

## Editors' Introduction: Fall 2020 Issue #3

Welcome to the third issue of the *Public Health, Religion and Spirituality Bulletin (PHRS Bulletin)*, published by the Public Health Religion and Spirituality Network (PHRS Network). For all of us, 2020 has been a year of the unexpected – and the ongoing! In the months since the pandemic began, so much of our lives have turned “virtual” with more time than ever spent in front of our computers and screens. We hope that this issue – whether you read it online or print out the PDF (or HTML) and read it on good old-fashioned paper – proves a bright spot that is both engaging and enriching for your work at the intersections of religion, spirituality, and public health.

This issue begins with an interview with Neal Krause, a sociologist and leading researcher of religion, spirituality and public health. As a bonus, we also offer a [video recording](#) of the interview to allow you to get a better flavor of Neal’s wonderful openness and insight, as well as our stellar team of interviewers. Next is an article by Doug Oman that provides a timely overview of research related to COVID-19, religion/spirituality, and public health. To our knowledge, it is perhaps the first significant *global* overview with attention to empirical findings, policy reports, and conceptual publications. Blake Kent authors an article that delivers an accessible overview of his and his colleagues’ work exploring R/S factors and health among US South Asian populations. Next, is an article authored by early career professional Caitlyn Gudmundsen describing the way her upbringing in a faith-based environment coupled with her graduate training in religion and public health catalyzed a bridge building career as the Director of Strategic Initiatives at Lutheran Services in America. Following this, Kelsey White and George Fitchett’s article gives readers an overview of their groundbreaking work developing a training program for health care chaplains through the

School of Public Health at University of Illinois, Chicago, which we hope inspires others to consider equally innovative cross-disciplinary work. This issue closes with our resource article highlighting new empirical work, upcoming conferences, recent conference proceedings, and COVID-19 related resources.

The *PHRS network* was officially launched in the Spring of 2019, and the present issue marks the first full year of the *PHRS Bulletin*. In our annual board meeting this September, we reflected on what we have learned over the past 18 months and how we might improve and build the network going forward. To do so, of course, requires us to hear from YOU, our readers, as our efforts will not bear the intended fruit if we are not building a network that draws together and strengthens the collective work of those engaging with religion, spirituality, and public health.

To this end, would you spend five minutes or less completing this brief [reader’s survey \(link\)](#)? We know time is limited and that goodwill is pulled in a variety of directions... but we ask anyway (☺) and thank you in advance for your generosity.

Finally, we are pleased to introduce Angela Monahan as our new junior editor. Angela is a recent public health graduate from UC Berkeley where she participated in a traineeship on religion, spirituality, and public health directed by Doug Oman. She is currently working from Washington D.C. as an Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health (ASPPH) and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) fellow and has been an integral part of conducting interviews with leading scholars for all three issues of the *PHRS Bulletin*. We are excited to have Angela join our editorial team!

Thank you for being a part of the PHRS network,  
and we wish you and your loved ones well in the  
months ahead.

Sincerely,  
Kate, Doug, and Angela

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