007).

Additionally, there is practical significance to this study as well. Namely, this research can provide a foundation for academic institutions to evaluate their training. If the research demonstrates that the average pastor or pastoral counselor is unable to distinguish what is humanistic theory from biblical general revelation, this creates a research gap for major seminaries and training institutions to address (specifically, course work related to the Enlightenment and its modern-day impact), in order to more competently train pastors to counsel (Bergen, 2015; Berger, 2016; Bonino & Hanna, 2017; McGorry, 2022).

### **Research Questions**

**RQ1:** How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of the modern mental health system?

This research question is requesting information from participants to share their knowledge of the history of the modern mental health system. It creates the opportunity for participants to demonstrate awareness, or lack thereof, in connecting the modern mental health system to its Enlightenment roots to the various secular humanist contributors that contributed to its creation, and connect it to participants' awareness of these entities' impact on modern practice (Asthana, 2015, p. 244, 246; Bergen, 2015, p. 158; Berger, 2016, p. 63; Berger, 2018, pp. 124–125; Straus et al., 2016). In short, this question is designed to determine a level of awareness that

the average pastor or pastoral counselor has on the influence of humanism within the modern mental health system, which includes pastoral counseling.

**RQ2:** How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of modern mental health system tools, such as the *DSM*, its codes, and contributing theories?

This research question is requesting information from participants to share their knowledge on the etymology of tools used within the modern mental health system, most primarily the *DSM* and its resulting realities. This is significant as the *DSM* is directly traced and attributed to Kraepelin, the “grandfather” of the *DSM*, who is a known proponent of naturalism, materialism, the brain dysfunction theory, and human eugenics (Bergen, 2015, p. 158; Berger, 2016, p. 63). This question is designed to learn if the average pastor or pastoral counselor is aware that they are navigating humanistic constructs that find their origin in an anti-God etymology (Berger, 2016, 2018; Brown, 2017; Jovanovic, 2021; Taliaferro, 2015).

**RQ3:** Does the average pastor or pastoral counselor see any areas of their practice or referral making that is currently influenced or informed by humanism?

This research question is requesting information from participants to share their belief regarding the current influence of humanism on their pastoral counseling. It draws on the reality that studies have shown that the average pastor holds to materialistic beliefs regarding causation, in addition to utilizes humanistic constructs unaware of their humanistic etymology (Berger, 2016, p. 63; Bonino & Hanna, 2017; Breed, 2021; Clebsch & Jaekle, 1964; Clinebell, 1966; Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023; Holleman & Chavez, 2023). It is designed to create a sense of awareness for the researcher in an effort to support the research hypothesis, create future research opportunities on this phenomenon, as well as generate research-based solutions to

cultivate a greater sense of awareness on the part of pastors and/or pastoral counselors, if the hypothesis that they are not aware is demonstrated to be correct.

**RQ4:** How would the average pastor or pastoral counselor: counsel or refer to a licensed professional differently, if at all, if they were acutely aware of and trained on the contributing (secular humanist) etymology(s) to the modern mental health system and its tools and theories?

This research question is one of awareness and impact and is requesting information from participants regarding how a greater awareness of secular humanism would impact their practice as pastoral counselors. The question draws on the data-driven reality that the average pastor or pastoral counselor utilizes the modern mental health system, its theories, and its tools without express knowledge to its secular humanist influences and foundation (Berger, 2016, p. 63; Berger, 2018; Bonino & Hanna, 2017; Breed, 2021; Clebsch & Jaekle, 1964; Clinebell, 1966; Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023; Holleman & Chavez, 2023; Stanford & Philpott, 2011; Vaidyanathan et al., 2021). As such, it is asking what would change, if anything, about how the secular humanistically *aware* average pastor or pastoral counselor would refer to those licensed in the community who may be overtly or subliminally influenced by humanism. The answer to this question can be used as a foundation for future research to train future pastors or pastoral counselors to best navigate the challenges of the modern mental health system and ensure they are providing the highest, most Godly quality of care and counsel to those they are responsible for shepherding.

### **Definitions**

1. Secular humanism: A way of life and that is pursued without reference to God or religion; the process whereby society and social institutions gained increasing independence, autonomy, and escape from ecclesiastical authority and influence; a

worldview separate from the concept of God, divine order, divine authority, and divine giftedness, instead favoring a the belief that humankind is comprised of only biological, psychological, social, person-focused developmental, and cultural realities that comprise their human composition (Felderhof, 2012; Gill, 2001; Pihlström, 2023).

2. **Materialism:** The idea that all phenomena can be explained by the interaction and movements between material particles; denial of the existence of God (Schwartz & Begley, 2002; Welch, 2011).
3. **Scientism:** The integration of science and theology; faith in the scientific process (Berger, 2016; Moreland, 2001).
4. **Biopsychosocial theory:** The belief that three things comprise and reflect health: biological well-being, psychological wellbeing, and social wellbeing respectively (Saad et al., 2017).
5. *The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM):* The *DSM* began as a 19th-century investment in nosology by secular humanist and eugenicist Emil Kraepelin. It is the handbook used by health care professionals in the United States and much of the world as the authoritative guide to the diagnosis of mental disorders. The *DSM* contains descriptions, symptoms and other criteria for diagnosing mental disorders (American Psychiatric Association, 2023; Shorter, 2015).
6. *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD):* A system of classification and category that provides critical knowledge on the extent, causes, and consequences of human disease and death worldwide, allowing the systematic recording, analysis, interpretation, and comparison of mortality and morbidity data collected in different countries or regions and at different times; it ensures semantic

interoperability and reusability of recorded data for the different use cases beyond mere health statistics, including decision support, resource allocation, reimbursement, guidelines and more (Hippius & Müller, 2008; World Health Organization, 2023).

7. Average pastor: A general pastoral *practitioner* whose pastoral role includes responsibilities associated with counseling, shepherding, and discipling (Hindson & Dobson, 1983; Johnson, 2021; Prince, 2013).
8. Pastoral counselor: A pastor or a community *practitioner* whose role is specific to pastoral counseling, shepherding, and discipling, who may not be a pastor in vocational title, but functions like one in practice (DeYoung & Quinn, 2014; Hindson & Dobson, 1983; Johnson, 2021; Oden, 1987a, 1987b; Pierre & Reju, 2015; Powlison, 2007; Prince, 2013; Reju, 2015).
9. Chemical imbalance theory: The theory that there is a deficiency in certain specific chemicals in the brain resulting in psychiatric disorder or abnormality; the theory that chemical imbalances in the brain are causative for the constructs of mental illness; the theory that life expectable problems are mental disorders resulting from an imbalance of chemicals in the brain (Berger, 2018; Francis, 2012; Welch, 1991).

### **Delimitations and Limitations**

Within research, it is essential to be upfront about the limitations, assumptions, and boundaries surrounding a research project and research phenomenon. Delimitations and limitations are then components within research that clearly outline the intent and parameters of a given research project. Delimitations outline the boundaries of research that deem what cannot be accomplished, or what are outside of the scope of the research. Limitations are transparent

realities that may influence a project, or the disclosure of any known weaknesses within the research that may cast doubt on the results or conclusions (Leedy & Ormrod, 2010).

### **Delimitations**

Among the primary delimitations of this study is limiting it to the vocation of pastoral counselor. While limiting, this is because within the field of counseling, there are wide ranging titles one can assume or be awarded, in addition to numerous certifications, degrees, and specialty training that result in one being titled a counselor within the realm of vocational ministry (Kinghorn, 2016). As such, to broaden the research beyond the target population (pastoral counselors) would be to surpass the limitations of the scope of this project. A second delimitation is that the role of pastoral counselor is limited to those who have a primary capacity as a counselor, specifically for the case study interviews (as outlined Chapter Three). This is such as this population is the most likely to be informed on the research phenomenon, as opposed to other pastoral roles (small groups pastor, missions pastor, etc.) that are likely to have other emphases and bases of knowledge. A third delimitation is a lack of commentary on the helpful interventions and contributions that secular humanism has made to the people-helping industry. The point of this research is not to dissect the helpful and/or the harmful aspects of secular humanism, but instead to point to a hypothesized knowledge gap on the part of pastors who counsel and/or pastoral counselors on their awareness regarding how much secular humanism, a system born and perpetuated by anti-God philosophy and sentiment, influences an inherently biblical system of people-helping (Felderhof, 2012; Gill, 2001; Pihlström, 2023). In short, the goal of this research is illumination, not assessment. This research is meant to create a platform for future research-based assessments.



### **Limitations**

The primary limitations to this study are regarding the online survey. First, while the case study interview allows for the potential of follow-up questions and exploration of an individual perspectives on the research phenomenon, the online survey allows for only rigid exploration using yes or no questions. Secondly, a limitation is related to the design itself. While the intended audience is pastors and/or pastoral counselors, and the survey will only be available in spaces particular to pastoral counselors (as outlined Chapter Three), it is impossible to delineate the actual participants of the study beyond basic demographic information. A third limitation is honesty. While it is assumed that most individuals speak truthfully regarding age, credentials, and role, this is not guaranteed, and could in some small measure of skewed data.

### **Summary**

Having considered the reality of biblical instruction regarding the pastor's call to counsel, tangentially with, if not parallel to, the rise and influence of Enlightenment secular humanism, an anti-God system of thought, a clear problem/phenomenon presents itself (Berger, 2016; Brown, 2017; Gill, 2001; Jovanovic, 2021). That being: does the average pastor and/or pastoral counselor have awareness of the influence of secular humanism in their counseling approaches and applications; do they see the influence it has had? This is a problem requiring consideration as, due to Enlightenment philosophy, humanity has moved toward secular humanistic, materialistic, and purely scientific thought, and away from a religious, let alone biblical, framework for its existence (Berger, 2016). Furthermore, research clearly demonstrates humanism has influenced major sections of pastoral counseling (Ağilkaya-Şahin, 2018; Crabb, 1975; Kinghorn, 2016; Klaasen, 2018a, 2018b; Leins, 2021). As such, the purpose of this mixed methods intra-paradigm qualitative case study and survey, then, is to discover whether or not

average pastors and/or pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of secular humanism in or on their counseling approaches and applications.

This chapter established the need for this study by providing a historical overview of how the phenomenon developed, including a detailed background including the historical, social, and theoretical contexts, the significance of this research to this writer, the development of a detailed, but concise problem statement, the development of a subsequent purpose statement and choice of matching theoretical foundation for the research, the overall significance of this study (on its own and for broader culture), the development of research questions, and finally, a list of key definitions for the purpose of clarity.

In the next chapter, this research will provide to a detailed and multifaceted literature review, a comprehensive theoretical framework, and create a robust case for the long-term significance of the outcome of this study that is rooted in generations of research data.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### Overview

Pastoral counsel and care have existed in some form since biblical times. It can be most precisely understood from the writing of the Apostle Paul, as he self-describes labor intensive, some-times paternal, multiyear investments of encouragement, correction, and teaching with various churches and their people (*English Standard Version Bible*, 2008/2011, Acts 18:11, Acts 19:10, Colossians 3:16, 1 Thessalonians 2:7–18). In some form, pastoral and religious counseling continued in prevalence for generations, with a shift away from it only occurring in the late 1700s due to the cultural phenomenon known as the Enlightenment.

The Enlightenment is modern secularism's coming of age—where humankind moved away from a religious orientation as a framework for etymology, existence, and ethics, toward secular humanism, naturalism, and scientism. Since then, society has increasingly drifted toward humanistic and materialistic concepts to define and understand itself (Brown, 2017; Jovanovic, 2021). Pastoral work, most precisely people-helping approaches for counseling and care, were not exempt from this drift, with humanistic, therapeutic categories influencing biblical framework, and thus, becoming widely used. As a result, in modernity there are biblical explanations and recommendations for the use of therapeutic categories being researched and written on to this day as a part of cultural advancement (Johnson, 2021; Welch, 2022).

However, little research has been accomplished examining how influential secular humanistic constructs have become in and on pastoral care and counseling, let alone on if the average pastor or pastoral counselor is even aware of just how humanistic their approaches have subtly become. In modern culture, diagnostic criteria are a cultural forgone conclusion, being described by some as animating all professional counseling (Hansen et al., 2014, p. 173). Others

(Shoshana, 2019) go so far as to describe psychological and psychiatric categories as being not *just* influential, but a socially interpretive framework for many aspects of human society (Shoshana, 2019, p. 183). Put plainly, humanism, an anti-God system of explanation and societal interpretation, thus exists as part of the core makeup and interpretive framework of modern society as a whole (this being negatively corroborated by Scripture; Brown, 2017; *English Standard Version Bible*, 2008/2011, 1 Peter 5:8). The significance of this reality should not be understated. Humanism is opposed to the biblical concept and reality of God at its very foundation. This belief is intrinsic to the philosophy's very existence (Brown, 2017; Jovanovic, 2021; Taliaferro, 2015). This puts humanism, as an interpretive framework, at odds with a biblical framework and its realities of God's standards for morality and means of healing (*English Standard Version Bible*, 2008/2011, Romans 1, Romans 8).

This is relevant, as will be outlined throughout this literature review, given that humanism and its core tenets have created modern psychological and psychiatric practice. Relatedly, as will be demonstrated, modern psychiatric and psychological principles heavily influence, if not inform, modern pastoral counseling as a people-helping model to a degree it does not seemingly recognize. And, given humanism's etymology and conclusions, it generates a paradigm that views the biblical truth(s) and application(s) as outdated and irrelevant at worst, and incomplete, ill-equipped, insufficient, unsophisticated, insensitive, and unable to truly help a person in great distress, at best (MacArthur, 1994). Some secularist-forefathers went so far as to assert that religious practitioners were/are unstable and should be institutionalized for having non-naturalistic beliefs (Steinberg & Angermeyer, 2001). This begs a series of questions for a Christian, let alone a pastor who counsels to consider, not the least of which is the usefulness of

the tools and systems stemming from an interpretive framework that opposes its continued usefulness, if not its existence.

To that, certainly, ample scholarship exists for the purpose of cultivating *appropriate* integration of theological realities with what the Enlightenment produced in humanistic psychological interventions and medical, psychiatric care (Emlet, 2017; Hathaway & Yarhouse, 2021; Welch, 2022). Some, such as respected scholars and pastoral counselors, Pierre and Reju (2015), whose work is quite literally among the premiere primers for pastoral counseling, go so far as to describe matters such as referral to external professional counseling (worth noting it is not outlined as Christian counseling) and/or medical or psychiatric help as a part of normative pastoral care and practice (p. 120). However, research regarding how far humanistic constructs have seeped their ways into pastoral care and counseling is all but non-existent, save for, most recently, the writing of some like the late David Powlison (2007), and more recently Daniel Berger (2016, 2018, 2020). Instead, nearly all Christian scholarship recounts diagnostic criteria and the various disciplines, approaches, referral needs, and practices of secular psychology and psychiatry in much the way Pierre and Reju (2015) did, as self-evident realities with little, if not no, attention given to their etymology and its subsequent influence.

Another set of significant questions the anti-God etymology of humanism poses is with regard to the harmfulness of humanism used in a Christian context. Are Christ-followers being educated and trained to utilize tools that are counter their faith system? More importantly, are Christians, pastors, and laity alike, even aware of what is humanistic and harmful, what is appropriately integrated, and what is not? These are questions that this comprehensive literature review reveals the essentiality of asking, for (this) research to discern, and future research build

on, to ensure pastors and counselees alike are growing/healing biblically and not in a way that is counter-theological truths and thus, harmful, to a one's personhood.

It is, thus, imperative for the pastor who counsels to be aware of how much humanism has affected their ministry and their pastoral counseling, to say nothing of if they are aware it has occurred at all. It is a biblical, moral imperative to ensure one's counsel is in line with Scripture to the highest possible degree(s). Certainly, unknowing and uninformed use of a humanistic system would be biblical malfeasance by ignorance—a problem for not just the pastorate, but any Christian (*English Standard Version Bible*, 2008/2011, Luke 12:47–48, 2 Timothy 3:16–17).

This study would build on a small foundation laid by a few key figures. First, the earliest writings of Adams (1970, 1973, 1979). Adams, studying under Mowrer (a secular humanist who shall be discussed in further detail later in this study) was exposed to Mowrer declaring the field of psychiatry to be a failure, refuting the fundamental presuppositions of the then-prevalent Freudian model of psychology, in addition to opposing the medical model of mental illness (Adams, 1970, p. xvi). This influenced Adams to accomplish much the same in challenging the influence of secular humanism in Christian counseling, simultaneously backfilling his assertions with rigid application of Scripture. However, Adams did not address etymology, as much as allude to it through its ramifications (Adams, 1970, 1973, 1979). Beyond Adams, the study would draw on the aforementioned Powlison (2007), who, while not going into significant detail, alludes to the steady influence of humanism increasing over generations via the abdication of the once high cultural authority of the church. Finally, and most prominently, it builds on research of Berger (2016, 2018, 2019, 2020), who, while expansive in volumes and subject matter, only briefly touches on *many* subjects across *multiple* volumes for the purpose of highlighting how secular the field of Christian counseling, in general, has become. It was Berger (2018), though,

who exposed this researcher to the existence of individuals such as Emil Kraepelin, Wilhelm Wundt, and others, as influential on the state of secularism influencing pastoral counseling (p. 61). Save for Berger, whose research provides historical context but is too expansive in subject matter and academic-volumes to be considered harmonized to a statistically significant end, in addition to his works not being pointed at a particular practical impact regarding the outcomes of this researchers study(s), most Christian and/or biblical scholarship is pointed at discerning navigation and usage of the modern mental health system as a foregone conclusion, as opposed to examining the systems etymology, thus revealing a significant gap in research, and the need for this study.

As a further complimenting note, the significance of this research question is only punctuated by scholarship demonstrating that the impact of humanism on modern mental health constructs is also a growing concern among secular professionals. Some go so far as to assert that the system itself is broken based on the prevalence of humanism and its applicable philosophies and is subsequently in need of reform and more accountability (Chambers & Stanley, 2017; Nikkel, 2015).

As such, for this literature review and the subsequent research to be comprehensive for the purposes of answering the research question(s), the accepted scholarship regarding the humanistic etymologies of secular approaches must be vividly demonstrated. This will be accomplished by examining the humanistic foundation of the *DSM* and its influence on the modern mental health system. Following this, this research will examine the humanistic foundation of modern therapeutic thought, and the implications of humanism on modern practice. Additionally, it will examine scholarship demonstrating the influence and subsequent

secularization of pastoral care and counseling via humanisms influence, touching on a number of specific areas of concern.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of a research project provides a general explanation as to what lens or worldview a researcher uses to describe why a research problem exists. Furthermore, it speaks to what a researcher hopes to find in the study, in addition to providing a frame of reference to view the realities and perceptions of participants in a study (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Within this research project, the interpretive framework that will be utilized is social constructivism. This framework is a subset of cognitive constructionism, which emphasizes learning via guidance and/or collaboration with others. It was propounded in 1968 by Lev Vygotsky, who adhered to a belief that cultural influences and language are intrinsic to how individuals understand culture and the world around them, and thus, is relevant to learning as language is what is used in directive communication or collaboration (Akpan et al., 2020). Vygotsky's belief, at the foundation of this theory, is that all learning takes place under the guidance of someone else or via peer collaboration (Akpan et al., 2020, p. 51).

One using this framework seeks to discern an understanding of the world in which they live, and develop subjective, meaningful interpretations directly related to certain objects, things, and perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 24). For social constructivism to be successful, a researcher must understand the following: the premise that is formed around a concept or research questions; the reality of the participants of the study as they understand it; and what is hoped to be gained through the knowledge a study provides. From a research standpoint, reality is then discerned and understood through human activity and dialogue, relying as much as possible on the participants' perspective of a given reality (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Ernest, 1999;



Gredler, 1997; Kim, 2001; Kukla, 2000; Prawat & Floden, 1994). As Creswell and Poth (2018) outline, *meaning* is often discerned both socially and historically, meaning, both historical influence and social interaction contribute, if not create, a phenomenon being studied, as well as the norms that research participants operate within.

As such, social constructivism is the appropriate framework for this study in that it seeks to discern the significance of historical attitudes and events on modern understandings, dialogues, and directive interactions between people helpers and those in need of help, in much the same way that the theory outlines as being relevant in educational settings (Akpan et al., 2020). Through eight to 10 semistructured interviews, the narrow number of participants' reality can be understood (the impact of secular humanism on pastoral counseling), as well as the gaps that may or may not exist in actuating their worldview (in pastoral counseling). A complementary, wider-scale survey was used to discern the width and breath of a larger cultural sample's understanding of this subject, generating a sense of cultural continuity (or lack thereof), creating opportunities for future research and scholarship to address the *meanings* and realities that this research discovers.

From this study, further use of the a social constructivism theory could be utilized in the following ways: (1) to explore the subjective interpretation and ideas of study participants to generate solutions to the theorized knowledge gap for personal enhancement; (2) to explore the subjective interpretation and ideas of study participants to generate solutions to the theorized knowledge gap for cultural enhancement; and (3) to explore the subjective interpretation and ideas of study participants regarding specific changes they will make regarding greater awareness of the influence of humanism on their specific pastoral counseling approach.

## Related Literature

### The Humanistic Foundation of the DSM and Mental Health Systems

#### *Emil Kraepelin*

Given the prevalence of the humanistic mental health criteria and the *DSM's* influence on modern culture, it is most appropriate that this literature review begin by outlining how this came to be. This starts in acknowledging the significance and influence of Emil Kraepelin. Kraepelin is among the most significant influencers of the current construct of mental illness. He is widely considered to be the founder of modern psychiatry, the father of modern psychotherapy and psychiatric genetics (Berger, 2016, p. 63). Berger (2016) further describes Kraepelin as a social Darwinist and promoter of racial hygiene (p. 63). He continues by asserting that Kraepelin's view of humanity was materialistic in nature, resulting from an underlying philosophy of materialism and positivism. Berger (2016) notes that Kraepelin rejected that humans consist of a physical *and* a spiritual nature (p. 64, 65). The result of this, on Kraepelin's part, led to the establishment of the brain dysfunction theory (the precursor theory to the biopsychosocial and medical model of mental illness), which is still prevalently held in modern psychiatric thinking to the time of this study's composition (Berger, 2016, p. 63). Berger (2016) described Kraepelin as among the most important individuals in psychiatry's history (p. 63).

Berger is far from alone in describing Kraepelin in these categories, with ample scholarship expanding one's understanding of the extent of his humanistic thought processes. Bergen (2015) describes Emil Kraepelin as an influential, pre-Nazi war-time psychiatrist, and heralds him as the one who devised the system of diagnostic categories that eventually resulted in the *DSM*. The writer goes so far as to ascribe to him the title of "grandfather" of the *DSM*

(Bergen, 2015, p. 158). Additionally, the work describes Kraepelin's "conviction" of psychological problems being biological in nature (Bergen, 2015, p. 159).

Straus et al. (2016) add to this, and corroborate the contributions of Kraepelin to the *DSM*, but further add insight to his etymological framework. They describe Kraepelin as a white-German nationalist and proponent of human eugenics, racism, degeneration theory, and the creation of an Aryan race (each category being inherently humanistic and materialistic in nature). The article further outlines Kraepelin's direct mentoring relationship to three prominent Nazi psychiatrists, including Ernst Rüden, who was, himself, an avid proponent of racial hygiene and directly responsible for various components of Nazi eugenics and the Holocaust (Berger, 2018, pp. 124–125; Breggin, 2015, p. 102, Straus et al., 2016).

Adding to this is Bonino and Hanna (2017), who firmly root psychiatry, psychopathology, and the *DSM* in reductionistic philosophy and humanistic treatment approaches. The work credits Kraepelin in detail, highlighting his contributions to the medical model of classifications as it relates to mental illness. It further asserts his contributions led to the disease model of mental illness, which is firmly rooted in the biopsychosocial model and brain dysfunction theory, which are humanistic in nature and origin (Bonino & Hanna, 2017).

An earlier work, Engstrom (2007) adds value to this study in taking a different approach of interpretation while still landing at a similar conclusion. Engstrom argues that the historical linking of eugenics to Nazi Germany has been overstated, and that eugenics was a fundamental part of the development of *all* modern society. He further asserts that Kraepelin was striving to prevent evolution from becoming uncontrollable and regressive (Engstrom, 2007, p. 393). However, he in no way minimizes Kraepelin's position as a eugenicist and supporter of racial cleansing (Engstrom, 2007, p. 389). In fact, the writer goes so far as to note his support and high

praise of Kraepelin's pupil and Nazi psychiatrist, Ernst Rüden, who was, again, responsible for Nazi war crimes (Engstrom, 2007, p. 393). Thus, while in no way diminishing or altering Kraepelin's worldview, he instead paints it and his beliefs in a more charitable light.

Hippius and Müller (2008) further corroborate the contributions of Kraepelin to the *DSM*, but expand his influence to the *ICD* as well (World Health Organization, 1993). Furthermore, Becker et al. (2016) assert that Kraepelin should rightly be known for his research regarding psychiatric disorders (specifically schizophrenia). Hippius & Müller (2008) further describe him as a pioneer in other fields of the modern mental health movement, as well, including psychopharmacology, pharmacopsychiatry, forensic psychiatry, and genetic research, with each discipline finding an origin point in his research, corroborating the assertions of Berger, that all of these disciplines find their etymological roots in humanism (Becker et al., 2016; Berger, 2016, p. 63; Hippius & Müller, 2008, pp. 3-4).

Additionally, research by McGorry (2022) highlights the problematic nature of our current diagnostic category of schizophrenia, specifically relating to its Kraepelinian origin. It describes both Kraepelinianism and the more recent neo-Kraepelinianism (both humanistic) as deficient and outdated, resulting in schizophrenia, as we understand it, being a flawed diagnostic criterion (McGorry, 2022, pp. 84, 85). This is noteworthy, given that it is a secular criticism of a prevalent, modern construct.

To that, McGorry (2022) highlights Kraepelin's ongoing influence on modern practice, both in origin and through neo-Kraepelinian's—meaning Kraepelinian humanism remains a known (albeit disliked by some) influence on modern practice to this day (pp. 84; 85). Thirdly, since this is a Kraepelinian etymological issue, it again brings the humanistic system under scrutiny for pastoral counselors.

Adding to this, Kendler's (2020) scholarship is specific to Kraepelin's research on dementia praecox (premature dementia). It addressed, in detail, Kraepelin's nosology, which was inherently humanistic. In detail, it describes him as a positivist, a pragmatist, and that he believed all psychiatric diagnoses are natural in origin (Kendler, 2020, p. 1186). This simply adds to the mounting body of scholarly evidence as to the humanistic nature to Kraepelin's contributions to the modern mental health system, and the effect they have on modern practice, including pastoral counseling, to this day.

Like others, Ebert and Bär (2010) affirm that the American Psychiatric Association's *DSM* classifications rely on the Kraepelinian classification system. However, they add a new layer of understanding to the influence of humanism on the modern mental health system, particularly the *DSM* and its creation. Ebert and Bär connect Kraepelin to known naturalist, materialist, and father of *psychology* (another arm of the modern mental health system), Wilhelm Wundt, as a mentor (Ebert & Bär, 2010). Knowing this, it acts as further, but also new, corroboration that Kraepelin and his diagnostic research (as well as its applications) are humanistic in nature, given among his primary influences are other humanists. Additionally, it is a noteworthy aside, for the purposes of this study, that Ebert and Bär root modern psychological practice in humanism as well (Ebert & Bär, 2010, pp. 191–192).

Steinberg and Angermeyer (2001) add depth to one's understanding of the relationship between Wilhelm Wundt and Emil Kraepelin. They describe it as not just a professional or mentoring, but a more personal relationship as well. Their research shares specific correspondence, with direct quotes, related to Wundt's distaste for religion, even going so far as to insinuate that scientists and philosophers who were also religious thinkers were not credible as practitioners, and may need to be institutionalized for their religious thinking (Steinberg &

Angermeyer, 2001). To bookend his thoughts on the foolishness of religion, Wundt noted to Kraepelin that he would never be treated by a clinician who utilized religious philosophy in practice (Steinberg & Angermeyer, 2001, p. 304).

Thus, having established that Kraepelin and his categorical system has a strong etymological origin in secular humanism, and having touched on a relationship between Kraepelin and Wundt in both personal and professional categories, it behooves this study to briefly touch on Wundt, his psychological thoughts and contributions, and most precisely, highlighting how humanistic his influence was and is on modern practice.

### ***Wilhelm Wundt***

Corballis's (2021) essay links psychology and humanistic evolution (materialism) in a historical developmental bond. In doing so, it outlines the worldview and significance of Wilhelm Wundt, and describes him as among the most influential psychologists in history. The study holds a description of him as a devout and significant evolutionist as his base belief system, and as proponent of natural selection (Corballis, 2021).

Expanding our understanding of Wundt, Radu (2019) assesses the positive impact that he had on the fields of physiology and psychology (particularly in laying the foundations of experimental psychology). He does this by asserting that not only was Wundt evolutionary in his thinking and practices, but so wise and influential on humankind that he may have actually contributed to evolutionary steps (Radu, 2019, p. 449). This is significant to this study as it speaks to the influential presuppositions that would have existed in and surrounded Wundt. It also speaks to the mark he has left on history that has led to such an audacious thought about him.

Further elaborating on the significance of Wilhelm Wundt and his influence, Jovanovic (2021) composed a paper paying respect to Wundt on the hundredth anniversary of his passing. In doing so, he endeavored to contextualize Wundt's life and contributions to the history of psychology in a way that would allow him to be more properly understood than scholarship had contributed to this point. In accomplishing this, the writer described Wundt as a pioneer of modernity bridging from the Enlightenment, assisting humanity in moving away from a religious orientation into a new form of ontological thought, including the self-determination and self-actualization of humankind (Jovanovic, 2021, p. 33–34). As with the aforementioned research to this point, Jovanovic (2021) firmly roots Wundt as a secular humanist, assessing him as a pioneer of humanistic advancement.

The context of Asthana's (2015) scholarship is related to the works of Wundt as a pioneer of historical and modern psychology. She describes him as *strictly scientific* in his approaches and ideas, applying this framework to an understanding of the mind and consciousness. It also states he was a *pure* scientist, meaning he had a strict adherence to naturalism as an etymological foundation (Asthana, 2015, pp. 244, 246). The writer goes so far as to state that Wundt *rescued psychology* and the concept of the mind/soul from the church, as she asserts that Wundt believed his understanding of psychology was basic to all knowledge and knowing (Asthana, 2015, p. 245). Finally, the article further corroborates the influence and mentorship of Wundt in the life of Kraepelin (Asthana, 2015, p. 245).

As such, this adds value to the growing body of research that the foundations of modern psychology and psychiatry are inherently humanistic in origin and nature, and that pastoral counselors require some knowledge of this to biblically navigate these fields well.

***O. Hobart Mowrer***

P. Corbin's (2017) scholarship opens a needed door of consideration for this research. He examines the life and practice of O. Hobart Mowrer—specifically his contributions and deviations, to and from, the fields of psychology and psychiatry. P. Corbin outlined how, while a secularist, Mowrer rebelled against secular psychology and psychiatry (P. Corbin, 2017, pp. 1–2). He described Mowrer as stating that psychology and psychiatry corrupted religion and culture, and that these entities lessened the overall morality of both (P. Corbin, 2017, p. 2).

As a notable aside, it is the influence of Mowrer on the aforementioned Jay Adams that helped spawn the modern *biblical* counseling movement (a wing of pastoral counseling) that rebelled against the influence of humanism in secular practice, the church, and culture (Adams, 1970, pp. 1, 13–19).

This is significant to this research in that it highlights secular awareness of how humanism had and has negatively impacted culture some 70 years ago. Further, it creates opportunity to build on this research in the form of research questions within this study to discern if pastors or pastoral counselors have awareness of Mowrer or his secular criticisms of psychology and psychiatry, as well as his influence on an entire wing of pastoral counseling.

**The Humanistic Foundation of Modern Therapeutic Thought**

Having established that research clearly indicates that the very etymology and influences that led to the creation of modern psychiatry and the *DSM*, the humanistic categorical system that exists to this day which still pays homage to its Kraepelinian roots, as well as the humanistic roots Wundt brought to life in psychology, this study can turn its attention to modern therapeutic applications, and their inherently humanistic foundation. To that end, McLaughlin (2019) provides a number of helpful insights for this research. First, he avidly supports a wider



resurgence of humanism in third-wave behaviorism. This is significant as third-wave behaviorism is grounded in psychological well-being and self-awareness, metacognition, acceptance approaches, and overall spirituality as being relevant in behavioral interventions that are prominent to the time of this research being composed (McLaughlin, 2019). This reveals a concerted effort on the part of some, like this article's author, to ensure humanism is strongly represented at the heart of modern psychological practice.

Secondly, the article notes Carl Rogers as being the most notable humanist-therapist in therapeutic history (McLaughlin, 2019, p. 3). While this may seem unrelated, it unintentionally draws a line of corroborating evidence related to the humanistic infiltration of pastoral counseling—specifically dating back to the 1970s through notable Christian counselor Dr. Larry Crabb.

Briefly, while Crabb (1975) acutely writes he does not agree with Rogers on everything, even going so far as to categorize some of his framework as rebellion to Scripture, he asserts that Rogers offers many complementary constructs to Scripture related to his basic presuppositions and categories pertaining to personality problems (pp. 34–35). This is a considerable dotted line given that Crabb has been widely influential within the sphere of modern Christian counseling. Crabb's ties to Rogers, whom McLaughlin (2019) associates directly to humanism and its therapeutic advancement, should be at least of note to the minds of pastoral counselors, as (1) Crabb identifies Rogers as a contributor to some of his own approaches, and (2) Crabb is notably of high rapport in pastoral counseling, with hundreds of thousands of books sold utilizing Rogerian humanistic aspects with little description of their etymology outside of the components Crabb describes as rebellion to Scripture (Crabb, 1975, pp. 34–35; Crabb, 1977, back cover; McLaughlin, 2019). His 1977 work even touts an endorsement of humanistic practitioners

(Crabb, 1977, back cover). However, Crabb does little beyond this researchers' description of his statements to explain to the average reader how what is biblical and what is humanistic in his approach, beyond the assessing of the aforementioned sinful categories. To the point of this study, this is woefully under-describing the statement Crabb is making.

From McLaughlin (2019) with the cross-reference to Crabb (1977), it is reasonable to begin to see a concerted effort in literature to have humanism remain influential on modern mental health constructs. Furthermore, as will be discussed in a subsequent section of this literature review, it can be seen that studies show a subtle influence of humanism on pastoral counseling to an extent that is observable, but largely unknown in impact due to helpful cross-referencing of research such as this with allusion, but limited to no description (Crabb, 1977; McLaughlin, 2019).

Furthermore, Hansen et al. (2014) assert that humanism is not just at the foundation of the *DSM*, but *animates professional counseling* as an entire field, noting specifically, that its origins, history, and philosophical foundation are humanistic in nature (p. 173). While the writers do not mention Kraepelin, they note other known humanists, such as Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, among others as influences to this end. Rogers, in particular, is touted as an influential humanist on *all* modern practice (Hansen et al., 2014, p. 173). Furthermore, the Hansen et al. (2014) article then goes on to assert that humanism should be a foundational orientation to all counseling practice and that modern practitioners should strongly emphasize humanism as a people-helping ideology. In summary, these writers desire for humanistic ideology to remain at the very core of all modern therapeutic practice.

In a subsequent article, Hansen (2017), as a single writer, continues his assertion that humanism is not only essential but should play a significant role in the shaping of the

contemporary mental health system. In making this assertion, he additionally posits that mental health constructs find their origin in a genetic foundation. He further yet calls for counselors to employ humanistic perspectives to inform modern practice and cultural programming (Hansen, 2017, p. 3).

DeRobertis (2021) adds a very recent investment and scholarship to the place of humanism in modern psychological practice. To context, much of the article was invested in explaining the lengthy history and benefits of humanistic models of care in cultural psychology, cognitive psychology, and developmental psychology, in addition to its interventions—making a high case for their value. Additionally, in no uncertain terms, the writer expresses the value of the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* to modern therapy and its vision for psychological sciences (DeRobertis, 2021, p. 8). From there, the lion's share of the article describes how humanistic psychology has created a needed, inclusive, integrative approach to help individuals find their true self. The conclusion of the work asserts that humanistic approaches to modern psychological practice are as relevant today, as they have ever been, as a result of their infiltration of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (DeRobertis, 2021, p. 26). Additionally, DeRobertis (2021) asserts that there is need for continued effort to highlight the value of humanistic approaches within research in order to maintain humanism's helpful position in culture (DeRobertis, 2021, p. 28).

This research is corroboration toward the reality that humanism is not being culturally treated as only a theoretical framework, as much as a foundation for modern practice (if not modern life). Furthermore, it reaffirms that humanism has been influential for generations, and remains so to this day. It breeds additional confirmation to the unsettling reality that, based on its sheer presence in society and social sciences, that pastoral counseling has been influenced by a

system of thought antithetical to its biblical basis, and appears to be, in some ways, unaware of the depth of its influence.

### **The Results of Humanism on the Modern Mental Health System**

Therefore, another worthy consideration is how humanism and its principles are reflected in modern mental health systems. To that, the context of Starcevic et al. (2020) and their writing is with regard to internet usage disorder, its overall diagnostic usefulness, its lack of empirical base, and how this is related to the concept of diagnostic inflation within the *DSM*, specifically. This article represents a number of significant issues. The first is related to the diagnostic inflation itself. It outlines how the move from *DSV-IV* to *DSM-5* based models for diagnosis of internet usage disorder transitioned it from bring one overall condition to six different disorders, resulting in a staggering total of 14 diagnostic entities (Starcevic et al., 2020, p. 917). The second issue is the argument made by the authors that the diagnostic information and expansion represented in the article is not *necessarily* bad, and could be understood in some categories as even progressive (Starcevic et al., 2020, p. 917). However, thirdly, the article asserts the reality that the very diagnostic criteria they designate as potentially helpful is not clinically based, and very well may not be diagnostically useful.

This inconsistency aside, it additionally acts as corroboration to the long-term effects of humanism on culture through the changing, humanistic system of the *DSM* that pastors regularly engage with. This study, in particular, is useful to form research questions toward the research gap, to determine awareness on the part of pastoral counselors to the realities this article poses regarding *DSM* changes and their implications on culture and practice, and a pastor's awareness thereof.

In another helpful article, examining another perspective, Mayrhofer et al. (2021) desire to provide a compelling case for openly incorporating postmodern thought in experimental psychology. They argue that experimental psychology inherently contains postmodern components (Mayrhofer et al., 2021, p. 2). In making this case then, the writers assert a number of conclusions. First, that psychology, as the scientific discipline, is rooted in humanistic positivist theory and exists to understand the mind and complex human behavior. They posit that the “dominant” means by which this is accomplished is already through scientific experiment (Mayrhofer et al., 2021, p. 1). As a result, they state that these humanistic approaches are the dominant presuppositions that exist in modern psychological practice (Mayrhofer et al., 2021, pp. 1–2). Adding additional validity to their point, the authors point to the etymology of modern psychological practice, rooting it in the *natural science* contributions of the aforementioned Wilhelm Wundt (Mayrhofer et al., 2021). They, as others do, herald him as the father of experimental psychology (Ebert & Bär, 2010; Mayrhofer et al., 2021).

For the purposes of this study then, it is demonstrated that there is a concerted effort being made within modern practice for Enlightenment humanism and postmodernism to remain the prevailing worldview in modern psychology. It is these theories that modern practitioners are influenced by and taught as forgone conclusions. Further yet, it is these theories that many Christian counselors gain knowledge of how to use, but do not know their etymological basis. As such, it is these worldviews that exist behind the values of many modern practitioners that pastors will engage and collaborate with. And without distinct awareness of their etymology, they are likely engaging in various forms of humanism unaware.

Taking a divergent, yet (another) helpful detour, one article, while slightly aged, acts as a relevant starting point for a body of research that demonstrates the prevalence of the

biopsychosocial model in contemporary practice. Ghaemi (2009) writes that the model is the mainstream ideology of psychiatry (p. 3). He later describes the biopsychosocial model as the medical model, and as being inherently reductionist in nature (Ghaemi, 2009, p. 4). As has been outlined throughout this research, these are inherently secular humanist concepts that exist as a part of an anti-God system of thought populated by naturalist George Engel (Pies, 2019, p. 10). Furthermore, especially as it pertains to the chemical imbalance theory, the biopsychosocial theory will be explored in a subsequent section. To that end, this acts as validation, spanning years, to the growing body of research that reveals past and modern practice is firmly saturated in a humanist worldview, which has direct impact on how clinicians of various helping disciplines practice (surely effecting the pastorate to that end).

Building on this, the purpose of the writing of Saad et al. (2017) is advocating for a biopsychosocial *spiritual* model of personhood, and subsequent model of helping people. In making the case for the wisdom of this for modern practice, the writers make several noteworthy recommendations. First, they advocate that 50 years' worth of scholarship and research which they argue indicate the need for a spiritual dimension to modern practice—something in and of itself as noteworthy for a secularist culture (Saad et al., 2017, p. 2). Second, and significant to this research, is how the writers define the construct of spiritual. They describe spiritual as an open and fluid concept and recommend a diverse description and understanding of it. They believe it to be related to transcendence and the connectedness of life via beliefs, values, traditions, and similar concepts (Saad et al., 2017, pp. 1–2). As such, spiritual is not a Christian concept, as much as a universalist concept that has more to do with self-actualization than moral authority to a higher power. Thirdly, then, is the detailed history the writers provide for the biopsychosocial theory. They describe the biopsychosocial model as humanistic and holistic in

nature, and is reflected in the views understanding of what it means to be human. They further note it was cultivated by naturalist George L. Engel, who believed in three things that reflect health: biological wellbeing, psychological wellbeing, and social wellbeing respectively (Saad et al., 2017, p. 1).

This is illuminating to this study in a few ways. First, it adds additional credibility to the prevailing reality of modern psychology and psychiatry via the biopsychosocial model/theory as being steeped humanism both in origin and in modern application (which certainly affects the modern pastorate). Second, even when there are attempts made to acknowledge and incorporate spiritualism into the biopsychosocial model, spiritualism is reduced to glorified universalism, in an effort to be inclusive. As such, should such a biopsychosocial spiritual model be developed and employed, it is complicated for a pastor, or a pastoral counselor, to engage in use or endorsement thereof, as the entire concept is infiltrated by secular humanism and universalism.

### **The Chemical Imbalance Theory**

A discussion surrounding the chemical imbalance theory adds another dimension to this research quite worthy of consideration as the impact of secular humanism on the counseling movement (specifically pastoral counseling) is examined. As Pies (2011, 2019), Murphy et al. (2022), and others (like Berger, 2016, 2019) will outline in detail (below), the theory stands at a place of high cultural speculation, and these ramifications should not be missed or understated. Consider Pies (2019). The context of his writing is directly related to what he describes as debunking the chemical imbalance theory—going so far as to call it a myth in the very title of his article (Pies, 2019, p. 9). Deeper in his work, he states that the theory is “bogus,” a “misattribution to the field of psychiatry,” and that “it is time to drive a stake in its misbegotten heart” (Pies, 2019, p. 11). This is strong and notable language, given the writer touches on the

origin of the chemical imbalance theory as being rooted in the biopsychosocial theory of personhood and the historical, philosophical thought of naturalist George Engel. Pies describes how the naturalist philosophy of the biopsychosocial theory is an influential paradigm to this day (Pies, 2019, p. 10).

Corroborating and expanding understanding, Murphy et al. (2022) are helpful to this research to that end. Their work is highlighting the cultural prevalence of the chemical imbalance theory as it pertains to the construct of depression. They call the chemical imbalance theory a “popular narrative,” asserting it was popularized by pharmaceutical companies (Murphy et al., 2022, p. 351). They draw on the writing of Pies (2011) in describing this as a psychiatric urban legend (Pies, 2011). In making these assertions and the dilemmas this creates for modern practitioners, two conclusions are revealed from their scholarship. The first conclusion is related to influence. Murphy et al. (2022) reveal from a study (2020) with  $n = 77$  participants, that 90% of social workers adhere to the chemical imbalance theory and explain it to their clients despite its criticism (Acker & Warner, 2020; Murphy et al., 2022, p. 351). They also reveal that a broad sampling of the American population, in addition to a sample of  $n = 39$  medical websites, all endorse the chemical imbalance theory (Demasi & Göttsche, 2020; Murphy et al., 2022, p. 351; Pescosolido et al., 2010). This to conclude—secular mental health practice(s) and various theories, even if some have become speculative or disproven in validity, remain heavily influential. This noted, relevancy of the construct of influence will be explored below.

The second conclusion this article asserts is related to the etymology of the chemical imbalance theory. Murphy et al. (2022) plainly outline that the chemical imbalance theory finds its origin in a biomedical explanation of being. And, as has been established previously in this



research, biomedical etymology finds a home in the secular humanistic understanding of personhood (Berger, 2016; Bonino & Hanna, 2017; Saad et al., 2017, pp. 1–2).

These studies and their conclusions are noteworthy, in and of themselves, as they validate data that reveals a long-standing influence of secular humanism on history, modern practice, and modern pastoral ministry. However, this is even more so illuminating as Holleman and Chaves (2023) will demonstrate in a subsequent section that a statistically significant high volume of religious leaders retain belief that the chemical imbalance theory remains viable despite ample research revealing it may, best case scenario, as encompassing the accurate as once thought, or worst-case scenario, a myth as Pies asserted (Holleman & Chaves, 2023; Pies, 2019). This, subsequently, generates questions regarding how informed the average pastor and/or pastoral counselor is on these matters and if knowledge thereof would impact their people-helping approaches.

### **The Secularization of Pastoral Counseling**

While this was touched on in a previous section, it is imperative that a study of this type demonstrate the poverty of recognition related to the research question(s) regarding the recognized impact of secular humanism on pastoral counseling. As will be outlined, humanistic diagnostic criteria and its related therapeutic disciplines are considered to be intrinsic to modern culture. So much so that various journals that publish scholarly research on pastoral care and counseling either treat diagnostic constructs as if they simply *are*, or, fully embrace them within the realm of Christian practice. These scholarly submissions create illumination of the aforementioned research gap related to the awareness of the influence of humanism on the part of pastoral care and counseling and validate the need for this study.

As such, while this literature review has focused and will continue to rely heavily on modern research, it is significant to see the impact of humanism on pastoral counseling over a longer spectrum of time. To that end, in their work examining pastoral care in a historical perspective, Clebsch and Jaekle (1964) emphasize the essentiality of pastoral care practitioners being open to and utilizing psychological theories as essential to the four pastoral functions of healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling. More startlingly, they assert that pastors should maintain a sense of openness to insights of even conflicting psychological theories to their faith system, as humankind's capacity for trouble is "complex, intricate, and inventive" (Clebsch & Jaekle, 1964, p. 79). While it is outside of the scope of this research to address this in detail, in short, the writers are asserting that a Christian faith system may be incomplete, and human distress is more inventive than biblical realities may be capable of discerning. These statements cannot be understated, given that a later version of the work printed in 1994 noted the audience the authors celebrated as having reached for 30 years were those in seminaries and divinity schools (Clebsch & Jaekle, 1994, p. v). Further yet, in this same section, they endorsed their utilization of writings on personhood that were developed during the Enlightenment, in addition to that of Nietzsche and Freud (Clebsch & Jaekle, 1994, p. vii). Knowing this, it can be plainly seen that humanism, specifically, anti-God Enlightenment philosophy, has been specifically influential on the pastorate and pastoral care for nearly six decades to the time of this research composition.

Similarly, pastor and seminary professor Howard Clinebell, Jr. (1966), in his formative work on basic types of pastoral counseling, wrote of pastoral counseling's need to be revised in light of (then) modern research. He emphasized the significance of (then) new and relevant investments in pastoral practice that resulted of reality therapy and existential psychotherapy,

each being rooted in humanism and the genetic theory of causation, going so far as to note the rich influence of humanists William Glasser and Rollo May (Clinebell, 1966, p. 22; Lyngstad, 2022; Ratner, 2019; Schneider, 2010). Clinebell, Jr. (1966) though, does not provide any insight regarding his understanding of the humanistic or anti-God origins of the theories he positively regards and/or proposes. All the same, this writing creates further corroboration of a decade's long history regarding the influence of humanism on the pastorate and seminary education.

Continuing, more modernly, the purpose and context of Breed's (2021) article is a call for people-helpers to live as servants (*diakonos*) of Christ in providing pastoral care to a narcissistically entitled individual (Breed, 2021, p. 1). To do this, the writer links the modern mentality of entitlement to the diagnostic construct of narcissism. Upon establishing this purpose, the work provides an outlook by which pastoral counseling can address narcissism and entitlement (Breed, 2021). Relevantly, the construction of the article is crucial. At each point of description, the author emphasizes the diagnostic criteria of narcissism, as well as the concept of entitlement, *first* throughout the work. It repeatedly led with the secular *DSM* criteria as its foundational element(s) (Breed, 2021, pp. 1–2).

Throughout the remaining pages, pastoral counseling concepts, their approach(s) and methodology(s), as well as theology, are well represented. However, they are scaffolding built on secular criterion first. Furthermore, this is treated like a non-issue by the Breed, which is significant as it: (1) highlights the research gap and this researcher's hypothesis toward a fundamental lack of awareness on the part of the writer to the humanistic nature of the *DSM* criteria, and (2) what appears as an unconscious import to diagnostic criteria *before* biblical criteria. Secondly, further punctuating the aforementioned reality regarding an unawareness of pastoral counselors being humanized, is the absence of the concepts of *sin* or *repentance* from

the work. While it is outside the scope of this discourse to deviate in detail, both entitlement and narcissism find their *biblical* home in the sin of pride, with biblical solutions being related to repentance (Asher & Asher, 2014, p. 122). While other pastoral techniques are well-represented, the core of pastoral care and *biblical* change for entitlement and narcissism are not represented in the article (Breed, 2021). Given these realities, it should be a concern to the modern pastor or pastoral counselor that they are increasingly unknowingly secularized should they rely on scholarship of this type.

Revealingly and startlingly, Holleman and Chaves's (2023) bleeding-edge study with national representation from an  $N = 890$  sample of clergy demonstrates that the vast majority of clergy in the United States *overwhelmingly* believe in a medical understanding, causation, and treatment for depression. The study further notes that most clergy support and endorse medical causation, the chemical imbalance theory, and genetic causation (Holleman & Chaves, 2023, pp. 270–273). This is inherently problematic from the outset as Berger (2016) and Bonino and Hanna (2017) note that the medical causation and the brain-dysfunction theory of personhood find their origin in secular humanism (Berger, 2016, p. 63). This is also to say nothing of the ongoing collection of data being demonstrated against the validity of the chemical imbalance theory (Berger, 2019; Murphy et al., 2022; Pies, 2011, 2019).

Additionally, the study demonstrates a statistically significant lower number of clergies believe in faith-oriented causes for mental distress (Holleman & Chaves, 2023, pp. 270–273). The article goes so far as to note that the surveyed clergy believe that a religious understanding of depression is supplemental to the medical view (Holleman and Chaves, 2023, p. 273). And, while it is outside of the scope of this discourse to address this in detail, the very fact that that it shows clergy consider biblical considerations as secondary, not primary, is a definitive revelation

to a categorical change in thought and approach in real time, to the time of this literature review is being composed. This article provides data revealing how far pastoral counseling has slipped from a primarily biblically oriented perspective, to the humanistic perspectives that lay at the foundation of modern practice and mental health constructs (whether knowingly or unknowingly).

Building on this, Fitzgerald and Vaidyanathan's (2023) research complement this recent scholarship exploring clergy, faith systems, and these entities knowledge and utilization of the modern mental health system(s). Their goal was to discern what faith communities, including evangelical Christianity, would benefit from with regard to knowledge, partnership with, and utilization of the modern mental health system in their ministry contexts. In investigating these questions, Fitzgerald and Vaidyanathan assert, in no uncertain terms, that research has demonstrated two realities: first, that Christian clergy are routinely confronted with mental health issues, and second, that faith-leaders may not have the necessary mental health literacy to effectively help their congregants (Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023, p. 477). This research revealed four themes: (1) the desire for education on mental health system(s) on the part of clergy to best utilize it, and for mental health practitioners to learn more regarding more helpful religious outcomes (i.e. sanctification); (2) a desire for relationship building between the modern mental health system(s) and religious initiatives, such as for cross-pollination and cross referral; (3) external factors, such as reform of the justice system, economic considerations, and the addressing of stigma in both the church and the mental health community on matters of personal distress, and (4) dismissal—with some, though a “few” per the article, asserting that neither field needs the another and should remain fully autonomous (Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023, pp. 480–482).

One of the conclusions of this  $N = 67$  case-volume research is that only “a few” clergy believed that there should be a complete distinction from the mental health system and religious investments (Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023, p. 482). Meaning: most clergy in this study believe that use of modern mental health constructs, education on these subjects, and relationships between faith structures and the mental health social structures is advantageous in pastoral work, which, as established throughout this study on both history and modern practice, is heavily influenced by humanism. The study goes so far as to validate this as part of its discussion and conclusion (Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023, p. 484). As such, this data acts as corroboration to the reality that pastors are ill-educated on the humanistic influence of the modern mental health system, to a point where a researched majority desire partnership with it in some form.

Only slightly less recent, but equally helpful, Vaidyanathan et al. (2021) examine data from interviews with faith leaders on their perceptions of the modern mental health profession. The sample includes evangelical Christianity and a subset thereof within the research sample (Vaidyanathan et al., 2021, p. 948). There were a number of notable conclusions. First, the data asserts that pastoral counselors (specifically) engage in a higher degree of trust with the modern mental health system when they have a level of awareness of how it functions and what it provides (note: its etymology was not a considered factor in the research; Vaidyanathan et al., 2021, p. 948). Second, the interviews revealed that many pastoral clergy are prone to trusting therapists that are *spiritual*, and as a result, stated that they trust the therapists’ spiritual-moral core to drive a therapeutic relationship toward correct *spiritual* outcomes in addition to therapeutic ones (Vaidyanathan et al., 2021, p. 952).

Conclusions, based on the aforementioned assertions, include the following. First, education for pastoral counselors on the modern mental health system often results in trusting it more. Most, if not all, of this education is related to resource utilization and referral. As has been demonstrated throughout this research body, etymology and theory are often considered forgone conclusions and not addressed. Second, this research demonstrated that pastoral clergy are prone to trust a counselor who is *spiritual*, and that it is *presumed* that their spirituality takes a prominent place in their practice. Their considerations in no way reflect an intended concern as to the clinicians preferred psychological and psychiatric influences or methods.

As has been outlined prior, this is not to make the case this partnership is wholly unwise. However, this research highlights a data-driven reality that pastoral counselors pay little mind to the influence of humanism they allow on themselves, those they counsel, or those they refer to community practitioners.

While an older study, very relatedly, Stanford and Philpott (2011) accomplished research regarding the knowledge base of senior pastors ( $N = 1207$ ) and their awareness of the modern mental health system as well. It additionally sought to discern the participants' knowledge and perception of the causes and treatment methods for mental illness. In their study, they anonymously surveyed senior pastors in the Baptist General Convention of Texas via online questionnaire (Stanford & Philpott, 2011). Their study revealed several realities from the 168 responses. First, it outlined an overall lack of collaboration between clergy and mental health professionals, noting that neither profession trusted the other. Second, the surveyed senior pastors embraced biological causes and treatments for mental illness as important and effective. Third, there were divergent opinions amongst the participants, regarding which contributions to mental disorders were psychosocial or spiritual. However, many perceived biological causes as

the most important. Fourthly, the participants stated they referred their congregants to mental health professionals with whom they shared and overlapping and common value system consistent with research findings from other studies—specifically those known to be Christians (Stanford and Philpott, 2011, p. 281, 287–288; Vaidyanathan et al., 2021, p. 952).

Each of these are significant data points, all of which contribute to the need for *this* study. This is the case as, as with other studies, there was no explanation for etymology of mental health constructs in any way. It is a significant reality given that such a large volume of senior pastors believed in not just biological causes, but treatment models—many of which find their origin in humanism (Bergen, 2015, p. 159; Berger, 2016; Hippus & Müller, 2008, pp. 3–4). This acts as additional corroboration to draw attention to the reality of humanistic infiltration of pastoral counseling to that end, and, given the age of this study, it highlights the reality that this gap has existed for some time.

Building on this further is a study conducted by Kitchen Andren and McKibbin (2018). For their study, they researched rural Christian pastors ( $N = 101$ ) via an internet-based survey on how they assisted older congregants who were struggling with depression. Much content was invested in explaining the range of depressive symptoms related to the age of congregants with depression and addressing the likelihood of a referral from a pastor as a result. The noteworthy data for the present study came from the results (Kitchen Andren & McKibbin, 2018). The results demonstrated that of the 101 respondents to the survey, that over two thirds (69%) of the sample believed in an organic etiology of mental illness. As a result, the likelihood of a referral to a community practitioner was nearly just as high, particularly as the depressive symptoms were toward the more severe end of the depressive symptom spectrum (Kitchen Andren & McKibbin, 2018, p. 110). Furthermore, the Christian pastors represented in the study indicated a



general willingness, if not a desire, to collaborate with mental health providers. The survey, like others in this present study, reveals that community practitioners may benefit from education and training on how to collaborate and develop professional rapport with clergy (Kinghorn, 2016, pp. 107, 109; Kitchen Andren & McKibbin, 2018, p. 113).

As such, this study adds to the growing body of statistically significant research that demonstrates that pastoral education on the etymology of mental health constructs is sorely lacking as, once again, the pastors represented in the study believe in the medical model of mental illness, which this study has revealed to be secular humanist in origin and nature (Bergen, 2015, p. 159; Berger, 2016; Hippus & Müller, 2008, pp. 3–4). Furthermore, the study itself did not describe the origin of mental health constructs, nor did it touch on how the pastors come to their opinions on the subject. To that end, this acts as helpful validation to the purpose of this research, namely, that pastors and/or pastoral counselors are not aware of the humanistic origins of the modern mental health system. And, as a result, they endorse and utilize humanistic systems and resources, unaware.

Transitioning focus, in additional recent scholarship, authors Papaleontiou-Louca and Kitromilides (2023) pay respect to the fields of psychology and theology, validating the applicability of both fields for the expressed purpose of helping humankind. However, when pushed to the specific distinctives of useful application, psychology was described as having the framework and interventions to assist individuals in managing life difficulties to improve an individual's life. Theology, however, was noted to not have these tools, and instead be primarily concerned with the meaning of life to find personal meaning (Papaleontiou-Louca & Kitromilides, 2023, p. 126).

As the work progressed, Papaleontiou-Louca and Kitromilides (2023) state that there is need for a relationship between psychology and theology, and practitioners should no longer think of this as a *versus* match, as opposed to a both/and. Again, though, when outlining the specific realities of how this takes shape, the authors note that psychology without theology would likely lead to spiritual death. However, theology without psychology could result in a patient becoming fanatical, or hardened to the truths of psychology (Papaleontiou-Louca & Kitromilides, 2023, p. 128). The import was always placed on the secular humanistic categories as primary. This should be concerning to the pastor or pastoral counselor, as there is a vast difference in consequence for this perspective when one consider that the Bible describes humankind's chief need as salvation from sin (*English Standard Version Bible*, 2008/2011, Luke 19:10).

This article (2023), while certainly charitable to the involvement of theology in modern practice, boasts the insufficiency of the theological nature of pastoral counseling. It overtly and repeatedly proposes the need for the components and interventions of modern practice, many of which find their theoretical framework in humanism (Papaleontiou-Louca & Kitromilides, 2023). This, thus, adds bleeding-edge credence to the existence of the research gap and the need for study regarding the subtle secularization of pastoral counseling, and a pastoral awareness thereof.

Further yet, published under the overall periodical title of *Pastoral Psychology*, Schuhmann and Damen (2018) make a number of important assertions in their writing. First, they suggest a definitive reality that pastoral care is no longer owned by a Christian or Jewish tradition, but is owned and employed by many faith systems (Schuhmann & Damen, 2018, pp. 405–406). Second, they suggest that *pastoral care* is no longer relevant language, and should be redefined as *spiritual care*, as spiritual care is employed by both nonreligious and religious

practitioners, creating an encompassing term that any practitioner can fall under. In doing this though, the writers further outline how spiritual care is yet unremarkable and in need of the developing of specific language for the approach to be more convincing and distinctive (Schuhmann & Damen, 2018, p. 405). Thirdly, morality is altered from a God-concept, to *the good*. This narrative change, the authors argue, will better root spiritual care and counsel in the humanistic construct of transcendence, which will better serve humankind as it engages morality (Schuhmann and Damen, 2018, p. 407).

This article attempts to utilize pastoral psychology as a concept, but ultimately defangs the sting of morality and transitions pastoral counseling away from a position of inherent authority, being based on a biblical moral code and the character, if not the very name of God, and re-focuses it to have a full foundation of humanistic self-actualization constructs (thus further validating the need to examine this research question; Schuhmann & Damen, 2018).

Others yet illustrate the research gap under consideration. Consider the works of Klaasen as he writes on pastoral counseling (Klaasen, 2018a, 2018b). While this article is specifically addressing violence from the perspective of pastoral counseling, Klaasen (2018a) demonstrates a bias toward various aspects of humanism in pastoral practice. In this initial work, it is revealed in two forms. First, his utilization of the narrative approach, and second, his overt written statements regarding using feminist theology as his theological framework for this article (Klaasen, 2018a, p. 1).

Noting this is not to criticize the article-writer for their contributions within the work, let alone malign the narrative approach as inherently anti-God given its application. Instead, it highlights that pastoral counseling has been so influenced by humanism that it either cannot recognize the reality of the influence in these subtle ways or does not realize the sheer volume of

overtly anti-God thought that has influenced culture, and through it, pastoral counseling. For example, the theoretical framework for narrative inquiry finds its origin in American pragmatism, an overtly humanistic etymology (Lal et al., 2012). Feminist theology finds its origin in feminist theory, which is an evolved execution of grounded theory, which is also humanistic in origin as well (Bryant & Charmaz, 2012).

A second submission by Klaasen (2018b) that is worthy of consideration is a meta discussion related to pastoral care in shifting cultures. Within this larger discussion, he outlines the pastoral counseling models of major demographics areas, including the two approaches in the United States and Britain (Klaasen, 2018b, pp. 1–3). He describes the first approach to pastoral care as being multidisciplinary, including various forms of sciences (modern psychology and psychiatry) to address complex issues (Klaasen, 2018b, pp. 2). This is the more subtle of the two. The second approach Klaasen (2018b) describes is more expressly humanist. He outlines a clear shift from theology to personal expression and experience, and references contributing factors, such as feminist theology, queer theology, black theology, among others, with regard to a spiritual paradigm shift toward the experiential (Klaasen, 2018b, pp. 3).

The relevancy and significance of this cannot be understated for the purpose of this present research. The primary point of note is that Klaasen (2018a, 2018b) does not describe a model of pastoral care in either submission that does not involve humanistically informed sciences. His categories simply speak to the *degree* of humanist infiltration (Klaasen, 2018a, 2018b). As such, this acts as additional validation of the research hypothesis and research gap that pastoral care has been infiltrated by humanistic thought to a degree that it does not fathom, and to a point where some may not even consider the profession as even existing well without a form of humanism at its foundation.

A particularly interesting point of additional research comes from the *Journal of Pastoral Care and Counseling*. In it, Seitler (2014) proposes a new dialectic approach to considering personhood and human circumstances based on humanism, respect, empathy, and understanding. Divergent from this, but of secondary further note, throughout the article the writer is personally critical of diagnostic criterion and goes so far as to note others who are as well, including *DSM-IV* chairperson Allen Francis, who is cited as being critical of the *DSM-5*. This is provided as corroborating evidence of both criticism of diagnostic criterion, as well as to validate Seitler's overall point of a need for a new approach to diagnostic work (Seitler, 2014, p. 6). He goes so far as to call *DSM* psychiatric diagnoses as grossly inaccurate and highly subjective (Seitler, 2014, pp. 4–5). And, though without naming any, he goes so far as to be critical of spiritual diagnostic models as well (Seitler, 2014, p. 8).

Further yet, Seitler (2014) asserts that the mind evolved over the course of millennia—a concept that some Christians adhere to, but is certainly well-believed within humanism (p. 2). As such, this research, provided in a pastoral counseling and care oriented journal, is evidence to the research gap that pastoral counseling and care have been influenced, if not are saturated, in humanism to a degree that it is ignorant (without knowledge) of.

Adding helpful insight, Leins (2021) examines the history of pastoral care and its relationship to and with modern psychotherapy. The article's overall context is related to how pastoral counseling has changed over time, addressing what it was prior to evidence based practiced. Leins (2021) asserts within his writing, though, that pastoral care has been reduced to a spiritualized form of modern, humanized psychotherapy (p. 344). He, drawing from Dykstra (2005), notes that evidence-based practices culturally emerging resulted in classic pastoral care as becoming no longer relevant in a more advanced society (Leins, 2021, p. 353). Furthermore,

he unpacks how pastoral counseling has become sidelined, only adequately addressing concepts such as human suffering and spiritual sanctification (tangentially making this divergent from overall therapeutic practice; Leins, 2021, pp. 353–354). The work closes challenging pastoral counselors to better orient themselves to current evidence-based practices, which will result in a better reduction of suffering. He wrote that to do anything less than this is not actually pastoral (Leins, 2021, p. 355).

As such, the validity of these assertions is not under consideration within this research project. Instead, it is worth objectively noting that the author makes the case that evidence based practices are essential within the realm of pastoral counseling for it to, in fact, be pastoral at all. He pays no mind to the etymology of these evidenced based practices, and thus, does not address their potentially humanistic origins and how to navigate the introduced tensions for the pastor. This, then, adds precise corroboration to the growing body of research that pastoral counseling has been subtly influenced by humanism, overtime, and many are unlikely to perceive its general influence. If anything, this, and the aforementioned submissions, would posit humanistic influence as beneficial, even if that is not expressly understood due to a lack of knowledge of the influence. In addition to this, it offers opportunity to develop interview questions to determine if modern pastors or pastoral counselors are aware of the conclusions this article asserts, and navigate the significance thereof.

Transitioning, Kinghorn (2016) examines five diverse American Christian approaches to mental health and mental illness: pastoral care and counseling, biblical counseling, integrationism, Christian psychology, and the work of the Institute for Psychological Sciences. The context for writing is for the purpose of creating awareness for mental health practitioners to better engage with religious practitioners to create awareness of various practice-approaches and

interventions (Kinghorn, 2016, pp. 107, 109). It is relevant for the purposes of this research, however, as it seeks to firmly entrench the practice of pastoral counseling in the roots of psychology and psychiatry, highlighting its notable influencers as being known humanists, Carl Rogers (who, as noted, had a notable influence on Christian counselor Larry Crabb) and Rollo May. Furthermore, Kinghorn specifically states that historical pastoral counselors and historical clergy were sympathetic to psychology and psychiatry, pursuing cooperation since as early as the mid-20th century. He further asserts that best practices today result in these fields working together, which best serves humankind; that each discipline should not rule the others out but collaborate and grow together (Kinghorn, 2016, pp. 107, 109).

Kinghorn (2016) offers a note toward his bias as well, exhorting therapeutically trained counselors from all fields to not ignore faith-based exclusive systems of people-helping. He notes to do this is a mistake as fields like biblical counseling (a largely faith-exclusive system) capture the fears, longings, and convictions of a significant volume of the American population, many of whom suffer from mental illness (Kinghorn, 2016, p. 109). There is a clear note to be charitable to what he subtly deems as lower-tiered therapeutic approaches.

Kinghorn (2016) additionally credits the pastoral counseling movement as having spawned the *Journal of Pastoral Counseling and Care*—an (aforementioned) peer review journal. This is noteworthy as this research study has repeatedly outlined that journal as publishing articles related to pastoral counseling that are influenced by humanism (Kinghorn, 2016, p. 108).

As such, this adds to the growing body of research evidence that pastoral counseling has been increasingly influenced by humanism for many years. It also creates opportunity, through research-informed interview questions (based on scholarship like this article), to ask if pastors

are aware of the field of pastoral counseling's humanistic influences, such as known humanists Carl Rogers and Rollo May, whether they use journals such as the *Journal of Pastoral Counseling* and *Care*, among other significant questions for this study to determine the validity of the research hypothesis.

Langer (2019) then, in his writing, investigates the relationship between biblical, general revelation and science, outlining the tension that exists between Scripture and general revelation (specifically related to social sciences). He goes so far as to discuss *genetic* evolution as being plausible and draws on the usefulness of Freudian systems (concluding with guidelines to integrate the two; Langer, 2019, p. 441). The article goes further to note that the secular slide of pastoral counseling into use of general revelation gave birth to the modern biblical counseling (a faith-only system) as a response (Langer, 2019, pp. 445–446). Given this research and its conclusions, the article provides helpful insight, in that it acknowledges the subtle slide of the pastorate and pastoral counseling into humanism to a degree by which it does not recognize how influenced by humanism it has become (to the point of spawning a new faith-exclusive version of counseling).

Other scholarship (via Lassair) (2020) then draws on the uniqueness of pastoral counseling, pastoral psychotherapy, and spiritual care as a part of overall care for people. Lassair draws on ample research to demonstrate the efficacy of pastoral counseling, particularly Pargament (2011) (Pargament, 2011). They also recommend a necessity within pastoral counseling for overall integrative medical care (psychiatric and psychological needs) to best meet a clients' needs (Lassair, 2020, p. 22).

Lassair (2020) proceeds to advocate for evangelical Christianity as an overall framework, including the value and inclusion of trinitarian theology (Lassair, 2020, p. 24). However, as the



details of the essentiality of pastoral care and its continuing education unfolds, he advocates that pastoral care continuing professional education and professional and continuing education call for openness, awareness, and to be built on wisdom. These words sound wise. However, Lassair (2020) advocates for pastoral care to be encompassing beyond evangelical Christianity, and informed if not educated by, at the least, a universal religious awareness, in addition to some education of humanistic systems of psychology and psychiatry (p. 28).

This article is relevant to this research, in that it both knowingly (in the form of rightly advocating for comprehensive training) and unknowingly (much humanism stands at the foundations of his recommendations) advocates that pastors and pastoral counselors know and utilize systems that are humanistic in nature, thus creating more subtle infiltration of these concepts into pastoral care.

Bernau (2021) also adds considerable value to this literature review. He asserts that the language, applications, and outcomes of pastoral care and/or clergy care have significantly changed over the course of the last hundred years. He outlines where once clergy had a *monopoly* on the helping industry, this has been increasingly diminished by the rise of neurology, psychology, and psychiatry (Bernau, 2021, p. 362). Bernau (2021) outlines that this has further resulted in a specific shift in language within the realm of pastoral counseling to reflect the influence of the aforementioned social and medical sciences. Further yet, with the rise of these fields, he notes that with the subsequent rise of evidence-based practice, pastoral counseling has significantly shifted its language and outcomes over the course of the last 70 years specifically (Bernau, 2021, p. 362).

This article acts as evidence of the slow and steady influence of humanism and the sciences (in addition to their evidence-based outcomes) on the pastorate and pastoral counseling

in a specific and historical way. It is written with a tone that these changes have been helpful to pastoral counseling, and not detracting from it, despite the (unknown) humanist influence.

Sheppard (2016) contributes as well, via a review of literature by Maynard and Snodgrass (2015) endeavoring to answer the question: *what is pastoral counseling*. They outline the subject as being rooted in theological reflection, and emphasize graduate-level education in religion, spirituality, and theology (Sheppard, 2016, p. 61). They continue by outlining the complexities related to third-party payment, various credentialing bodies, ethical standards, and licensing related to pastoral counseling (Sheppard, 2016, p. 62). Later yet, the article touches upon spiritually integrated psychotherapy, mindfulness therapy(s), and other treatment models that spring from these methodologies as helpful for spiritual diversity (Sheppard, 2016, p. 65). As is noted elsewhere in this research, spiritually integrated psychotherapy is humanist and universalist in origin (Pargament, 2011). Additionally, mindfulness can be traced back to humanism as well (Stryd, 2022).

As such, this review acts as additional information that validates a steady infusion of humanism into pastoral counseling in both the aforementioned presented data, in addition to its recommendations toward partnership with other integrated medical systems (like psychiatry) (Sheppard, 2016, p. 65).

In another helpful work, Ağılkaya-Şahin (2018) describes pastoral psychology and care and positive psychology as near siblings (pp. 183–184). He states that they share similar features and outcomes as they desire to bolster common virtues, such as forgiveness, hope, and love (Ağılkaya-Şahin, 2018, pp. 190–195). While there are many noteworthy insights from this article, the primary assertion the writer makes is that historical pastoral care's most favored approaches stem from humanistic psychology (Ağılkaya-Şahin, 2018, pp. 186). He subsequently

highlights that Carl Rogers, Karen Menninger, and Karen Horney were highly influential on pastoral care practices, including contributing to pastoral care and counseling journals, which further corroborates previous research demonstrated in this literature review pertaining to influential Christian counselor Larry Crabb and his humanistically influenced approaches—crediting of individuals like Rogers (Ağılkaya-Şahin, 2018, p. 186; Crabb, 1975, pp. 34–35).

This creates additional corroboration and linkage between historical pastoral care and a heavy humanistic influence, which pastors and pastoral counselors require knowledge of to ensure they are engaging in faithful biblical practice.

Focht (2020), in the *Pastoral Psychology* journal, attempts to generate a model of pastoral counseling that incorporates trauma theory into the biblical story of Joseph, connecting it to the stages of recovery from trauma. This is not inherently unthinkable, and the model offers many positive outcomes. Yet, the article fails to, in any way, acknowledge the origin of trauma theory. Trauma theory finds its origin in psychoanalytic theory, which was established by Freud (Freud, 1925; Ringel & Brandwell, 2011). Bloom (2019) takes its origins a step further and writes, in no uncertain terms, that trauma theory finds its origins in humanist evolution.

Thus, this is a glaring instance where an inherently secular humanistic model has been brought to bear in a pastoral approach with no effort made to acknowledge the origin of the theory that created the model. This begs the question this writers' study is intending to answer: did the author know? The fact that this question must even be posed corroborates the need for this research, to say nothing of the reality that the writer of this article paid no attention to the humanist construct it imposed on a biblical context.

### Summary

Having considered this eclectic, but consistent, body of work, a few realities evidence themselves. First, anti-God secular humanism has been at the core of psychological and psychiatric practice since the Enlightenment, resulting in almost 250 years of thought, investment, and scholarship being committed to cementing its place in modern people-helping systems. Second, secular humanism has been so influential in society as a defining framework that it naturally influences people-helping systems to a degree where it appears difficult to separate the two in a post-Enlightenment culture. Thirdly, of the elaborate and eclectic body of research represented in this literature review, it can be definitively demonstrated that there is almost no scholarship that address the research gap regarding whether pastors and/or pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of humanism, based on such realities as the cultural prevalence of Enlightenment humanism and the prevalence of the humanistically-originated *DSM* criteria, in their counseling approaches and applications. What, then, needs to be determined from this research is whether or not pastors and/or pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of humanism on, and in their counseling, and if awareness of humanistic influence on pastoral counseling and care would prompt pastors toward a shift in method, approach, and referral to minimize the impact of humanism in their pastoral ministry. In the subsequent chapter, this study will endeavor to answer these questions via the use of eight to 10 semistructured case study interviews and a tangential survey to a wider audience, to determine the level of awareness of pastors and/or pastoral counselors regarding the influence of humanism, and how that knowledge may inform their practice moving forward.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODS**

### **Overview**

The Enlightenment of the late 1700s resulted in society drifting away from a religious etymological understanding toward a humanistic and materialistic understanding of its own existence (Brown, 2017; Jovanovic, 2021). Due to the pervasive nature of the resulting influence of humanism, many aspects of modern life have been affected by this system of thought. People helping systems, including pastoral counseling, are not exempt from this. As such, the purpose of this study was to determine if modern pastors and/or pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of secular humanism in or on their counseling approaches and applications. Pastors and/or pastoral counselors of various ages and stages of their careers were individually assessed via a semistructured interview or complementary mixed methods intra-paradigm online survey for the purpose of comparative analysis of the case studies. The responses were then coded to identify emerging themes for the purpose of answering the research questions, generating recommendations for future research, and providing implications for ensuring pastoral counseling is limited in being affected by humanism.

### **Design**

The design for this research is a mixed methods intra-paradigm qualitative study, using two qualitative forms of research: the collective case study research method and an online qualitative survey method (for comparative analysis). The mixed methods intra-paradigm study design offers the opportunity to increase validity and eliminate error (Greckhamer et al., 2018; Lucas & Szatrowski, 2014). Furthermore, recent scholarship by O'Reilly et al. (2021) has demonstrated the efficacy of intra-paradigm research, noting that it is complementary—revealing

different facets of a phenomenon being studied, and enabling deeper, richer, and more comprehensive insight into a subject of study.

Regarding the semistructured interview case study design, it allows for a single issue or concern to be investigated, with the inquirer utilizing multiple cases to demonstrate different perspectives or understandings on or of the issue or concern being researched. The strength of this research design is that a detailed investigation can take place on a single concept with precise focus (the impact of humanism on pastoral counseling), as opposed to subjective experience represented in a phenomenological study, where subjective experiences, as opposed to a shared reality for multiple individuals, can be thoroughly explored. Additionally, it allows for replication of procedures (via the interview questionnaire), which contribute to the identification of patterns, consistencies, or potential relationships to evidence themselves via the independent cases' understanding of the subject of the research questions (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2009). The data collection method within this design was a semistructured interview. The interview was focused on a comprehensive, predetermined set of research-interview questions but left room for open-ended, follow-up questions and dialogue for a more detailed understanding of the subject under research (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). This research design was appropriate as the collective case study method allows for a wide range of age(s), experience, and education to be represented as a part of the sample of interviewees all conducted surrounding a shared phenomenon (focusing on the impact of the phenomenon itself, not the subjective experience of the case study participants).

The comparative analysis via an online qualitative survey had a number of strengths. As one of the oldest and most reliable forms of data collection, surveys are commonplace and wisely used (Glock, 1967; Heppner et al., 2016). Generally, the aim of survey use is to discern the

frequency and/or nature of a phenomenon. They are a self-reporting tool for identifying facts, opinions, attitudes, and behaviors related to the phenomenon being studied. This allows for further identification of patterns, potential causes, and issues that affect a population (Heppner et al., 2016). Heppner et al. (2016) specifically note that it is helpful for testing conjectures as well, making it high complementary for comparative analysis within an intra-paradigm study (p. 289). The online qualitative survey was focused on a revised version of the comprehensive, predetermined set of research interview questions, modifying them to be effective for the broad application of a survey. This allowed for comparative analysis of the case study interviews, as well as fit within the existing coding framework to increase the validity of this research study (Behr, 2015).

These, together, allowed themes to be subsequently identified and coded in a way that comprehensively suggested future research opportunities and academic development (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

### **Research Questions**

**RQ1:** How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of the modern mental health system?

**RQ2:** How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of modern mental health system tools, such as the *DSM*, its codes, and contributing theories?

**RQ3:** Does the average pastor or pastoral counselor see any areas of their practice or referral making that is currently influenced or informed by humanism?

**RQ4:** How would the average pastor or pastoral counselor: counsel or refer to a licensed professional differently, if at all, if they were acutely aware of and trained on the contributing (secular humanist) etymology(s) to the modern mental health system and its tools and theories?

### **Participants**

This study and these participants (pastors and/or pastoral counselors) are significant. As outlined in other sections of this research, the etymological framework of humanism has infiltrated many aspects of modern society, including pastoral counseling. This is demonstrated in the research of Stanford and Philpott (2011), which outlined that a significant sample of clergy adhere to the secular humanist assertion of a biological cause for mental illness; the research of Vaidyanathan et al. (2021), who outlined that many pastors are prone to trust the modern mental health system as long as those they refer to are *spiritual*, as spiritualism generates the presumption of like-mindedness without actually being aware of a clinician's theological foundation; the further research of Fitzgerald and Vaidyanathan (2023), which revealed a belief on the part of many clergy that they lack the necessary mental health literacy to effectively help their congregants (noting the essentiality of the modern mental health system as a primary helping tool despite its humanistic foundation), and the research of Holleman and Chaves (2023), which reveal that the vast majority of clergy in the United States overwhelmingly believe in the secular humanist theory of medical understanding, causation, and treatment for mental illness, additionally noting most clergy support genetic causation (Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023; Holleman & Chaves, 2023; Stanford & Philpott, 2011; Vaidyanathan et al., 2021). To that end, research has shown pastoral counseling has been heavily influenced by humanistic theory to a point where it is accepted in *these* studies as both essential and fact. Furthermore, there is little to no research that has been conducted regarding how aware of humanistic influence on



counseling pastors or pastoral counselors even are, as much as it being focused on the need for literacy and greater overlap between the pastorate and the modern mental health system. As such, research on the influence of humanism on pastoral counseling is essential for the purposes of best serving the people of God with Godly wisdom and tools.

To that end, participants for this study were *average* local church pastors and/or those who serve as pastoral counselors as their specific vocation (for example, a staff counselor at a Christian rescue mission or non-profit counseling ministry). The use of the term *average* here and in the research questions denotes the reality that in some churches, there is a greater sense of governance and role differentiation with regard to the title “pastor.” Yet, as ample scholarship outlines, the *average* pastor’s role includes responsibilities associated with counseling, shepherding, and discipling per biblical mandate. As such, in this study, the use of the term *average* is specific to the most common usage of the term, which involves counseling, shepherding, and discipling being associated with the role of pastor (Hindson & Dobson, 1983; Johnson, 2021; Prince, 2013). Accordingly, *average* pastors who have counseling responsibilities and pastoral counselors are the appropriate sample participants for this study for two reasons. First, as noted, pastoral counsel and care has long been considered intrinsic to the role of a pastor (DeYoung & Quinn, 2014; Oden, 1987a, 1987b; Pierre & Reju, 2015; Powlison, 2007; Reju, 2015). This consideration spans generations of thought and scholarship from as far back as the Apostle Paul, can be seen in the writing of Pope Gregory the Great, and extends to modern day writers (Oden, 1987a, 1987b; Powlison, 2007; Shaw, 2014; St. Gregory, 590/1978). Second, as the influence of humanism specifically on pastoral care and counseling is the subject of this research, and pastors and pastoral counselors are the ones providing pastoral care, pastors and pastoral counselors would thus be both the most appropriate participants in the study.

### Setting

Due to the essentiality of an eclectic sample ranging in age, experience, and education for the greatest degree of understanding and ability to answer the research questions, it is possible to attain national case involvement not limited to this researcher's sociodemographic area for the case study research interviews. As such, the setting was a confidential Zoom meeting room for maximal availability to all participants, confidentiality for all participants, the ability to record each session for ethics and analysis, and the ease of opportunity for transcription and subsequent coding. Furthermore, recent scholarship has demonstrated Zoom is suitable and useful for qualitative research, specifically the case study design (Archibald et al., 2019). The cases, who were selected based on a range of age, experience, and education, provided information regarding the current state of pastoral counseling and a sampling of the fields' awareness of the influence of humanism on pastoral counseling. Further, as noted, pastors were selected based on their specific engagement in pastoral counseling. In a typical church structure, this is most often a single pastor for a congregation or an associate pastor who is more focused on shepherding than preaching.

To that end, recruitment of participants occurred in the following ways: (1) a personal invitation via email or phone call from this researcher were sent to 15 pastors and/or pastoral counselors in their localized demographic where there is no conflict of interest inviting them to participate in the study; (2) a personal invitation via email or phone call from this researcher were sent to five pastors and/or pastoral counselors in other demographic areas where there is no conflict of interest inviting them to participate in the study; (3) and, as a larger or more eclectic sample was necessitated for data saturation, an invitation via the use of social media and internet network, such as Twitter, the Gospel-Centered Biblical Counseling and Equipping social media

group and The Gospel Coalition forums, where this researcher is connected with a wide range of pastoral demographics occurred, inviting individuals to participate in the study.

Upon invitations being sent, this researcher arranged nine semistructured interviews, utilizing the research interview questions in the forthcoming section. Following data saturation, the interviews were transcribed and codified to uncover themes, and participants reengaged to validate their involvement in the research to achieve maximum validity and reliability of the data (J. Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 85; Heppner et al., 2016). Finally, subsequent conclusions and recommendations for future research were outlined.

Regarding the qualitative research survey for comparative analysis, the setting was anywhere available to the participant(s) that allowed the space and time to commit to and complete the online survey. Recent scholarship has demonstrated SurveyMonkey is suitable and useful for this type of qualitative research (Bentley et al., 2020).

To that end, recruitment of participants occurred in the following ways: (1) a personal invitation via email from this researcher with the link or code to the survey to pastors and/or pastoral counselors, with associated instructions on length and research purpose of the survey, in their localized demographic where there is no conflict of interest inviting them to participate in the study; (2) a personal invitation via email from this researcher with the link or code to the survey to pastors and/or pastoral counselors, with associated instructions on length and research purpose of the survey, to partner pastors within this researchers' nondenominational church network; (3) an invitation via the use of social media and internet networking with associated instructions on length and research purpose of the survey, such as a post on Twitter, The Gospel-Centered Biblical Counseling and Equipping social media group, and/or email sent through The

Gospel Coalition forums, where this researcher is connected with a wide range of pastoral demographics would occur, inviting individuals to participate in the study.

The ideal number of survey responses, based on this mixed methods qualitative research approach, is a range between 87 and 134 individuals for the richest data set. This acknowledged, Braun also notes they have seen successful saturation with a range as low as 20 to 49, and that saturation is more code-specific to the research phenomenon (Braun, 2021). Van Rijnsoever (2017) agrees and asserts that data saturation is a complicated process when based on sample size, and thus, saturation should be more dependent on observing the quality of code data, and not on the number of codes in the sample. Knowing this, while the ideal range for the online survey was between 87 and 134 individuals, data saturation was achieved with the 119 survey responses (Braun, 2021; van Rijnsoever, 2017).

Following data saturation or the research window of 30 days closing, the interviews were codified for comparative analysis to the case study interviews to uncover, validate, or differentiate themes (Vaughn & Turner, 2016). Finally, subsequent conclusions and recommendations for future research were outlined.

### **Procedures**

This study originated from an observable phenomenon on the part of this researcher where he interacted with pastors and pastoral counselors (at conferences and related gatherings) who routinely engage in counseling-practice, intervention distribution, and/or referral. Accordingly, these pastors shared with this researcher that they interact with various aspects of the modern mental health system, from their counselees' diagnostic criteria to counseling methods popularized by Christian media, and, upon probing, routinely demonstrate a pronounced

lack of awareness regarding the influence of secular humanism on how they counsel, refer, or engage on mental health constructs.

Upon approval from Liberty University's Institutional Review Board, invitations to research participants were sent, and participants selected. Following selection of nine cases (pastors and/or pastoral counselors) for the sample, the interviewing of the case-samples occurred. The primary research tool employed was a research interview questionnaire composed of the research interview questions in the Instrumentation section of this chapter. The interview was conducted and recorded via the Zoom platform and was a semistructured case study interview. The estimated time for the semistructured interview and possible follow-up questions was no more than 60 minutes (Archibald et al., 2019).

In beginning of the semistructured interview, rapport was built to ensure trust, confidence, and confidentiality were all expressly in place for all parties (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315). It was significant to the research that each participant feels safe enough to transparently express their knowledge, awareness, and engagements with full confidence of confidentiality (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Following rapport as being established, a series of open, direct, verbal questions were used to elicit a detailed understanding of the experience and knowledge base of each case, including: their educational background and/or training for pastoral counseling, the discerning of each case's awareness of the history of humanism and pastoral counseling (or lack thereof), each case's conscious (or lack thereof) engagement with humanism in pastoral counseling, as well as their understanding of what would change, if anything, if they as pastoral counselors became aware of secular humanistic aspects to their practice, referrals, or ministry. As this structured dialogue unfolds, appropriate follow-up questions and dialogue were engaged in as required, based on case-participants answers,

observable physicality, and other non-verbal cues (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). Following the interviews, each interview was transcribed. Upon completing this, the interview transcript was shared with each case for the purpose of the highest degree of validity and reliability (Heppner et al., 2016).

Given the validity of intra-paradigm comparative analysis, in tandem with the time in which the nine interviews occurred, an internet survey was distributed, guided by the data provided in the methods section (Glock, 1967; Greckhamer et al., 2018; Heppner et al., 2016; Lucas & Szatrowski, 2014; O'Reilly et al., 2021). The survey utilized an appropriately revised rendition of the research-interview questions, modifying them to be effective for the broad application of a survey while simultaneously fitting within the existing coding framework to increase the validity of this research study. This allowed for a wider analysis of the case study interview data to gain a more encompassing understanding regarding the research questions (Behr, 2015). The length of the online survey was designed to take a maximum of 10 to 15 minutes, which is within what research has shown to be the ideal survey length (Revilla & Höhne, 2020). Then, upon completion of the survey window, or data saturation, the survey data was codified, analyzed, and compared to that of the case study interview data for the aforementioned wide range of understanding of the impact of humanism and pastoral counseling (Heppner et al., 2016).

### **The Researcher's Role**

This researcher is a pastor and pastoral counselor who has served and practiced in Kansas City, Illinois, and currently, northwest Indiana. He has exclusively served as a pastor and/or pastoral counselor for the last eight years, and bivocationally served in these capacity(s) for a

total of 13 years. It is this researcher's own training, observations of other local church pastors, and hopes for future pastoral counselors that influenced the creation of this research.

This researcher stepped into the role of human instrument in this study and was the individual to facilitate the research view case study interview and distribution of online survey. This noted, a researchers' values and biases are inherent to their personhood, meaning, they are reflected in research, hypothesis, data analysis, and even conclusions (Heppner et al., 2016). Thus, Creswell and Poth (2018) rightly note that a researcher's biases need to be controlled and diligent to not be expressed in the study.

To that end, a number of precautions were put in place for this research to have the highest volume of validity and integrity. Regarding the case study interviews, first, while there may have been some level of professional awareness through previous engagement at a setting, like a church-leaders breakfast or conference, any research participants chosen for the case study interview had no personal relationship with the researcher. Second, as an extension of the first, any research participants chosen for the case study interview had not spoken to this researcher regarding the topic of this research. Thus, the role of this researcher did not have led participant response, providing needed validity. Third, regarding the research interview questionnaire, the interview questions were designed to be devoid of this researchers' opinion and bias, instead focusing exclusively on case-participant fact-finding. For additional validity to the removal of bias, this list was reviewed by the dissertation chair for the purpose of ensuring the questions not are organized in a leading manner. Fourth: the minimization of investigator/researcher expectancies. This included but was not limited to: (1) a steady, calm voice; a conscious effort to not be verbally leading; and (2) control of all verbal and nonverbal behaviors during research interviews (Heppner et al., 2016). Fifth, the research interview was partially blind to participants

(Heppner et al., 2016; Lang & Stroup, 2020). Instead of participants being made aware they were in a study measuring the impact of humanism on pastoral counseling, participants were made aware they were involved in a study measuring their awareness of the overlap between psychiatry, psychology, and pastoral counseling. This description fit well within the parameters of the research interview questions but allowed for ignorance on the part of research participants to most accurately reflect their understanding or knowledge of the influence of humanism on pastoral counseling without being influenced by the interviewer. Sixth, research participants were asked to check the validity of the represented and codified data prior to formal submission of the research to validate the continuity of their statements as being true and reflective of what was stated in the interview itself (Heppner et al., 2016). In summary, the role of this researcher was nothing more than interviewer and fact-finder to the participants.

Regarding the qualitative online survey for comparative analysis, the survey was emailed by this researcher to individuals and posted on various platforms with only the context of the aforementioned partially blind research parameters and survey instructions (Regmi et al., 2016). This was to ensure bias is removed from the posting and allow for the highest integrity of the responses. The role of this researcher was nothing more than distributor of the survey, and analyzer of the data. There was no additional contact with online survey participants.

### **Instrumentation**

The interview process was semistructured. The research questionnaire stands at 29 primary questions and 13 planned secondary questions, many of which are yes/no and involve some level of follow-up question(s). The estimated time for the semistructured interview and possible follow-up questions was no more than 60 minutes.



The strategy for the semistructured interview was to follow the finalized order of the research questionnaire unless an undesigned question became relevant to the interview. When the semistructured interview deviated into undesigned questions or dialogue, upon completion of the deviation, the interview returned to the research questionnaire until completion.

### **Data Collection**

Upon approval from Liberty University's Institutional Review Board and case study participants provided informed consent, data collection commenced. The primary data collection method within the case study design was the semistructured interview(s). The interview(s) were focused on a robust set of predetermined, open-ended interview questions but allowed for follow-up questions and opportunity to dialogue when detailed answers or understanding of the research subject yielded a desire or need for unstructured and tangential dialogue (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). The questions were designed for qualitative analysis with the think-aloud method and unfolding context in mind (Bishop, 1992). This is significant to this research as it, as is noted in the literature review portion of this research, finds in origin Vygotsky theory, which also informs the theoretical framework of this research (Akpan et al., 2020; Charters, 2003). As such, it provided a complimentary, tiered approach to the overall continuity of research, with questions and sections building on what came prior for the most comprehensive understanding of the experience of each case and the overall thematic understanding from all cases.

Similarly, because the design for this research is a mixed methods *intra*-paradigm study utilizing two types of qualitative research, with the survey acting as wide spectrum validity to the case study interviews, the survey is nearly identical (Greckhamer et al., 2018; Lucas & Szatrowski, 2014). Instead of the detailed questions inviting dialogue and long-form data, the

survey was the same question-content, but limited to yes or no answers as it leads to simple tabulation for comparative analysis (Seale & Silverman, 1997).

### **Interviews and Online Survey**

The sequence to the interview questions was designed in sections, with each section building a foundation for the section that follows. Furthermore, they were precise to the research and informed and supported by the primary research questions—intentionally not leading, and open-ended for the purpose of maximum validity (Janes, 1999). Additionally, in line with the overall research model and framework being utilized throughout the study, it leaned heavily on the think-aloud method, which is a type of qualitative inquiry where specific questions were asked and participants were asked to respond based on the information that came to mind (Bishop, 1992). In summary, each section was designed to introduce a subject, allow a participant to think and speak about that subject, and then it was expanded and built on in later sections—a tiered approach.

The confidential interviews were initially comprised of these questions (having made room for open-ended dialogue in line with the research theory and framework), with responses transcribed for analysis and coding.

#### **Case Study Interview Questionnaire**

1. Please introduce yourself as if we have just met, including your role in pastoral counseling.
2. Please share your age.
3. Please share any training, certification(s), or degrees you have in pastoral counseling.
4. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of pastoral counseling as a subset of the “Christian counseling movement?”

5. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of modern psychology, including modern evidenced based practices?
6. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of modern psychiatry?
7. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of modern biblical counseling?
8. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the historical era known as “The Enlightenment?”
9. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding Jay Adams and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?
10. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding Emil Kraepelin and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?
11. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding Wilhelm Wundt and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?
12. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding David Powlison and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?
13. Do you read any pastoral counseling journals?
  - If yes, which?
  - What is their impact on your approach to pastoral counseling?
14. Can you describe your definition and understanding of secular humanism?
15. What influence, if any, do you think “The Enlightenment” has had on counseling?
16. What do you know of the history of the *Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM)*, including its originators?

17. Can you describe how you interact with a formal diagnosis code in your pastoral counseling?
18. What influence, if any, do you believe secular humanism has had on your pastoral counseling approach?
  - What influence, if any, do you believe secular humanism has had on the field of pastoral counseling?
19. What, if any, professional counseling (Christian or otherwise) do you refer to in your community?
  - What, if any, research do you engage in on their worldview?
  - What, if any, research do you engage in on their biblical integration?
20. If a professional counselor (Christian or otherwise) claims they are spiritual, are you more inclined to refer to them than someone who is not?
  - Can you explain your reasoning for this?
21. Did your pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training provide information for you on the history of the counseling movement?
  - If yes, what of it do you recall?
22. Do you believe you would benefit from additional knowledge on how pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect?
23. If you learned that many pastoral counseling programs taught content that is historically rooted in humanism, do you believe you would counsel differently as a pastor, if you were made aware of that?
24. If you learned that many modern practices and diagnostic criteria that that average professional Christian counselor use are historically based on humanism, do you believe

you would refer to Christian counselors differently as a pastor, if you were made aware of that?

To that end, the first 14 questions were rapport building, and focused on the interviewee, including their training and their various bases of existing knowledge; specifically: their pastoral counseling role, their age, their training in pastoral counseling, the history of pastoral counseling, the history of Christian counseling movement, the history of modern mental health system, their historical awareness of the Enlightenment, their definition of secular humanism, in addition to their awareness of various contributors to and from these influences on modern practice. They were reflective of the first guiding research question.

The next three questions covered the interviewee's thoughts regarding the influence of the Enlightenment, the history of the *DSM*, and any knowledge and application of modern, evidence-based practices. This was reflective of the second guiding research question.

Following this, there were three questions, and their subsequent questions participants answered regarding their knowledge of any areas within their practice or referral-making that are influenced or informed by secular humanism. This was reflective of the third guiding research question.

The final four questions of the interview questionnaire were designed to discern what additional knowledge the average pastor or pastoral counselor believes they desired to be informed on the intersection of pastoral counseling and secular humanism, in addition to discerning if their pastoral counseling practice would be executed differently if they had more precise training or education in this area. This was reflective of the fourth guiding research question.

### Online Survey Questionnaire

Similarly, the sequence to the online survey questions was designed in sections, with each section building a foundation for the section that follows. Like their interview counterparts, they are precise to the research and informed and supported by the primary research questions—intentionally not leading, for the purpose of comparative analysis and the validity it provides (Greckhamer et al., 2018; Janes, 1999; Lucas & Szatrowski, 2014).

1. Could you please provide your age range?
  - a. 18-26
  - b. 27-34
  - c. 35-42
  - d. 43-49
  - e. 50+
2. In the space below, please provide any degrees, certifications, and training you have had specific to pastoral counseling, if any? If you do not have any degrees, certifications, and training specific to pastoral counseling, please write: “none.”
3. If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the history of pastoral counseling within the “Christian counseling movement” in 3-4 sentences?
4. Could you provide a synopsis of the history of modern psychology in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
5. If asked, could describe any modern evidenced-based practices in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
6. Could you provide a synopsis of the history of modern psychiatry in 3-4 sentences, if asked?

7. If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the history of modern biblical counseling in 3-4 sentences?
8. If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the historical era known as “The Enlightenment” in 3-4 sentences?
9. Do you have any knowledge or awareness of Jay Adams, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
10. Do you have any knowledge or awareness of Emil Kraepelin, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
11. Do you have any knowledge or awareness of Wilhelm Wundt, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
12. Do you have any knowledge or awareness of David Powlison, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
13. Do you read any pastoral counseling journals?
  - a. Could you name them, if asked?
  - b. Could you describe their influence on you in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
14. Could you provide a definition of secular humanism in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
15. Could you provide a synopsis of the influence “The Enlightenment” has had on counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
16. If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the history of the *Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM)* in 3-4 sentences?

17. Could you name any original contributors to the creation of the *DSM*, if asked?
18. If asked, could you describe how you interact with a formal diagnosis code in your pastoral counseling?
19. Do you believe humanism has had an influence on your pastoral counseling approach?
20. Do you believe humanism has had an influence on the field of pastoral counseling?
21. Do you refer to any professional counseling (Christian or otherwise) in your community?
  - a. Do you research their worldview before referral?
  - b. Do you investigate the nature of the Scriptural integration and application(s) before referral?
22. If a professional counselor (Christian or otherwise) claims they are spiritual, are you more inclined to refer to them than someone who is not?
  - a. Could you explain your response in 3-4 sentences if asked?
23. Did your pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training provide information for you on the history of the counseling movement?
  - a. If yes, could you describe what you recall in 3-4 sentences if asked?
24. Do you believe you would benefit from additional knowledge on pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect?
25. If you learned that many pastoral counseling programs taught content that is historically rooted in humanism, do you believe you would counsel differently as a pastor?
26. If you learned that many modern practices and diagnostic criteria that the average professional Christian counselor use are historically based on humanism, do you believe you would refer to Christian counselors differently as a pastor?



Similarly, the first 12 questions and their respective sub-questions were rapport-building and focused on the participant. They drew out the participants' awareness of training and their various bases of existing knowledge, including: the history of pastoral counseling, the history of the Christian counseling movement, the history of the modern mental health system, their historical awareness of the Enlightenment, their definition of secular humanism, in addition to their awareness of various contributors to and from these influences on modern practice. They were reflective of the first guiding research question.

The next four questions cover the participants' understanding regarding the influence of the Enlightenment, the history of the *DSM*, and their knowledge and application of modern, evidenced-based practices. These were reflective of the second guiding research question.

Following this, like the interview, there were three questions and their subsequent sub-questions participants were asked regarding their knowledge of any areas within practice or referral making that are influenced or informed by secular humanism. This was reflective of the third guiding research question.

The final six questions, and their related sub-questions, of the survey were designed to discern if additional knowledge for the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the intersection of pastoral counseling and secular humanism was beneficial. In addition, they sought to discern if their pastoral counseling practice would be engaged in differently if participants had more precise training or education in these subjects. This was reflective of the fourth guiding research question.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis continued until data saturation occurs. Data saturation implies that no new themes were evidencing themselves within the case study interviews, and that data collection is

subsequently completed (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, pp. 317–318). After the structured interviews were complete, there were a number of essential components that were reported on. First, case or participant descriptions. While abiding by ethical compliance, reasonable information about the participants' make-up and suitability for the study was essential. Next, any disclosure of a preexisting relationship between the researcher and the interviewee should be disclosed, should there be any. Thirdly, an overview of research protocols to provide context for the study was provided. Finally, a coded representation of themes, insights, consistencies, and a high-level overview of initial conclusions was conducted and provided (Rashid et al., 2019, pp. 9–10). Coding was used in this study for the purpose of information aggregating and meaning-making of the case study data. This could be accomplished using a software such as ATLAS or Nvivo, but was not required (J. Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 85; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017)

To generate the codes and resulting meaning(s), the following occurred: first, the researcher became familiar with the data by reading and rereading the transcripts (and making notes, cross-referencing consistencies, etc.) against the backdrop of the guiding research questions; second, initial codes were generated to organize the data into meaningful categories; third, themes were identified based on the case study data that reflect patterns presented by answering the research questions; fourth, a review of the data was done to modify themes into categories that reflect the research to discern if the reflective data works within the whole of the research; fifth, the defining of the essence of the themes was conducted, in addition to the identification of subthemes; and sixth, a data write up was accomplished (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, 3354-33512).

As this occurs, consistent concepts were identified and revised as necessary to describe the revealed phenomenon in light of the guiding research questions. Hypotheses were subsequently made to the etymology of the research phenomenon, in addition to identification of relationships between concepts. These produced initial options for future research and solutions to be discerned, based on the results of the research data (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 85; Rashid et al., 2019, pp. 9–10).

### **Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness, in qualitative research, refers to the degree of confidence one can have in the research data, its interpretation, and methodology utilized to corroborate the validity of a study (Connelly, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Polit & Beck, 2014). The accepted criteria for trustworthiness in qualitative research are: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Connelly, 2016, p. 435). These concepts, and how they are employed, are discussed below.

### **Credibility**

Credibility in qualitative research is analogous to the internal validity of quantitative research. As such, it is paramount. The credibility then, is confidence in the truthfulness and validity of the study and is often represented in the forms of prolonged engagement with participants, peer, debriefing, reflective journaling and member checking (Connelly, 2016, pp. 435–436). The primary means of credibility for this research is triangulation. Triangulation is the utilization of multiple methods or data sources for a comprehensive understanding of a phenomena. It is a means to test a research hypothesis through a convergence of information from different sources (Carter et al., 2014). As such, credibility and confidence are established through the comparative analysis available via the intra-paradigm qualitative research model

utilized within this study, in tandem with the case study interviews. Together, these two comparative approaches provide a robust understanding of if modern pastors and/or pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of secular humanism in or on their counseling approaches and applications.

### **Dependability and Confirmability**

Dependability is similar to the reliability of quantitative research and focuses on the stability of data over time and over the conditions of the study (Connelly, 2016; Polit & Beck, 2014). In this study, dependability is primarily obtained via an audit trail from the transcription of the interviews for the case study interviews.

Confirmability is related to the neutrality of the research, and the ability for the research to be repeated. This is similar to the objectivity of quantitative research (Connelly, 2016; Polit & Beck, 2014). In this study, confirmability is again established via an audit trail from the transcription of the interviews for the case study interviews. This, in addition to the questionnaire, allows for the ability to replicate the study. Additionally, member checking was utilized. This gave participants in the case study the opportunity to validate their statements, as well as offered the opportunity for clarification and correction (Birt et al., 2016).

### **Transferability**

Similar to generalization, or external validity, in quantitative research, transferability outlines how the research findings may be applicable in other settings and situations (Connelly, 2016; Polit & Beck, 2014). For this research and its results, given its robust, detailed, and thick descriptions, it has the ability to inform future pastoral counselors, to ensure that they practically minimize or eliminate humanistic influence on themselves and others, within the sphere of their pastoral counseling. Additionally, it provides opportunities and a platform of assessment for

academic institutions to assess their current programming, in an effort to ensure that they are preparing pastors, and/or pastoral counselors, to minimize the influence of humanism in their counseling education. Finally, it provides a platform for academic institutions to generate future coursework in order that future students are competently trained to counsel and fully informed on the needed historical context and influence of humanism in pastoral counseling.

### **Ethical Considerations**

This research involves a number of ethical considerations for both the case study interviews as well as the online survey. They are detailed below.

#### **Case Study Interviews**

To alleviate any ethical dilemmas, the following considerations have been implemented within this study. First, each case study participant provided informed consent, signifying their knowledge of the purpose of the study, in addition to their willingness to engage in the study; this is an ethical requirement (Newman et al., 2021). Secondly, confidentiality and anonymity were provided to each case study participant—as well as the assignment of a pseudonym, which is a standard in qualitative research (Lahman et al., 2022). Thirdly, upon interview completion, and the completion of the interview transcript, the interview transcript was shared with each case participant to promote validity and reliability, as well as provide additional validation of ethical compliance (Heppner et al., 2016). Fourthly and finally, all data, including recorded videos of each case study and their transcription, are kept password-protected on a private computer (Roberts & Allen, 2015).

#### **Online Survey**

Because the online survey was both voluntary and confidential, there are limited ethical concerns. As such, at the beginning of the survey had a brief disclosure to the nature of the

research in its partially blind format, and an informed consent where participants acknowledged that survey responses would be used for research purposes. To that end, there was little to no risk for participants. All data were kept password-protected on a private computer (Roberts & Allen, 2015).

### **Summary**

With the purpose of this study being the determination of whether or not modern pastors and/or pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of secular humanism in or on their counseling approaches and applications, this chapter provided an encompassing description of the methods that were utilized within this study. It includes: an overview of the entirety of the study, including the utilization of an intra-paradigm approach, the design for the study, utilizing two forms of qualitative research for the highest validity, the guiding research questions, the settings for the research, specifically the zoom platform, and a description of the participants for both the case study interviews and the comparative survey. Additionally, this chapter included the procedures for both types of research, an outline of this researcher's role, a thorough description of the interview process, and subsequent data analysis of the interviews and the survey. The chapter closed with a detailed explanation of the components of trustworthiness and a comprehensive description of the needed ethical considerations. In the following chapter, then, the findings of this research study will be presented.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

### Overview

The purpose of this mixed methods intra-paradigm qualitative study is to discover whether or not the average pastor and/or pastoral counselor is aware of the influence of secular humanism in or on their counseling approaches and applications using either a semistructured case study interview via Zoom or via an online interview questionnaire via SurveyMonkey for comparative analysis. Due to the pervasive infiltration of secular humanism within many aspects of modern culture, this research seeks to discern the impact of secular humanism within the scope of pastoral counseling, creating a data-driven foundation to ascertain if pastors and/or pastoral counselors would benefit from additional education and resources on this infiltration and how to navigate or mitigate it. This is being accomplished in an effort to best meet the needs of those pastors and/or pastoral counselors who serve within pastoral counseling-ministry or other pastoral counseling contexts. It will further prevent or enhance (through a more biblical usage of) the utilization of interventions and theories that may run counter to the belief system of the average pastor and/or pastoral counselor that secular humanism may have adversely affected.

The study rests on the primary interpretive framework of social constructivism, which holds to the belief that learning occurs under the guidance of someone else or via peer collaboration (Akpan et al., 2020, p. 51). The guidance and peer collaboration both occurred within the confines of the semistructured case study interview (noting again that the online survey is for the purpose of comparative research and enhancing study validity; Greckhamer et al., 2018; Lucas & Szatrowski, 2014). Within social constructivism, *meaning* is derived socially and historically, recognizing both historical influence and social interaction contribute, if not create, the phenomenon under consideration, as well as the subsequent norms that research

participants operate within (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To that end, it is the historical influence of secular humanism on modern pastoral counseling practices, as well as the social implications of these historical realities brought to life within the context of the pastorally therapeutic relationship, that is the primary component of study. *Meaning* is thus understood by discerning historical awareness of secular humanism on modern pastoral counseling, its proponents, and practices, as well as how this affects the social realities of the pastoral counseling relationship (where secular humanistic principles may exist). To these ends, both the case study interviews, and the online survey were cultivated in such a way as to ascertain *meaning* and answer the guiding research questions.

Accordingly, this chapter will provide an overview of the findings of the research. It will include the following: a table outlining the demographic information of the case study interview participants; a rich and relevant narrative description of each of the participants, the results of the study, as well as concise research question responses. The chapter will close with a summary of this information and create a foundation to discuss the implications of the study to make future research recommendations in the final chapter.

## **Participants**

### **Case Study Interview**

As was outlined in Chapter Three, eight to ten case study interviews are ideal for data saturation and validity (J. Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 85; Heppner et al., 2016). To that end, nine interviews ( $N = 9$ , Male – 7, Female – 2) were scheduled and engaged in. Furthermore, in order for the study to be comprehensive and the information gained to be robust in its data-yielding, an interview sample reflecting a wide representation of the pastorate



and the field of pastoral counseling in the categories of ethnicity, gender, age, and educational background was invited and subsequently agreed to participate in this study (Table 1).

**Table 1**

*Participant Demographic Data*

Participant	Gender	Ethnicity	Age	Education	Role
1	Male	Caucasian	31	Master of Divinity from Southern Seminary and Association of Certified Biblical Counselor certification	Pastor of Counseling & Care Ministries
2	Male	African American	35	Master of Arts in Biblical Studies from Moody Bible Institute	Senior or Lead Pastor
3	Male	Caucasian	40	Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and 1/3 completed with Association of Certified Biblical Counselor certification	Senior or Lead Pastor
4	Female	Caucasian	66	Degree in occupational therapy with a mental health focus and International Association of Biblical Counselors certification	Private practice pastoral counselor
5	Male	Hispanic	43	3 levels of ordination through the Assemblies of God ordination process	Senior or Lead Pastor
6	Male	Caucasian	28	Master of Divinity from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	Online Campus Pastor and Communication ministries
7	Female	Caucasian	45	Bachelor of Science in Bible and Children’s Ministry from the University of Northwestern, St. Paul	Pastor of Children’s Ministry
8	Male	Caucasian	43	Master of Divinity, Christian Counseling Education Foundation training, and Association of Certified Biblical Counselor certified (lapsed).	Pastor of Counseling & Care Ministries
9	Male	Caucasian	55	Completing a Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, and in-process with the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors certification and International Association of Certified Biblical Counselors.	Senior or Lead Pastor

In accordance with the research parameters outlined in Chapter Three, each participant is engaged in a primary capacity of pastoral counseling within their respective pastoral, vocational endeavors. Further, each holds a commensurate level of education to their respective role. As such, the sample is comprised of a wide range of backgrounds, educational institutions, and bases of knowledge to create a robust, detailed, and/or thick understanding of the awareness the average pastor or pastoral counselor has regarding their awareness of the influence of secular humanism on their pastoral counseling vocation, and to answer the research questions.

The following, then, is a brief narrative on each participant. To create needed anonymity, each participant will only be called by a participant number and represented by that number-pseudonym throughout the duration of the study. Some specific details of each participant have been and will be generalized (such as specific pastoral roles in Table 1 and in subsequent descriptions) in an effort to protect participant confidentiality.

### ***Participant 1***

Participant 1 is a Caucasian, 31-year-old pastor who oversees a counseling and care-oriented ministry for his church. He holds a Master of Divinity from Southern Seminary and a certification from the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors. His role encompasses the work of counseling, as well as providing leadership to a lay counseling ministry. The participant stated their Bible school or seminary training provided “very little” information or training on the history of the counseling movement, which includes the impact of secular humanism on pastoral counseling. He holds to the belief that while his educational background and credentialing are vast, he is self-taught on the historical significance of secular humanism in or on pastoral counseling, of which he is well detailed in his description thereof.

***Participant 2***

Participant 2 is a 35-year-old African American pastor, who serves as the senior or lead Pastor of his church. His role encompasses most of the counseling for his congregation. He holds a Master of Arts in Biblical Studies from Moody Bible Institute and is currently engaged in supplemental education on pastoral counseling, specifically “care of souls” (as he described it) to better meet the needs of his congregation. He repeatedly stated that he has “very little” or “zero” information on the historical significance of secular humanism in or on pastoral counseling. He also states that his Bible school and/or seminary training did not provide information for him on the history of the counseling movement as a whole, or how it interacted with secular humanism. Furthermore, he noted that his current supplemental education is more focused on practice than it is on history, as well.

***Participant 3***

Participant 3 is a Caucasian, 40-year-old pastor who serves as the Senior or Lead Pastor of his church. His role encompasses most of the counseling for his congregation, which primarily consists of pre-marriage counseling, marriage counseling, parental counseling, and making counselor referrals. He holds a Master of Divinity and Doctor of Ministry from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and has completed one third of the certification process for the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors. He states that while his educational background and credentialing are vast and multidisciplinary, he holds “very limited” or “very little” knowledge of the history of the counseling movement, which includes the impact of secular humanism on pastoral counseling.

***Participant 4***

Participant 4 is a 66-year-old Caucasian female, who serves in a private practice biblical counseling center providing pastoral counseling both in-person and online as a 501c3 organization. She holds a degree in occupational therapy with an emphasis on mental health and a certification from the International Association of Biblical Counselors. Noting that she holds a secular credential and one specific to biblical/pastoral counseling, she described that neither set of her education prepared her to adequately *engage* in the worldview of secular humanism within her roles, as much as *operate* from within its framework. She further stated her secular credential did not prepare her with any knowledge regarding the history of various secular disciplines, as much as how to use the interventions of the era of occupational therapy and practice she was trained within. Finally, she asserted that what knowledge and understanding she possesses of the overall pastoral counseling movement and how secular humanism has involved itself in it was originally rooted in the 1970s writing of Adams (1970, 1973, 1979) to the present. However, much of what she knows today comes from a self-taught investment of reading books and attending conferences (Adams 1970, 1973, 1979).

***Participant 5***

Participant 5 is a 43-year-old Hispanic, male pastor who serves as the Senior or Lead Pastor of his church. He holds three levels of organization through the Assemblies of God denomination. He shared that all his counseling is focused on biblical categories and referrals for matters beyond the scope of his pastoral knowledge base. The participant stated his three levels of ordination provided “not much at all” or “none” regarding training for counseling, let alone the history of the counseling movement, preparation to engage with secular humanism, or the impact of secular humanism on pastoral counseling. So much so that at the conclusion of a

semistructured interview, the participant expressed thanks to the interviewer regarding areas he intends for their church to (now) improve in within the area of counseling.

### ***Participant 6***

Participant 6 is a 28-year-old Caucasian campus pastor for a large online congregation, who also provides high-level leadership to the digital ministry of his church. His counseling is typically limited to between one to three sessions before a referral is required given the size of the online congregation. He holds a Master of Divinity degree from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He states that while in his academic program, it was during the transitional period for Midwestern's overall counseling program, where it switched from a form of Christian-integrated counseling to nouthetic biblical counseling. He further stated that despite classes from both subcategories of pastoral counseling, he had "very minimal" knowledge of secular humanism and pastoral counseling and that he "could not articulate" their history or overlap, despite having some understanding of the Enlightenment era and its overall impact on human society.

### ***Participant 7***

Participant 7 is a 45-year-old, Caucasian female pastor. She serves as a Pastor over children's ministry in a large church, where she pastorally counsels some children, but most often is counseling parents on issues related to their children. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Bible and Children's Ministry from the University of Northwestern, Saint Paul. The participant stated their Bible school or seminary training provided "no knowledge of the history" of pastoral counseling, secular humanism, or how these concepts interact. She stated that the extent of her knowledge comes from the two counseling courses she had that were very practical in nature to meeting the needs of people, but they detailed little to nothing she could recall related to history.

***Participant 8***

Participant 8 is a Caucasian, 43-year-old male pastor who oversees a counseling and care-oriented ministry for his church. He holds a Master of Divinity, has been trained by the Christian Counseling Education Foundation, and is formerly certified via the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors (though he shared he has allowed this credential to lapse). While noting his diverse and expansive educational background and credentialing, he stated that his training and education only limitedly prepared him to engage with secular humanism within the realm of pastoral counseling and care. He further stated the actual coursework he accomplished was minimal on these subjects, and that he is a self-taught student regarding the historical significance of secular humanism in or on pastoral counseling. He stated that out of his own curiosity, he sought to study and understand pastoral counseling extensively and articulated detailed awareness ranging from Martin Luther to the Puritans, the Enlightenment era, and present matters. In short, Participant 8, as an average pastor or pastoral counselor, had above average, if not extensive, knowledge on the matters of consideration addressed by this study. That noted, he was clear the foundation of his knowledge base was not formal training.

***Participant 9***

Participant 9 is a Caucasian, 55-year-old male pastor who serves as the Senior or Lead Pastor of his church. His role encompasses most of the counseling for his congregation. He is completing a Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and is in the process of certification with the International Association of Biblical Counselors and the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors. This participant had “no knowledge [he] could recall” on any component of secular humanism, the history of the pastoral counseling movement, or any of the various areas of overlap between these two entities. This

participant's experience is of high relevancy to the study, given that the participant is actively enrolled in a pastoral counseling education program at the master's level, and involved in two active certification processes. This is noteworthy as the participant states, to this point, he has no knowledge he can recall regarding any awareness he has from his academic or certifying/credentialing agency(s) of the infiltration of secular humanism into pastoral counseling.

### **Online Survey Participants**

The number of participants in the online survey was  $N = 119$  of the required range of 87 to 134 individuals for data saturation (Braun, 2021; van Rijnsouwer, 2017). The demographic information required of participants for the online survey was broader in scope given that the purpose of the survey was for comparative analysis to the case study interview data. As such, the broad scope of demographic information allowed for a wider range of pastors and pastoral counselors to participate in this study.

Of highest importance for comparison, the required information was as follows: the age of participants, that their primary role involved a level or type of pastoral counseling, and some description of whatever training or preparation the survey participant had specific to pastoral counseling (whether that was Bible school preparation, graduate seminary work, Christian counseling education, secular mental health education, or a type of pastoral counseling certification). Their full demographic makeup is presented in Appendix E.

Unlike the case study interviews, where  $n = 7$  (seven of the nine—nearly 80%) were under the age of 50, the online survey results were dominated by the 50+ age participants, accounting for 47% of the total survey participation. The remaining breakdown involving nearly

22% were between the ages of 43 and 49, nearly 18% we are between the ages of 35 and 42, about 12% between the ages of 27 and 34, and under 2% between 18 and 26.

Regarding participants asserting that their primary vocation or primary ministry, volunteer or otherwise, involved a form of pastoral counseling, approximately 96 of  $N = 119$  participants self-reported that pastoral counseling held a primary place, with less than 5% stating this was not a primary function of their role. Details on the responses to this question are presented in Appendix E.

Finally, for the third piece of required demographic information, the online survey asked about the training participants had. A commanding 88% ( $n = 105$ ) of  $N = 119$  had a range of training, leaving only 12% ( $n = 14$ ) self-reporting they had no training that prepared them for pastoral counseling. While there are many noteworthy points of data that could be extrapolated from participants, the primary noteworthy point of data is that  $n = 60$  participants self-report to have graduate-level training or higher, accounting for slightly more than half of the total participation (see Appendix E for full results). Recognizing then that just 50% hold graduate-level education and 12% hold no recognized training, this yields an understanding that the remaining 35% of participants would self-report to hold undergraduate training or some form of counseling certification and training. Meaning, in short, 88% of participants, to some degree, had the potential for formalized training to interact with secular humanism in pastoral counseling. This should be noted for subsequent sections' efforts toward meaning-making, guiding research question answering, and recommendation-making.

## Results

Having achieved data saturation for both the case study interviews and online survey, clear, data-driven results are derivable. The recorded semistructured interviews and their



transcriptions provide vivid detail surrounding the awareness of the average pastor and/or pastoral counselor regarding the influence of secular humanism in or on their counseling approaches and applications through the pastoral experience of  $N = 9$  qualified individuals who agreed to be study participants. In corroboration, the online survey provides commensurate rich data sets that act as both additional validity, as well as offer helpful sets of self-reported data from a larger, more eclectic, national, if not global sample of  $N = 119$ , given the distribution methods utilized (as outlined in Chapter Three).

### **Theme Development**

In adherence to the theme development criteria outlined in the subsequent chapter, theme development, coding, and meaning-making occurred in the following manner: first, the researcher became intimately familiar with the research results by repeatedly rereading the transcripts and relistening to the recorded interviews while making notes, cross-referencing, and identifying consistencies as potential themes, against the backdrop of the guiding research questions. Following this, second, initial codes were developed to organize the data into meaningful and manageable categories; third, themes were identified based on the research data that reflect evidence-based patterns presented by measuring collected data against the guiding research questions. And fourthly, an initial review of the data was accomplished to clarify themes into categories that reflect both the research done and answer the guiding research questions, in an effort to confidently suggest future research opportunities and academic development to best equip pastors and pastoral counselors for the work of pastoral counseling, while simultaneously being informed on its intersection(s) with secular humanism (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, 3354–33512). Enclosed in Table 2 are the repeated concepts from the semistructured interviews and their transcripts that guided theme development,

corroborating insight sought from the online survey, and the corresponding guiding research question the theme is reflecting for the forthcoming recommendations in a later chapter. Thus, with these concepts outlined in rich detail, below then, the essence of the themes is explored.

**Table 2**

*Repeated Concepts for Theme Development*

Repeated concept	Code	Theme and subthemes	Research question
High level education	EDU	Academically unprepared (despite high levels of training)	RQ1
General awareness without specifics	AWR	Not detailed (or articulate)	RQ1
Being self-taught	BST	Academically unprepared (despite high levels of training); supplemental personal development	RQ1
Academically deficient training	ADT	Academically unprepared (despite high levels of training)	RQ1
Awareness of the dangers of secular humanism	DSH	Not detailed (or articulate)	RQ1
Desire for more academic preparation	MAP	Academically unprepared (despite high levels of training)	RQ1
Historically unaware of the development of psychology, psychology, and various Christian counseling disciples	HUAD	Academically unprepared (despite high levels of training); not detailed (or articulate)	RQ1
Historically unaware of the major contributors and their theoretical framework(s) to the modern era of therapy (pastoral counseling and secularly).	HUAC	Academically unprepared (despite high levels of training); not detailed (or articulate)	RQ1
Aware of the Enlightenment, but ill-equipped of its specific impact on pastoral or secular counseling	AOE	Not detailed (or articulate)	RQ1; RQ2

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Aware of the secular humanism, but ill-equipped of its specific impact on pastoral or secular counseling	AOSH	Academically unprepared (despite high levels of training); not detailed (or articulate)	RQ1
Supplemental personal development via pastoral counseling journals	SPD	Supplemental personal development	RQ1
Avoids diagnosis codes	ADC	Avoids secular constructs and language	RQ2
Secular humanism's impact on overall pastoral counseling	SIPC	Not detailed (or articulate)	RQ3
Counseling referral partnerships	CRP	Community partnership	RQ3
"Spirituality" concerns	SC	Avoids secular constructs and language	RQ3
More information on the intersection of pastoral counseling and secular humanism	INTSEC	Academically unprepared (despite high levels of training); not detailed (or articulate); dissonance of being affected	RQ4
Awareness of secular humanism influences practice responses	GRWAWR	Avoids secular constructs and language; academically unprepared (despite high levels of training); dissonance of being affected	RQ4

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### ***Theme 1: Highly Trained, Academically Unprepared***

Of the  $N = 9$  case study interview participants, respective to their pastoral field(s), each is highly trained. There are  $n = 6$  that hold graduate level education (with some of whom also holding specialty counseling certifications requiring a minimum of 30 hours of lecture and 50 hours of supervised counseling),  $n = 1$  holding undergraduate level secular training in occupational therapy which focused on mental health, in addition to comprehensive pastoral counseling certifications that require a minimum of 30 hours of lecture and 50 hours of supervised counseling, and  $n = 2$  that hold undergraduate or undergraduate equivalent training and years of experience in pastoral ministry commensurate to their roles (Northern California and Nevada Assemblies of God, n.d.). Each spoke highly of their training and preparation for

pastoral *ministry*. Yet, each of the interviewed participants described glaring absences in their training regarding the intersection, overlap, interplay, and interaction between pastoral counseling and secular humanism—as this theme will be outline in what follows.

For example, Participants 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9 each stated that they knew “zero,” “very little,” or had “no knowledge” of the history of modern psychology (Interview Question 5), including modern evidence-based practices steeped in secular humanism (as outlined in Chapter Two of this study). Only Participants 1 and 8 had accurate, if not extensive knowledge of this history. However, Participants 1 and 8 clearly attested to being self-taught and use other bases of knowledge to augment their education (as will be addressed in a subsequent theme).

Relatedly, when asked about their knowledge of the history of modern psychiatry (Interview Question 6), Participants 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 all stated they had “zero,” “very limited,” “none,” or “minimal” information on this, despite stating in other sections of the interview that *awareness* of psychiatric criteria and language was needed to reframe criteria into biblical language (Interview Question 17). Only Participant 1 was able to accurately articulate some of the history of psychiatry in a way that may inform their pastoral counseling efforts if the knowledge was employed to those ends.

Furthermore, when asked about their knowledge base regarding the historical era known as the Enlightenment (Interview Question 8),  $n = 6$  participants had “none” or “no knowledge” they could articulate regarding the Enlightenment. Participants 1, 3, and 8, however, were each able to provide a comprehensive and accurate explanation. Notably, each held graduate-level or higher education from different seminaries; however,  $n = 2$  stated they were self-taught on much of their knowledge base regarding the Enlightenment (with Participant 3 noting he learned about it during his graduate work). Not unrelatedly, interview Question 14 asked regarding the

participants' definition and understanding of secular humanism. Of  $N = 9$ , only  $n = 5$  (Participants 1, 3, 4, 5, 8) provided an accurate definition in their own words. Yet, none of the participants verbally created a correlation between their definition of secular humanism to the era of the Enlightenment (a notable subtheme). Further yet, Interview Question 15 specifically requested awareness of the influence, if any, the case study participants had regarding the influence of the Enlightenment specifically on the field of counseling. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 5$  stated they could not articulate an answer,  $n = 1$  answered incorrectly describing a completely different era of human history, leaving only  $n = 3$  (again Participants 1, 3, and 8) providing historically accurate answers to the interview question.

Comparatively, the online survey provides additional insight for supplemental analysis. Regarding Interview Question 5, Survey Questions 5 and 6 represent the same data sets. Interestingly, of  $N = 119$ ,  $n = 64$  (comprising nearly 54%) self-reported being unable to describe the history of modern psychology, and  $n = 55$  (comprising 46%) could not describe modern evidence-based practices, if asked. These results yield a data-driven conclusion that approximately 50% of participants lack education or information on these subjects. Complete results are available in Appendix E.

Further comparatively, the online survey participants ( $N = 119$ ) had a much higher percentage of participants self-reporting they could define secular humanism:  $n = 102$  (corresponding Survey Question 15). However, only  $n = 66$  (55%) self-report to their ability to provide a synopsis of the historical era of the Enlightenment. This is noteworthy, in that the online survey revealed that  $n = 105$  (88%) of participants had a significant degree of training in a pastoral field. As such, bringing the data sets together with Online Survey Question 16,  $n = 75$  (63.5% of respondents) could not describe the influence the Enlightenment has had on the field

of counseling, thus corroborating the interviews yielding of a knowledge gap (see Appendix E for full results).

As a punctuating point to this theme, both sets of data answered a question (Question 22 via interview and Question 25 via online survey) regarding whether or not they as a participant believe they would benefit from additional knowledge on where pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect. Of the  $N = 9$  case study interviews, each participant validated this with either “yes” or “absolutely.” From the online survey,  $n = 106$  (nearly 90%) responded by self-reporting they would benefit from it (see Appendix E for full results). Between both samples, it is a data-driven conclusion that more information about the intersection of these two concepts is desired. As such, the theme of highly trained individuals self-assessing that they are academically unprepared due to some level of unawareness or lack of correlation-making to address the relationship between secular humanism and pastoral counseling is a data-driven conclusion to arrive at.

### ***Theme 2: Not Detailed or Articulate on What Participants Know***

Theme 2 is woven throughout both datasets. For example, from the case study interviews—question four regarding the history of pastoral counseling as a subset of the Christian counseling movement, Question 5 regarding knowledge of the history of psychology and modern evidence-based practices, Question 6 on the history of modern psychiatry, question seven on the history of the modern biblical counseling movement, Question 8 regarding the Enlightenment, and Questions 9 through 12 related to awareness of key individuals that led to modern pastoral counseling as it is modernly expressed, received mostly inarticulate or unknowing answers. Illustrating, Question 6 on the history of psychiatry,  $n = 1$  was able to articulate a limited amount of accurate data, yet still only self-described as “slightly

knowledgeable.” Participant 4 described herself as knowledgeable enough to interact with psychiatry in her counseling practice but was unable to offer specific data. A charitable reading of the data yields a conclusion that, in the case of this question,  $n = 2$  had limited ability to articulate their knowledge, with the remaining participants being entirely unable despite recognizing the import of psychiatry and its influence. Similarly with Question 11, regarding knowledge of Wilhelm Wundt and his influence on modern counseling practices;  $n = 2$  recognized his name and understood him to be a pioneer of modern psychology, but could not describe his influence beyond that. The remaining participants had no knowledge of any kind.

Question 18 similarly offers insight regarding the belief of participants that secular humanism has an impact on participants in their pastoral counseling approach. To this question, inarticulate answers such as “some influence,” “some, but I can’t explain it,” “I am not sure how I am influenced,” “None I am aware of,” “I am not sure that is a super relevant question to me” (asserting the question did not apply to her [Participant 7], in context), and “I am sure it does without me knowing” were the responses offered.

The online survey offers corroborating insight as well. In response to Question 5 and Question 6, 53% and 46% of participants, respectively, self-report being unable to articulate their knowledge of modern psychology or modern evidence-based practices. For these two questions alone, that is a near average of half of all participants.

Question 7, regarding the survey participants’ ability to provide a synopsis of the history of modern psychiatry yielded similar results, with  $n = 82$  (nearly 69%) individuals responding by self-reporting they could not articulate its history (see Appendix E for detailed results).

Interestingly, Question 20 of the survey, which corresponds with case study Interview Question 18, offers a curious set of data. From the online survey,  $n = 74$  respondents self-reported that

secular humanism has had an influence on their pastoral counseling approach. However, due to the limitation of the online survey, how articulate those respondents could be of that influence is unknown. Helpful toward meaning making, one need not speculate too far. The responses to Question 16 reveal that  $n = 106$  (nearly 90%) self-report to questioning by asserting they would benefit from additional knowledge on where pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect. Of the  $N = 9$  case study interviews, each validated this with either “yes” or “absolutely.” As such, the theme of an inability to be articulate or be detailed in describing what pastors or pastoral counseling participants know or are aware of regarding the influence of secular humanism on pastoral counseling is revealed to be a data-driven and thematic reality.

### ***Theme 3: Supplemental Personal Development***

This theme evidenced itself through the duration of the case study interviews within multiple questions. First, in Question 4, regarding the history of pastoral counseling as a subset of the Christian counseling movement, Participant 4 stated she was “self-taught” and was able to articulate her knowledge base. Participants 1 and 8 also had extensive knowledge regarding this question, and revealed through later interview questions that they, too, were self-taught on this historical movement.

Regarding Question 5, addressing the history of modern psychology and modern evidence-based practices,  $n = 3$  expressed their knowledge was self-taught. Participant 1 was able to articulate his specific knowledge base, which a subsequent interview question revealed as being self-taught data. Participant 5 stated he engaged in “research for counseling sessions and preaching” to address psychology and counseling, meaning his awareness is self-taught. Thirdly, Participant 8 stated he has engaged in “independent study of biblical counseling,” and was able



to articulate both the history and three evidence-based practices his independent research yielded.

In Question 6, Participant 1 again represented a knowledge base later revealed to be from independent investments of learning. Furthermore, Participant 5 shared he has done independent research and study on the history of psychiatry, as well as its modern uses to help those he counsels decide if taking medication “is sinful or not,” which required self-study.

Question 12 presented this theme as well. This question focused on awareness of the influence of David Powlison on modern counseling practices. Participant 4 stated she knew Powlison personally and read (self-taught) “everything he’s written.” Participant 6 stated they also independently pursued his writing. Additionally, Participant 8 stated they, too, have “read everything he’s every written” in a self-taught manner.

Question 13 is about counseling journals and their utilization. Of the  $N = 9$  participants,  $n = 4$  read pastoral counseling journals. Of those,  $n = 3$  read the *Journal of Biblical Counseling*. On this, the online survey proves valuable for comparative analysis, as  $n = 13$  respondents stated they, too, read the *Journal of Biblical Counseling*. Of note, only three other journals were named in answering this question with a participant number of  $N = 114$  (meaning,  $n = 5$  participants skipped answering this question). Of note: other participants deviated from the question parameters by self-disclosing other areas of being self-taught, such as mentioning various blogs, podcasts, and book being read (again, the theme of being self-taught).

Question 21 repeats the theme again, with the question asking participants if their pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training, provided information on the history of the counseling movement. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 2$  claim to be self-taught. Participant 4 said her certified

biblical counseling training did not cover this and she is “self-taught” as a result. Additionally, Participant 8 stated: “I am self-taught,” and self-attests as a history buff.

Before closing this section, it is worth noting one limitation of the online survey for this theme. Due to its design, it had limited ability to engage in comparative analysis on this theme represented throughout the case study interviews. As the evidenced themes were unforeseen in this study’s construction, there is no direct or observable means to account for participants being self-taught beyond a single question. Even with this, the theme of participants being self-taught was prominently displayed and represented in multiple questions throughout the research.

### ***Subthemes***

As the defining of the essence of the themes was conducted, there were a number of subthemes that evidenced themselves within the study that are worthy of brief note (if for nothing else than an opportunity for future research; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017, 3354–33512).

**Avoidance of Secular Constructs and Language.** From the case study interviews, a strong subtheme of avoidance of secular language and constructs, in favor of repackaging these concepts, evidenced itself, most primarily within Question 17. Of  $N = 9$  participants,  $n = 6$  (Participants 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9) noted they would utilize secular language and translate it to biblical language. Participant 1 said: “I’ll use it to understand the cluster of symptoms that a counselee may experience.” Participant 4 described her usage as for the purposes of recategorizing it in biblical language. She said: “How do we live with a diagnosis code to please God is what I focus on.” Participant 7 stated she would give a formal diagnosis code another name that was appropriate to the pastoral counseling environment. Participant 8 echoed the same sentiments. Relatedly,  $n = 3$  avoids secular criteria and language at all. While outside of the scope of this

section, other portions of the interview would yield a data-driven conclusion that for seven of the nine interview participants, it is because there is some knowledge gap on how to interact with secular humanism in pastoral counseling at all.

The online survey offers some insight as well. Of  $N = 119$ , only approximately 59% self-disclosed they could describe how they interact with a formal diagnosis code, with the remaining 41% self-disclosing they could not or do not interact. As a bare minimum data reflected yield, 41% avoidance with no context is a significant number. And, when viewed in conjunction with the interview results for the purpose of extrapolation, it is statistically probable this theme would be further pronounced. See Appendix E for full details on the responses to this question.

**Community Partnerships.** The import of community partners and how to interact with them was also of thematic import given the diversity of opinions and execution of this. Question 19 of the case study interview requested information from participants regarding their thoughts and utilization of community partners. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 5$  refer to professional Christian-integrated counselors in their community. Of the remaining,  $n = 2$  only refer to nouthetic biblical counselors, with  $n = 2$  stating they do not refer, or have no one to refer to. Of further note,  $n = 5$  states they do research the worldview and Scriptural integration of their referrals.

From the online survey, of  $N = 115$  respondents,  $n = 73$  responded by self-disclosing they do refer to professional Christian counselors in their community. Of that number,  $n = 60$  self-disclose they research the worldview of those they refer to.

Of note, throughout both samples, there were expressions of a lack of trust or a need for trust in those being referred to. In some cases, there were statements made that referrals would only be to other nouthetic biblical counselors because of a presumed agreed-upon worldview. Case study interview Participant 1 stated that from his research, he looks for a professional

referral to at least be “balanced.” Case study interview Participant 3 states that he evaluates them on their opinion on Scripture before referring. Case study interview Participant 4 asserts she only refers within the nouthetic biblical counseling community. She states: “I won’t refer to a secularist.” Similarly, one online survey participant shared in the comment section for this question: “Even the integrationist counselors...are vetted on grounds of personal relationship, local church membership, and commitment to provide care that is relevant for the cases experienced suffering.” Another online survey participant stated: “I only refer people to Christian counselors whom I’ve met and know, or those I trust have recommended.... Short list!” A third said they refer “only to ACBC certified counselors. A fourth said “only in rare cases.”

The data-driven yield this subtheme demonstrates, when viewed in conjunction with the rest of the study, is that it reveals a lack of knowledge, understanding, and an untrusting speculation regarding the influence of secular humanism on pastoral counsel.

**Dissonance of Being Affected.** As was noted earlier in this study, case study interview Question 14 requested insight from participants regarding their definition and understanding of secular humanism. Of  $N = 9$ , only  $n = 5$  (Participants 1, 3, 4, 5, 8) provided an accurate definition in their own words. From Question 18, the study requested insights from participants, regarding how much they believe secular humanism has affected their pastoral counseling approach. Again,  $n = 5$  responded, however, it was Participants 1, 2, 3, 6, and 8 who articulated secular humanism had some impact on their counseling and offered some insight as to how. Similarly, Question 15 (the corresponding question to the case study interview Question 14) requested online survey participants’ ability to provide a definition of secular humanism in three or four sentences. Eighty-five percent of participants attested they could provide this. Relatedly, Question 20 (the correspondent to Question 18 for the interviews) on the online survey provided

the data point that approximately 63% were willing to articulate it had an influence on their pastoral counseling. While outside the scope of *this* study, this subtheme, when viewed in conjunction with the rest of the study data, specifically relating to the inability to articulate the history, worldview, and effects of various pieces relating to both secular humanism and pastoral counseling, create a data-driven result of dissonance in both data sets pertaining to what participants believe they know and how it functionally manifests itself in pastoral counseling practice. As such, it corresponds with two primary themes of being *knowing*, but inarticulate on secular humanism's influence on pastoral counseling (Theme 2), as well as being highly educated, yet remaining in some level of academic unpreparedness given that integrated knowledge on these concepts should produce more cohesive results.

### **Research Question Responses**

The purpose of this mixed methods intra-paradigm study, using qualitative case study interviews and the online survey method respectively, is to discover whether or not average pastors and/or pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of secular humanism in or on their counseling approaches and applications. The research has been guided by the following research questions: (1) How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of the modern mental health system?; (2) How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of modern mental health system tools, such as the *DSM*, its codes, and contributing theories?; (3) Does the average pastor or pastoral counselor see any areas of their practice or referral making that is currently influenced or informed by humanism?; and (4) How would the average pastor or pastoral counselor counsel or refer to a licensed professional differently, if at all, if they were acutely aware of and trained on the contributing (secular humanist) etymology(s) to the modern mental health system and its tools

and theories? The following are the responses both samples yielded. Each question will be led by the case study interview responses, followed by insight from corroborating online survey.

***Research Question 1: How Informed Is the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor on the (Humanistic) Etymology of the Modern Mental Health System?***

As was articulated in Chapter One, this question is designed to determine the level of awareness that the average pastor or pastoral counselor has on the influence of secular humanism on pastoral counseling. To answer it, the first three of the initial 14 questions were designed to build participants' demographic profile, and then focused on the interviewee, their awareness of the history of pastoral counseling, the history of the Christian counseling movement, the history of modern mental health system, their historical awareness of the Enlightenment, their definition of secular humanism, in addition to their awareness of various contributors to and from these influences on modern practice, in an effort to answer guiding Research Question 1. The following sampling is conducive to those ends.

First, in interview Question 4, regarding the history of pastoral counseling as a subset of the Christian counseling movement, of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 6$  were unable to articulate any information regarding their awareness of this. Only  $n = 3$  had some knowledge, with two of those being self-taught and one only able to articulate very recent history to date. As such, two thirds could not answer this question.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 4) revealed that of  $N = 119$ , nearly 54% self-disclosed they could articulate the history of pastoral counseling as a subset of the Christian counseling movement, and just over 46% self-disclosed they could not. Meaning, nearly half of the participants could not answer this question (see Appendix E for full results).

Second, in response to Interview Question 5, regarding the history of modern psychology including modern evidence-based practices, of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 6$  were unable to articulate any information regarding their awareness of these matters. Only  $n = 3$  had some knowledge, with two of those being self-taught and one only able to articulate what they described as outdated knowledge. As such, two thirds could not answer this question.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 5) revealed that of  $N = 119$ , only 46% self-disclosed they could articulate the history of modern psychology, and nearly 54% self-disclosed they could not, meaning, more than half of the participants could not answer this question.

Third, regarding Question 6, on participants' knowledge of the history of modern psychiatry, of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 8$  were unable to articulate any information regarding their awareness of this historical reality. Only  $n = 1$  claimed to be "slightly knowledgeable," and could provide detail. As such, approximately 89% of participants could not answer this question.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 7) revealed that of  $N = 119$ , only 31% self-disclosed they could articulate the history of modern psychiatry, and nearly 69% self-disclosed they could not. Meaning, slightly less than two thirds of the participants could not answer this question.

With regard to Question 7, on the historical era known as the Enlightenment and participants' knowledge thereof, again, of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 6$  were unable to articulate any information regarding their awareness of these matters. Only  $n = 3$  had some knowledge. As such, two thirds could not answer this question.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 7) revealed that of  $N = 119$ , more than 55% self-disclosed they could articulate a synopsis of the

historical era known as the Enlightenment, and nearly 45% self-disclosed they could not. Meaning, just under half of the participants could not answer this question.

Consider Question 10. This question invites participants to share their knowledge of Emil Kraepelin and his influence on modern counseling practice(s). For context to this question, as Chapters 1 and 2 outline, Kraepelin was the grandfather of the *DSM*, a devout secular humanist in worldview, and an educator of Nazi psychiatrists (Bergen, 2015, p. 158; Berger, 2016, p. 63; Berger, 2018, pp. 124–125; Straus et al., 2016). His influence remains active to this day (Berger, 2016, 2018, 2020). Yet, of  $N = 9$ , all participants had no knowledge of his influence and therefore none could knowledgeably answer the question.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 11) revealed that of  $N = 119$ , only 5% self-disclosed they could articulate any knowledge regarding the influence of Emil Kraepelin on modern counseling, with nearly 95% self-disclosing they could not, meaning nearly all the participants could not answer this question. See Appendix E for full survey results.

Similarly with Question 12 on the influence of Wilhelm Wundt on modern counseling practices. As noted previously in this study, Wundt was a devout humanist who believed that religious psychological practitioners were unstable and should be institutionalized for having non-naturalistic beliefs (Ebert & Bär, 2010; Jovanovic, 2021; Steinberg & Angermeyer, 2001). When participants were asked to articulate their knowledge of his influence, of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 7$  were unable to articulate any information regarding their awareness of Wundt. Only  $n = 2$  knew his name, with only one having some knowledge he was “a pioneer of modern psychology.” As such, nearly 78% of participants could not answer this question.



In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 12) revealed that of  $N = 119$ , only 8.5% self-disclosed they could articulate any knowledge regarding the influence of Wilhelm Wundt on modern counseling, with 91.5% self-disclosing they could not, meaning nearly all of the participants could not answer this question. See Appendix E for full survey results.

In allowing both samples and their data sets to speak for themselves, this study would reveal that in answering guiding Research Question 1, the average pastor or pastoral counselor is not aware of the (humanistic) etymology of the modern mental health system.

***Research Question 2: How Informed Is the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor on the (Humanistic) Etymology of Modern Mental Health System Tools, Such As the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM), Its Codes, and Contributing Theories?***

As was articulated in Chapter One, this question is designed to learn if the average pastor or pastoral counselor is aware that they are navigating humanistic constructs that find their origin in an anti-God etymology. There were three questions designed to cover what participants know regarding the influence of the Enlightenment, the history of the *DSM*, and any knowledge and application of modern, evidenced-based practices, to answer guiding Research Question 2.

The first of these questions was Interview Question 15, regarding what influence participants believed the Enlightenment has had on the counseling movement. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 5$  stated they could not articulate an answer or had “no knowledge of that.” Relatedly,  $n = 1$  provided an incorrect answer, sharing information about an incorrect era. Only  $n = 3$  provided an answer reflective of historically accurate knowledge. As such, two thirds could not answer this question.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 16) revealed that of  $N = 118$ , about 36.5% self-disclosed they could provide a synopsis of the Enlightenment and its impact on counseling, with over 63% self-disclosing they could not. Meaning, a little less than two thirds of the participants could not answer this question.

Regarding Question 16, on the history of the *DSM* and its originators, of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 0$  could name an originator of the *DSM*. However,  $n = 5$  navigated away from the question itself and shared their knowledge of how to use the *DSM*. As a noteworthy aside, only Participant 8 attributed it as being related to the Enlightenment. However, with regard to the question itself, none of the participants could answer this question.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 17) revealed that of  $N = 119$ ,  $n = 59$  participants self-disclosed they could provide a synopsis of the history of the *DSM*, with  $n = 60$  self-disclosing they could not, meaning approximately half of the participants could not answer this question. Relatedly, Question 18 also corresponds with Interview Question 16 on *DSM* originations. Of  $N = 118$  respondents, only  $n = 15$  self-disclosed they could, meaning the  $n = 103$  (over 87%) could not. See Appendix E for full survey results.

The final question (Question 17) under the guiding Research Question 2 requested information from participants on how they interact with formal diagnosis codes in their pastoral counseling. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 6$  stated they would use diagnostic codes as source information to translate into biblical language to provide pastoral counseling. Of the remainder,  $n = 3$  stated they did not interact with them or avoided them. As such, two thirds could answer this question in a comprehensive fashion.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 19) revealed that of  $N = 119$ , nearly 59% self-disclosed they could demonstrate how they interact

with a formal diagnosis code in their pastoral counseling, with just over 41% self-disclosing they could not. Meaning, more than half of respondents could interact in some way with a formal diagnosis code.

As such, in allowing samples and their data sets to speak for themselves, this study would reveal that in answering guiding Research Question 2, the average pastor or pastoral counselor is not informed on the (humanistic) etymology of modern mental health system tools, such as the *DSM* and contributing theories, though it recognizes that some have the ability to interact with diagnosis codes.

***Research Question 3: Does the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor See Any Areas of Their Practice or Referral-Making That Is Currently Influenced or Informed by Humanism?***

As was articulated in Chapter One, this question is designed to request information from participants on their beliefs regarding the current influence of secular humanism on their pastoral counseling, as well as pastoral counseling as a whole. There were three primary questions, as well as subsequent questions to the primary questions, that participants answered regarding their knowledge of any areas within their practice or referral-making that are influenced or informed by secular humanism.

The first of these questions was interview Question 18, regarding any areas of participants' practice or referral-making that is currently influenced or informed by humanism. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 5$  (Participants 1, 2, 3, 6, 8) stated they believe it has had "some" influence, and stated it did so unknowingly. Relatedly,  $n = 4$  shared they endeavor for it to have no impact, instead stating they are "purposefully God-centered," or that they "strive for [no impact]." Only  $n = 3$  provided an answer reflective of historically accurate knowledge. As such, more than half

are aware they are affected, while less than half make active efforts to mitigate its effect, being intentional to avoid secular influence.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 20) revealed that of  $N = 118$ , nearly 63% self-disclosed that secular humanism has had an influence on their pastoral counseling approaches, with 37% self-disclosing they could not, meaning more than half, but not two thirds, of respondents believe they are affected by secular humanism.

A second question toward answering Research Question 3 is derived from a follow-up question to Question 18, specifically asking if participants believe secular humanism has had on the field of pastoral counseling. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 8$  stated that they believe it has, with Participants 1 and 9 making statements that “the average” pastor is secularized and not well trained (with their tone distinguishing they are exempt from this group). Others stated that they believed the average pastor thinks that counseling is beyond them, which results in secularism seeping in. Only  $n = 1$  answered differently, not differing in their answer, but saying they were not educated enough to articulate an answer to this question. As such, nearly 90% of respondents stated they believed the field of pastoral counseling is affected, either knowingly or unknowingly, by secular humanism.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question further revealed that of  $N = 118$ , more than 90% self-disclosed secular humanism has had an influence on the field of pastoral counseling, with less than 10% self-disclosing they did not believe it did (see Appendix E for full results). Meaning, most respondents believe the field of pastoral counseling is affected by secular humanism.

Question 19 asks for participants to share what, if any, professional counseling (Christian or otherwise) they refer to in their community. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 5$  refer to professional Christian

counselors in their community. Furthermore,  $n = 2$  only refers to nouthetic biblical counselors, and  $n = 2$  has no community referrals available to them. As such, more than half of interview participants refer to professionals in their community. Relatedly, the follow-up questions to this question were related to whether or not the participants researched the worldview or Scriptural integration of those they refer to. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 5$  states they do research the worldview and Scriptural integration of their referrals. As such, more than half utilize referral sources, and more than half engage in some measure of evaluation of their referrals.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 22) revealed that of  $N = 115$  respondents,  $n = 73$  responded by self-disclosing they do refer to professional Christian counselors in their community. Of that number,  $n = 60$  self-disclosed they researched the worldview of the counselor, with  $n = 63$  self-disclosing they researched Scriptural integration. Meaning, more than half both refer and do some level of research on those they refer to.

Finally, in Question 20, the study requested that participants share if a professional counselor (Christian or otherwise) claimed they are spiritual, were they more inclined to refer to them than someone who is not. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 6$  stated they were less inclined. Relatedly,  $n = 3$  said they were more inclined. However, the total of the participants each *unpromptedly* stated they would require more definition of the word spiritual, regardless of how they answered the question.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 23) asked participants if they would be more likely to refer to a counselor who claimed to be spiritual and if they could answer why in three to four sentences if asked. Of  $N = 117$ ,  $n = 60$  self-disclosed they

would, with  $n = 57$  self-disclosing they would not. As such, just over half say they are more likely to refer to a counselor who states they are spiritual.

As such, in allowing samples and their data sets to speak for themselves, this study would reveal that in answering guiding Research Question 3, the average pastor or pastoral counselor does see areas of their practice or referral-making that are currently influenced or informed by humanism. This is evidenced in the responses of both data sets that more than half of each data set recognized the impact of secular humanism on them even if they could not articulate it, nearly all respondents from both data sets agreed it affects pastoral counseling as a field, and in how not only more than half of respondents evaluate their counselor referrals, but also in how the remaining half do not refer to *avoid* secular humanism and integration.

***Research Question 4: How Would the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor: Counsel or Refer to a Licensed Professional Differently, If at all, If They Were Acutely Aware of and Trained on the Contributing (Secular Humanist) Etymology(s) to The Modern Mental Health System and Its Tools and Theories?***

The first of these questions was Interview Question 21, regarding participants' pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training providing information for them on the history of the counseling movement. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 2$  stated their education was minimal on this. Further,  $n = 5$  stated they received no training on this or could "not recall." Finally,  $n = 2$  stated they were self-taught, and were the only participants who provided a more validating, detailed response.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 24) revealed that of  $N = 118$ , 53% self-disclosed pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training provided information for them on the history of the counseling movement, with nearly 47% self-disclosing it did not (see Appendix E for detailed results), meaning, just over half of

respondents self-disclosed their pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training provided information for them on the history of the counseling movement.

The second of these questions was Interview Question 22, regarding whether or not participants thought they would benefit from additional knowledge on how pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect. Of  $N = 9$ , each said “yes,” with Participants 3 and 7 saying “absolutely.”

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 25) revealed that of  $N = 118$ , just under 90% ( $n = 106$ ) self-disclosed they would benefit from additional knowledge on how pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect, with only 10% self-disclosing they would not. Meaning, the vast majority of respondents from both samples stated they would benefit from additional knowledge on how pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect.

Thirdly, participants were asked what their thoughts would be if they learned, as pastors or pastoral counselors, that many pastoral counseling programs taught content that is historically rooted in humanism if they believed they would counsel differently. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 7$  stated that would counsel differently, and each in their own way, stated they would do this to prevent humanistic infiltration. Participant 3 stated they would “have to take it into consideration.” Participant 4 stated that it makes her ensure she is “even more pastoral” in her offerings of care. Participant 8 said it already affects how he counsels. Interestingly,  $n = 2$  stated no, it would not affect how they counsel, and it would not change, because they were already aware of humanism, and it is already factoring into how they counsel and refer. Thus, while the answers may differ in how each participant responded, each participant ( $N = 9$ ) stated in their own

vernacular that they counsel and refer in light of secular humanism and its (perceived) negative impacts already.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 26) revealed that of  $N = 118$ ,  $n = 75$  (65.5%) self-disclosed they would counsel differently as a pastor if they found out that many pastoral counseling programs taught concepts that were historically rooted in humanism. Only  $n = 43$  (36%) self-disclosed they would not. Meaning, more than half, but not two thirds, of respondents self-disclosed they would counsel differently if they knew this information (see Appendix E for detailed results).

Finally, Question 24 requested participants share if they learned that many modern practices and diagnostic criteria that average professional Christian counselor use are historically based on humanism, do they believe they would refer to Christian counselors differently as a pastor, if they were made aware of that? Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 7$  stated that would refer differently. Participant 3 stated that this knowledge would make him “cautious of it.” Participant 9 stated that he would be less likely to refer in these cases. Additionally,  $n = 1$  (Participant 7) stated no, that it would not alter her approach to referrals because this knowledge already influences her decision-making (which could make the case that her response is “yes”). Finally,  $n = 1$  stated he was unsure if it would, but could not articulate additional context.

In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question (Question 27) revealed that of  $N = 118$ ,  $n = 83$  (70%) self-disclosed they would refer to differently if they were aware of or believed those they were referring to were using diagnostic practices and criteria historically based in humanism, meaning nearly two thirds self-disclosed they would refer differently with this knowledge (see Appendix E for detailed results).



As such, in allowing samples and their data sets to speak for themselves, this study would reveal that in answering guiding Research Question 4, the average pastor or pastoral counselor *would*: counsel or refer to a licensed professional differently if they were acutely aware of and trained on the contributing (secular humanist) etymology(s) to the modern mental health system and its tools and theories. This is evidenced in the responses of both data sets presenting a marked change in how pastors and/or pastoral counselors would practice, refer, or desire more information on secular humanism, as they grow in awareness of its secular origins and humanistic effects.

To those ends, the purpose of this mixed methods intra-paradigm qualitative case study and survey was to discover whether or not average pastors and/or pastoral counselors are aware of the influence of secular humanism in or on their counseling approaches and applications. It could be stated, based on these data sets, that while pastors and pastoral counselors are somewhat informed or self-taught, their training is not comprehensive, competent, and/or complete. As a result, these objective datasets present a clear conclusion that the average pastor or pastoral counselor is unprepared to engage in adequate discussion on or understanding of the overlap of secular humanism within pastoral counseling, and, as a result, cannot be concluded to be truly aware.

### **Summary**

This chapter provided an objective overview of the findings of the research via two data sets: a case study interview of  $N = 9$  and an online survey of  $N = 119$ . The chapter included: a table outlining the demographic information of the case study interview participants; a rich and relevant narrative description of each of the participants, and the results of the study from both the interview participants and the online survey. This resulted in concise research question

responses and an overall, data-driven conclusion to the research related to the research hypothesis. The chapter closes with a summary of this information, resulting in a foundation to discuss the implications of the study and make future research recommendations in Chapter Five. In Chapter Five then, this study will present a summary of findings, a discussion of the findings, and the implications of the findings in light of current research and theory(s). Finally, it will close with recommendations to build on this base of research to best equip future pastors and pastoral counselors to most competently meet the needs of those they serve in an informed way.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION**

### **Overview**

As has been noted throughout the research discourse, the purpose of this mixed methods intra-paradigm qualitative case study and online survey study is to discover whether or not the average pastor and/or pastoral counselor is aware of the influence of secular humanism in or on their counseling approaches, referrals, and applications. It was born of a primary hypothesis that pastors and/or pastoral counselors lack an acute awareness of how much influence secular humanism has on their pastoral counseling, as, upon investigation within this study, precious little research has been accomplished to examine how influential secular humanistic constructs have become in and on pastoral care and counseling. Furthermore, little to no research has been engaged in to determine if the average pastor or pastoral counselor is even aware of how humanistic their approaches have become. These realities bred essential questions and revealed a research gap this study sought to fill. Knowing this, in the aforementioned chapters of this study, an encompassing articulation of the research-need was outlined, an expansive review of relevant literature validating the research need was provided, a detailed description of methodology was given, research was conducted, and a thorough deconstruction and analysis of the results was provided. In this final chapter, then, a summary of the relevant findings will be outlined, a discussion on the findings and the implications in light of relevant literature and theory will be engaged in, the implications of the study will be considered, and will close with recommendations for future research.

### **Summary of Finding**

The following are the guiding research questions of this study.

- **RQ1:** How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of the modern mental health system?
- **RQ2:** How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of modern mental health system tools, such as the *DSM*, its codes, and contributing theories?
- **RQ3:** Does the average pastor or pastoral counselor see any areas of their practice or referral-making that is currently influenced or informed by humanism?
- **RQ4:** How would the average pastor or pastoral counselor counsel or refer to a licensed professional differently, if at all, if they were acutely aware of and trained on the contributing (secular humanist) etymology(s) to the modern mental health system and its tools and theories?

Below then is a concise summary of the findings of the research under each question as a heading.

### **Research Question 1: How Informed Is the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor on the (Humanistic) Etymology of the Modern Mental Health System?**

As was outlined in Chapter Two of this study, the modern mental health system finds its roots in the Enlightenment and secular humanism (Brown, 2017; Jovanovic, 2021). As was further noted, pastors and pastoral counselors, whether knowingly or not, are thus engaging with secular humanist or secularly influenced constructs on a regular basis as a result of pastoral counseling (Emlet, 2017; Johnson, 2021; Welch, 2022). As a result, this research question is relevant to this study as it is seeking to determine the level of awareness that the average pastor or pastoral counselor has regarding the influence of secular humanism on the modern mental health system, which includes its influence on pastoral counseling.

To answer this question, the first three questions were designed to build rapport and a demographic profile of participants, with the remaining 11 questions focusing on the awareness of participants regarding the history of pastoral counseling and the Christian counseling movement, the history of modern mental health system, participants' historical awareness of the Enlightenment, their definition of secular humanism, and their awareness of various contributors to and from these influences on modern counseling practices, including Jay Adams, David Powlison, Emil Kraepelin, and Wilhelm Wundt.

In summary, data from the case study interview participants of  $N = 9$  and  $N = 119$  online survey participants revealed that the average pastor or pastoral counselor is not aware of the (humanistic) etymology of the modern mental health system. As was consistently revealed, knowledge and awareness of the etymology of the modern mental health system, including various components of psychology and psychiatry, various contributors to their disciplines, various contributors to pastoral counseling and its development, as well as major historical eras, such as the Enlightenment resulting in secular humanism, were cursory at best. Briefly, consider the following:

- Regarding the history of modern psychology and modern evidence-based practices, of  $N = 9$  case study interviews,  $n = 6$  were unable to articulate any information regarding their awareness (Table 3). Only  $n = 3$  had some cursory awareness, two of which attested to being self-taught. The corresponding online survey question revealed that of  $N = 119$ , only 46% self-disclosed they could articulate the history of modern psychology, with nearly 54% self-disclosing they could not, meaning more than half of the participants could not answer this question.

**Table 3**

*Awareness of the History of Modern Psychology and Modern Evidence-Based Practices*

Data collection method	Participants ( <i>n</i> )
Interview	
Able to articulate both	3
Unable to articulate both	6
Survey	
Able to articulate history	55
Unable to articulate history	64
Able to articulate evidenced-based practices	64
Unable to articulate evidenced-based practices	55

- Regarding the history of modern psychiatry (Table 4), of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 8$  were unable to articulate any information regarding their awareness of this historical reality. Only  $n = 1$  participant claimed to be “slightly knowledgeable.” In a comparative analysis, the corresponding online survey question revealed that of  $N = 119$ , only 31% self-disclosed they could articulate the history of modern psychiatry, with 69% self-disclosing they could not. Meaning, more than half, but slightly less than two thirds of the could not answer this question.

**Table 4**

*Awareness of the History of Modern Psychiatry and the Enlightenment*

Awareness	Interview		Survey	
	Aware	Unaware	Aware	Unaware
History of modern psychiatry	1	8	37	82
Enlightenment	3	6	66	53

- Regarding the historical era known as the Enlightenment (Table 4), of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 6$  were unable to articulate any information regarding it. Only  $n = 3$  had some knowledge. As such, two thirds could not answer this question. The online survey question revealed that of the  $N = 119$  respondents, almost half self-disclosed they could not answer this question.
- Regarding major secular humanist influences on pastoral counseling (Table 5): Of Kraepelin,  $N = 9$  (all) of the interview participants had no knowledge of his influence and of  $N = 119$ , a mere  $n = 6$  self-disclosed they had knowledge via the survey; Of Wundt, of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 7$  were unable to articulate any information regarding him,  $n = 6$  of  $N = 119$  self-disclosed they were able via the survey results.

**Table 5**

*Knowledge of Major Secular Humanist Influences on Pastoral Counseling*

Secular humanist	Interview		Survey	
	Knowledge	No knowledge	Knowledge	No knowledge
Emil Kraepelin	0	9	6	113
Wilhelm Wundt	2	7	6	113

As such, it appears, via data-driven conclusion, that the average pastor or pastoral counselor is not aware of the (humanistic) etymology of the modern mental health system, credibly answering Research Question 1.

**Research Question 2: How Informed Is the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor on the (Humanistic) Etymology of Modern Mental Health System Tools, Such As the *DSM*, Its Codes, and Contributing Theories?**

Many tools of the modern mental health system find their etymological foundation in extensions of secular humanism that have been systematized. The *DSM*, its codes, and its theories are reflective of this historical reality (Bergen, 2015, p. 158; Berger, 2016, p. 63). As a result, this question is designed to learn if the average pastor or pastoral counselor is aware that they are navigating and/or interacting with humanistic constructs and tools that find their origin in a secular etymology (Berger, 2016, 2018; Brown, 2017; Jovanovic, 2021; Taliaferro, 2015).

The next three questions, then, covered participants' awareness regarding the influence of the Enlightenment, the history of the *DSM*, and any knowledge and application of modern, evidenced-based practices they may have. Briefly, consider the following:

- Regarding participants' awareness of the influence of the Enlightenment on the counseling movement, of  $N = 9$  case study interviews,  $n = 5$  stated they could not provide an answer or had "no knowledge" of it. Further,  $n = 1$  provided an incorrect answer. Finally,  $n = 3$  provided an answer reflective of historically accurate knowledge. Regarding the online survey, approximately 36.5% believed they could provide a synopsis of the Enlightenment and its impact on counseling. In summary, two thirds of participants from both samples could not answer this question.
- Regarding the history of the *DSM* and its originators, of  $N = 9$  case study interviews,  $n = 0$  could name an originator of the *DSM* or articulate its origins without deviating from the question. Relatedly, the online survey question revealed that of  $N = 119$ ,  $n = 59$  self-disclosed they could provide a synopsis of the history of the *DSM*, with  $n = 60$  self-



disclosing they could not. Meaning, more than half of the participants could not answer this question. Additionally, the corresponding question for the online survey revealed of  $N = 118$ , only  $n = 15$  self-disclosed they could, meaning the  $n = 103$  (over 87%) could not name an originator.

- Regarding participants' responses to how they interact with formal diagnosis codes in their pastoral counseling—of  $N = 9$  interviews,  $n = 6$  stated they would use diagnostic codes as source information to translate into biblical language to provide pastoral counseling. Of the remainder,  $n = 3$  stated they did not interact with or avoid them. As such, two thirds could answer this question in a comprehensive fashion. Comparatively, the online survey revealed that of  $N = 119$ , nearly 59% self-disclosed they could articulate how they interact with a formal diagnosis code in their pastoral counseling, with just over 41% self-disclosing they could not. Meaning, more than half of respondents could interact in some way with a formal diagnosis code.

As such, it appears, via data-driven conclusion, that this study would reveal that the average pastor or pastoral counselor is not informed on the (humanistic) etymology of modern mental health system tools, such as the *DSM* and contributing theories, though it is important to note at least two thirds have some ability to interact with diagnosis codes.

### **Research Question 3: Does the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor See Any Areas of Their Practice or Referral-Making That is Currently Influenced or Informed by Humanism?**

Research Question 3 draws on a robust body of evidence resulting in a hypothesis that the average pastor holds to materialistic beliefs regarding the origins of mental illness and mental constructs, in addition to utilizing these secular constructs unaware of their humanistic

etymology (Berger, 2016, p. 63; Bonino & Hanna, 2017; Breed, 2021; Clebsch & Jaekle, 1964; Clinebell, 1966; Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023; Holleman & Chavez, 2023). As such, this research question requested information from participants regarding their awareness of the current influence of humanism on their pastoral counseling.

As such, the next set of questions, and the subsequent questions participants answered, was with regard to participants' knowledge of their practice or referral-making that is influenced or informed by secular humanism. Briefly, consider the following:

- The first of these questions asked after any areas of participants' practice or referral-making that are currently influenced or informed by humanism. Of  $N = 9$  interviewees,  $n = 5$  stated they believe it has had *some* influence, with  $n = 4$  stating they endeavor for humanism to have no impact. As such, more than half are aware they are affected, with the remaining half being intentional to avoid secular influence. Comparatively, the online survey question revealed that of  $N = 118$ , nearly 63% self-disclosed secular humanism has had an influence on their pastoral counseling approaches. Meaning, more than half, but not two thirds, of respondents self-disclosed they are affected by secular humanism.
- Participants were also asked if they believe secular humanism has had on the field of pastoral counseling. Of  $N = 9$  within the case study interviews,  $n = 8$  stated that they believe it has. Only  $n = 1$  answered by stating they were not educated to articulate an answer to this question. As such, nearly 90% of respondents stated they believed the field of pastoral counseling is affected by secular humanism. Comparatively, the online survey question revealed that of  $N = 118$ , more than 90% self-disclosed secular humanism has had an influence on the field of pastoral counseling, with less than 10% self-disclosing

they did not believe it did. Meaning, most respondents from both samples believe pastoral counseling is affected by secular humanism.

- Participants were asked to share what, if any, professional counseling (Christian or otherwise) they refer to in their community. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 5$  refer to professional Christian counselors in their community,  $n = 2$  only refers to nouthetic biblical counselors, and  $n = 2$  stated they have no community referrals available to them. Meaning, more than half of interview participants refer to professionals in their community. From the follow-up questions pertaining to whether or not the participants research the worldview or Scriptural integration of those they refer to: of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 5$  states they do research the worldview and Scriptural integration of their referrals. Meaning, more than half utilize referral sources, and more than half engage in some measure of evaluation of their referrals. The corresponding online survey question revealed that of  $N = 115$ ,  $n = 73$  self-disclosed they do refer to professional Christian counselors in their community. Of that number,  $n = 60$  self-disclosed they researched the worldview of the counselor, and  $n = 63$  self-disclosed they research Scriptural integration. Meaning, more than half both refer and do some level of research on those they refer to.
- The final question for this guiding research question asked participants to share if a professional counselor (Christian or otherwise) claimed they are spiritual, would they as a pastor or pastoral counselor be more inclined to refer to them than someone who is not spiritual. Of  $N = 9$ ,  $n = 6$  stated they were less inclined. Relatedly,  $n = 3$  said they were more inclined. Significantly, the total of the participants stated they would require more definition of the word spiritual, regardless of their answer. The online survey question

also asked participants if they would be more likely to refer to a counselor who claimed to be spiritual. Of  $N = 117$ ,  $n = 60$  self-disclosed they would, with  $n = 57$  self-disclosing they would not. As such, just over half say they are more likely to refer to a counselor who states they are spiritual.

Knowing this, it appears via data-driven conclusion that this study would reveal that the average pastor or pastoral counselor does see areas of their practice and/or referral-making that are currently influenced or informed by humanism. This is evidenced in both samples by more than half of each respective data set recognizing the impact of secular humanism on them as pastoral counselors, despite not being able to articulate it. Additionally, nearly all respondents from both samples agreed secular humanism affects the field of pastoral counseling. Finally, it is revealed in the data that more than half of respondents evaluate their counselor referrals to mitigate the negative impact of secular humanism, with the remaining half not referring to avoid secular humanism and integration.

**Research Question 4: How Would the Average Pastor or Pastoral Counselor: Counsel or Refer to a Licensed Professional Differently, If at All, If They Were Acutely Aware of and Trained on the Contributing (Secular Humanist) Etymology(s) to the Modern Mental Health System and Its Tools and Theories?**

This research question draws on a body of evidence that the average pastor or pastoral counselor utilizes the modern mental health system (such as: in the form of a referral), its theories, and its tools without full awareness or expressed knowledge of its secular humanist influences and foundation (Berger, 2016, p. 63; Berger, 2018; Bonino & Hanna, 2017; Breed, 2021; Clebsch & Jaekle, 1964; Clinebell, 1966; Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023; Holleman & Chavez, 2023; Stanford & Philpott, 2011; Vaidyanathan et al., 2021). As such, this question

seeks to discern if the average pastor or pastoral counselor believes they need to increase in awareness on the overlap of secular humanism and pastoral counseling. It also asks what, if anything, would be altered regarding how the average pastor or pastoral counselor would counsel or refer if they became aware of or trained on secular humanism and its influence on pastoral counseling.

- Regarding participants' pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training providing information for them on the history of the counseling movement, of  $N = 9$  case study interviews,  $n = 2$  stated their education was minimal,  $n = 5$  stated they received no training or could "not recall," and  $n = 2$  stated they were self-taught (these being the only participants who provided a detailed response). Meaning, each participant ( $N = 9$ ) saw an academic deficit in their Bible school, seminary, or pastoral counseling preparatory training. The corresponding online survey question revealed that of  $N = 118$ , 53% self-disclosed pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training provided information for them on the history of the counseling movement, with nearly 47% self-disclosing it did not. Meaning, just over half of respondents self-disclosed their pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training provided information for them on the history of the counseling movement.
- Regarding whether or not participants thought they would benefit from additional knowledge on how pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect, of  $N = 9$  interviews, each said "yes." The comparative online survey revealed that of  $N = 118$ , just under 90% ( $n = 106$ ) self-disclosed they would benefit from additional knowledge on how pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect, with only 10% self-disclosing they would not. Meaning, the vast majority of respondents from both samples self-

disclosed they would benefit from additional knowledge on how pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect.

- Participants, as pastors or pastoral counselors, were also asked what their thoughts would be if they learned that many pastoral counseling programs taught content that is historically rooted in humanism, if they believed they would counsel differently. Of  $N = 9$  interviews,  $n = 7$  stated that would counsel differently to prevent humanistic influence. As a notable addition,  $n = 2$  stated it would not affect how they counsel because they were already aware of humanism, and it is factoring into how they counsel already. In summary, the interview respondents each stated in their own vernacular that they counsel in light of secular humanism and its (perceived) negative impacts. The corresponding online survey question revealed that of  $N = 118$ ,  $n = 75$  (65.5%) self-disclosed they would counsel differently if they found out that many pastoral counseling programs taught concepts that were historically rooted in humanism. Only  $n = 43$  (36%) self-disclosed they would not. Meaning, more than half of both samples believe they would counsel differently if they knew this information.
- The final question asked participants to share if they learned that many modern practices and diagnostic criteria that average professional Christian counselors use are historically based on humanism, if pastors or pastoral counselors believed they would refer to Christian counselors differently as a pastor if they were made aware of that? Of  $N = 9$  case study interviews,  $n = 7$  stated they would refer differently,  $n = 1$  (Participant 7) stated it would not alter her approach to referrals because this knowledge *already* influences her referral-making (which would result in her answering being an additional affirmation), and  $n = 1$  stated he was unsure if it would but could not articulate additional

context. Meaning, nearly 89% would or do refer differently as a result of humanistic influence. The online survey revealed that of  $N = 118$ ,  $n = 83$  (70%) would refer to a professional counselor differently if those they were referring to were using diagnostic practices and criteria historically based on humanism, meaning, nearly two thirds self-disclosed they would refer differently with this knowledge.

As such, it appears, via data-driven conclusion, that this study would reveal that the average pastor and/or pastoral counselor would: counsel or refer to a licensed professional differently if they were acutely aware of and trained on the contributing (secular humanist) etymology(s) to the modern mental health system and its tools and theories.

Having, thus, determined these results objectively and impartially, it would result in the primary hypothesis that pastors and/or pastoral counselors lack an acute awareness of how much influence secular humanism has on their pastoral counseling, as a correct and/or valid conclusion to state.

### **Discussion**

As has been outlined throughout this research, the Enlightenment was modern culture's coming of age—where humankind moved away from a religious framework for existence and ethics toward secular humanism and various forms of naturalism, adopting humanistic and materialistic concepts to define and understand itself. The field of therapeutic intervention (including pastoral counseling) was not exempt from this shift in philosophical framework (Brown, 2017; Jovanovic, 2021). As this study outlined, modern pastoral counseling has, in fact, adapted to, if not adopted it (Holleman & Chaves, 2023; Klaasen, 2018b; Pierre & Reju, 2015; Vaidyanathan et al., 2021). There are now biblical explanations and recommendations for the use of secular categories designed to help pastoral counselors navigate what has become humanistic

cultural advancement (Johnson, 2021; Welch, 2022). This is of concern for pastoral counseling, as humanism is opposed to the biblical concept and reality of God at its core. It represents a counter-biblical interpretive framework for life and human distress (Brown, 2017; Taliaferro, 2015; Jovanovic, 2021; *English Standard Version Bible*, 2008/2011, Romans 1, Romans 8). Yet, a survey of literature (extensively outlined in Chapter Two) would indicate that pastoral counseling, as a field, is unaware if not embracing of secular humanism in some ways. This is seen as far back as the writing of Clebsch and Jaekle (1964), who assert that pastors should be open to insights from conflicting psychological theories and that humanity's troubles may be too nuanced and complex for pastoral work alone (Clebsch & Jaekle, 1964, p. 79). Or, most recently, a national 2023 clergy study with nearly 900 participants revealing that most of the research sample believes in materialistic and genetic causation in treatments for mental illness (Holleman & Chaves, 2023, pp. 270–273). This is of note as Chapter Two further revealed that the theory of genetic causation finds its origins definitively in secular humanism theory and philosophy (Berger, 2016, 2018; Schwartz & Begley, 2002; Welch, 2011).

Furthermore, as was detailed in Chapter One, little research has been done to examine how influential secular humanistic constructs, theories, and tools have become in and on pastoral care and counseling. Further yet, little to no research has been done to determine if the average pastor or pastoral counselor is even aware of how humanistic their approaches have become. What past research has been done is far from comprehensive, either only alluding to the growing influence of humanism over generations, or is part of a vast body of work that touches on a wide number of subjects, without narrowly focusing on the specifics of this study (Berger, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2020; Powlison, 2007).



**Novel Contributions**

As a result of the above, this narrowly focused research study measuring the level of awareness of the average pastor or pastoral counselor regarding the influence of secular humanism on them and their practice is novel, as no research of this type has been accomplished prior. Other research, such as the Holleman and Chaves study (2023), addresses clergy opinion on the specifics relating to the chemical imbalance theory, the theory of genetic causation, and how clergy believe this affects the construct of depression. Similarly, Fitzgerald and Vaidyanathan's study (2023) was designed to discern what faith communities would benefit from regarding knowledge, partnership with, and utilization of the modern mental health system in their ministry contexts. Knowledge for the purposes of enhanced collaboration was the goal, not measuring awareness and/or impact (Fitzgerald & Vaidyanathan, 2023). As such, this study is novel as it creates a precise body of research for pastors, pastoral counselors, and academic institutions (Bible schools, seminaries, clergy education, certifying bodies) to examine and enhance their educational outputs to best prepare pastors and pastoral counselors to engage with secular humanism in an informed and clear-conscienced way.

**This Study in Light of Previous Research**

Given the novel nature of this study, this research complements previous research by creating a precise base of knowledge in what was an absence of one, from two wide-ranging samples of national, potentially global, participants. It extends past research by shedding new and precise light on the research phenomenon of the awareness, or lack thereof, of pastors and pastoral counselors, specifically regarding the influence of secular humanism on their counseling, referral-making, and therapeutic approaches.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The framework for this study is social constructivism, a subset of cognitive constructionism, which emphasizes learning via guidance and/or collaboration with others (Akpan et al., 2020). This theoretical lens seeks to discern an understanding of the world in which one lives and develop meaningful interpretations from the subjective experience of individuals directly related to, or in the case of this research, the awareness on the part of pastors and pastoral counselors of how influenced they are by secular humanism (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 24). Meaning-making occurs through dialogue, understanding as much as possible from a participant's perspective of the research subject (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Ernest, 1999; Gredler, 1997; Kim, 2001; Kukla, 2000; Prawat & Floden, 1994).

Social constructivism was the correct framework for this study in that it contributed to discerning the significance of historical attitudes and events (the Enlightenment) on modern understandings, dialogues, and directive interactions between pastoral people helpers and those in need of help (Akpan et al., 2020). The eight to 10 semistructured interviews (with a corroborating online survey for wider audience authentication and validity) created the appropriate space for participants and their thoughts to be understood regarding the impact of secular humanism on pastoral counseling, as well as identify gaps that this study demonstrated to exist in most participants' worldview. As a result, this framework and its theory contributed to impartial learning and data-driven meaning-making to the point of recognized data saturation, based on the collaborative perspectives of participants in a tangible and quantifiable way that can be used to make informed enhancements to pastorally academic and training settings to better prepare pastors and pastoral counselors to competently engage in people-helping while

simultaneously being informed enough to minimize any harmful effects of secular humanism in that process.

### **Implications**

In considering the whole of this project to this point, this section outlines the theoretical, empirical, and practical implications resulting from this research study. The nature of the study, specifically the awareness of the average pastor or pastoral counselor regarding the influence of secular humanism on their pastoral counseling approaches will be interwoven throughout each section, as it is a Christian worldview and a secular (anti-God) influence on a practical outpouring of it in the form of the pastorate and pastoral counseling as a field, that is the subject of this research.

### **Theoretical Implications**

Due to the novel nature of this research, connecting it to other theories would prove challenging as this study was conducted to fill a research void and create an opportunity for replication and future study. This noted, some theoretical implications were built into the study itself that present points of consideration. Foremost of these would be related to the presupposition that pastors and pastoral counselors are competently aware of and trained on the effects of secular humanism in their pastoral counseling approaches. Consider the following. As outlined in Chapter Four, of the  $N = 9$  case study interview participants, each is highly trained. There are  $n = 6$  holding graduate level education (with some of whom also holding specialty counseling certifications requiring a minimum of 30 hours of lecture and 50 hours of supervised counseling, and others yet holding doctorates),  $n = 1$  holding an undergraduate level secular training in occupational therapy, focusing on mental health (in addition to comprehensive pastoral counseling certifications that require a minimum of 30 hours of lecture and 50 hours of

supervised counseling), and  $n = 2$  holding undergraduate or undergraduate equivalent training and years of experience in pastoral ministry commensurate to their roles. While highly trained for their pastoral role, each participant described a poverty of education regarding the intersection, overlap, interplay, and interaction between pastoral counseling and secular humanism. Of  $N = 9$ , each stated they desired more knowledge intersections of pastoral counseling and secular humanism. Furthermore, of  $N = 118$ ,  $n = 60$  participants have graduate-level training or higher. And, with the other participants having a significant degree of training accounted for previously in this study, the data yields a reality that 88% of participants had the potential for formalized training to interact with secular humanism in pastoral counseling. Yet, this sample also revealed they, too, desire more information on this, with  $n = 106$  self-disclosing they would like more information on the intersection(s) between pastoral counseling and humanism.

As such, a significant theoretical implication is that pastors and pastoral counselors are not being competently educated or trained within existing systems to be aware of or manage the impact of secular humanism on their pastoral counseling approaches and referral-making despite robust education across academic institutions and denominations (as revealed in Chapter Four). Resultingly, this research generates a theory that at all levels of pastoral preparedness, from undergraduate to post-graduate, as well as in biblical counseling certification, education, and training, there would be benefit from examining their curriculum(s) for the purpose of robust enhancement in this way.

### **Empirical Implications**

A primary empirical implication this research presents is the acute lack of awareness and articulation of the historical era of the Enlightenment, its relationship to the onset of secular

humanism, and the subsequent effect this has on modern pastoral counseling practices. Chapter Two demonstrated a researched-based conclusion from an expansive national survey that most clergy believe in medical causation, the chemical imbalance theory, and genetic causation, all of which, as this study demonstrated, find their origin in Enlightenment secular humanism (Holleman & Chaves, 2023, pp. 270–273). Related to this, Chapter Four demonstrated from both sample populations that considerably less than half of each sample could articulate the influence of the Enlightenment on the field of counseling. From the interviews,  $n = 5$  stated they could not articulate an answer,  $n = 1$  answered incorrectly, leaving only  $n = 3$  providing a historically accurate answer (of  $N = 9$ ). Similarly, the online survey of  $N = 118$ ,  $n = 75$  (more than half, but not two thirds) could not describe the influence of the Enlightenment on the field of counseling, thus corroborating knowledge gap. It reveals a data-driven conclusion of disconnected information and awareness on the definition of secular humanism, the impact of secular humanism, the era of the Enlightenment, how this influenced the field of counseling at the time, and how those historical reverberations continue to impact pastoral counseling to this day.

This implication is further exaggerated by a separate but validating/complimenting question, which asked both sample populations if they believed pastoral counseling, as a field, has been affected by secular humanism. Of  $N = 9$  interviews,  $n = 8$  stated that they believe it has. Meaning, nearly 90% of respondents stated they believed the field of pastoral counseling is affected, either knowingly or unknowingly, by secular humanism. The online survey question revealed similar results. Of  $N = 118$ , more than 90% self-disclosed secular humanism has had an influence on the field of pastoral counseling. Empirically, when viewed with the previous point in this section, the data reveals a credible observation that there are significant awareness gaps on the part of pastors and pastoral counselors connecting clearly intertwined realities that result in a

potential for humanistic compromise infecting pastoral counseling approaches based on a demonstrated lack of cohesion between significant and related concepts.

Resultingly, this research further generates an implication that, at all levels of pastoral preparedness from undergraduate to post-graduate, as well as biblical counseling certification, education, and training, there would be benefit to examining their curriculum(s) for the purpose of robust enhancement to address this data-revealed reality.

### **Practical Implications**

If the implications of this study were considered and applied, most specifically that pastors and pastoral counselors require better training at all levels of academics and education on the history of secular humanism and its influence on everyday pastoral counseling, then the practical implications would be seismic. Better trained pastors, for example, would learn that many modern theories and interventions find their origin in a secular humanistic etymology and avoid areas of compromise in a knowing way (Clebsch & Jaekle, 1994, p. v, vii). They would be more informed on the reality that the theory of medical causation for mental illness and the brain-dysfunction theory of personhood find their origin in secular humanism, and provide counsel accordingly (Berger, 2016, p. 63; Bonino & Hanna, 2017). They would be prepared to engage with the fact that the chemical imbalance theory, still held by many to be true and useful despite being wildly scientifically disproven, is no longer viable as an explanation for human behavior and emotional dysregulation, and instead, be informed on more data-driven biblical interventions (Berger, 2019; Murphy et al., 2022; Pies, 2011, 2019). This seismic shift would breed better trained and more historically aware pastors and pastoral counselors who would be more comprehensively prepared to engage in the work of pastoral care and counseling to “rightly divide the Word of Truth” and counsel, integrate, care, and/or help in a way that honors the issue

a person in need of counsel has. In doing so, pastors and pastoral counselors would recognize a need for a Gospelized approach of encompassing care for an embodied soul in need of nuanced approaches and interventions to address counselee distress without lapsing into humanism (*English Standard Version Bible*, 2008/2011, 2 Timothy 2:15, Psalm 139:14).

Pointedly, the most practical implication of this study, should it result in a change in various academic and training institutions, would be better trained pastors and pastoral counselors, capable of providing better, more *informed* counsel on a myriad of complex issues, that result in the most comprehensive help possible being provided, without compromising into veiled anti-God therapeutic approaches and outputs. A shift of this type would be reflective of a stalwart worldview of being uncompromising in both academic and personal faith in the sufficiency of Christ and the fullness of the knowledge He has given us, in a knowing way (*English Standard Version Bible*, 2008/2011, Psalm 139:14, 2 Corinthians 12:9). It would therefore create the truest expression of care, for the glory of God, from the practical theology of the counselor, for the good of the one receiving counseling.

### **Recommendations for Future Study**

There are several recommendations this research presents for future study that are derived from the results. Of primary significance for the most encompassing and extended reach of this research would be a recommendation to conduct a survey or audit of the curriculum by or for the academic and/or certifying institutions represented by this research, specifically from the interviews where these entities were named (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, the Assemblies of God ordination body, the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors, the International Association of Biblical Counselors), where their curriculum for pastoral ministry is evaluated for effectiveness regarding

the presentation of the history of the counseling, focusing on the major movements and milestones that have resulted in the counseling movement known and used today. This extended research would be time-consuming, but would identify the *now*-known gaps in education and training that this study revealed exist from both the interviews and the online surveys. The gaps were revealed to exist across the spectrum of generations of academic and educational institutions, in addition to certifying entities, denominations, and age groups. A secondary application from this curriculum audit could be a course component added to each preparatory investment where the Enlightenment and its effects would be treated, for example, for counseling students with the same level of investment and intention that other pastoral disciplines treat Martin Luther sparking the Protestant Reformation and the awareness of the long-standing impact of this event from its occurrence to modernity. This recommendation would result in both increased awareness and acute research gap filling.

A second, but more narrowly focused, recommendation would be an audit or survey done of pastoral training programs (specifically those represented through this study) discerning where increases in awareness are needed on the subject and impact of secular humanism and how it influences the ministry of pastoral counseling specifically. A study of this type would identify gaps in academic preparation, reveal the places this knowledge base could be better articulated for the next generation of pastors, and, as a result, potentially lower the various aspects of unawareness represented in this study (questions regarding the history of the *DSM*, its usefulness, its etymological foundation, and how it intersects with pastoral counseling in God-honoring ways) in future studies of this type where the procedures could be replicated to identify an enhancement or further decrease in awareness (and utilization).



A third recommendation for future study would be as follows. Create a long form “lab” study involving an initial survey, education, and hypothetical case studies. At the outset of the lab study, an interview or survey questions similar to those of this study could be given to participants to answer. Upon the interview and survey completion, the equivalent of a three-credit hour class of information would be provided to the sample, equipping them with information on the Enlightenment, secular humanism, the etymology of the *DSM* as an outpouring of it, the influence of secular humanism on the counseling movement, including that of pastoral counseling, and how these matters intersect today through various counseling disciplines. Upon completion of the sample’s academic preparation, they should be provided with a series of case study scenarios that would require participants to engage in their newly learned (and previous) knowledge base(s). From this, it could be learned if academic preparation results in greater awareness and better pastoral counseling practice(s). If there is a demonstrated change in thought processes, approaches to pastoral counseling, and how referrals get made by study participants, this would act as a further research base to then fully articulate a three-credit hour class to be incorporated in all pastoral counseling preparatory environments to consistently raise awareness, and subsequently, more competently train pastors and pastoral counselors to provide informed pastoral counsel to those they serve without inappropriate or uninformed secular humanist compromise.

### **Summary**

As has been reiterated throughout this study, the purpose of this research was to pursue a knowledge of whether or not the average pastor and/or pastoral counselor has an awareness of the influence of secular humanism in their counseling approaches and applications. It was engaged in and accomplished a robust and comprehensive review of literature (Chapter Two)

which demonstrated that humanistic, therapeutic categories have influenced the biblical framework of pastoral counseling to become both knowingly and unknowingly compromised, if not widely adopted and used. Given that secular humanism is an anti-God system of explanation and societal interpretation, this cannot morally remain the case within the realm of pastoral counseling (*English Standard Version Bible*, 2008/2011, Acts 18:11, Acts 19:10, Colossians 3:16, 1 Thessalonians 2:7–18, 2 Timothy 3:16–17, 1 Peter 5:8).

To accomplish this goal, the design for this research was a mixed method intra-paradigm qualitative study, using two qualitative forms of research: the collective case study research method (via semistructured interview) and an online survey (for comparative analysis). The mixed methods intra-paradigm study approach offered a higher degree of opportunity to increase validity and eliminate error (Greckhamer et al., 2018; Lucas & Szatrowski, 2014). To that end, a robust set of question-based instruments were developed for both intra-paradigm methods. They were complementary in nature and utilized to the point of data-saturation:  $N = 9$  for the case study interview and  $N = 119$  for the online interview, respectively. The data reveal that while pastors and pastoral counselors are somewhat informed or self-taught, their training is not comprehensive, competent, and/or complete. The objective datasets presented a clear conclusion that the average pastor is unprepared to engage in adequate discussion on or understanding of the overlap of secular humanism and pastoral counseling, and, as a result, cannot be concluded to be truly aware.

Recognizing this, there are notable conclusions to draw from this study. First, this research generates a clear and data-driven implication that, at all levels of pastoral preparedness, there would be a significant benefit to enhancing academic curriculum(s) for the purposes of more competently trained and secularly aware pastors and pastoral counselors. The case study

interviews and corroborating online survey clearly validate this conclusion with nearly every data set. Second, there is a notable conclusion participants revealed, in that they lack awareness, and desire more information. This was represented in the themes derived from the data (Chapter Four) and found in such data points as seen in Appendix E, as well as in the corresponding interview questions. Thirdly, as noted, the most practical implication of this study, should it result in any change or enhancement in creating awareness through academic and/or training institutions, would be that its hypothesis revealed, and the research demonstrated, a necessity of better-trained pastors and pastoral counselors who are capable of providing more informed and aware counsel. The ultimate intention of this increased awareness would be more comprehensive care for the glory of God and the good of those being served, minimizing or eliminating compromise, whether knowingly or unknowingly, with any anti-God therapeutic approach, intervention, or recommendation.

It is this researcher's ultimate hope that this study is used as a foundation for future research and/or academic enhancement. The prayer would be that it acts as an impetus to better equip those called to any type of pastoral counseling ministry—that they become fully informed, and as a result, aware, of the pervasive nature of secular humanism permeating the counseling movement, and they, resultingly, pursue the most effective and informed means of biblically engaging with the distressed/distresses God brings pastors and/or pastoral counselors to serve, while simultaneously avoiding any secular humanist infiltration and compromise.

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**Appendix A: IRB Approval Letter****LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.**  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

October 10, 2023

Stephen Ganschow  
Kristin Kellen

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY23-24-307 Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Dear Stephen Ganschow, Kristin Kellen,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

**For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.**

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

Sincerely,  
**G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP**  
*Administrative Chair*  
**Research Ethics Office**

## Appendix B: Case Study Interview Questionnaire

### SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

1. Please introduce yourself as if we have just met, including your role in pastoral counseling.
2. Please share your age.
3. Please share any training, certification(s), or degrees you have in pastoral counseling.
4. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of pastoral counseling as a subset of the “Christian counseling movement?”
5. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of modern psychology, including modern evidenced-based practices?
6. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of modern psychiatry?
7. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of modern biblical counseling?
8. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the historical era known as “The Enlightenment?”
9. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding Jay Adams and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?
10. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding Emil Kraepelin and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?
11. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding Wilhelm Wundt and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?
12. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding David Powlison and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?
13. Do you read any pastoral counseling journals?
  - o If yes, which?

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

- What is their impact on your approach to pastoral counseling?
14. Can you describe your definition and understanding of secular humanism?
15. What influence, if any, do you think “The Enlightenment” has had on counseling?
16. What do you know of the history of the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM), including its originators?
17. Can you describe how you interact with a formal diagnosis code in your pastoral counseling?
18. What influence, if any, do you believe secular humanism has had on your pastoral counseling approach?
- What influence, if any, do you believe secular humanism has had on the field of pastoral counseling?
19. What, if any, professional counseling (Christian or otherwise) do you refer to in your community?
- What, if any, research do you engage in on their worldview?
  - What, if any, research do you engage in on their biblical integration?
20. If a professional counselor (Christian or otherwise) claims they are spiritual, are you more inclined to refer to them than someone who is not?
- Can you explain your reasoning for this?
21. Did your pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training provide information for you on the history of the counseling movement?
- If yes, what of it do you recall?
22. Do you believe you would benefit from additional knowledge on how pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect?

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

23. If you learned that many pastoral counseling programs taught content that is historically rooted in humanism, do you believe you would counsel differently as a pastor, if you were made aware of that?
  
24. If you learned that many modern practices and diagnostic criteria that that average professional Christian counselor use are historically based on humanism, do you believe you would refer to Christian counselors differently as a pastor, if you were made aware of that?



## Appendix C: Case Study Interview Field Notes

### SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

#### RQ1: How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of the modern mental health system?

1. **Please introduce yourself as if we have just met, including your role in pastoral counseling.**

Participant 1 – Pastor of Care & Counseling

Participant 2 – Lead Pastor

Participant 3 – Senior (solo) Pastor

Participant 4 – Private Practice BC / pastoral counselor

Participant 5 – Lead Pastor at a church in Texas

Participant 6 – Pastor of Digital Communication and Discipleship

Participant 7 – Kids World Pastor

Participant 8 – Pastor of Soul Care (counseling)

Participant 9 – Senior Pastor

2 pastors of counseling

1 Private practice BC

1 Digital Communications (Online Campus Pastor)

1 Kids Pastor

4 Senior Pastors

7 men, 2 women.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

**2. Please share your age.**

Participant 1 – 31

Participant 2 – 35

Participant 3 – 40

Participant 4 – 66

Participant 5 – 43

Participant 6 – 28

Participant 7 - 45

Participant 8 - 43

Participant 9 - 55

7 / 9 are 45 or under.

2/9 are 45 and older (55 and 66)

**3. Please share any training, certification(s), or degrees you have in pastoral counseling.**

Participant 1 – MDiv in BC (Southern Sem) / ACBC

Participant 2 – MA in Bible Studies – taking a counseling class “care of souls”

Participant 3 – MdDiv and D.Min. – 1 semester / 1 class. 1/3 of ACBC Cert.

Participant 4 – IABC Cert. / Self-Taught / degree in occupation therapy that taught psych.

Participant 5 – All 3 levels of ordination through the Assemblies of God

Participant 6 – Mdiv from Midwestern

Participant 7 – Bach Science in Bible and Kids Min

Participant 8 – Mdiv, Training in BC from CCEF. Formerly ACBC certified.

Participant 9 – Master level Edu. Trained in BC. Working on IABC and ACBC cert.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

4 MDiv

2 MA

1 Secularly trained in occupational therapy (BA) and BC certification

1 BS in Bible and Kids Min

1 Assemblies of God certified and ordained in all 3 levels.

4. **What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of pastoral counseling as a subset of the “Christian counseling movement?”**

Participant 1 - Pastoral Counseling has been a tradition since the Apostolic era forward.

(very vague)

Participant 2 – Very little.

Participant 3 – Very little

Participant 4 – History from Adams forward through self-taught research

Participant 5 – Not much at all. Just that it is part of the role of a pastor. Experience only.

Participant 6 – Very minimal. Unable to articulate.

No knowledge of the history. I only had 2 counseling courses.

Participant 8 – Understands the history extensively, from Martin Luthor and the Puritans to present.

Participant 9 – No knowledge he can recall.

6 were unable to articulate anything

The 2 pastors of counseling (participant 1 and 8) know extensively

1 – self-taught – Participant 4 – only knew Adams forward.

5. **What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of modern psychology, including modern evidenced-based practices?**

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

Participant 1 – notes its history in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. Describes it as an Enlightenment outpouring before any questions about the Enlightenment or history were asked. So he is knowledgeable.

Participant 2 – Zero.

Participant 3 – Very little.

Participant 4 – Describes herself as aware, but unable to articulate.

Participant 5 – I have done research for counseling sessions and preaching, but nothing formal. Low level layman knowledge at best.

Participant 6 – I know psychology and how to measure it against BC. Not the history.

Participant 7 – No knowledge of the history.

Participant 8 – I only have a little bit of knowledge, but it came through the lens of my independent study of BC. I know CBT, Existential Therapy, and Narrative Trauma therapy.

Participant 9 – No knowledge he can recall.

2/9 (participants 1 and 8) had extensive knowledge.

6/9 had none.

1/9 had outdated knowledge (participant 4).

**6. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of modern psychiatry?**

Participant 1 – slightly knowledgeable. Talked about the barbaric practices of lobotomy and manipulation of the brain. No date time attached, but knowledgeable about how brain manipulation through various medicines took place. The last century and the development of the DSM also is a part.

Participant 2 – Zero.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

Participant 3 – Very limited.

Participant 4 – Describes herself as aware, knowledgeable enough to interact in counseling on it

Participant 5 – None. Just researched-knowledge toward the use of medication and helping people decide if it's sinful or not to take it.

Participant 6 – Minimal. I couldn't account for it.

Participant 7 – No knowledge of the history.

Participant 8 – None.

Participant 9 – No knowledge he can recall.

1/9 (Participant 1) had knowledge on history.

8/9.

**7. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the history of modern biblical counseling?**

Participant 1 – roots it in Jay Adams. Focus on Christ in counseling issues. Nouthetic counseling led to seminaries adopting it as their model. Also alludes to the “new wave” as clinically informed BC in the last 15 years.

Participant 2 – Zero.

Participant 3 – Knows about Jay Adams and how now we have the ACBC. Nothing further.

Participant 4 – Is able to describe the practice and process of BC and BC administration, but was unable to describe the history.

Participant 5 – Nothing.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

Participant 6 – I had 2 BC classes. But was unable to articulate anything specific with this question.

Participant 7 – No knowledge of the history.

Participant 8 – Extensive knowledge. Starting at 7:30) Describes Powlison's work, Lambert's work, and Eric Johnson's book.

Participant 9 – No knowledge he can recall.

3/9 had knowledge (participants 1, 3, and 8).

6/9 new little ot nothing.

**8. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding the historical era known as “The Enlightenment?”**

Participant 1 – described it was the rise of humanism away from religious expression.

Participant 2 – Zero.

Participant 3 – I learned about it in my MA. It was a shift in focus to “reason.”

Participant 4 – Discussed the enlightenment as a product of the 1960s and 70s as being new age.

Participant 5 – None.

Participant 6 – Aware of its impact, I know it's negative, but could not articulate specifics.

Participant 7 – No knowledge.

Participant 8 – I majored in social science in under grad. And, as a history buff, I have studied it extensively.

Participant 9 – No knowledge he can recall.

3/9 had knowledge (participants 1, 3, and 8).

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

*6/9 new little or nothing.*

**9. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding Jay Adams and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?**

Participant 1 – describes Adams as a pioneer of BC. His model led to the creation of training centers and modern BC in seminaries.

Participant 2 – Zero

Participant 3 – I am familiar with Adams. Could not articulate.

Participant 4 – Very aware of Adams, his writing, and his influence.

Participant 5 – None.

I have read Adams. But can't speak to his overall influence.

Participant 7 – None.

Participant 8 – Has extensive knowledge of Adams, his influences, what he did for BC, and how BC as a whole exists because of him.

Participant 9 – No knowledge he can recall.

*3/9 had extensive knowledge (participants 1, 4, and 8).*

*2/9 were aware and had read Adams, but that's it.*

*4/9 could not articulate.*

**10. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding Emil Kraepelin and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?**

Participant 1 – None.

Participant 2 – Zero.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

Participant 3 – None.

Participant 4 – Aware of his name, but no concept of influence.

Participant 5 – None.

Participant 6 – Zero. Never heard of him.

Participant 7 – None.

Participant 8 – Zero.

Participant 9 – No knowledge all.

*All 9 had none.*

**11. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding Wilhelm Wundt and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?**

Participant 1 – Knew his name. Says he was a pioneer modern psychology that many modern people draw from but knew no specifics beyond that.

Participant 2 – Zero

Participant 3 – None.

Participant 4 – Zero.

Participant 5 – None.

Participant 6 – Zero. Never heard of him.

Participant 7 – None.

Participant 8 – I know his name, but could not describe his influence.

Participant 9 – No knowledge he can recall.

*2/9 knew his name and that he was significant, but could not articulate his influence.*

*7/9 could not describe*



**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

**12. What knowledge, if any, do you have regarding David Powlison and his influence on modern counseling practice(s)?**

Participant 1 – central figure of BC. Moved away from behaviorism to a more heart-centered model and talked about desires and affections as being Powlison's brain child and forward movement for BC.

Participant 2 – Zero

Participant 3 – I am familiar with Powlison as a part of BC, but nothing specific.

Participant 4 – I knew him personally and read everything he's written.

Participant 5 – None.

Participant 6 – I am aware of him and have read a devotional of his, but am not aware of his influence.

Participant 7 – I know his name, but no specific knowledge.

Participant 8 – I have a lot of knowledge of Powlison. I have read everything he's written. I saw him take Adams' pieces and build on them for modern BC.

Participant 9 – I know who he is...I know his name...but no specific knowledge he can recall.

3/9 had extensive knowledge on Powlison, with 1 knowing him personally.

3/9 knew his name, but could not articulate his influence.

3/9 had no knowledge.

**13. Do you read any pastoral counseling journals?**

Participant 1 – The Journal of BC.

Participant 2 – Yes

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

Participant 3 – No.

Participant 4 – – The Journal of BC.

Participant 5 – No.

Participant 6 – No.

Participant 7 – No.

Participant 8 – Yes. The Journal of BC.

Participant 9 – No.

- If yes, which?

Participant 2 – No.

- What is their impact on your approach to pastoral counseling?

Participant 1 - It challenges him to be responsible w/ his skills and think more deeply about scripture and new models of helping people.

Participant 2 – Not able to describe.

Participant 4 – Very helpful for hard cases with things I didn't understand that the journal discussed.

Participant 8 – I read them and implement things in difficult cases the journal addresses. It's been shaping.

3/9 all read the Journal of BC, and said it helped them have ideas and approaches for hard cases.

6/9 did not read an journals in counseling.

**14. Can you describe your definition and understanding of secular humanism?**

Participant 1 – a philosophical ideology that sees the human experience as central to the current world.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

Participant 2 – No.

Participant 3 – It is a term referencing human reason and valuing that.

Participant 4 – A massive worldview difference from biblical worldview. It's a man-centric view of life as opposed to Christ centric.

Participant 5 – A look internally to overcome emotional or psychological challenges. The power of self to change.

Participant 6 – No.

Participant 7 – I cannot on the spot.

Participant 8 – A view of life and living absent from God, where humans are actually good and at the center. Life is relativistic. All we know is a result of human invention and understanding.

Participant 9 – No.

5/9 (participants (1, 3, 4, 5, 8) provided an accurate definition in their own words.

4/9 could not.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

**RQ2: How informed is the average pastor or pastoral counselor on the (humanistic) etymology of modern mental health system tools, such as the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM), its codes, and contributing theories?**

**15. What influence, if any, do you think “The Enlightenment” has had on counseling?**

Participant 1 – The Enlightenment was very impactful on counseling. Made it about one’s view of self and their expression. Counseling goals are now focused on this themselves (self-actualization) (client-centered).

Participant 2 – Unable to articulate the impact.

Participant 3 – The shift away from seeing the Bible as authoritative resulted in more “authorities” in counseling than there were beforehand. Before it was Bible almost only, and now there is scores of authorities.

Participant 4 – A lot. As self-actualization has become a prominent philosophy of life (new age), it’s heavily influenced.

Participant 5 – Unknown.

Participant 6 – It has a significant influence.

Participant 7 – I cannot articulate it, though I know it does. Every era has had an effect on counseling though.

Participant 8 – When people started to question religious influence as an authority, after events like the 30 years war, people started to question religion as viable, because it seemed to always lead to fighting. So religious texts were ousted in favor of human reason and secular humanism. As a result science became more important as a non-

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

religious basis for things. This, then created secular psychology - a new human-centric system of counseling that was antithetical to religious institutions helping people.

Participant 9 – No knowledge of that.

3/9 (participants 1, 3, 8) provided an answer reflective of the reality of the Enlightenment and its impact.

1/9 answered incorrectly, and talked about the wrong era (participant 4)

5/9 could not articulate.

**16. What do you know of the history of the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM), including its originators?**

Participant 1 – Doesn't know originators. The APA was influential. The DSM is a way to assess and describe clusters of symptoms to categorize and label all manner of human behavior. Knows it's changed over time.

Participant 2 – Zero.

Participant 3 – I am familiar w/ how to use the DSM, but none of the originators.

Participant 4 – I know how to read and use the DSM. But not its development. I do not know the originators.

Participant 5 – I don't know anything about that.

Participant 6 – I am familiar with the DSM-5. But no knowledge on the history or its originators.

Participant 7 – I do not know the history, but I am familiar w/ its purpose and usefulness.

Participant 8 – I know a little. I do not know the originators. What I know, in general, was the DSM was an attempt to scientifically classify distressing human behavior.

Participant 9 – No knowledge.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

0/9 knew any originators or their worldviews.

1/9 (participant 8) was able to articulate it correct relating to the Enlightenment.

**17. Can you describe how you interact with a formal diagnosis code in your pastoral counseling?**

Participant 1 – I'll use it to understand the cluster of symptoms that a counselee may experience.

Participant 2 – No.

Participant 3 – No.

Participant 4 – I receive it and be familiar with them to recategorize it as biblical. How do we live w/ a diagnosis code to please God is what I focus on.

Participant 5 – I don't.

Participant 6 – I would not base pastoral counsel on it. It's a helpful data point for me to address symptoms as needed.

Participant 7 – I do not interact with them. I would default to their therapist. I would give the formal diagnosis code to give it another name specific (rename) to a pastoral counseling environment. I'd be pastoral.

Participant 8 – I do not interact at all. I do not use DSM language. I use biblical language, concepts and categories. I know the DSM lingo to understand the person, but I use biblical language.

Participant 9 – I would try and help counselees articulate their diagnosis code in more general terms, and then trying to relate it to biblical counseling language.

6/9 (participants 1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9,) would use it as a source of information and then translate it to biblical language.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

3/9 do not use and avoid.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

**RQ3: Does the average pastor or pastoral counselor see any areas of their practice or referral-making that is currently influenced or informed by humanism?**

**18. What influence, if any, do you believe secular humanism has had on your pastoral counseling approach?**

Participant 1 – “Some influence” because society is secularly humanized. It may lead me to be too focused on improvement of well-being or emotions as opposed to holiness.

Participant 2 – Some, but he couldn’t explain it.

Participant 3 – I am not sure how I am influenced, but I know that those I’ve read have been...so I have thus been influenced.

Participant 4 – None I am now aware of it. I purpose to be fully God-centered.

Participant 5 – I point people away from themselves (his definition of secular humanism) and to God.

Participant 6 – It’s impacted because the people I meet w/ are impacted. And because I have a knowledge and training gap, I am surely impacted.

Participant 7 – I can’t articulate the answer to that. Because I am only a pastoral counselor: “I am not sure that is a super relevant question [pertaining] to me.” She did not believe it applied to her.

Participant 8 – It does not overtly. I am sure it does w/ out me knowing.

Participant 9 – I strive for none. I counsel through God’s Word.

Participants 1, 2, 3, 6, 8 all recognized it has had some impact on them, but each described their efforts to mitigate it.

Participants 4, 5, 7, 9 all said there is no effect and they only counsel from the Bible



**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

- **What influence, if any, do you believe secular humanism has had on the field of pastoral counseling?**

Participant 1 – on a wide scope, it is dominating. He believes that the “average pastor” is not well trained, and thus, the movement of pastoral counseling is heavily influenced.

Participant 2 – It has had some impact but unable to be described.

Participant 3 – Too many pastors think counseling is beyond them, so they believe they have to refer as a result.

Participant 4 – Clinically informed BC is the current expression of this. All of the “\_\_\_\_-informed” isms.

Participant 5 – It has had an influence. Too many Christian counselors allow people to have too much self-reliance.

Participant 6 – Very significant.

Participant 7 – I could not articulate that.

Participant 8 – Usually it is misrepresentations of Scripture. Secular humanist language and misunderstandings and Miss articulation of scripture that leads people to false conclusions, like how someone must love themselves before they can love others. Which is in direct violation to the greatest commandment. Things like that.

Participant 9 – I believe the average, untrained pastor is more secularized than they probably realize.

8/9 (all but participant 7) articulated that pastoral counseling has been impacted in some degree.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

**19. What, if any, professional counseling (Christian or otherwise) do you refer to in your community?**

Participant 1 – Yes. A Christian psychiatrist.

Participant 2 – There are none in our community I refer to.

Participant 3 – The Biblical Counseling Center, and a local church with a counseling ministry called Bethel Church.

Participant 4 – I refer to other BC. I won't refer to a secularist. I will also "recommend" or "suggest" people see a doctor if they are psychotic.

Participant 5 – We have a list of professional Christian counselors, but I did make craft it. I inherited it, as the Senior Pastor.

Participant 6 – I do refer to Christian counselors.

Participant 7 – I do refer to (integrated) Christian counselors in my community

Participant 8 – I know and trust and refer to a few professional counselors. They do their counseling from a Christian worldview, though they use evidence-based practices and integration.

Participant 9 – I do not refer to integrated. Nor is there anyone in my community I think I could.

5/9 – refer to integrated professional counselors (4 of whom vetted, 1 [participant 5] did not).

2/9 only refer to professional BC.

2/9 (participant 2 and 9) do not refer and do not have anyone to refer to

o **What, if any, research do you engage in on their worldview?**

Participant 1 – I do ask questions about biblical truth and their understanding of it.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

I look for them to be at least “balanced.”

Participant 2 – He would investigate when interviewing counselors.

Participant 3 – I vetted them and their opinion on Scripture in counseling before referring.

Participant 4 – I do not know how to do that unless you know someone.

Participant 5 – None. I inherited the list.

Participant 6 – A lot. They have theological degrees in addition to their psych training.

Participant 7 – I do research their worldview.

Participant 8 – I do, though informally. I ask about their theology informing their counseling and the place of Scripture. As well as their approach and counseling philosophy and various doctrines (like the doctrine of sin).

Participant 9 – If there was someone I thought I could refer to, I would, yes.

**What, if any, research do you engage in on their biblical integration?**

Participant 1 – Conversational research. He wants to know how they see the centrality of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Participant 2 – He would investigate this if interviewing.

Participant 3 – Anecdotally.

Participant 4 – I’ve never had the in-road to do that.

Participant 5 – None. I inherited the list. But now I think I need to.

Participant 6 – A lot. They have theological degrees (MAs) in addition to their psych training.

Participant 7 – I specifically ask about where they attend church, how Scripture

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

integrates in, and how faith in Christ is represented in the session itself. I won't refer to anyone I do not vet.

Participant 8 – Yes. Definitely.

Participant 9 – If there was someone I thought I could refer to, I would, yes.

**20. If a professional counselor (Christian or otherwise) claims they are spiritual, are you more inclined to refer to them than someone who is not?**

Participant 1 – Less inclined.

Participant 2 – No.

Participant 3 – No.

Participant 4 – No.

Participant 5 – No.

Participant 6 – The percentage may be higher toward yes, but I need more info.

Participant 7 – not necessary.

Participant 8 – Yes, it would depend on what they meant by spiritual.

Participant 9 – Yes. But I'd need deeper clarification on what spiritual means.

o **Can you explain your reasoning for this?**

Participant 1 – Spiritual likely means mystical. As such, it may even be more harmful than helpful.

Participant 2 – I would need to know what spiritual means.

Participant 3 – I'd need to know what spiritual means.

Participant 4 – I need to know what spiritual means.

Participant 5 – I need to know what spiritual means.

Participant 6 – I need to know what spiritual means.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

Participant 7 – There are a lot of things spiritual could mean.

Participant 8 – it would depend on what they meant by spiritual.

Participant 9 – it would depend on what was meant by spiritual.

6/9 said they were less inclined

3/9 said they would if they had more info on the definition of spiritual to carefully  
make the choice

9/9 said they needed the definition of spiritual

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

**GRO 4: How would the average pastor or pastoral counselor: counsel or referral to a licensed professional differently, if at all, if they were acutely aware of and trained on the contributing (secular humanist) etymology(s) to the modern mental health system and its tools and theories?**

**21. Did your pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training provide information for you on the history of the counseling movement?**

Participant 1 – Yes, but very little.

Participant 2 – No.

Participant 3 – I don't recall. Most of the little I know came from the little ACBC covered in the initial 30 hours of training touching on Adams the DSM itself, but that was about it.

Participant 4 – When I did IABC training, no. She claims to be self-taught on this.

Participant 5 – No.

Participant 6 – Minimal.

Participant 7 – I took 2 classes. The history was not important.

Participant 8 – No. I am self-taught. I am a BC history buff.

Participant 9 – No. At least not yet.

○ **If yes, what of it do you recall?**

Participant 1 – An intro to counseling class that touched on the Enlightenment for maybe 20 minutes.

Participant 6 – only Freud.

**7/9 said no or so little they could not recall or minimal**

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

2/9 (participant 4 / 8) self-taught, 1 of which was deeply knowledgeable (Participant 8)

**22. Do you believe you would benefit from additional knowledge on how pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect?**

Participant 1 – yes.

Participant 2 – yes

Participant 3 – absolutely.

Participant 4 – yes.

Participant 5 – yes.

Participant 6 – yes

Participant 7 – “absolutely.”

Participant 8 – Yes.

Participant 9 – Yes.

9/9 said yes.

**23. If you learned that many pastoral counseling programs taught content that is historically rooted in humanism, do you believe you would counsel differently as a pastor, if you were made aware of that?**

Participant 1 – no

Participant 2 – yes

Participant 3 – yes, I would have to take it into consideration

Participant 4 – yes, it makes me make sure I am even MORE pastoral in my care.

Participant 5 – yes.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

Participant 6 – yes

Participant 7 – No.

Participant 8 – Yes. It already affects how I counsel.

Participant 9 – Yes. I take my BC seriously to not have to refer to secular counselors.

7/9 said yes, and would counsel as a means of preventing humanism.

2/9 said no, but it is because they were already aware of humanism and it factors into how they counsel and refer.

So, 9/9 essentially said yes.

24. **If you learned that many modern practices and diagnostic criteria that average professional Christian counselor use are historically based on humanism, do you believe you would refer to Christian counselors differently as a pastor, if you were made aware of that?**

Participant 1 – yes.

Participant 2 – I am not sure.

Participant 3 – Yes, I'd be cautious of it.

Participant 4 – Yes. I am aware of that. And I would be hesitant to refer that way. I'd try and keep them myself.

Participant 5 – Yes.

Participant 6 – Yes

Participant 7 – Yes, in summary, because I (she) already vet counselors closely for this reason.

Participant 8 – No. Because I am already aware of their humanistic tendencies, so I can make informed decisions.



**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

Participant 9 – Yes. I am less likely to refer to them.

7/9 said yes, and they'd be more cautious and or want to learn more.

1/9 said no, because he already does the appropriate vetting

1/9 said he was unsure.

Essentially, 8/9 said yes.

**SGanschow – Case Study Interview Questionnaire  
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

**INTERVIEW THEMES:**

- 1) There seems to be awareness or cursory knowledge of a variety of subjects (The Enlightenment, secular humanism is negative, folks like Adams and Powlison, etc), but a limited amount of actual knowledge to articulate the reason why.
- 2) The most knowledgeable on secular humanism and its impact were professed to be self-taught in the interviews.
- 3) All agreed that their education on the history of counseling and how it effects their present practice, across the board, was deficient to prepare them to counsel or address secular humanism.
  - a. All believe they need more knowledge on how to interact with secular humanism as pastors / pastoral counselors.
- 4) There is a general awareness that humanism is dangerous for a Christian, but most could not articulate how, why, or where humanism came from. And it's as if the few that do had a hard time pulling the pieces together.
  - a. Only 2 participants were knowledge enough to dialogue in detail throughout all of the survey questions (participants 1 & 8).

**NOTEABLE OBSERVATIONS FOR CHAPTER 5**

- 1) It didn't matter where folks were educated from, they were woefully unaware.
- 2) Those who knew the most were self-taught.
- 3) Both data sets resulted in a yield of mass-desire for more awareness and info.

## Appendix D: Online Survey Questionnaire

### SGanschow – Online Survey Questions Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

1. Could you please provide your age range?
  - a. 18-26
  - b. 27-34
  - c. 35-42
  - d. 43-49
  - e. 50+
2. In the space below, please provide any degrees, certifications, and training you have had specific to pastoral counseling, if any? If you do not have any degrees, certifications, and training specific to pastoral counseling, please write: “none.”
3. If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the history of pastoral counseling within the “Christian counseling movement” in 3-4 sentences?
4. Could you provide a synopsis of the history of modern psychology in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
5. If asked, could describe any modern evidenced-based practices in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
6. Could you provide a synopsis of the history of modern psychiatry in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
7. If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the history of modern biblical counseling in 3-4 sentences?
8. If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the historical era known as “The Enlightenment” in 3-4 sentences?
9. Do you have any knowledge or awareness of Jay Adams, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?

**SGanschow – Online Survey Questions**  
**Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

10. Do you have any knowledge or awareness of Emil Kraepelin, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
11. Do you have any knowledge or awareness of Wilhelm Wundt, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
12. Do you have any knowledge or awareness of David Powlison, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
13. Do you read any pastoral counseling journals?
  - a. Could you name them, if asked?
  - b. Could you describe their influence on you in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
14. Could you provide a definition of secular humanism in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
15. Could you provide a synopsis of the influence “The Enlightenment” has had on counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?
16. If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the history of the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM) in 3-4 sentences?
17. Could you name any original contributors to the creation of the DSM, if asked?
18. If asked, could you describe how you interact with a formal diagnosis code in your pastoral counseling?
19. Do you believe humanism has had an influence on your pastoral counseling approach?
20. Do you believe humanism has had an influence on the field of pastoral counseling?
21. Do you refer to any professional counseling (Christian or otherwise) in your community?

**SGanschow – Online Survey Questions**  
**Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling**

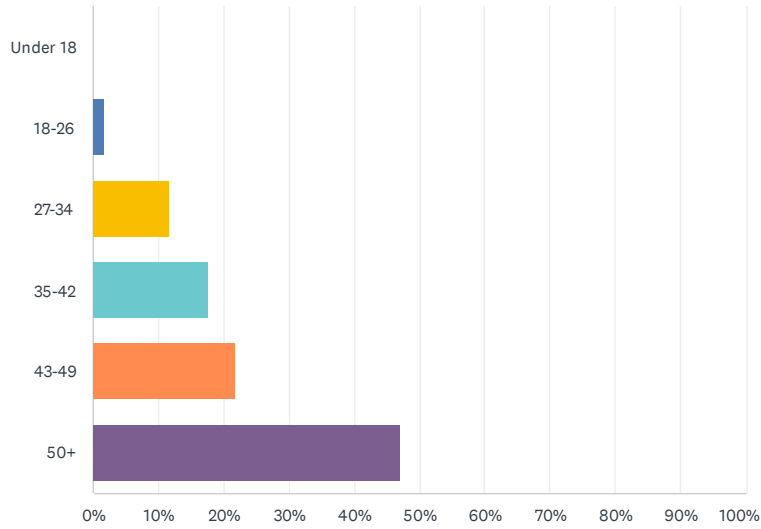
- a. Do you research their worldview before referral?
  - b. Do you investigate the nature of the Scriptural integration and application(s) before referral?
22. If a professional counselor (Christian or otherwise) claims they are spiritual, are you more inclined to refer to them than someone who is not?
- a. Could you explain your response in 3-4 sentences if asked?
23. Did your pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training provide information for you on the history of the counseling movement?
- a. If yes, could you describe what you recall in 3-4 sentences if asked?
24. Do you believe you would benefit from additional knowledge on pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect?
25. If you learned that many pastoral counseling programs taught content that is historically rooted in humanism, do you believe you would counsel differently as a pastor?
26. If you learned that many modern practices and diagnostic criteria that the average professional Christian counselor use are historically based on humanism, do you believe you would refer to Christian counselors differently as a pastor?

**Appendix E: Online Survey Data**

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

**Q1 Could you please provide your age range?**

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

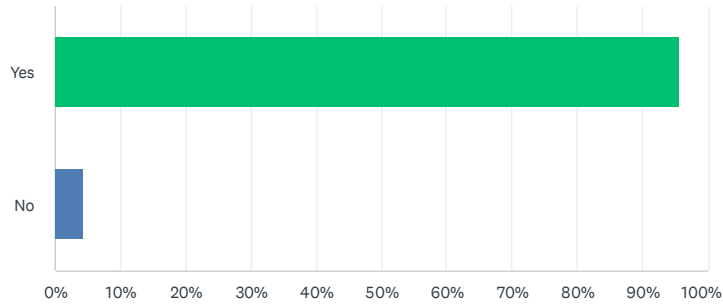


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	0.00%	0
18-26	1.68%	2
27-34	11.76%	14
35-42	17.65%	21
43-49	21.85%	26
50+	47.06%	56
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q2 Is a part of your primary vocation or primary ministry (volunteer or otherwise) a form of pastoral counseling (this includes biblical or nouthetic counseling in a local church or parachurch setting providing this service)?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	95.80%	114
No	4.20%	5
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

**Q3 In the space below, please provide any degrees, certifications, and training you have had specific to pastoral counseling, if any? If you do not have any degrees, certifications, and training specific to pastoral counseling, please write: "none."**

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	MDiv Southern/ ThM studies Southern	10/31/2023 5:52 PM
2	M. Div & D. Min (biblical counseling) from Southern Seminary	10/31/2023 7:22 AM
3	Pursuing MAFTC	10/30/2023 8:49 PM
4	None	10/30/2023 8:00 PM
5	During my M.Div. program, I took "Intro to Biblical Counseling" as a required course and "Marital and Premarital Counseling" as an elective. After seminary, I became a prepare-enrich certified facilitator.	10/30/2023 12:38 PM
6	ACBC Biblical Counseling classes (30h) and reading assignment	10/26/2023 12:21 PM
7	MA and EDD(abd) in Biblical Counseling from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Certified PREPARE/ENRICH facilitator.	10/26/2023 10:22 AM
8	BA/BS Biblical Studies and Historical Philosophy MABC	10/23/2023 7:35 PM
9	Minimal counseling workshops	10/23/2023 1:48 PM
10	MA in Christian Marriage, Family, and Individual Counseling, Gottman Level 1 Training	10/22/2023 7:34 PM
11	BA in Biblical Counseling	10/18/2023 10:36 AM
12	Masters of Divinity, Some Doctoral of Ministry Studies, one unit of Clinical Pastoral Counseling (all at SBTS)	10/18/2023 10:25 AM
13	One class in Bible College, trainings and workshops for lay people (for personal and ministry purposes) on soul healing topics like trauma, shame, etc. Trainings on child behavioral management as part of previous jobs. So, a little bit, or "none," depending on how you are counting.	10/17/2023 8:28 PM
14	M.Div., ACBC certification	10/17/2023 4:45 PM
15	BA Biblical Studies Pursuing MA in Pastoral Ministries	10/17/2023 11:38 AM
16	M Div in Psychology and Counseling NOBTS D Min in Counseling SEBTS	10/17/2023 8:43 AM
17	None	10/16/2023 9:38 PM
18	none	10/16/2023 9:36 PM
19	Retired pastor. Still Mentor. Moody Grad.	10/16/2023 8:44 PM
20	Volunteer. Lay counseling training.	10/16/2023 8:38 PM
21	None	10/16/2023 8:17 PM
22	CAMS Calling And Ministries Study. It is a course the Church of God gives those going into ministry. My degree is a BS in Liberal Arts. I took many classes on behavioral science.	10/16/2023 7:46 PM
23	Biblical counseling	10/16/2023 6:38 PM
24	Doctor of Ministry Master of Divinity CCEF Certification	10/16/2023 6:04 PM
25	Spiritual Director CPE	10/16/2023 4:28 PM



Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

26	M.Div. & CCEF School of Biblical Counseling certificates	10/16/2023 3:29 PM
27	D. Min, working on counseling certification	10/16/2023 2:54 PM
28	Master of Divinity, ACBC certification	10/16/2023 2:50 PM
29	MA in Theological Studies, IABC certified	10/16/2023 2:26 PM
30	MA in Theology. ACBC teaching, but not hours.	10/16/2023 2:21 PM
31	Music with an emphasis in counseling. Lots of training and workshops by ACBC, ABC, CCEF, Faith Biblical Counseling Lafayette, and the Christian Trauma Healing Network	10/16/2023 1:45 PM
32	Biblical studies major, youth and counseling. Credentialed	10/16/2023 1:40 PM
33	None	10/16/2023 1:36 PM
34	None	10/16/2023 1:25 PM
35	MDiv, Christian Ed specialization with a focus in Pastoral Care and Counseling MS, Counseling and Psychology Certified Pastoral Counselor	10/16/2023 1:22 PM
36	Bachelor's in Child & Family Services, Minor in Psychology, LPN	10/16/2023 1:20 PM
37	* Bach Applied Social Science (Counselling) * Currently completing Grad Dip in Counselling through a Christian University in Aust	10/16/2023 1:09 PM
38	ACBC certified, BA in Biblical Counseling from Masters College, full-time pastoral ministry.	10/16/2023 12:59 PM
39	In-patient psych training as a Para. Bible college Psychology as Counseling Prep.	10/16/2023 12:50 PM
40	ICADC ICCS CTP Diploma restorative justice	10/16/2023 12:42 PM
41	Non-accredited counseling course/program	10/16/2023 12:36 PM
42	D.Min., M.Div.	10/16/2023 12:33 PM
43	Masters of Biblical Counseling	10/16/2023 12:01 PM
44	Masters of Divinity CCEF training	10/16/2023 11:58 AM
45	*Certificate of Ministry-ULC *SOLDIER'S Covenant-Salvation Army * Disaster Response Team-Salvation Army *Praise-Worship Team Salvation Army	10/16/2023 11:56 AM
46	none	10/16/2023 11:54 AM
47	None, working on ACBC Certification	10/16/2023 11:53 AM
48	None	10/16/2023 11:51 AM
49	None	10/16/2023 11:44 AM
50	None other than over 50 years experience	10/16/2023 11:44 AM
51	None	10/16/2023 11:42 AM
52	Currently in a Doctor of Biblical Counseling program with MIUD	10/16/2023 11:34 AM
53	MDiv in BC ACBC certified	10/16/2023 11:09 AM
54	MABC, DMin	10/16/2023 7:28 AM
55	DMin Biblical Counseling ACBC certified	10/16/2023 6:15 AM
56	PhD in Biblical Counseling	10/16/2023 1:17 AM
57	Masters of Divinity	10/15/2023 12:50 PM
58	Masters-level training in pastoral ministry and theology.	10/14/2023 5:09 PM
59	Master level training in pastoral ministry.	10/14/2023 5:06 PM
60	Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling; ACBC Certified	10/14/2023 4:13 PM
61	Basic pastoral training including some counseling classes.	10/14/2023 11:53 AM

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

62	LAADC, ICADC, SAP, CABC	10/14/2023 11:52 AM
63	None	10/14/2023 10:58 AM
64	M.Div.	10/14/2023 10:49 AM
65	Bachelor of arts in biblical studies Calvary Chapel University, Certified Biblical Counselor IABC	10/14/2023 10:30 AM
66	MA Theological Studies	10/14/2023 10:12 AM
67	MAR, Pastoral Counseling, Liberty University 2013	10/14/2023 8:31 AM
68	MA clinical counseling	10/14/2023 7:41 AM
69	ACBC certification/ CCEF certificate courses	10/14/2023 7:29 AM
70	D.Ed.Min Biblical Counseling M.A. Clinical Pastoral Counseling	10/13/2023 6:23 PM
71	Seminary study and counseling courses OIC module training ACBC phase one	10/13/2023 5:30 PM
72	Masters of Divinity.	10/13/2023 3:22 PM
73	Biblical Counseling certification	10/13/2023 2:44 PM
74	In Phase 2 of ACBC certification, in process of MA in Biblical Counseling	10/13/2023 2:40 PM
75	ACBC certification	10/13/2023 2:18 PM
76	NANC/ACBC Certified since 2009	10/13/2023 1:50 PM
77	Diploma in Church Ministry; BA in Biblical Studies; Master of Divinity; Master of Arts in Biblical Counselling; PhD Applied Theology (Biblical Counselling); Certified Biblical Counselor; ACBC level 2; Ordained Minister	10/13/2023 1:40 PM
78	DMin in Biblical Counseling from SBTS	10/13/2023 1:36 PM
79	D.Min; D.Min.; ACBC Certification and Fellow; IABC Certification	10/13/2023 12:49 PM
80	In the process of getting ACBC Certification	10/13/2023 9:30 AM
81	BA Biblical Studies MA Counseling ACBC certification in Biblical counseling	10/13/2023 8:29 AM
82	ACBC certification. B.A. in Biblical Studies	10/13/2023 8:05 AM
83	MABC ACBC certification	10/12/2023 8:32 PM
84	Minimal training through the Biblical Counseling Training	10/12/2023 8:03 PM
85	Some graduate study in Biblical Counseling and I presently am in phase 3 of ACBC certification.	10/12/2023 7:21 PM
86	MABC	10/12/2023 6:31 PM
87	Doctor of Ministry with an emphasis on biblical counseling	10/12/2023 3:37 PM
88	MA in Biblical Studies from Moody Theological Seminary... have now counseled for 18 years.	10/12/2023 2:48 PM
89	Yes Lay Counseling at Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minneapolis, MN - Curriculum is "How People Change" BA degree in Ministry LMHC at Valparaiso University	10/12/2023 12:16 PM
90	BS Biology MDiv Theology No counseling degree- Dan Alender trauma training	10/12/2023 11:17 AM
91	Some credits toward licensed counseling degree; MA in Transformational Leadership with Bethel Seminary	10/12/2023 11:02 AM
92	None	10/12/2023 10:52 AM
93	BSW - Bachelor of Social Work M-Div - Masters of Divinity	10/12/2023 10:13 AM
94	none	10/12/2023 9:28 AM
95	In my final year of a bachelor of biblical counseling from the Master's University. I have also completed the equivalent of the ACBC fundamentals.	10/12/2023 7:34 AM
96	BA Psychology, MAMFC, MACE, LPC-I	10/11/2023 10:09 PM

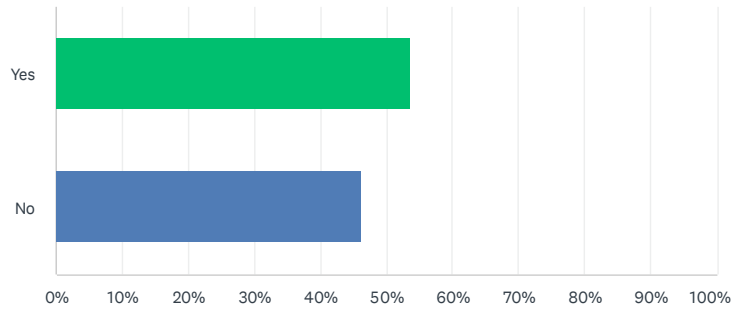
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

97	Training within my bachelor's degree. Also, multiple training events in biblical counseling. Currently working towards ACBC certification.	10/11/2023 8:55 PM
98	Mdiv in BC from SBTS	10/11/2023 8:42 PM
99	Certification with ACBC and MA and Christian Studies in Biblical Counseling	10/11/2023 8:40 PM
100	MDiv from Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, MA in Clinical Mental Health Counseling from Regent	10/11/2023 8:29 PM
101	MA- BIBLICAL COUNSELING, Luther Rice ACBC-certified ED candidate- pastoral counseling and community care	10/11/2023 4:15 PM
102	MAPC BCCC MFT SYMBIS PREPARE/ENRICH SUICIDE/PAIR	10/11/2023 2:03 PM
103	MDiv	10/11/2023 1:38 PM
104	Masters in Biblical Counseling, Currently enrolled in a PhD in Applied Theology (Emphasis in Biblical Counseling)	10/11/2023 1:31 PM
105	MDiv	10/11/2023 12:59 PM
106	BSW	10/11/2023 12:29 PM
107	ACBC certification Presently a student at Midwestern/Spurgeon.	10/11/2023 11:39 AM
108	BS Biomedical Sciences, ACBC Certification, CCEF Certification	10/11/2023 11:37 AM
109	ACBC	10/11/2023 11:09 AM
110	None that are certified	10/11/2023 11:01 AM
111	Bachelors in Christian Ministry from Missouri Baptist University, St. Louis, MO Masters in Christian Ministry from Baptist Bible College Graduate School, Springfield, MO Masters of Divinity from Faith Bible Seminary, Lafayette, IN Biblical Counseling Training Conference Tracks 1-4, Faith Church, Lafayette, IN ACBC Certification & Specializations in Marriage and Addiction	10/11/2023 10:59 AM
112	Marriage Counseling certification. Courses on biblical counseling.	10/11/2023 10:52 AM
113	Master of Divinity: Concentration - Biblical Counseling ACBC Training	10/11/2023 10:48 AM
114	none	10/11/2023 10:46 AM
115	I attended track one of faith Baptist church Christian counseling training.	10/11/2023 10:44 AM
116	Biblical Counseling Certification and counseling training courses from multiple seminaries and training centers	10/11/2023 10:41 AM
117	MA, Ministry	10/11/2023 10:37 AM
118	Basic certification in pastoral life coaching Master's of Divinity degree, which included pastoral counseling classes	10/11/2023 10:35 AM
119	MA in Theological Studies and MDiv in Theology with pastoral counseling classes and training	10/11/2023 10:20 AM

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q4 If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the history of pastoral counseling within the “Christian counseling movement” in 3-4 sentences?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

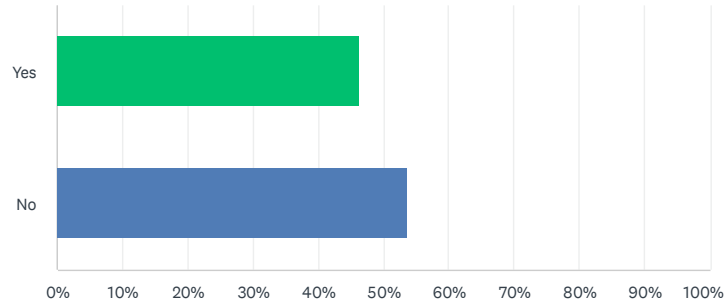


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	53.78%	64
No	46.22%	55
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q5 Could you provide a synopsis of the history of modern psychology in 3-4 sentences, if asked?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

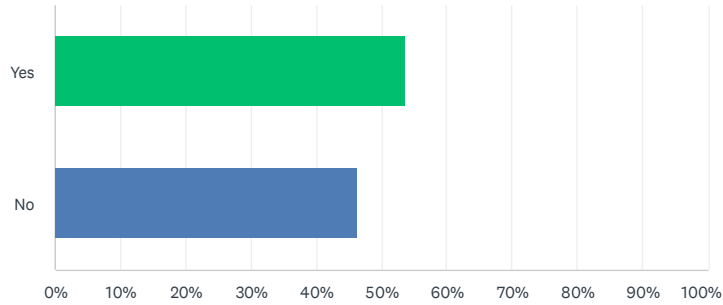


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	46.22%	55
No	53.78%	64
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q6 If asked, could you describe any modern evidenced-based practices in 3-4 sentences, if asked?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

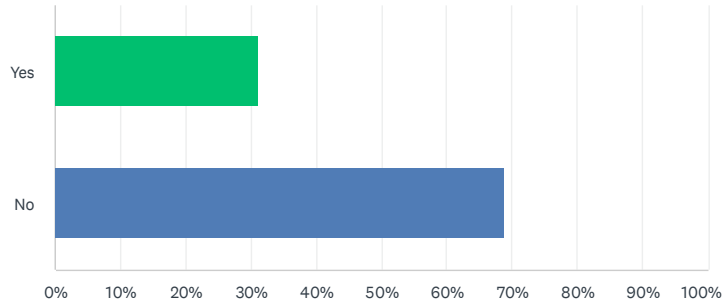


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	53.78%	64
No	46.22%	55
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q7 Could you provide a synopsis of the history of modern psychiatry in 3-4 sentences, if asked?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

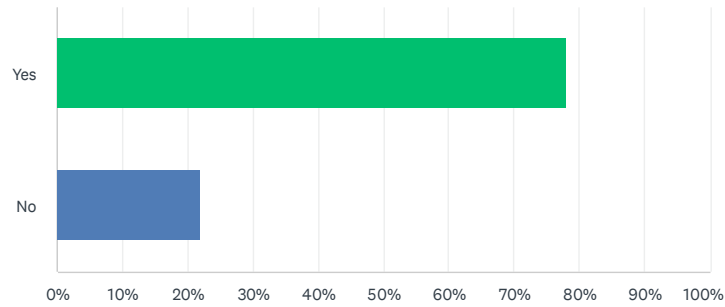


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	31.09%	37
No	68.91%	82
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q8 If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the history of modern biblical counseling in 3-4 sentences?

Answered: 118 Skipped: 1



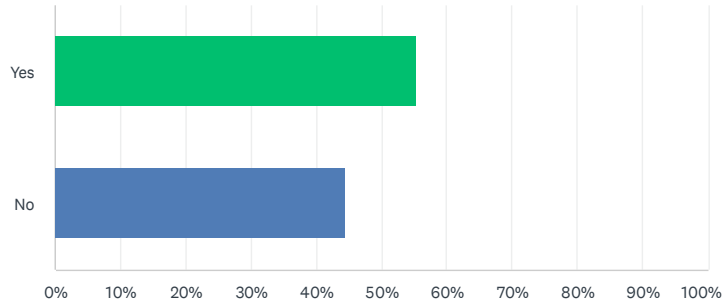
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	77.97%	92
No	22.03%	26
TOTAL		118



Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q9 If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the historical era known as “The Enlightenment” in 3-4 sentences?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

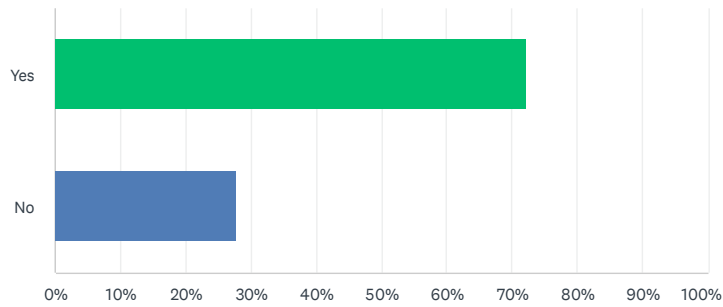


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	55.46%	66
No	44.54%	53
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q10 Do you have any knowledge or awareness of Jay Adams, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

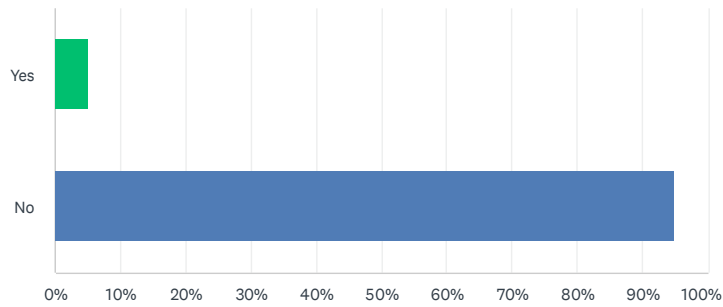


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	72.27%	86
No	27.73%	33
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q11 Do you have any knowledge or awareness of Emil Kraepelin, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

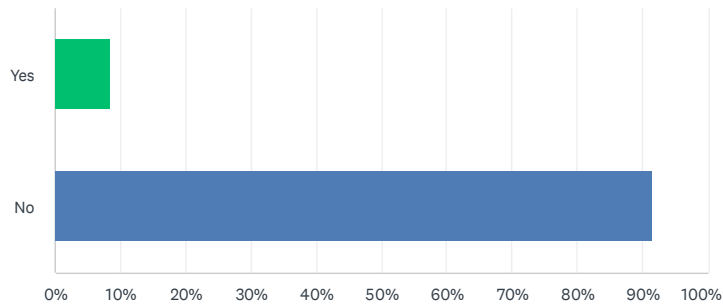


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	5.04%	6
No	94.96%	113
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q12 Do you have any knowledge or awareness of Wilhelm Wundt, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?

Answered: 118 Skipped: 1

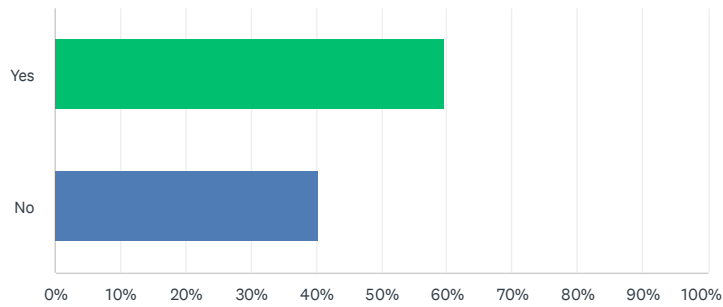


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	8.47%	10
No	91.53%	108
TOTAL		118

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q13 Do you have any knowledge or awareness of David Powlison, and, if yes, could you describe your understanding of their influence on modern counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	59.66%	71
No	40.34%	48
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q14 Do you read any pastoral counseling journals (please answer yes or no in the comment box)?a. Could you name them, if asked (please answer yes or no in the comment box)?b. Could you describe their influence on you in 3-4 sentences, if asked (please answer yes or no in the comment box)?

Answered: 114 Skipped: 5

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Yes, yes	10/31/2023 5:52 PM
2	NO	10/31/2023 7:22 AM
3	no	10/30/2023 8:49 PM
4	No	10/30/2023 8:00 PM
5	No	10/30/2023 12:38 PM
6	No No No	10/26/2023 12:21 PM
7	14. Yes. a. Yes. b. Yes.	10/26/2023 10:22 AM
8	No	10/23/2023 7:35 PM
9	None	10/23/2023 1:48 PM
10	No	10/22/2023 7:34 PM
11	No	10/18/2023 10:36 AM
12	No	10/18/2023 10:25 AM
13	No	10/17/2023 8:28 PM
14	Journal of Biblical Counseling. It has offered me consistent help in counseling the cases I have, with fresh perspective, and new insight or awareness of issues I'm unfamiliar with. The level of competency in the journal ensures that most entries are both respectful and sufficiently scholarly for the purpose of the journal in assisting pastoral care.	10/17/2023 4:45 PM
15	Yes; Yes; Yes	10/17/2023 11:38 AM
16	Yes to all	10/17/2023 8:43 AM
17	a. No b. No	10/16/2023 9:38 PM
18	no	10/16/2023 9:36 PM
19	Not anymore.	10/16/2023 8:44 PM
20	No.	10/16/2023 8:38 PM
21	No	10/16/2023 8:17 PM
22	14) No a) no b) no	10/16/2023 7:46 PM
23	No	10/16/2023 6:38 PM
24	Journal of Biblical Counseling	10/16/2023 6:04 PM
25	No	10/16/2023 4:28 PM
26	Yes a. Yes b. Yes	10/16/2023 3:29 PM
27	No.	10/16/2023 2:54 PM

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

28	No. No. No.	10/16/2023 2:50 PM
29	No. No. No.	10/16/2023 2:26 PM
30	No. No. No.	10/16/2023 2:21 PM
31	Yes. Yes. Yes.	10/16/2023 1:45 PM
32	No	10/16/2023 1:36 PM
33	No	10/16/2023 1:25 PM
34	Yes x 3	10/16/2023 1:22 PM
35	No	10/16/2023 1:20 PM
36	No	10/16/2023 1:09 PM
37	Journal of Biblical Counseling by CCEF, various articles put out by ACBC and the Truth in Love Podcast by ACBC. Yes.	10/16/2023 12:59 PM
38	Not typically. I do research timely papers and trend management.	10/16/2023 12:50 PM
39	None	10/16/2023 12:36 PM
40	No	10/16/2023 12:33 PM
41	Yes. The Journal of BC. It's helpful.	10/16/2023 12:01 PM
42	Yes Journal of Biblical Counseling Helpful for ongoing refining and new tools.	10/16/2023 11:58 AM
43	No	10/16/2023 11:54 AM
44	No	10/16/2023 11:53 AM
45	No	10/16/2023 11:44 AM
46	No	10/16/2023 11:44 AM
47	No	10/16/2023 11:42 AM
48	Jay Adams books on Christian counseling , the Bible.	10/16/2023 11:34 AM
49	Yes Yes Yes	10/16/2023 11:09 AM
50	Yes, yes	10/16/2023 7:28 AM
51	Yes Yes Yes	10/16/2023 6:15 AM
52	Yes	10/16/2023 1:17 AM
53	Yes. Biblical Counseling Journal. Helpful.	10/15/2023 12:50 PM
54	No. No. No.	10/14/2023 5:09 PM
55	No. No. No.	10/14/2023 5:06 PM
56	no	10/14/2023 4:13 PM
57	No. No. No.	10/14/2023 11:53 AM
58	Yes. In The Redeemers Hand Simple to understand Love, Know, Speak, Do	10/14/2023 11:52 AM
59	No. No. No.	10/14/2023 10:58 AM
60	The Journal of Biblical Counseling	10/14/2023 10:49 AM
61	yes, yes	10/14/2023 10:30 AM
62	No. No. No.	10/14/2023 10:12 AM
63	No	10/14/2023 8:31 AM
64	Yes, not with any regularity Yes Yes	10/14/2023 7:41 AM

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

65	Yes, the Journal of Biblical Counseling (CCEF publication)	10/14/2023 7:29 AM
66	a. yes b. yes	10/13/2023 6:23 PM
67	No	10/13/2023 5:30 PM
68	No	10/13/2023 3:22 PM
69	No	10/13/2023 2:44 PM
70	Yes A. Yes B. Yes	10/13/2023 2:40 PM
71	Yes	10/13/2023 2:18 PM
72	Yes	10/13/2023 1:50 PM
73	a. yes b. yes	10/13/2023 1:40 PM
74	Yes - Occasionally pull an article from the Journal for Biblical Counseling. Helps me understand an issue biblically, and how secular psychiatry normally approaches the issue.	10/13/2023 1:36 PM
75	14. Yes. a. Yes. b. Yes.	10/13/2023 12:49 PM
76	yes, yes, yes	10/13/2023 9:30 AM
77	No	10/13/2023 8:29 AM
78	No, unfortunately!	10/13/2023 8:05 AM
79	Yes, the Journal of Biblical Counseling I have often sought a better understanding of counseling issues through articles in the JBC, written by people with deeper understanding of theology and experience than I have, especially in certain areas such as scrupulosity, trauma, gender identity issues in teens, and others. I feel that my training was foundational and that I need to continue learning in order to provide exceptional care for those the Lord sends to me and in order to guide newer counselors looking to me for resources.	10/12/2023 8:32 PM
80	No	10/12/2023 8:03 PM
81	I am not currently reading any pastoral counseling journals, but occasionally listen to podcasts produced by ACBC. The influence of the podcasts is helpful to remind me of the things that are important as a Biblical counselor.	10/12/2023 7:21 PM
82	Yes to all	10/12/2023 6:31 PM
83	Yes Yes Yes	10/12/2023 3:37 PM
84	No	10/12/2023 2:48 PM
85	a. No b. No	10/12/2023 12:16 PM
86	None	10/12/2023 11:17 AM
87	No	10/12/2023 11:02 AM
88	No	10/12/2023 10:52 AM
89	No	10/12/2023 10:13 AM
90	no	10/12/2023 9:28 AM
91	Yes to all three questions	10/12/2023 7:34 AM
92	No	10/11/2023 10:09 PM
93	Yes, yes, yes.	10/11/2023 8:55 PM
94	No	10/11/2023 8:42 PM
95	yes	10/11/2023 8:40 PM
96	Association of Contextual Behavioral Science, CAPS, and Journal of Biblical Counseling	10/11/2023 8:29 PM
97	Yes, yes, yes	10/11/2023 4:15 PM
98	Yes	10/11/2023 2:03 PM



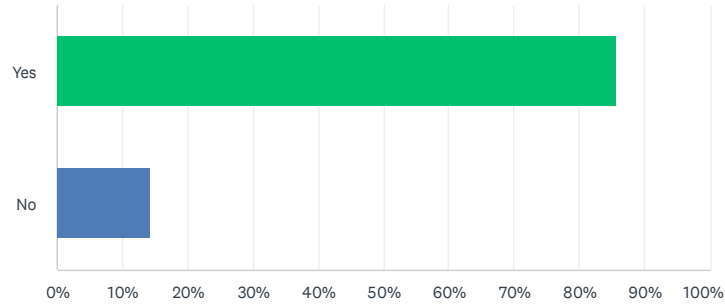
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

99	Yes	10/11/2023 1:38 PM
100	A. Yes, JBC, JBSC. B. Yes	10/11/2023 1:31 PM
101	No	10/11/2023 12:59 PM
102	yes	10/11/2023 12:29 PM
103	A. Yes B. Yes	10/11/2023 11:39 AM
104	CCEF Journal of Biblical Counseling; Yes	10/11/2023 11:37 AM
105	No	10/11/2023 11:01 AM
106	No	10/11/2023 10:59 AM
107	No.	10/11/2023 10:52 AM
108	No	10/11/2023 10:48 AM
109	no	10/11/2023 10:46 AM
110	No	10/11/2023 10:44 AM
111	Yes, I read the Journal of Biblical Counseling	10/11/2023 10:41 AM
112	no	10/11/2023 10:37 AM
113	No	10/11/2023 10:35 AM
114	14a - No 14b - No	10/11/2023 10:20 AM

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q15 Could you provide a definition of secular humanism in 3-4 sentences, if asked?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

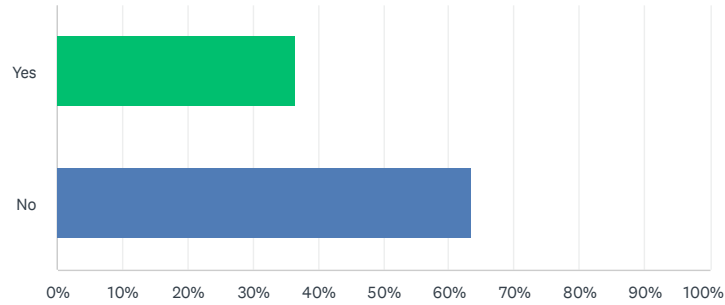


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	85.71%	102
No	14.29%	17
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q16 Could you provide a synopsis of the influence “The Enlightenment” has had on counseling in 3-4 sentences, if asked?

Answered: 118 Skipped: 1

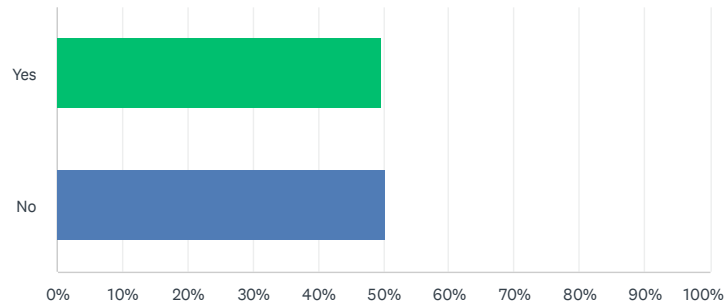


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	36.44%	43
No	63.56%	75
TOTAL		118

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q17 If asked, could you provide a synopsis of the history of the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM) in 3-4 sentences?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

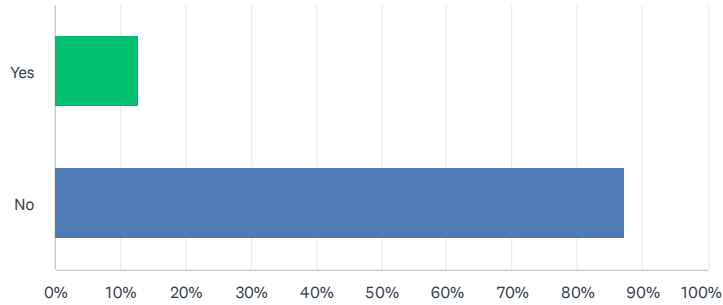


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	49.58%	59
No	50.42%	60
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q18 Could you name any original contributors to the creation of the DSM, if asked?

Answered: 118 Skipped: 1

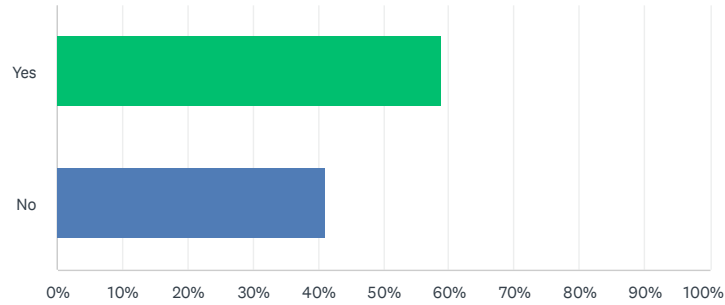


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	12.71% 15
No	87.29% 103
TOTAL	118

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q19 If asked, could you describe how you interact with a formal diagnosis code in your pastoral counseling?

Answered: 119 Skipped: 0

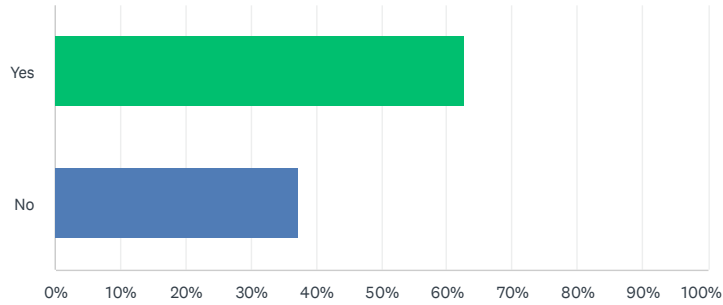


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	58.82%	70
No	41.18%	49
TOTAL		119

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q20 Do you believe humanism has had an influence on your pastoral counseling approach?

Answered: 118 Skipped: 1

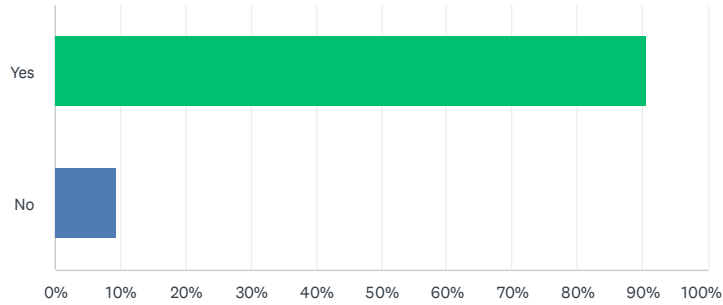


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	62.71%	74
No	37.29%	44
TOTAL		118

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q21 Do you believe humanism has had an influence on the field of pastoral counseling?

Answered: 118 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.68%	107
No	9.32%	11
TOTAL		118



Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q22 Do you refer to any professional counseling (Christian or otherwise) in your community (please answer yes or no in the comment box)?a. Do you research their worldview before referral (please answer yes or no in the comment box)?b. Do you investigate the nature of the Scriptural integration and application(s) before referral (please answer yes or no in the comment box)?

Answered: 115 Skipped: 4

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Yes, yes, yes	10/31/2023 5:52 PM
2	Yes. A = yes B = yes	10/31/2023 7:22 AM
3	Yes. Yes. No.	10/30/2023 8:49 PM
4	Yes	10/30/2023 8:00 PM
5	Yes and yes	10/30/2023 12:38 PM
6	No Yes Yes	10/26/2023 12:21 PM
7	22. Yes. a. Yes. b. Yes.	10/26/2023 10:22 AM
8	No	10/23/2023 7:35 PM
9	Yes. Yes. Yes.	10/23/2023 1:48 PM
10	Yes A) yes B) yes	10/22/2023 7:34 PM
11	No	10/18/2023 10:36 AM
12	Yes	10/18/2023 10:25 AM
13	Yes, yes, yes.	10/17/2023 8:28 PM
14	Yes. And yes. And yes. Even the integrationist counselors in our church referral are vetted on grounds of personal relationship, local church membership, and commitment to provide care that is relevant for the case's experienced suffering.	10/17/2023 4:45 PM
15	Yes; Yes; Sometimes	10/17/2023 11:38 AM
16	Yes to all	10/17/2023 8:43 AM
17	a. Yes b. No	10/16/2023 9:38 PM
18	no	10/16/2023 9:36 PM
19	No.	10/16/2023 8:44 PM
20	No.	10/16/2023 8:38 PM
21	No	10/16/2023 8:17 PM
22	22) In general yes but no one specifically. a) no since I don't give a referral for a specific person. b) no since I don't give a referral for a specific person.	10/16/2023 7:46 PM
23	No	10/16/2023 6:38 PM
24	Yes. I only refer people to Christian counselors whom I've met and know, or those I trust have recommended.... short list!	10/16/2023 4:28 PM
25	Yes a. Yes b. Yes	10/16/2023 3:29 PM

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

26	No.	10/16/2023 2:54 PM
27	Yes. I do not, no. Yes.	10/16/2023 2:50 PM
28	Yes. No. Yes.	10/16/2023 2:26 PM
29	No. No. No.	10/16/2023 2:21 PM
30	Yes. Yes. Yes.	10/16/2023 1:45 PM
31	No	10/16/2023 1:36 PM
32	Yes	10/16/2023 1:25 PM
33	Yes x 3	10/16/2023 1:22 PM
34	B	10/16/2023 1:20 PM
35	A) yes B) no	10/16/2023 1:09 PM
36	No.	10/16/2023 12:59 PM
37	Yes, yes and yes.	10/16/2023 12:50 PM
38	yes-yes-no	10/16/2023 12:42 PM
39	No e	10/16/2023 12:36 PM
40	Yes and yes	10/16/2023 12:33 PM
41	Yes. No. Yes.	10/16/2023 12:01 PM
42	Yes. No. Yes.	10/16/2023 11:58 AM
43	yes, yes, no	10/16/2023 11:54 AM
44	A. Yes and B. Yes	10/16/2023 11:53 AM
45	Yes, yes, yes	10/16/2023 11:51 AM
46	Yes Yes Yes	10/16/2023 11:44 AM
47	Yes. Yes. Yes.	10/16/2023 11:44 AM
48	Yes	10/16/2023 11:42 AM
49	I have not done any referrals at this time.	10/16/2023 11:34 AM
50	No	10/16/2023 11:09 AM
51	No	10/16/2023 7:28 AM
52	No No No	10/16/2023 6:15 AM
53	Yes	10/16/2023 1:17 AM
54	Yes. No. No.	10/15/2023 12:50 PM
55	Yes. No. No.	10/14/2023 5:09 PM
56	Yes. No. No.	10/14/2023 5:06 PM
57	no	10/14/2023 4:13 PM
58	Yes. No. No.	10/14/2023 11:53 AM
59	No if they are a Christian Yes if they are an unbeliever and dont want Biblical counseling	10/14/2023 11:52 AM
60	Yes. No. No.	10/14/2023 10:58 AM
61	Yes. No. No.	10/14/2023 10:49 AM
62	yes, yes	10/14/2023 10:30 AM
63	Yes. No. No.	10/14/2023 10:12 AM

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

64	No	10/14/2023 8:31 AM
65	Yes Yes No	10/14/2023 7:41 AM
66	No	10/14/2023 7:29 AM
67	22. No a. no b. no	10/13/2023 6:23 PM
68	Yes	10/13/2023 5:30 PM
69	No	10/13/2023 3:22 PM
70	I don't refer out	10/13/2023 2:44 PM
71	No	10/13/2023 2:40 PM
72	No	10/13/2023 2:18 PM
73	No	10/13/2023 1:50 PM
74	a. yes b. yes	10/13/2023 1:40 PM
75	Yes, but only to ACBC certified counselors. We have a group in our community with full-time biblical counselors. For Questions 23 and 27, I only refer to certified biblical counselors.	10/13/2023 1:36 PM
76	22. No. a. DNA b. DNA	10/13/2023 12:49 PM
77	Yes	10/13/2023 8:29 AM
78	No	10/13/2023 8:05 AM
79	22 - yes, only in very rare cases such as suicidal children a. yes b. I asked but was not given this information	10/12/2023 8:32 PM
80	Yes	10/12/2023 8:03 PM
81	No, I do not refer. I will not refer counselees to an integrationist.	10/12/2023 7:21 PM
82	No to all	10/12/2023 6:31 PM
83	Yes Yes Yes	10/12/2023 3:37 PM
84	No	10/12/2023 2:48 PM
85	a. Yes b. Yes	10/12/2023 12:16 PM
86	Yes,	10/12/2023 11:17 AM
87	Yes	10/12/2023 11:02 AM
88	Yes	10/12/2023 10:52 AM
89	Yes, Yes, Yes	10/12/2023 10:13 AM
90	n/a	10/12/2023 9:28 AM
91	Yes to all three questions.	10/12/2023 7:34 AM
92	Yes, yes, yes	10/11/2023 10:09 PM
93	No	10/11/2023 8:55 PM
94	Yes. Yes. No.	10/11/2023 8:42 PM
95	no	10/11/2023 8:40 PM
96	Yes	10/11/2023 8:29 PM
97	Yes, yes, yes	10/11/2023 4:15 PM
98	Yes	10/11/2023 2:03 PM
99	Yes	10/11/2023 1:38 PM
100	I do not refer anyone to professional counseling.	10/11/2023 1:31 PM

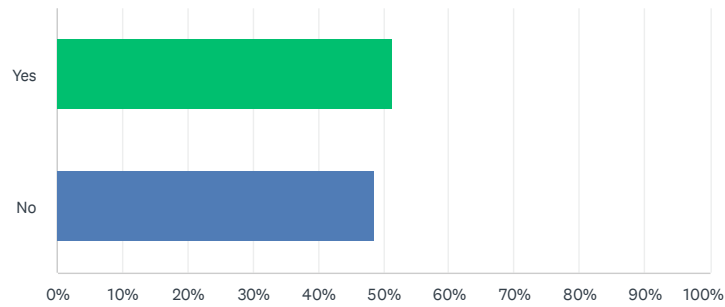
Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

101	Yes Yes Yes	10/11/2023 12:59 PM
102	yes	10/11/2023 12:29 PM
103	22. No	10/11/2023 11:39 AM
104	Yes; Yes	10/11/2023 11:37 AM
105	Yes	10/11/2023 11:09 AM
106	Yes	10/11/2023 11:01 AM
107	No	10/11/2023 10:59 AM
108	Yes	10/11/2023 10:52 AM
109	No	10/11/2023 10:48 AM
110	yes yes no	10/11/2023 10:46 AM
111	I do not since we are provided with a list but for my family use I would	10/11/2023 10:44 AM
112	No, I don't refer to any professional counseling.	10/11/2023 10:41 AM
113	yes	10/11/2023 10:37 AM
114	Yes Yes No	10/11/2023 10:35 AM
115	20a - Yes 20b - Yes	10/11/2023 10:20 AM

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

**Q23** If a professional counselor (Christian or otherwise) claims they are spiritual, are you more inclined to refer to them than someone who is not?  
 Could you explain your response in 3-4 sentences if asked?

Answered: 117 Skipped: 2

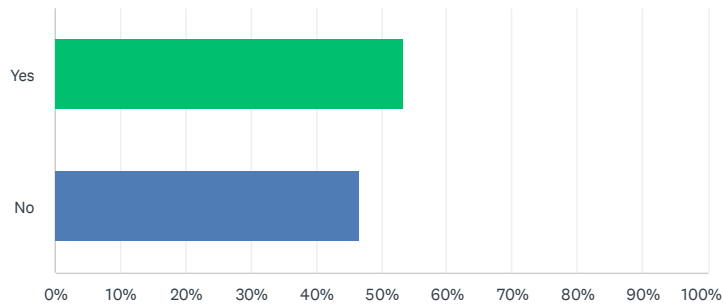


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	51.28%	60
No	48.72%	57
TOTAL		117

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q24 Did your pastoral education or Bible school/seminary training provide information for you on the history of the counseling movement? If yes, could you describe what you recall in 3-4 sentences if asked?

Answered: 118 Skipped: 1

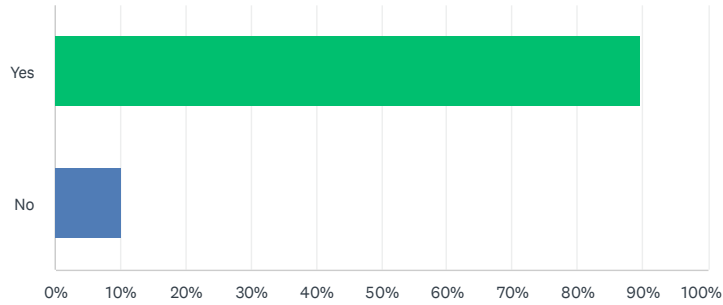


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	53.39%	63
No	46.61%	55
TOTAL		118

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q25 Do you believe you would benefit from additional knowledge on pastoral counseling and secular humanism intersect?

Answered: 118 Skipped: 1

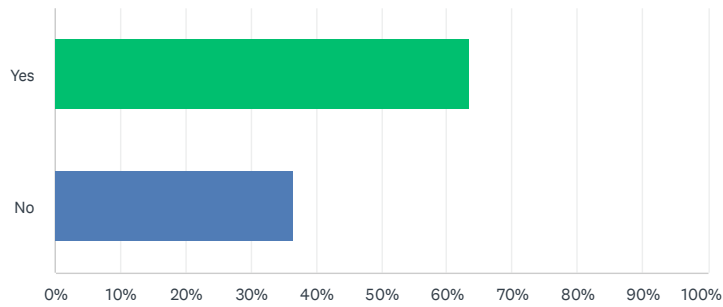


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	89.83%	106
No	10.17%	12
TOTAL		118

Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q26 If you learned that many pastoral counseling programs taught content that is historically rooted in humanism, do you believe you would counsel differently as a pastor or pastoral counselor?

Answered: 118 Skipped: 1



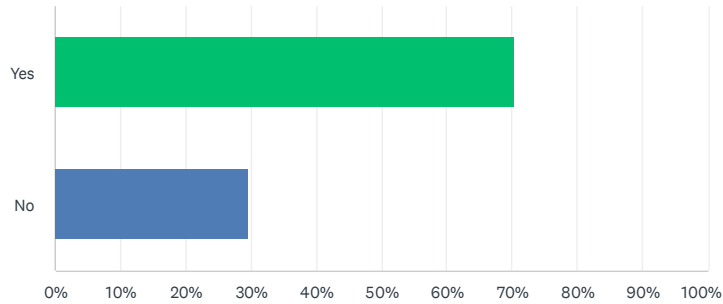
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	63.56%	75
No	36.44%	43
TOTAL		118



Discerning Impact of Secular Humanism on Pastoral Counseling

Q27 If you learned that many modern practices and diagnostic criteria that the average professional Christian counselor use are historically based on humanism, do you believe you would refer to Christian counselors differently as a pastor or pastoral counselor?

Answered: 118 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	70.34%	83
No	29.66%	35
TOTAL		118