

BLURRED LINES

EXPLORING HOW SBAE TEACHERS INTERACT WITH WORKPLACE BOUNDARIES

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INTRODUCTION

- The ability to establish & maintain boundaries has been linked to Ag teacher retention (Hasselquist & Graves, 2019).
- Ag teachers expressed feelings of guilt and tension when trying to say "no" to activities that interfered with attempts toward work-life balance (Traini et al., 2019).
- Little is known about Ag teacher engagement with boundary creation & boundary encounters.
- Purpose - explore how Ag teachers interact with boundaries in their profession.

Under what circumstances do Ag teachers feel their boundaries are being crossed?

METHODS

- Descriptive qualitative study
- 66 Ag teacher participants at two workshops about establishing & maintaining boundaries
- 96 individual anonymous contributions of examples when they felt boundaries were crossed in their work (overlooked/smothered, annoyed resentful, guilt/shame, disrespected/unappreciated)
- Collaborative thematic analysis

CONCLUSIONS

- Participants feel crossed-boundaries most poignantly when perceived expectations are imposed, when their personal time is impeded due to various work-related obligations, and when various individuals (e.g., parents, students, administration) expect unreciprocated commitment

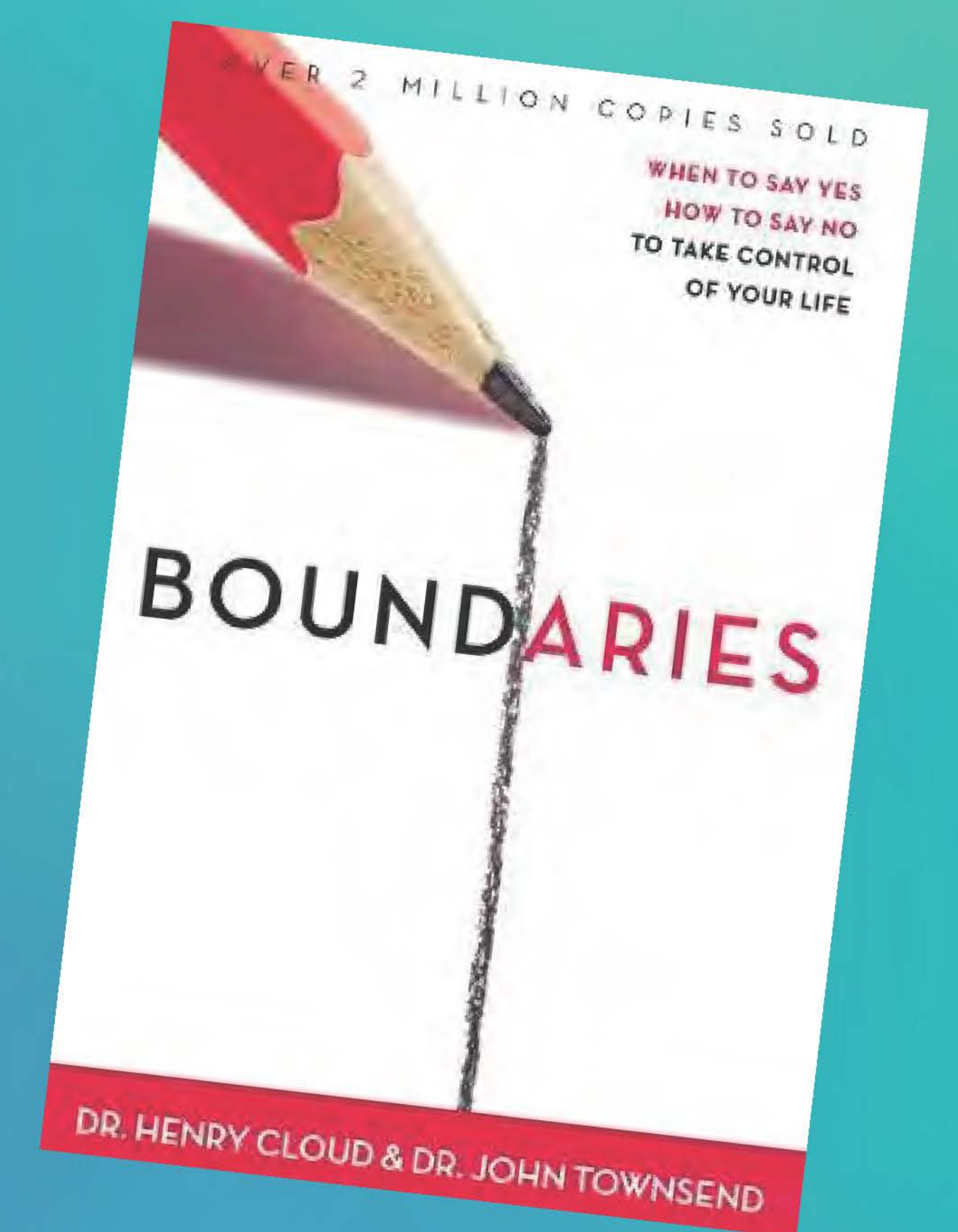
It appears our participants interact with blurred boundaries or a lack of defined limits or bounds in their chosen vocation

- These results align with findings from previous research offering the challenges associated with the multiple demands of the job (Lemons, et al., 2015; Solomonson, et al., 2018) and Cloud and Townsend's (2017) connections between blurred boundaries and diminished well-being

Moving Forward - How do Ag teachers establish & maintain boundaries in relation to expectations, time at work, and garnering support from collaborators?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

- Cloud & Townsend's (2017) *Boundaries*
- Boundaries are physical & emotional delineations which help people understand their responsibilities.
- Boundaries in vocations give clearer pictures of what people are/are not responsible for; boundaries enhance quality of life.
- This is useful given the numerous demands of Ag teachers.



FINDINGS

PERCEIVED EXPECTATIONS

Centered around examples of workload, deadlines, logistics and recognition

"When ASB comes to me and expects me to use the shop or for me to drop what I'm doing"

"When alumni/parents assume things are or aren't happening but don't ask an advisor and they get mad at us"

PERSONAL TIME IMPEDED

Physical space & mental health

"When I miss baby bedtime, dinner, first steps, or potty training"

"I had to miss a huge 20+ year family tradition for a mandatory work trip & hated the guilt"

COMMITMENT FROM OTHERS

Parents, resources, others' perceptions

"When community members do not volunteer or attend an event and then ask me to call if I need anything from them"

"When students come up with an idea for fundraising & assume I will do it for them"