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# RECONCILING INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGES IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION: ACTION AND LEGITIMACY

**Susan Gair**

James Cook University

**Debra Miles**

James Cook University

**Jane Thomson**

James Cook University

This article describes an action research project undertaken in Australia to confront Eurocentrism in our social work curricula. Our aims, action, and reflections are discussed. Further, we explore the legitimacy of non-indigenous teachers taking action to reconcile indigenous knowledges in curricula. The findings have relevance for international social work education.

WHEN THOSE WHO HAVE POWER to name and to socially construct reality choose not to see you or hear you, whether you are dark-skinned, old, disabled, female, or speak with a different accent or dialect than theirs, when someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing. (Rich, 1986, p. 199)

This article describes an action research project undertaken in Australia in 2001 by a small group of academic staff of the School of Social Work and Community Welfare at James Cook University (JCU), a regional university in North Queensland. A high proportion of JCU students are the first members of their families to enroll in a tertiary course. North Queensland experiences appreciably lower rates of participation in higher education than the national

average (JCU, 2003). The North Queensland context is characterized by a higher ratio of indigenous people than the national average. Despite this fact, the numbers of indigenous students studying within our program are below population percentages of indigenous people. This context provided a clear rationale for the project.

Our action research project, to "Indigenize the curriculum," attempted to redress issues captured by Rich (1986) in the above quote. The primary aim was to move further away from Western, Eurocentric approaches to teaching and learning in social work education, toward one where indigenous Australians are more visible. Further, we wanted to implement change for the long-term goal that our graduate body would reflect more accurately our regional indigenous demographic profile. We considered that it was *our* responsibility to work for change (Dominelli, 1989). For the purposes of the project described here, we use

the term "indigenize" as a verb to describe active efforts to render more visible indigenous people in the North Queensland and Australian context. We recognize that there is great diversity within the histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Nevertheless, in the context of this article, we refer to the common experience of indigenous peoples of invisibility within our social work curricula and we ponder our own cultural Whiteness, gender, and power in relation to indigenous peoples. While this project is situated within the Australian context, the international literature suggests these issues have wider relevance (Thomas, 2003; Youngblood Henderson, 2000).

"Reconciliation" as a term is used internationally to signify reunification between previously warring parties. However, it goes beyond the resolution of conflict to the stage of integrating community and encouraging people to share values and develop congenial relationships (Galloway, 2002). The Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, "a landmark in Australian history" (Report of the Council for Reconciliation to Federal Parliament 1994, p. 9), made 339 recommendations (Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Secretariat, 1997). These included addressing the high rate of incarceration reducing the number of deaths in custody, and addressing the fundamental underlying social issues. The final recommendation stated that "reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in Australia must be achieved if community division, disorder and injustice to Aboriginal people are to be avoided" (Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Secretariat, 1997, p. 386).

### **Reconciliation in Teaching and Learning in the Academy**

Present-day Australia is a multicultural nation of 20 million people, 2.4% of whom are indigenous, either Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, or a combination (Trewin & Madden, 2003). To be indigenous in the Australian context is to be descended from groups that have been resident for over 40,000 years. Since British colonization in 1788, Australian history has been characterized by atrocities, disease, dispossession from land, and marginalization of the indigenous peoples (Pearson, 1994; Reynolds, 1989, 1996). These experiences parallel the experiences of First Nations peoples worldwide. In Australia, there has been robust debate recently regarding the "white out" of indigenous history (Neill, 2002) and the privileging of "White" knowledge. This has arisen from Windschuttle's (2002) challenge to the interpretations of historians Reynolds (1989, 1996) and Ryan (1996). That is, in addition to the lack of national acknowledgement of responsibility for indigenous oppression, there has been a "backlash" against indigenous and pro-indigenous interpretations of Australia's colonial history, and a silencing of such voices.

So how, as Read (2002) asks, should non-indigenous Australians reconcile with indigenous people within the academy? Tertiary education can contribute to decreased marginalization and increased opportunities for indigenous Australians (National Tertiary Education Union, 2000; Richardson, 2003). Many authors and tertiary educators now call students' attention to issues of colonization for indigenous peoples of the world (Gilbert, 2001; McDonald & Coleman, 1999; Pattel-Gray, 1997; Reynolds, 1989, 1996; Ruwhiu, 1999). In so

doing, they model engagement in a process of reconciliation. Less common is the collaborative development of a curriculum that is sensitive to indigenous students' prior cultural learning (Lynn, Pye, Atkinson, & Peyton-Smith, 1990; McTaggart, 1991). According to a recent report (Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training, 2002) initiatives are needed to increase degree-completion rates of indigenous students. These include reviewing course structures and content for inclusion of indigenous knowledge.

Bourke and Bourke (1999) argue that curriculum for indigenous Australians should reflect "indigenous heritage and experiences as well as provide academic and technical skills to enable a significant contribution to the development of Australia in the next millennium" (p. 56). McConville (2002) writes, "With the advent of the modern reconciliation movement, the role of education as one of the most important areas in which reconciliation can be given some substance is becoming more apparent" (p. 18).

Further, Bourke and Bourke (1999) and Bunda (1999) identify key issues in meeting the needs of indigenous students, including policy formation, appropriate levels of funding, involvement in decision making, and indigenization of the curriculum. They suggest that universities could well base their reconciliation efforts on these issues. This article endorses reconciliation and the role of faculty in this process. Given the global oppression of First Nations peoples, contributing to reconciliation through a process of Indigenizing social work curricula has international relevance (Taylor, 1999).

Regarding social work education, there appears to be an exclusion of indigenous knowledge. Galloway (1993) and Bar-on (1999)

highlight some of the primary cultural problems. Notwithstanding a commitment within social work to broader structural change (Mulaly, 1997), mainstream, Western practice often reflects values of individualism. These include the centrality of the individual as the focus of social work theory and practice, the focus on individual pathology, and solutions that are defined by values of individual self-determination, self-help, and confidentiality. For indigenous peoples, a focus on individualism may exclude cultural and community values.

In the New Zealand context, Ruwhiu (1999) asserts that "Eurocentric interpretations of welfare and well-being" (p. 32) in social and community work education and demands to be "self-development centred" (p. 32) have led to high attrition rates for Maori students. Burgess, Crosskill, and Larose-Jones (1993) state that this practice serves to discriminate against students and perpetuates racism in education.

Dominelli (1997) calls for a shift in social work curricula, with movement in antiracist directions away from the arrogance of the status quo. Lynn et al. (1998) assert that Australian social work and welfare curricula "strongly reflect(s) the models and value base of western society" (p. 1). They call, as others do, for the "indigenization" of social work courses for "culturally appropriate education and training" (p. 2) and the valuing of the "cultural resources and material experiences" (Nakata and Muspratt as cited in Lynn et al., p. 83) of these marginalized groups. With regard to social work teaching, learning, and practice, Lynn (2001) states: indigenous social welfare work approaches have been silenced and relegated to the periphery as deficit theory and practice in the landscape of social work (p. 903).

On a similar but different note, Atkinson and Peyton-Smith (in Lynn et al., 1990) ask "How are we to design a program which will work for Aboriginals and also operate effectively in a white society?" (p. 84). Atkinson and Peyton-Smith (1990) argue that "it is not acceptable to assume they (indigenous graduates) will only be employed by Black agencies" (p. 85) and they offer the view that "both Black and White" perspectives must be incorporated. We sought to research our own teaching as a contribution to this reconciliation process. There is little literature by non-indigenous academics examining their own racism thereby contributing to reconciliation processes. This is despite the fact that "prominent academics of color, such as Hooks (1990) and Spivak (1988), have repeatedly said that one of the most important efforts White people could undertake to address racism would be to examine self reflectively how White racism works" (Scheurich, 1997, p. 119).

### **Actioning Change**

Action research is a cyclical inquiry that is collective, reflective, and critical (Carr & Kemmis, 1983; Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988). This methodology was most appropriate for our project aims and, importantly for us, it was consonant with social work values (Australian Association of Social Workers [AASW], 1999). In this project, action research meant rejection of positivist notions of generalizability and an embracing of a methodology that presents educators with an opportunity to become skilled, reflective researchers of their own practice (Carr & Kemmis, 1983; Hall, 1995; King, 1995; Shumsky, 1958). Like many other methods of qualitative research, action research

challenges traditional paradigms. Carr and Kemmis (1983) identify its distinctive feature, suggesting that

Action researchers cannot regard the 'objects' of action research as determined, independent, external 'phenomena'... because they recognise that their educational practices, understandings, and situations are their own—that they are deeply implicated in creating and constituting them as educational. Nor do action researchers take a technical or instrumental view of the relationship between theory and practice. (p. 180)

The project aims were modeled on the action research work of Hall (1995). The primary aim was to undertake curriculum development that would enable teaching staff to move further away from a mono-cultural curriculum toward one more appropriate for indigenous students and more relevant for all graduates. The research is situated within our university and the North Queensland cultural context. However, the processes used in this action research project will be of interest to other Australian and international teachers and researchers struggling with similar dilemmas.

In line with action research methodology we progressed through cycles of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). We engaged in a problem-solving process of focusing directly on our concerns as teachers regarding our curriculum (O'Hanlon, 1993). The following section reveals our struggles as we moved through these cycles.

### **Moving Through Cycles: Plan, Act, Observe, and Reflect**

#### **Planning**

The first step was to secure an indigenous consultant to the project. While ultimately successful, this process was a lengthy one, mainly because of the already high workload of local workers who would have knowledge of, and an interest in, our planned curriculum review. This illustrated for us the importance of taking time and making time to plan a curriculum review process. Twelve meetings were planned in 2001 to facilitate individual project development and implementation and some collective action. The action research team consisted of four female, non-indigenous social work academics and our consultant. An evaluation of the aims was planned for the 12th meeting.

#### **Act**

Individual projects were as follows. The *first author* had two objectives. The first was to examine and gain feedback on her teaching style, lecture content, and delivery. To enact this objective the author video-taped several lectures and asked project colleagues for feedback with regard to respectful, inclusive presentation of material. Suggestions were to strengthen connections within and between topics, and give more opportunity for student involvement and discussion. Further suggestions were to give concrete examples from the local community, to present a traditional owner perspective (i.e., a person authorized to speak on that issue in that geographic area of Australia) where possible, to reduce the didactic nature of the presentation, and to use more storytelling. The second objective was to develop and make accessible to students an annotated bibliogra-

phy—a recommended collection of readings documenting indigenous history, heritage, knowledge, and experiences.

The *second author* focused on strengthening an introductory social policy subject. This author wanted to model inclusive social work practice within the subject. She had been disappointed with strategies she had implemented in the past. For example, allocating one lecture to indigenous issues tended to depict indigenous people as problematic; one of a list of “problems” that social workers “dealt with.” Similarly, the use of one-off guest indigenous speakers could appear tokenistic, as though any perceived deficits or flaws in the curriculum were the responsibility of one indigenous guest speaker. (The fourth group member offers another perspective, see below). The second author implemented new strategies, including identifying herself clearly to students as a non-indigenous woman and articulating her intention to centralize the experience of indigenous people within the policy subject. An indigenous perspective was integrated weekly.

The *third author* chose to concentrate actions on the field education program requirements. Twenty-eight weeks in two block placements of unpaid field practicum is a requirement of the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree program at JCU (AASW, 2000). The indigenous consultant had identified that more indigenous people would seek to become accredited social workers if the AASW Accreditation Guidelines were more respectful of the different but equal “ways of knowing” (Lynn et al., 1998) of indigenous practitioners. A first task was to engage in an e-mail discussion nationally with field education colleagues about the lack of recognition of indigenous students’ levels of prior

learning and current knowledge, with regard to field placement requirements.

This author also introduced an inaugural half-day forum into the field education integration program. Three indigenous graduates spoke about the benefits and deficits of their JCU educational experiences within the hegemonic social work educational context (Smart & Manawaroa Gray, 2000) and about how their indigenous knowledge both complemented and challenged the Western discursive practices within which they had been educated. They called on non-indigenous students to work in complementary ways with indigenous practitioners.

The *fourth group member* aimed to introduce more indigenous content into her teaching within the Australian Women's Studies course. Her strategies included increasing Australian indigenous women's writings as reference material in the course, changing the assessment criteria (Christensen & Lilley, 1997), and recruiting indigenous guest lecturers to speak on their chosen areas of expertise.

### Observe and Reflect

The weekly meetings were characterized by passionate discussion, reflection, and critical feedback. The *first author* considered the evaluation questions from Lampert and Lilley (1996, pp. 10–13) as a tool for early reflection. These questions raised issues of legitimate knowledge and the authority to teach certain knowledge. Seeking further reading regarding multiple knowledges, this author pondered the model developed by Heron (1992) who identifies four stages of knowledge. These are (a) experiential, (b) presentational, (c) propositional, and (d) practical knowledge. After identifying only

elements of propositional knowledge (i.e., knowledge *about* indigenous Australians) in her teaching, she attempted to increase the amount of indigenous experiential knowledge (lived experience), presentational knowledge (creative, perceptive knowledge including story telling), and practical knowledge (the skills of enacting). Student evaluations appear to illustrate a mixed response, from hostility to her pro-indigenous position, to appreciation of stories from local elders. The annotated bibliography is forthcoming.

For the *second author*, feedback provided by non-indigenous students at the end of the subject indicated a heightened awareness of structural disadvantage and less of a willingness to seek individual causes for social issues. Some students spoke positively about accessing resources outside the mainstream social work literature such as articles by indigenous authors including Pearson (2000a, 2000b), Perkins (1990), and Langton (2002). Upon reflection, it appeared that students had begun to challenge each other to consider an indigenous perspective.

The work undertaken by the *third author* was located centrally within adult learning principles (Kolb, 1984; Foley, 1995). She applied these to challenge the appropriateness of fieldwork guidelines for indigenous practitioners. Adult learning principles hold to the importance of minimizing power imbalances and to awareness of the role of the educator in matching the needs of the adult learner to the learning experience. She argued that cultural considerations are needed to maximize outcomes for indigenous people. She resolved to continue the lengthy process of influencing Australian social work education regarding

recognition of skills that indigenous practitioners already possess when they seek to become social workers (National Tertiary Education Union, 2003; Woods, 1996).

For the *fourth group member*, the most valuable learning had been relinquishing control of some aspects of the subject and not just tokenistically "allowing" one indigenous lecturer to come and do the "indigenous women and feminism" lecture.

Our evaluation after 12 weeks was that we had been successful in enacting the primary aim of the project. In place of identified Eurocentric practices we implemented alternative practices, stories, and resources that promoted indigenous strength, voice, and presence in social work education. We all agreed that the focus of the project and the evaluation of its effectiveness would be ongoing as a crucial part of our teaching. As a result of this and related work, this school has introduced new curriculum content in 2004 directly addressing issues of race and reconciliation with indigenous people.

In a second cycle of the research process, papers were presented at two key Australian tertiary educators' conferences. While overall feedback was positive, a recurring query was the legitimacy of non-indigenous academics undertaking to "indigenize the curriculum." The appropriateness of securing "help" from an indigenous consultant also was raised. The final section of the article addresses these issues.

### **Of Responsibility, Whiteness, Power, and Legitimate Space**

McConville (2002) argues that "non-Indigenous peoples through the various levels of government and bureaucracy have an overriding responsibility to accept and uphold the

educational rights of Indigenous peoples and to know that these rights and freedoms are non-negotiable" (p. 18).

As a group of non-indigenous academic women, we debated early in the project what was not appropriate for us to do. For example, we would not speak on behalf of indigenous people, speak of indigenous people as "other" or ignore our gender or our "whiteness" (Ashroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1995; Huggins, 1998). Indeed, since its inception, the whole project was informed by our developing and continuing awareness of these issues. We acknowledged the inappropriate absence of indigenous academic staff within our school. Notwithstanding this deficit, we believed that we had a legitimate responsibility to facilitate change within our own curriculum. Feedback from the consultant suggested that, in her words, the project represented "good practice . . . worth sharing across the whole institution" (Savage, personal communication, April, 2002).

On the topic of "white" women as activists for change, Bush (1998, p. 219) highlights the blurred boundaries of some White women's agendas in relation to pre- and post-world war Left-wing activism against racial oppression. Bush argues that such activism, which fostered "close social contact" between White women and Black men, rendered "Black" women invisible. Huggins (cited in Darling, 1998) suggests that "White involvement in Black rights became trendy" (p. 13) and that while non-indigenous involvement in the Black rights movement was noteworthy, many "Aboriginal people were used at their expense by Whitefellas who were involved in power politics" (Darling, 1998, p. 13). Curthoys (2002) speaks of insider/outsider knowledge in relation to indigenous issues, highlighting the fact that mistakes have been made in the past as

non-indigenous people seek to demonstrate their support for indigenous people's struggles.

Making a different but related point, Moreton-Robinson (2000) speaks of some past feminist academics who teach about racial oppression but "do not engage with their whiteness or the subjugated knowledge of those who experience such oppression" (p. 131). Moreton-Robinson (2000) further states how "whiteness as a racial identity . . . confers dominance and privilege (that) remains unmarked and unnamed" (p. 137). She calls for the owning of white privilege by feminist academics engaged in activism for antiracist pedagogy. Similarly, Shah (1989) and Huggins (1998) are critical of those non-indigenous women who fail to accept responsibility for admitting their own racism and doing something about it. Reflecting on our White privilege is an ongoing responsibility we acknowledge. We undertook this action project with the help of an indigenous woman consultant. We had understood that historically, some White women's power may have further marginalized indigenous women. During our ongoing critical reflections about this project, we became more aware of the argument that some White women have placed indigenous women in the position of assisting White women to "unlearn their racism," therefore placing indigenous women in a "maid service position" (Huggins, 1998, p. 61). We would be more aware of these deeper issues in future project planning.

Regarding legitimacy, in our action research project and in our teaching, we have claimed responsibility for the lack of visibility of indigenous knowledge. Lynn (2001) identifies "a space of possibility" (p. 903) in social work education; a place where "new possibilities can emerge . . ." and

"new ways of practice devised" (p. 913) regarding indigenous and non-indigenous knowledge and ways of working. In this space, "partnerships in curriculum development" (Bourke and Bourke, 1999, p. 64) can emerge. Our project is one example of working within this legitimate space of possibility by taking action to further progress reconciliation between indigenous Australians and the academy.

### Conclusion

With reference to achieving the aims of the action research project discussed in this paper, we developed processes that allowed us to move further away from a Eurocentric social work curriculum, towards a more inclusive model. "Whiteness" has been visited in this process. Regarding the legitimacy of non-indigenous teachers taking action to "indigenize" social work curriculum, we believe that non-indigenous academics can claim a legitimate space to undertake this process. Notwithstanding possibilities for collaborative work with indigenous colleagues, we believe non-indigenous social work educators can advance the reconciliation process between the academy and indigenous people. Educators have a responsibility to acknowledge and reconcile multiple knowledges within their own curriculum for inclusive, indigenous-respectful education for all students. As illustrated in this article, action research processes can assist in this quest.

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**Susan Gair** is senior lecturer, **Debra Miles** is lecturer, and **Jane Thomson** is senior lecturer, School of Social Work and Community Welfare, James Cook University, Townsville, Queensland Australia.

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Address correspondence to Susan Gair, James Cook University, School of Social Work and Community Welfare, Townsville QLD 4811 Australia; e-mail: Susan.Gair@jcu.edu.au.


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# THE MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING INVENTORY: A MEASURE FOR EVALUATING SOCIAL WORK STUDENT AND PRACTITIONER SELF-PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR MULTICULTURAL COMPETENCIES

**Robert G. Green**

Virginia Commonwealth University

**Mary Kiernan-Stern**

George Mason University

**Karen Bailey**

Virginia Commonwealth University

**Katrina Chambers**

Virginia Commonwealth University

**Rebecca Claridge**

Virginia Commonwealth University

**Garrett Jones**

Virginia Commonwealth University

**Gwen Kitson**

Virginia Commonwealth University

**Stephanie Leek**

Virginia Commonwealth University

**Monica Leisey**

Virginia Commonwealth University

**Kristina Vadas**

Virginia Commonwealth University

**Kerri Walker**

Virginia Commonwealth University

The standards of the National Association of Social Workers (2001) for culturally competent practice and the Council on Social Work Education's (2001) accreditation standards require monitoring and evaluation of the multicultural competencies of students and professional social workers. The absence of assessment instruments impedes feedback about compliance and the effectiveness of multicultural practice. Results of the present study support the use of 2 self-report subscales of the Multicultural Competence Inventory (MCI) for evaluating worker self-perceptions of competency. The MCI will also help provide empirical feed-back about students' views of their own progress, particularly within programs emphasizing social justice and diversity.

AMONG THE MOST SALIENT REQUIREMENTS for professional practice, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) assign the very highest priority to multicultural competencies. The attitudes, knowledge, and skills required to attain these competencies are delineated prominently in the CSWE (2001) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards and the NASW (2001) Standards for Cultural Compe-

tence in Social Work Practice. Both statements are unequivocal and require a considerable amount of systematic monitoring and evaluation of the competencies of students and practitioners. Indeed, some practitioners and educators are even more strident and assert that social workers without multicultural competencies, or those with deficiencies in this area, may in fact be incompetent or impaired (Gallegos, 1984; McMahon & Allen-Meares, 1992).

It is not surprising, therefore, that the NASW (1999) Code of Ethics is unwavering: Positive and accepting attitudes toward multicultural client groups are ethical imperatives of professional practice.

Because of the prominence and consistency of professional opinion and the mandates of these major professional organizations, numerous conceptualizations of multicultural practice and practice techniques have been developed, advocated, and disseminated in recent years (see for example, Dean, 2001; Devore & Schlesinger, 1999; Dungee-Anderson & Beckett, 1994; Fellin, 2000; Goldberg, 2000; Laird, 1998; Lum, 1999, 2000; McGoldrick, Giordan, & Pearce, 1996; Schiele, 1996; Swigonski, 1996; Tsang & Bogo, 1997).

Although these models share the common goal of prescribing, improving, and facilitating the effectiveness of social work practice with multicultural clients, they also diverge from one another by emphasizing one of two different but complementary dimensions of practice and requisite competencies. The more traditional cultural literacy point of view emphasizes the need for cross-culturally specific in-depth knowledge and skills when social workers provide services to multicultural clients (Dungee-Anderson & Beckett, 1994; McGoldrick et al., 1982; Schiele, 1996). The post-modern view of multicultural practice, however, questions whether workers from one culture can actually become competent in a constantly changing culture different from their own. Consequently, the post-modern practitioners' definition of multicultural competence shifts from the worker's responsibility to develop a greater understanding of client and cultural differences to the recognition

that this understanding itself may be a futile and unproductive pursuit. Competence for the post-modern practitioner is best understood as (developing) greater understanding of herself, of her reactions to client differences, and of cultural limitations and barriers (Dean, 2001; Goldberg, 2000; Laird, 1998).

In this study, to be sensitive to the assessment targets of both the traditional and the post-modern perspectives, we employ a comprehensive definition of multicultural competence. Our definition emphasizes the importance of cultural literacy, cross-cultural knowledge, and skill in direct practice, as well as the social worker's knowledge about herself and her cultural limitations. This inclusive definition, although first suggested by Sue et al. (1982) in the counseling literature, reflects the organizing framework of NASW's (2001) Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice and is therefore particularly relevant to our sample and our study.

In spite of conceptual achievements and the growth of practice models within the profession, measures of practitioners' roles in implementing these models have yet to be designed, advanced, and tested. Consequently, as Walters and Wheeler (2000) and Boyle and Springer (2001) have concluded recently, this measurement gap continues to be a significant barrier to the development of evidence-based knowledge about the effectiveness of multicultural practice.

### **Assessing Attitudes Toward Diverse Client Groups**

In the absence of measures for these multicultural competencies, the evaluation of professional performance with diverse client

groups has relied on studies of professionals' reports of their attitudes toward specific client groups, their responses to practice vignettes about multicultural practice, or of content analyses of attitudes reflected in professional publications and documents. These studies, evidenced in a comprehensive review of the research literature, are summarized in Table 1. The specific attitude assessed by each (racial diversity, gender equity, or homosexuality), the method of assessment used (self-report, practice vignette, or content analysis), and the size and characteristics of the study's sample are reported.

In spite of the relatively small, regionally-biased, and unrepresentative samples that characterize most of these investigations, the number of studies completed may suggest a substantial empirical database about social worker attitudes toward multicultural client groupings. In reviewing and evaluating the volume and focus of these studies, however, it should be noted that most have been targeted to attitudes about gender equity and homosexuality. Although empirical studies have investigated such related topics as mentor relationships among African-American social workers (Collins, Kanya, & Tourse, 1997), the importance of diversity content in schools of social work (Gutierrez & Soifer, 1999), and the effect of racial sensitivity on clients served (Singleton-Bowie, 1995), and other studies have summarized learning objectives and available measurement devices for assessing practitioner and student attitudes toward racial diversity (Carillo, Holzhalb, & Thyer, 1993; Maneolas, 1994), only three have specifically investigated professionals' attitudes toward racial diversity and people

of color (Garcia & Van Soest, 2000; McMahon & Allen-Meares, 1992; Weiner, 1989).

Moreover, none of these studies assessed the attitudes of agency-based professionals. Garcia and Van Soest (2000) surveyed 304 faculty members' "assumptions about racism" and Weiner (1989) reported the "racial attitudes" of 125 baccalaureate social work students. Findings of both studies were mixed and evidenced considerable variation among both student and faculty research participants; however, the results of the third study, McMahon and Allen-Meares' (1992) content analysis of journal articles published in the 1980s, were alarming. These researchers reported that professional journal articles included in their sample ( $N=117$ ) tended to reflect authors' beliefs that the oppression of people of color was "normal and natural"; a primary, underlying assumption of the articles studied was that only individual intervention can help people of color. Because of the failure of this sample of social work professional writing to reflect institutionally-based assumptions, attitudes or interventions concerning people of color, the researchers concluded that the "way in which the [social work] literature articulates social work practice maintains a status quo that adversely affects minorities" (McMahon & Allen-Meares, 1992, p. 537).

Although positive associations between social worker attitudes toward multicultural client groups and their reports of practice activities or preferences have been demonstrated in a few studies (Black, Oles, & Moore, 1998; Oles, Black, & Cramer, 1999; Walters & Wheeler, 2000), the nature of the link between attitudes and actual practice competencies is tenuous. It is conceivable, for example, that practitioners

TABLE 1. Summary of Studies of Social Workers' Attitudes Toward Racial Diversity, Gender Equity, and Homosexuality

| Study                         | Attitude(s) Assessed |               |                | Method(s) of Assessment |                   |                  | Sample                                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------------|
|                               | Racial Diversity     | Gender Equity | Homo-sexuality | Self-Report             | Practice Vignette | Content Analysis |                                             |
| Abramovitz, 1978              |                      | x             |                |                         |                   | x                | Articles published in 2 journals, 1970-1978 |
| Ben-Ari, 2001                 |                      |               | x              | x                       |                   |                  | 103 social work faculty                     |
| Barretti, 2001                |                      | x             |                |                         |                   | x                | 567 articles published between 1988-1997    |
| Berkman & Zinberg, 1997       |                      |               | x              | x                       |                   |                  | 187 NASW members                            |
| Black, 1994                   |                      | x             |                | x                       |                   |                  | 105 social work students & other majors     |
| Black et al., 1996            |                      |               | x              | x                       | x                 |                  | 56 social work students                     |
| Black et al., 1998            |                      | x             | x              | x                       | x                 |                  | 331 social work students                    |
| Carter et al., 1994           |                      |               | x              |                         |                   | x                | Course syllabi of 12 schools of social work |
| Cramer, 1997                  |                      |               | x              | x                       | x                 |                  | 127 social work students                    |
| Cramer et al., 1997           |                      |               | x              | x                       | x                 |                  | 331 social work students                    |
| Fischer et al., 1976          |                      |               | x              |                         | x                 |                  | 135 social workers                          |
| Dailey, 1980                  |                      |               | x              |                         | x                 |                  | 207 social workers                          |
| Dailey, 1983                  |                      |               | x              |                         | x                 |                  | 328 social workers                          |
| De Cresenzo, 1983             |                      |               | x              | x                       |                   |                  | 140 social workers & other professionals    |
| Dongvillo & Logon, 2001       |                      |               | x              | x                       | x                 |                  | Class of BSW social work students           |
| Garcia & Van Soest, 2002      | x                    |               |                | x                       | x                 |                  | 304 social work faculty                     |
| Grise-Owens, 2002             |                      | x             |                |                         |                   | x                | All articles published in JSWE, 1998-1999   |
| Gingerich & Kirk, 1981        |                      | x             |                | x                       | x                 |                  | 48 social work students                     |
| Hardman, 1997                 |                      | x             |                | x                       |                   |                  | 75 social workers (Great Britain)           |
| Hudson & Ricketts, 1980       |                      |               | x              | x                       |                   |                  | 300 social work and other students          |
| Hyun & Johnson, 2001          |                      |               | x              | x                       |                   |                  | 124 social work students (Korea)            |
| MacMahon & Meares, 1992       | x                    |               |                |                         |                   | x                | 117 articles published between 1980-1989    |
| Morrow, 1996                  |                      |               | x              |                         |                   | x                | 27 social work textbooks                    |
| Newman et al., 2002           |                      |               | x              | x                       |                   |                  | 2,522 social work students                  |
| Nichols-Casebolt et al., 1994 |                      | x             |                |                         |                   | x                | Publications in 12 journals, 1982-1991      |
| Oles et al., 1999             |                      |               | x              | x                       | x                 |                  | 110 social work students                    |
| Quam & Austin, 1984           |                      | x             | x              |                         |                   | x                | Articles published in 8 journals, 1970-1981 |
| Sun, 2002                     |                      |               | x              | x                       | x                 |                  | BSW social work students                    |
| Wisiewski & Toomey, 1987      |                      |               | x              | x                       |                   |                  | 77 social workers                           |
| Weiner, 1988                  |                      | x             |                |                         | x                 |                  | 125 social work students                    |

may report particularly positive *attitudes* toward certain client groups in research studies and nevertheless lack the actual *competencies* required for effective practice with these same client groups. Similarly, professionals with less positive or negative attitudes toward particular groups might actually demonstrate unexpected practice competencies when providing services to those groups.

### **Interdisciplinary Measures of Multicultural Competencies**

While neither direct measures of multicultural competencies nor direct measures of social work practice have been forthcoming, self-report measures of practitioners' multicultural competencies, rather than their attitudes, have appeared in the interdisciplinary literature in recent years. The most rigorous of these have been developed, tested, and reported by counseling psychologists: these include the Cross-Cultural Counseling Inventory (LaFromboise, Coleman, & Hernandez, 1991); the Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-and-Skills Survey (D'Andrea, Daniels, & Heck, 1991); the Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale-Form (Ponterotto, Burkard, Rieger, Grieger, & Dubuisson, 1995); and the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, & Wise, 1994).

The specific competencies hypothesized and assessed by the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI) are remarkably similar to practice competencies and characteristics identified and emphasized by the social work models articulated in the literature and in the practice and educational standards developed by NASW and CSWE respectively. In fact, this measure includes both the multicultural

self-awareness dimension advocated by post-modernists and the knowledge and practice skill dimensions emphasized in the more traditional models. Specifically, the MCI accesses workers perceptions of their: (1) multicultural awareness; (2) multicultural relationships; (3) knowledge; and (4) counseling skill. Moreover, as Boyle and Springer (2001) have also recently concluded, the psychometric characteristics of the MCI are stronger than those of the Cross-Cultural Counseling Inventory, the Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-and-Skills Survey, and the Multicultural Counseling Awareness Scale-Form B.

In view of these psychometric attributes and of the unique compatibility of the MCI with divergent social work practice models, this self-report measure may have considerable potential for bridging the multicultural measurement gap within social work and for contributing to the empirical evaluation of multicultural practice. Pilot administrations to social workers thus far, however, have been limited to students. In one of these studies, McFadden, Dumbrill, and Maiter (2000) reported positive pre- to post-changes on the awareness and skills subscales when the MCI was used to assess student outcomes in a distance-learning course. In a second larger pilot test with 442 social work students from four schools of social work, Walters and Wheeler (2000) reported consistent evidence of the MCI's reliability and validity. The range of alpha reliability coefficients for the four subscales (.65 to .84) was comparable to those reported in earlier studies of counseling psychologists. Similarly, factor analysis of the 40 items in this student data revealed the same four-factor solution hypothesized by the MCI and supported in a series of earlier investigations among counseling

psychologists. Finally, Walters and Wheeler's (2000) pilot study also provided evidence of criterion-related validity. It was found that 1st-year students with previous multicultural training reported higher scores on both the skills and awareness subscales than 1st-year students without previous multicultural training ( $p < .05$ ).

Although the results of the studies of social work students are encouraging, they do not, of course, provide compelling evidence of the utility, reliability, and validity of the MCI when administered to experienced social work practitioners. These studies do, however, point to the need for additional research that assesses the competencies of contemporary social work practitioners across diverse practice settings and fields of practice. The present study, therefore, was conducted to begin filling this knowledge gap by addressing social worker self-evaluations of these competencies.

### **Research Questions Developed to Evaluate the MCI**

In the present evaluation of the MCI, we wanted to know whether administrations in a sample of professional social workers would result in data reflecting the measure's reliability and validity. We evaluated two aspects of reliability and two types of validity. With regard to reliability, we wanted to identify the items of the MCI scale to which social workers would consistently respond and those that would be left blank. Although the current 40-item measure has been reduced from the original 83 items on the basis of an extensive item analysis (Sodowsky et al., 1994), it is not known whether each of the remaining items,

originally written for counseling psychologists, will be consistently completed by social workers. In addition to this very fundamental and important test, the study also assessed the internal consistency of each of the four MCI scales formed by the items. Internal consistency assessment complements the assessment of missing values by investigating whether each of the items to which social workers will actually respond are also useful and pertinent to the particular scale to which they have been assigned.

Unlike tests of reliability, tests of validity evaluate the accuracy of a scale, or the degree to which it actually assesses the concepts it was designed to assess. In this study, we evaluated the construct validity of the MCI among social workers by observing whether or not the items assigned to each of the four dimensions of multicultural competency are sufficiently correlated with one another to form the specific competency factors hypothesized; and whether these factors, as also suggested by the MCI practice model, will be correlated with one another. In other words, we investigated whether respondents who reported high levels of knowledge, relationship competence, and awareness also reported high levels of multicultural counseling skill.

Finally, to evaluate criterion-related validity of the MCI, we assembled contrast groups within our sample to evaluate the ability of the MCI to discriminate between the reports of social work practitioners who have completed their MSW training and student social workers who have not. We predicted that the practitioners would report higher levels of competence on each of the four subscales when compared to the students.

### Method

The data for this study were collected in conjunction with a wider investigation of social workers' practice attitudes and competencies (Green, 2002). Mailing labels for 600 randomly selected professional members who had earned at least an MSW degree and 300 randomly selected MSW student members of the National Association of Social Workers were provided by NASW staff.

The survey and follow-up design required three successive mailings. The first mailing was a pre-survey announcement letter sent to all 900 potential respondents. This letter described the study and its goals, informed recipients that a questionnaire would soon be mailed to them, and encouraged them to respond accordingly. A second letter, the questionnaire, and a postage-paid return envelope were mailed a week later. The third letter, mailed 3 weeks after the second, thanked those who had already returned their questionnaires and asked those who had not, to do so as soon as possible. After the 70 questionnaires returned by the post office because of inaccurate or incomplete addresses were subtracted from the total number sent, the 344 completed questionnaires amounted to a 41% survey return rate.

Because the comparison-group research design required for the larger study required over-sampling of members of a single state chapter, we conducted *a priori* statistical tests of all background and demographic variables to determine whether separate analyses of the state and national data would be required. These sample comparison tests did not reveal a statistically significant difference ( $p < .001$ ) between state-chapter and national NASW members on any of the six comparisons (employment set-

ting, employment function, gender, racial/ethnic background, age, and religious preference). Consequently, the responses of the 344 social workers (102 students and 242 practitioners) who returned questionnaires were merged into a single data set for analysis. Separate statistics for the state and national samples may be obtained from the first author.

### Sample

Of the 344 social workers who responded to the survey, 289 (84.1%) indicated they were *currently* working for agencies, or in the case of the students, completing field placements that "provided services to multicultural clients." Since this is an important prerequisite for research participants in the evaluation of this measure, only these 289 respondents were included in the final sample. It should be noted when reading the sample description and the analysis of data, however, that because not all of the respondents completed all demographic questions, not all of the responses for all questions add up to 289.

Almost three fourths of this final sample (216 or 74.8%) were practitioners and the remaining 73 (25.2%) were graduate students. More than half (170, 58.8%) were direct practitioners and the remainder (119, 41.2%) reported their primary job function was planning, administration, supervision, education, consultation, or research/evaluation. About two-thirds reported they were between the ages of 50 and 59 (180, 62.3%), another 33 (11.5%) were over 60, and about a fourth (72 or 25.1%) were under 40. A total of 225 (78.9%) were female and 60 (21.1%) were male, and 246 (85.1%) reported they were "White/Caucasian," 12 (4.2%) African American, 8 (2.8%) Latin American/Hispanic,

7 (2.4%) Asian/Pacific Islander, 3 (1.1%) Native American, and 1 (0.3%) Mexican American. Six respondents (2.1%) reported "other" for this category. These demographic and professional characteristics of the sample are consistent with those of the national membership of NASW.

### Description of the Measurement Device (MCI)

The MCI is a 40-item self-report measure consisting of four subscales: multicultural counseling skills (11 items); multicultural awareness (10 items); multicultural counseling knowledge (11 items); and multicultural counseling relationship (8 items). Condensed summaries of these items and the subscales they comprise are reproduced in Tables

2–5. All items are phrased as statements on a 4-point Likert-like scale (4=very accurate, 3=somewhat accurate, 2=somewhat inaccurate, 1=very inaccurate) and worded so that 1 indicates low multicultural competence and 4 high multicultural competence. The inclusive ranges of possible scores for the subscales are: skills and knowledge 11 to 44; awareness 10 to 40; and relationship 8 to 32. The range of scores for the full scale is 40 to 160.

Since the initial development and psychometric evaluation of the MCI (Sodowsky et al., 1994), a series of continuing validation studies have supported the measure's content, criterion, and construct validity through factor analyses and the correlation of these separate subscales with alternative measures of multicultural compe-

**TABLE 2. Multicultural Counseling Skill Subscale: Number and Percentage of Missing Responses, Descriptive Statistics, and Factor Loadings ( $n=289$ ,  $M=37.99$ ,  $SD=4.88$ , Cronbach's  $\alpha=.79$ )**

| Content Summary of Multicultural Counseling Skills Scale Items        | Number of Responses Missing | % of Responses Missing | Item Mean | SD  | Factor Loading |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------|-----|----------------|
| 1. 50% of clients seen more than once.                                | 8                           | 2.76                   | 3.77      | .59 | .24            |
| 2. Cultural mistakes quickly recognized and recovered.                | 4                           | 1.38                   | 3.27      | .71 | .19            |
| 3. Use several methods of assessment.                                 | 11                          | 3.80                   | 3.55      | .66 | .45            |
| 4. Philosophical preferences are understood.                          | 5                           | 1.73                   | 3.66      | .54 | .64            |
| 5. Able to distinguish between need for brief and long-term services. | 6                           | 2.08                   | 3.42      | .71 | .38            |
| 6. Effective crisis interventions.                                    | 10                          | 3.46                   | 3.54      | .68 | .70            |
| 7. Various practice techniques and skills used.                       | 2                           | 0.70                   | 3.59      | .62 | .67            |
| 8. Concise and to the point when reflecting, clarifying, and probing. | 6                           | 2.08                   | 3.34      | .61 | .75            |
| 9. Comfortable exploring sexual issues.                               | 1                           | 0.34                   | 3.42      | .71 | .53            |
| 10. Effective in getting a client to be specific.                     | 1                           | 0.34                   | 3.47      | .64 | .73            |
| 11. Compatible nonverbal and verbal responses.                        | 1                           | 0.34                   | 3.54      | .58 | .50            |

tence and client outcome (Constantine & Ladney, 2000; Pope-Davis & Ottavi, 1994; Sadowsky, 1996; Sadowsky, Kuo-Jackson, Richardson, & Corey, 1998; Worthington, Mobley, Franks, & Tan, 2000). These studies have also consistently demonstrated acceptable levels of internal consistency as assessed by Cronbach's alpha.

The MCI's purpose is to assess competencies of practitioners who are currently providing counseling, therapy, or direct services. Although the majority of social workers nationally and those included in our sample are also direct or micro practitioners, a significant number of social workers are supervisors,

administrators, or planners, most of whom have provided direct services at one point in their career. To evaluate the competencies of these macro practitioners who had previously worked with multicultural clients, we modified the instructions on the instrument to include the following: "Please indicate how accurately each statement described you when you most recently provided direct services to multicultural clients."

### Findings

As can be seen in Tables 2 through 5, an overwhelming majority of the social workers

**TABLE 3. Multicultural Awareness Subscale: Number and Percentage of Missing Responses, Descriptive Statistics, and Factor Loadings ( $n=289$ ,  $M=28.11$ ,  $SD=5.54$ , Cronbach's  $\alpha=.76$ )**

| Content Summary of Multicultural Awareness Scale Items                         | Number of Responses Missing | % of Responses Missing | Item Mean | SD   | Factor Loading |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------|------|----------------|
| 1. Solving problems in unfamiliar settings.                                    | 4                           | 1.38                   | 3.43      | .77  | .28            |
| 2. Having an understanding of specific racial and ethnic minority groups.      | 3                           | 1.00                   | 3.17      | .72  | .34            |
| 3. Understanding the importance of the legalities of immigration.              | 17                          | 5.89                   | 3.07      | .92  | .17            |
| 4. Extensive professional or collegial interactions with minority individuals. | 0                           | 0.00                   | 2.99      | .98  | .66            |
| 5. Multicultural caseload has doubled.                                         | 12                          | 4.15                   | 2.08      | 1.05 | .51            |
| 6. Interactions with people of different cultures are enjoyable.               | 0                           | 0.00                   | 3.53      | .63  | .37            |
| 7. Involved in advocacy against institutional barriers for minority services.  | 5                           | 1.73                   | 2.25      | 1.07 | .62            |
| 8. I am familiar with nonstandard English.                                     | 5                           | 1.73                   | 2.75      | .99  | .50            |
| 9. Extensive life experiences with minority individuals.                       | 4                           | 1.38                   | 2.80      | 1.02 | .62            |
| 10. Frequently seek multicultural consultation, training, and workshops.       | 4                           | 1.38                   | 2.56      | .98  | .53            |

in the sample responded to each of the items of the MCI. At least 95% provided an answer to 39 of the 40 items. The total number of missing responses for all items ranged from 0 to 17. The least number of missing values were for the items of Multicultural Relationship scale. More than 99% of all social workers responded to each of these eight items. Alpha reliabilities for three of the subscales, multicultural knowledge (.74), multicultural awareness (.76), and multicultural skill (.79), exceeded .70. The reliability coefficient for the relationship subscale was .63.

To test whether or not each of the four subscales would be evident in this sample of social work practitioners and graduate students, responses to all 40 items of the MCI were factor

analyzed. Earlier factor analyses of the MCI in samples of counseling psychologists used principle axis factoring techniques (Sodowsky et al., 1994; Sodowsky et al., 1998), although Walters and Wheeler (2000) used principal component analysis with the MCI data generated by social work students. Consequently, both methods were used in the present study and all resulting solutions were inspected. Because the practice model assessed by the MCI assumes correlation among the four dimensions of competency, and previous studies have consistently reported these correlations, oblique rotation methods were used with both factor analytic procedures. Four factors were initially specified for each procedure and

**TABLE 4. Multicultural Knowledge Subscale: Number and Percentage of Missing Responses, Descriptive Statistics, and Factor Loadings ( $n=289$ ,  $M=34.82$ ,  $SD=4.69$ , Cronbach's  $\alpha=.74$ )**

| Content Summary of Multicultural Knowledge Scale Items                  | Number of Responses Missing | % of Responses Missing | Item Mean | SD  | Factor Loading |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------|-----|----------------|
| 1. Understanding of the effect of age, gender roles, and SES status.    | 1                           | 0.34                   | 3.65      | .65 | .53            |
| 2. Know innovative concepts and treatment methods.                      | 2                           | 0.69                   | 3.14      | .79 | .58            |
| 3. "World-minded" or pluralistic outlook.                               | 5                           | 1.73                   | 3.41      | .66 | .63            |
| 4. Self-examination of cultural biases.                                 | 0                           | 0.00                   | 3.61      | .63 | .67            |
| 5. Research findings about minority clients' preferences applied.       | 3                           | 1.00                   | 2.83      | .81 | .40            |
| 6. Aware of changing practices, views, and interests of clients served. | 9                           | 3.11                   | 2.99      | .68 | .30            |
| 7. Differences in behaviors and values of minorities considered.        | 1                           | 0.34                   | 3.47      | .65 | .43            |
| 8. Refer or consult on basis of clients' minority identity development. | 12                          | 4.15                   | 2.77      | .94 | .41            |
| 9. Defensiveness is self-monitored and corrected.                       | 3                           | 1.00                   | 3.33      | .74 | .30            |
| 10. Sociopolitical history of the clients' minority group applied.      | 3                           | 1.00                   | 2.95      | .84 | .38            |
| 11. Clients' levels of acculturation are understood and applied.        | 11                          | 3.81                   | 3.21      | .68 | .27            |

alternative solutions, specifying 2, 3, and 5 factors, were also evaluated.

The four factor solution with the principal components analysis provided the most simple and interpretable solution. Factor loadings for this solution are reported for each item in each scale in Tables 2–5. As in the case of previous analyses, eigenvalues for each of the four extracted factors were greater than 1.0, and the variance accounted for by the model exceeded 33% (34.09%). As can be seen in Tables 2–5, 36 of the 40 items loaded on the appropriate (predicted) factor at .30 or greater: these included all 8 of the items of the relationship scale, 10 of the 11 items of the knowledge scale, 9 of the 10 items of the awareness scale, and 9 of the 11 items of the skill scale. As predicted, each of the four subscales constructed from these factors were correlated with one another ( $p<.01$ );

the strength of these coefficients ranged from .22 (awareness and relationship scales) to .54 (knowledge and skill). Interestingly, and perhaps most importantly, awareness ( $r=.46$ ), knowledge ( $r=.54$ ), and relationship ( $r=.43$ ), frequently viewed as prerequisites for the development of skill in models of multicultural practice, were all positively correlated with the multicultural skill scale.

Because of the inter-correlation of the subscales a MANOVA (GLM) procedure was used to examine the criterion-related validity. This analysis was conducted after diagnostic tests for linearity, homogeneity of the variance-covariance matrices, and multicollinearity supported the suitability of the data for this technique. The test examined mean differences on all scale scores for the professionals ( $n=216$ ) and students ( $n=73$ ). Results supported the

**TABLE 5. Multicultural Relationship Subscale: Number and Percentage of Missing Responses, Descriptive Statistics, and Factor Loadings ( $n=289$ ,  $M=25.77$ ,  $SD=3.63$ , Cronbach's  $\alpha=.63$ )**

| Content Summary of Multicultural Relationship Scale Items                     | Number of Responses Missing | % of Responses Missing | Item Mean | SD  | Factor Loading |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------|-----|----------------|
| 1. Client mistrust of racially different social worker.                       | 2                           | 0.70                   | 2.05      | .86 | .55            |
| 2. Social worker overcompensation, over-solicitation, and guilt.              | 1                           | 0.34                   | 1.63      | .84 | .55            |
| 3. Case conceptualizations not stereotypical or biased.                       | 0                           | 0.00                   | 3.05      | .89 | .37            |
| 4. Differences between social workers and clients' worldviews.                | 0                           | 0.00                   | 1.70      | .90 | .46            |
| 5. Cognitive differences make communication difficult.                        | 1                           | 0.34                   | 1.77      | .86 | .53            |
| 6. Minority clients compared with majority group measures.                    | 2                           | 0.70                   | 2.09      | .83 | .63            |
| 7. Self-examination of personal limitations shakes social workers confidence. | 2                           | 0.70                   | 1.58      | .78 | .43            |
| 8. Client differences cause social worker discomfort.                         | 1                           | 0.34                   | 1.35      | .72 | .35            |

criterion-related validity of the MCI. Subscale and full-scale means are reported in Table 6. The multivariate statistics for the differences between the student and practitioner competence scores (Wilks Lambda=.853,  $F=12.23$ ,  $p=.001$ ) were statistically significant. Specific between group differences on scale means, however, were observed only for the relationship and the skill subscales ( $p<.01$ ).

Discussion

The results of the reliability analyses conducted for this study provide substantial evidence that (1) professional social workers and social work students can and will consistently respond to the items of the MCI and that (2) the subscales formed by these 40 items are internally consistent.

The number of missing values were minimal and clearly within acceptable standards for multi-item instruments. This pattern was consistent whether respondents were students or micro practitioners who reported on their current practice or macro practitioners who evaluated themselves on the basis of their previous direct practice experience. Nevertheless, some of the items elicited more missing values than others. In particular, attention should be given to the modification, elimination, or selective use of item # 3 of the Multicultural Awareness Subscale, the only item left unanswered by more

than 5% of those who returned questionnaires (17 or 5.89%). This item—"when working with international students or immigrants, I understand the importance of the legalities of visa, passport, green card, and naturalization"—assumes that all practitioners have worked with "international students or immigrants." It appears this assumption can be more confidently made about counseling psychologists, particularly those who work at college and university counseling centers, than a national sample of social work practitioners.

The internal consistency reliabilities of the four subscales, as measured by coefficient alpha, were remarkably similar to the means for coefficients repeatedly obtained and reported by Sodowsky and colleagues in a continuing series of studies and to those reported by other investigators (Sodowsky et al., 1998; Pope-Davis & Ottavi, 1994; Constantine, 2000). As in the case of these earlier studies, the relationship scale (.63) was the only scale in the present study that failed to exceed .70.

The results of the validity testing of the MCI subscales were more mixed. The series of factor analytic techniques and subsequent correlation analyses of the extracted factors supported each of the four dimensions and the predicted empirical relationships between them. In addition, the results of the criterion-validity testing provided support for the relationship and the

TABLE 6. Criterion-Related Validity: Sample Means for the MCI Scales for All Respondents

| Groups Evaluated | N   | Means for MCI Full Scale and the Four Subscales |                |                    |                    |                       |
|------------------|-----|-------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
|                  |     | Full Scale                                      | Skill Subscale | Awareness Subscale | Knowledge Subscale | Relationship Subscale |
| All respondents  | 289 | 126.71                                          | 37.99          | 28.11              | 34.82              | 25.78                 |
| Practitioners    | 216 | 127.99                                          | 38.91          | 28.12              | 34.90              | 26.05                 |
| Students         | 73  | 122.90                                          | 35.27          | 28.09              | 34.59              | 24.94                 |

practice skill dimensions of social work practice. Social workers who had completed their master's degrees reported more practice skill and better relationships with clients than the students. The failure of these same criterion-related tests to support the validity of the knowledge and the awareness subscales in our sample makes the utility of these two subscales in assessing the multicultural competencies of students and social work practitioners more questionable.

The research design for this first national evaluation of a measurement device to assess social workers' multicultural competencies was carefully planned and executed. Choices about the measure tested and about the procedures used were guided by a systematic review of the literature, an earlier series of interdisciplinary studies, and by two previous studies that piloted the MCI in samples of social work students. Nevertheless, an evaluation of the usefulness of the results must also be guided by the limitations of the MCI and of the research design implemented.

The return rate of 41% is lower than expected. In part, this may be explained by the length of the questionnaire. All 40 items of the MCI were included so that each of the four subscales and the relationships between them could be assessed. However, because the sample statistics match the NASW population parameters so closely, there is no reason to believe the sample is not representative of the NASW membership.

The MCI's reliance on self-report for information about social workers' actual practice competencies is clearly the measure's and the study's greatest limitation. The degree to which self-reported measures actually reflect profes-

sionals' in-practice competencies, rather than their intentions and self-efficacy, is not entirely clear. In the present study this limitation is compounded for the macro practitioners, many of whom were asked to rely on their recall of their perceptions of their competencies when they last practiced. For some of these practitioners this period of time was as much as 20 years.

Indeed, it should be noted that in one previous study neither the MCI nor three other measures of perceived multicultural competencies were correlated with an alternative measure of competence assessed by independent observers/raters (Constantine & Ladany, 2000). On the other hand, a more recent study found positive empirical relationships between those of White service providers' MCI scores, the reports of the people of color they served, and the systematic observations of third parties (Roysircar, Gard, Hubbell, Ortega, & Webster, in press).

Obviously, the results of continuing methodological investigations in this area are warranted; results of this continuing research should be followed carefully by those with an interest in the evaluation of multicultural practice. Similarly, controlling for a potential multicultural social desirability-response bias in practitioners' reports of their own competencies is of continuing concern with all self-reported measures. This potential bias is reflected in professionals' insistence that they *always* interact positively with minorities and *always* favor government and educational policies that promote multicultural diversity (Sadowsky et al., 1998). Although one previous study failed to detect relationships between subscales of the MCI and measures of a social desirability (Sadowsky et al., 1994), another, using only the full scale MCI, did find a minimal

positive association between the MCI and social desirability (Sadowsky et al., 1998).

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Because of these limitations, use of the MCI in the evaluation of social work education and practice should obviously be viewed as a preliminary step in ongoing efforts to monitor and evaluate social worker competencies with multicultural clients. Continuing efforts should include, where feasible, the use of direct observation and client reports of these competencies as well. In addition, practice competency evaluations with the MCI will provide more comprehensive information if measures of professionals' self-efficacy and tendencies to respond in a socially desirable fashion are also administered. The use of these companion measures will permit statistical control and provide information about the degree to which social workers' response characteristics and tendencies confound the assessment of self-reported practice competencies. Fortunately measures of both self-efficacy in social work practice (Holden, Meenaghan, Anastas, & Metrey, 2002) and of multicultural social desirability (Sadowsky et al., 1998) have been developed in recent years and are available for use by educators, practitioners, and researchers.

Of interest to social work education, the two MCI subscales validated in the present study should be useful in providing data to partially inform a variety of critical social work educational decisions, including admissions to graduate and advanced standing programs and completion of foundation or other prescribed curricula. The scales should also be particularly useful to classroom faculty who wish to access student course outcomes in practice,

social justice, and diversity courses. Finally, because the CSWE (2001) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards require outcome data concerning the practice readiness of their graduates, these brief measures could be of considerable value for educational evaluation and accreditation review. In particular the MCI subscales may be useful and appropriate in evaluating and providing empirical feedback about the educational performance of those programs organized around themes of social justice, diversity, and practice with clients from marginal or oppressed groups.

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**Robert G. Green** is professor, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Social Work. **Mary Kiernan-Stern** is instructor and director of MSW field education, George Mason University School of Social Work. **Karen Bailey, Katrina Chambers, Rebecca Claridge, Garrett Jones, Gwen Kitson, Stephanie Leek, Monica Leisey, Kristina Vadas,** and **Kerri Walker** were all master of social work students, Virginia Commonwealth University, at the time of the study.

Address correspondence to Robert G. Green, School of Social Work, Virginia Commonwealth University, 1001 West Franklin Street, Richmond, VA 23285; e-mail: bob4g@comcast.net.

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# **SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION IN THE HOMELAND: WO'LAKOTA UNGLU'SU'TAPI.<sup>1</sup> EPAS OR IMPASSE? OPERATIONALIZING ACCREDITATION STANDARD 6.0**

## **Richard W. Voss**

West Chester University

## **Albert White Hat, Sr.**

Sinte Gleska University  
Rosebud Sioux Tribe

## **Jim Bates**

Eastern Washington State University  
Yankton Sioux Tribe

## **Margery Richard Lunderman**

Ring Thunder Ti'ospaye  
Oglala Sioux Tribe

## **Alex Lunderman, Jr.**

Ring Thunder Ti'ospaye  
Rosebud Sioux Tribe

This article examines the broader historical context of American colonial Indian education policy, the challenges American Indian students face with successful performance in higher education today, the legacy of active resistance to culturally destructive educational policy, and the critical role of tribal colleges in preserving traditional prerogatives and values, while providing access to higher education for American Indian students living in the homelands. It examines the Council on Social Work Education's accreditation standard 6.0 and offers practical ways social work educators can collaborate with tribal colleges to further support indigenous social work education in culturally compatible and affirming ways to strengthen bicultural identity and tribal sovereignty.

MY GRANDMOTHER always told me that the White man never listens to anyone, but expects everyone to listen to him. So, we listen! . . . We have survived here because we know how to listen. The White people in the lower forty-eight talk. They are like

the wind, they sweep over everything.  
(Coles, cited in Nabokov, 1991, p. 431)

Over the years the first author has spent time listening to traditional Indian people from the Great Sioux Nation, specifically what they think about professional social workers and their ideas about help and healing. One of the most eye-opening findings was the perception that some social workers were perceived as "books, not real live people, more interested in enforcing regulations than responding to [the needs of] people" (Voss, Douville, Little

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<sup>1</sup> The term "homeland" which connotes a place of safety, wellbeing, and sovereignty is preferred by the *Sicangu* Oyate (Rosebud Sioux Tribe) over the term "reservation" to describe the land allocations established by treaty with the U.S. Government. This Lakota term means, "strengthening our Lakota way within oneself and in relationship with creation."

Soldier, & Twiss, 1999b, p. 233). The first author has also visited tribal colleges and community colleges on the homelands (reservations) and noticed that all of these institutions offer either the associate of arts degree or a bachelor of arts degree in human services, or both—rather than the baccalaureate social work degree. When asked about this, administrators have explained that this curriculum decision has been based not only on resource limitations (the lack of social work faculty available to teach on the reservation), but they also note the perception that accredited human services and counseling programs are less rigid and more accommodating to incorporating traditional pedagogy and cultural prerogatives than the social work curriculum (Personal Communication, S. L. Klein and B. Clifford, Sinte Gleska University, 2001).

These findings are corroborated by the authors' review of "Tribal College Profiles" (see the Appendix in *Globalization of Tribal Colleges and Universities*, 2000), which included profiles of 18 tribal colleges. The profiles included information about the respective majors offered at the tribal colleges and report on the types of majors their institutions offer. These profiles showed the following: Only two offered the associate of arts degree in social work and the Red Crow Community College in Alberta, Canada was in the process of developing a joint BSW program in concert with the University of Calgary. Most of the colleges offered other related majors which included associate of arts degrees in the following concentrations: human services, community health education, and alcohol and drug abuse studies. The associate of science degrees were also offered and include the following areas: chemical dependency counseling,

social science, public and tribal administration, health information technology, and criminal justice. Sinte Gleska University offered three related bachelor of science degree programs including criminal justice, mental health, and chemical dependency. Oglala Lakota College offered the BS in human services, and Sitting Bull College offered the BS in Native American human services. The Turtle Mountain Community College offered the BS in social work in partnership with the University of North Dakota (*Globalization of Tribal Colleges and Universities*, 2000).

The report *Creating Role Models for Change: A Survey of Tribal College Graduates* (American Indian Higher Education Consortium, Institute for Higher Education Policy, & Sallie May Education Institute, 2000) offers additional information about courses of study at tribal colleges and includes a summary of tribal college graduates' major fields of study. Among its findings, it showed that 19% of the graduates majored in nursing and health care, 13% in computer and office technology, 11% in education/teaching, and 11% in psychology/social work/human services (p. 8). These data document interest in social work among American Indian students<sup>2</sup> attending tribal colleges, despite the

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<sup>2</sup> The authors have decided to use the terms "American Indian," "native indigenous people or students," "Indian," or "tribal people" interchangeably when discussing generic issues, concerns, and ideas about the subjects of this essay. The authors are well aware of the historical, social, and political complexity and controversy associated with any terms used to identify culturally distinctive groups of people and note that the term "American Indian" is the legal title of federally recognized tribes holding jurisdiction on reservation lands in the United States. The terms "native

apparent barriers to the BSW. Interestingly, all of the tribal colleges included in the tribal college profiles in *Globalization of Tribal Colleges & Universities* (2000) reported that they had established international partnerships and exchanges as institutional priorities, and many had developed partnerships with sister universities across the United States—so there is interest in inter-institutional partnerships and collaborations here.

Similar findings about the social work curriculum, tribal concerns, and the needs of American-Indian students have been identified and discussed by Jim Bates, a Lakota/Nakota and an enrolled member of the Yankton Sioux Tribe, professor emeritus, Eastern Washington State University, social work educator, consultant to various tribes, and an American-Indian student advocate (personal communication, 1999). Professor Bates has noted how he has had to re-educate American-Indian graduates from accredited social work programs to function competently in tribal social services. Professor Bates noted that many tribes did not want to hire professional social workers for tribal services as they were not viewed as effective with Indian people, in that they were “just too complicated” for Indians to trust. Professor Bates often spoke about the need

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indigenous” and “tribal people” connote the originality of the people’s association with creation, the land, and the Creator, and their natural, extended, familiar relationship bonds which define them. Likewise the term “homeland” is preferred over “reservation” since the later connotes a fenced in place where animals are kept; it connotes a place of containment or restriction whereas the former term better reflects the sense of kinship, a place of safety and origin, and deep-felt affection the Lakota and other traditional people feel for their ancestral homeland.

for a “shadow curriculum” for native indigenous students, a curriculum that would be grounded upon core indigenous values and traditional philosophical assumptions; a curriculum that would more appropriately prepare traditional Indians for social work in their respective tribes within the framework of their own traditional heritage (personal communication, 1999).

These observations have been further supported by Weaver’s study about the experiences of American-Indian social workers in social work programs (2000). Respondents noted that, “psychodynamic theories and research methods [being] taught were sources of conflict” (p. 422); other respondents reported deep, pervasive conflicts related to broad institutional expectations. Weaver reported the following:

Some experienced conflict between the holistic spiritual community they came from and the hierarchical, bureaucratic educational system. The emphasis on written methods to communicate knowledge was also a struggle. Some felt they must compromise their cultural identity to succeed in school. One respondent stated that, “in the small groups I try to assimilate further by being more verbal as that is important it seems and also lengthy eye contact is something I continue to work on.” (p. 423)

Weaver’s findings document the intensity of cultural shock and dislocation experienced by Native-American students during their transition from leaving home and attending classes in a foreign university environment, far from their homeland (reservation). Weaver (2000) quoted one respondent, who stated,

If [I] hadn't been staying at [a nearby tribal college] the first year I went to [a social work program at a large university] I don't think I would have made it; me and my roommates would take turns crying . . . because it was so different from us, especially just coming from a boarding school. . . . We only had each other for support. (p. 424)

Parallel to these discussions, a traditional Oglala medicine man<sup>3</sup> and other elders who live in a traditional community on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation have discussed their concerns about and the need for social work on the reservation, the need for developing a core curriculum for tribal social workers, and the pressing needs of American-Indian people (personal communication, 2000). This medicine man asked for more discussion between traditional tribal educators and elders with mainstream educational institutions (and their respective accrediting bodies) particularly around building a curriculum that could interface with traditional knowledge keepers. He was really calling for a two-way process, one where professional social workers would collaborate with the medicine men and traditional elders, teaching basic or core helping skills, and also where the traditional knowledge-keepers would inform social work practice. He wondered why American social workers were so influenced by "English social work" when there were traditions of social work-like functions among traditional (American-Indian) people.

<sup>3</sup>It is customary not to include the names of medicine men and elders in publications out of respect.

In the midst of these discussions, the first author found himself straddling two worlds. In the summer of the year 2000, he was adopted as a Hunka son by an Oglala elder, a descendent of Chief Red Cloud, and given the name *Ohi-tika Wicasa* that was translated as "Keeps His Word." It is from this relational context, with one foot in each of these worlds, that this article is written with permission from his respective elders and extended family.

The above data from traditional tribal communities suggest that the significant differences inherent in culturally diverse groups, particularly native indigenous (Indian) students are not being adequately addressed in practical, reciprocal, and developmental terms for these students in their experiences with formal social work education. The differences that come to bear are poignantly illustrated in the Red Road Approach developed by Gene Thin Elk (Red Dog, personal communication, 1999), which contrasts the "unnatural world" of the dominant culture influenced by "how one feels" versus living in the "natural world" that is not guided by "how one feels" but by responding to all life based on a spiritual understanding, by "acting responsibly and doing the right thing." The different trajectories from these epistemological stances powerfully illustrate how the values of the dominant culture have been infused into a curriculum that overly emphasizes the exploration of feelings versus the exploration of right action: "how do you feel about that?" or "reaching for feeling(s)" versus using the pedagogy of tribal values, spirituality, and traditional teaching.

The question arises, Is it possible to bring these apparently incompatible worldviews into a dialogue? Will the Council on Social Work

Education's (2001) accreditation standard 6.0 offer any real avenues for dialogue and co-operation between social work educators and institutions with traditional people and their respective tribes and nations, or will it sustain the present pedagogical impasse evident in the data presented in the following discussion? When traditional people do not approve of something, the way they express their disagreement is not to show up—they will “just walk away.” To illustrate this point, an elder would ask, “Do you know how the people used to vote a bad leader out of office?” He answered, “When the chief woke up one morning and all the tipis had moved away. *Then* he knew something was up. No one would tell him, ‘Hey Chief, you’ve got a problem here.’ It was understood that he should have known better and paid more attention to what was going on” (Little Soldier, personal communication, 1999). This article is a wake-up call for social work education in the homeland.

### **Social Work Education and Post-Colonial Resistance**

The history of American-Indian education policy is problematic on many levels. The early pedagogy driven by assimilation theory attempted to extinguish what was perceived as uncivilized and untamed in Indian children and instill within them the values and work ethic seen as indispensable for productive citizenry. Many Indian children were removed from their respective reservations, separated from their families, and routinely introduced to Christianity as a civilizing methodology. They were prohibited from speaking their native languages and practicing their native spirituality. In this vacuum, they were socialized

into a materialistic lifestyle in an institutional (boarding school) setting (Douville, personal communication, 1997; Little Soldier, personal communication, 1997; White Hat, personal communication, 1997; see Standing Bear, 1975, pp. 123–176).

Today few American-Indian families have not been affected by the legacy of the Indian boarding school experience. While some Indian people claim to have benefited from their boarding school experience, it is often associated with the loss of culture, loss of language, and loss of identity. In their findings from their study of historical trauma and identity, Weaver and Yellow Horse Brave Heart (1999) report that over half of the respondents rated their boarding school experiences as negative and 58% reported physical abuse by boarding school staff. Seventy-one percent reported experiencing racism from school staff; interestingly, more men reported physical and sexual abuse than women (p. 28). Currently, educators are looking at culture as a resource for students and understand that cultural identity is not a static concept, but is a dynamic and adaptive resource. We now see that exposure to diverse cultures may actually make individuals stronger and enable them to function in two or more cultural worlds, as the situation requires (McFee, 1968; Oetting & Beauvais, 1991; Weaver & Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1999).

“Historical trauma” describes the cumulative cultural wounding across generations as well as present-day effects on one’s current life circumstances (Weaver & Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1999, p. 22) in response to systemic oppression and genocide. For American-Indian people the legacy of genocide includes imposed distortions of one’s tribal identity, devalued

sense of self, and suppression of tribal cultural values and traditional practices (Holler, 1995, p. 110; Lane Deer, 1992, p. 230; Voss, Douville, Little Soldier, & White Hat, Sr., 1999a; Voss et al., 1999b). While group identity continues to be strong among traditional Lakotas, it includes some features that have led to a group identity formed on the status of being persecuted and oppressed (Weaver & Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1999, p. 23). For the Lakota, the sense of self has traditionally been associated with an intimate bond with the group (Lakota Nation) and with a profound sense of kinship with all of creation, including the natural universe and ancestral spirits articulated in the Lakota imperative *Mitakuye oyas'in!* which has been translated as "All my relations!" For the traditional Lakota self-identity does not exist apart from the spiritual world, the nation, and all creation (Weaver & Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1999). In response to historical trauma, Lakota and other Indian people have developed various coping styles and survival strategies (trauma responses) that may appear dysfunctional when viewed outside of the historical context. Care must be taken to comprehend the level of unresolved grief, deprecated group status, and devalued self-image that continue to affect some indigenous native homelands (Weaver & Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1999, p. 23).

Oetting and Beauvais (1991) found that an individual's identification with one culture is independent of their identification with any other culture. Therefore, increasing identification with one culture does not necessarily demand a reciprocal decrease in identification with another culture (Weaver & Yellow Horse Brave Heart, 1999, p. 21). In order to develop a strong identity with the predominant culture,

an individual need not relinquish his or her identity with his or her native culture, which was the faulty assumption of the early boarding school innovators. We now know that individuals may and do identify with more than one culture for a variety of reasons, and that there are multiple sources of strength and support for overcoming even great adversity (Crozier-Hogel & Wilson, 1997).

### **Educational Failure as a Form of Cultural Resistance**

In a survey of post-secondary school achievement of American Indians, Robert N. Wells (1997) found that the 1st-year retention rate of American-Indian students in post-secondary education was 45%, with a graduation rate of 25%. This survey found the most frequently identified factors that hindered college-level achievement for American-Indian students were the following: inadequate preparation, poor adjustment to the college environment, personal and family problems, and financial difficulties (Wells, 1997). Failure rates of American Indian students who go to college directly from reservations reportedly run nearly 70% and higher (Harriman, 2000, pp. 1–2). American Indians have the lowest level of educational attainment of any racial or ethnic group in the United States. According to the 1990 Census data, among American Indians 25 years and older, only 66% graduated from high school and only 9% had earned a bachelor's degree or higher. We also know that one out of five American Indians live on reservations where access to higher education continues to be limited (Census Bureau, 1998). In the report "Creating Role Models for Change: A Survey of Tribal College Graduates" the American

Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), together with the Institute for Higher Education Policy and Sallie May Education Institute (2000), noted that

The history of higher education for American Indians in the United States largely has been one of systemic failure. For hundreds of years, the primary goal of post-secondary education efforts for American Indians at predominantly white, mainstream institutions was cultural assimilation rather than students' educational development and progress. (p. 1)

The pedagogical dilemmas affecting American-Indian students today must be understood in the historical context of the liberal educational legacy inherited from the 1800s which embraced a "cookie cutter" or an industrial conveyor belt one-size-fits-all, or "one best system" of education built on uniformity, productivity, and compliance (Johnson & Reed, 2002). This, coupled with the legacy of the Carlisle Indian School's liberal philosophy inspired by Colonel Richard C. Pratt's notion of "kill the Indian. . . save the man," (1973), established the pedagogical template and basic philosophical foundation for American-Indian education policy in the United States for the next century. Colonel Pratt's distinction of "kill the Indian, save the man" was actually a liberal revision of the previous master text, which read "the only good Indian, is a dead Indian," and literally sought to strip the Indian youth of his or her tribal identity. This overtly racist ideology set the brutal historical context of Indian education policy, the legacy of which frames the present challenges facing contemporary social work educators

interested in addressing the systemic failure in post-secondary performance measures for many American-Indian students today.

### **Challenging the Script of Indian Education: The Legacy of Zitkala Ša at the Carlisle Indian School**

In order to better comprehend the legacy of Indian education policy one also needs to consider the legacy of resistance and the push toward intellectual sovereignty against the pedagogies that have silenced the voices of Indian children. A particularly powerful testimony of this academic resistance is found in the writings of Zitkala Ša, a turn-of-the century Yanktoni Dakota Sioux woman (aka Gertrude Bonnin, see Fisher, 1979; Enoch, 2001), who became an Indian teacher at the Carlisle Indian School. Zitkala Ša would later construct an impassioned critique of the pedagogy of cultural and spiritual annihilation that supported and sustained the colonizing-assimilating institutions affecting Indian people. She wrote,

For the white man's papers I had given up my faith in the Great Spirit. For these same papers I had forgotten the healing in trees and brooks. On account of my mother's simple view of life, and my lack of any, I gave her up, also. I made no friends among the race of people I loathed. Like a slender tree, I had been uprooted from my mother, nature, and God. I was shorn of my branches, which had waved in sympathy and love for home and friends. The natural coat of bark which had protected my oversensitive nature was scraped off to the very quick. (Zitkala Ša, cited in Enoch, 2001, p. 127)

By articulating her self-understanding, ZitkalaŠa offers insight into the psychologically destructive pedagogy of the Indian boarding school experience that replaced the familiar self inscriptions of Indian life and culture, with the master script of the “civilized” White school masters. ZitkalaŠa actively resisted full assimilation by consciously reflecting on the multiple layers inherent in the process of ideological indoctrination incorporated in Indian education, noting the following:

As months passed over me, I slowly comprehended that the large army of white teachers in Indian schools had a larger missionary creed than I had suspected. It was one which included self-preservation quite as much as Indian education. (Zitkala Ša, cited in Enoch, 2001, p.117)

ZitkalaŠa’s testimony of academic survival and resistance provides insight into the power of education to subvert culture, undermine identity, and erode tribal sovereignty by a colonizing curriculum.

### **Core Social Work Values and Traditional Indian Wisdom: Decoding the Social Work Script**

Higher education continues to be based on a modern, secular, liberal, scientific model of empiricism and interpersonal objectivity, requiring critical, detached scrutiny that assumes the investigator is separate from the subjects studied. This is not the way traditional American Indians see their world; for them the world (earth) and the above (sky) are intimate relatives, so intimate the traditional Lakota Sioux use the personal relational terms

of *Maka* (“mother”), *Unci* (“grandmother”), *Ate* (“father”), and *Tunka’sila* (“grandfather”) respectively. For the traditional Lakota and other traditional American Indians these are not metaphors. These are terms of endearment and reflect a way of speaking about a highly personalized environment where everything is intimately related and connected. This conflict creates an epistemological crisis for many American-Indian students whose outlook on life and the understanding of the world is holistic. Lionel Bordeaux, president of Sinte Gleska University noted, “We do have a very holistic outlook. . . . We find it difficult to separate various things within ourselves” (Harriman, 2000, p. 2).

While present-day century social work education would not consciously or overtly ascribe to Colonel Pratt’s “kill the Indian, save the man” ideology, social work education is, nonetheless, situated within the broader educational institution historically embedded in the American experience. Within this broader educational context, vestiges and residues of the earlier civilizing pedagogy may be found in the profession’s most fundamental values. Consider the profession’s emphasis on “intervention” and ethical stance on “client self-determination” and “client confidentiality.” Traditional Indian people understand their close ties to all of their relatives and ancestors who respond to their needs when they ask for help. The spirits give many options to the individual in the healing process and are always available to help the individual. The individual seeking help knows that answers are not always immediate, so he or she waits with patience and fortitude (*wo’wacini tanka*) and knows that understanding will come in the space of time. The individual knows that

his or her problems will be dissolved, often in a way that is not expected. Here the spirits (relatives) really challenge one's mind or reasoning power to recognize the solution(s) as it (they) unfold in day to day life. There is great respect for the intelligence of the individual throughout this process.

What is perceived as being most real, genuine, and good (ethical) for traditional Indian people is the rhythm, interconnectivity, and cycle of creation, which is reflected in their view of all life. Here, the individual is viewed as intimately related to all of creation that includes immediate and extended family, both living and ancestors who have passed on to the spirit world, as well as the tribal family and nation. Within this cultural context the very core social work values of client "self-determination" and "confidentiality" must be nuanced carefully and may be perceived as antithetical to traditional wisdom and knowledge, and perhaps unwittingly, subvert basic traditional Indian understandings of life which revolve around shamanism and tribalism (Voss et al., 1999b). There can be cultural dissonance between these traditional Lakota prerogatives and social work practice models that overly emphasize interventions with individuals, client self-determination based on Western personality theories, and the idea of an individualistic sense of confidentiality which can place a family member at odds with his or her *Ti'Ospaye* (extended family). Such interventions may be perceived as intrusive, intimidating, and culturally subversive.

Traditional Lakota culture resonates more with social work approaches that use pragmatic, community-based, prevention-oriented, risk reduction strategies that are holistic and

engage the extended family and community as the primary helping system and affirm and incorporate cultural values and tribal prerogatives in interventions (Voss et al., 1999a; White Hat, personal communication, 2004). Cognitive therapies that emphasize personal and social responsibility and incorporate a discussion about the "false self" and the "true self" more closely correspond to the traditional Indian understanding of the challenges of choosing the good over the bad and learning from both. Within this tribal context, the individual is not alone in this arduous and difficult process; he or she has powerful spiritual resources that are available in the helping process. This well illustrates the concept incorporated into the title of this article, *Wo'Lakota Unglu'su'tapi*, "Strengthening our Lakota way within oneself and in relation with creation" and provides the nuance in understanding a traditional Lakota view of personal responsibility or self-determination.

Traditionally, the extended family was responsible for dealing with the problems of living that arose in pre-reservation tribal society (Douville, personal communication, 1997; Voss et al., 1999a; White Hat, personal communication, 1997, 2004). The idea of an elder sitting down with a social worker who is not a relative, perhaps a non-Indian, a stranger really, often someone much younger and inexperienced with life; who comes into his or her home asking personal questions and discussing personal matters, often recording or writing down what is said would be viewed as a cultural violation by most traditional people (White Hat, personal communication, 2004). "Out of respect for the visitor the elder will talk to the social worker politely," but there are deep questions about

why such personal information is necessary (White Hat, personal communication, 2004). If and when such information is later used in court, there is a sense of deep betrayal and mistrust. If it is known that the social worker is a relative, he or she risks being ostracized by, and even cut-off from extended family. The situation is fraught with risk and danger. American-Indian social workers providing social services in native homelands (reservations) walk a tight-rope between these two confounding worlds. The first author has often heard the advice that social workers working with Indian people in the homelands "should not live on the reservation" (Matthew Cash, personal communication, 2004) so they can avoid being overly involved with their clients "in order to be professional." This conventional advice underscores the challenges and pressures tribal social workers face as they seek to engage in more culturally compatible practices with their relatives in their homelands.

The post-modern take on "kill the Indian, save the man" comprehends the destructiveness in the modern liberal interpersonal split between the subjective (personal) self and the objective (professional) self. This philosophical stance, consistent with 19th-century missionary ideals, focuses on socializing the student in core social work values that embed the message that shamanism (spirit-calling) and tribalism (multiple kinship attachments and loyalties) as foundational to traditional Indian identity (Voss et al., 1999b) are unprofessional because they are nonempirical (superstitious), undifferentiated (primitive), and undefined (porous)—all code words for the "savage" or shadow curriculum. The jury is still out on whether there is any way to bring these different worldviews into

any kind of meaningful dialogue. The Council on Social Work Education (2001) accreditation standard 6.0, however, extends such an opportunity for bicultural social work educational transformation.

### **Role of Tribal Colleges in Native Indigenous Homelands**

In order to address the lack of access to higher education, and fueled by the American Indian self-determination movement that coalesced in the 1960s, 33 tribal colleges and universities were established in the United States and Canada to help increase access to higher education by American Indians who live on remote tribal lands (AIHEC et al., 2000, p. 1). Located on homelands (reservations) and administered by American-Indian staff, the tribal colleges and universities are a unique resource in bridging traditional American-Indian knowledge, understandings, and cultural practices to the academic disciplines (Red Bird & Mohatt, 1976). The development of these colleges was further supported by the developing "theory of Indian-controlled schools" (Clifford, 1974), which rejected the assimilation process in education and asserted the new Indian ideologies and belief systems that looked to the "internal forces in the Indian community," demanding local control of Indian education that could promote social change from within the reservation. Clifford identified five critical elements of Indian-controlled schools. First of all, there would be an immediacy of contact between young and old; second, it would promote rootedness in the local environment and encourage exploration of traditional wisdom through modern technology; third, it would provide a forum for cultural expansion and

creativity; fourth, it would provide employment at the local level; and finally, it would establish control of federal monies to better leverage and promote Indian development and capital. So the shifts in traditional Indian views toward formal education have a long history of Indian intellectual resistance and tribal commitment to the preservation of cultural prerogatives. The authors argue these components are relevant to social work education, particularly in light of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) (2001) accreditation standard 6.0, Nondiscrimination and Human Diversity.

As we look at the troubling failure rates discussed above we must also look at this situation in the context of developing strategies to implement the CSWE (2001) Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) curriculum. To what extent are our post-secondary educational settings and credentialing bodies developing culturally competent curricula and partnerships with tribal colleges as critical cultural resources? Or do they uncritically (unconsciously) apply a set of social expectations inherited from an arcane 19th-century American-Indian education policy modeled on forced assimilation which, unwittingly, creates hostile learning environments for native indigenous (American-Indian) students. Perhaps the under-representation of traditional American Indians within the profession of social work, and overall, low retention and completion rates in the academy provide evidence of active resistance to continuing cultural genocide.

### **Accreditation Standard 6.0, Nondiscrimination and Human Diversity**

The CSWE (2001) EPAS accreditation standard 6.0 mandates that "specific, continuous

efforts to provide a learning context in which understanding and respect for diversity... are practiced and *"the program provides a learning context that is nondiscriminatory and reflects the profession's fundamental tenets [italics added]"*. While the term "diversity" is not defined in the document, it is significant that "learning environment" is, i.e., that it should be *nondiscriminatory*. Based on the above data documenting the failure of the academy to retain and graduate native indigenous, American-Indian students living in their homelands, how does the CSWE (2001) EPAS accreditation standard 6.0 measure whether, and to what degree, accredited social work programs serving a native indigenous student population meet this standard? Again the CSWE (2001) accreditation standard 6.0 is very clear in identifying criteria to measure compliance in this area, these include *"faculty, staff, and student composition; selection of agencies and their clientele as practicum settings; composition of program advisory or field committees; resource allocation; program leadership; speakers series, seminars, and special programs; research and other initiatives [italics added]"*.

To what extent do we see CSWE-accredited programs located near traditional homelands (reservations) incorporating American Indians in these areas? Alex Little Soldier, former chairman of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe viewed tribal sovereignty (see Pevar, 1992, p. 79) as a critical issue in the restoration of tribal identity for his people (Lunderman/Little Soldier, 1992). This issue was also raised by Paul Boyer in his discussion about the critical role of tribal colleges in educating both tribal leadership, native students, and the larger community about sovereignty as a reality for Indian people and not just rhetoric (Boyer, 2004). How does

accreditation standard 6.0 incorporate tribal sovereignty into its diversity standard? To what extent are CSWE-accredited programs actively engaged in dialogue with tribal governments and colleges and jointly developing social work curricula that can respond to the realities of our native indigenous homelands (reservations), integrating shamanism and tribalism (Voss et al., 1999b) in substantive ways where the “diversity” standard actually supports tribal sovereignty and cultural integrity? How can accredited social work programs serving native indigenous (American-Indian) students living in their native homelands provide a “nondiscriminatory learning environment” without literally having one (programmatic) foot in the student’s homeland (reservation)? Recall the respondent in Weaver’s (2000) study who noted, “if [I] hadn’t been staying at [a nearby tribal college] the first year I went to [a] social work program. . . I don’t think I would have made it” (p. 424). Clearly, the tribal college was part of this student’s survival strategy in completing the program, and by extension is a natural resource for CSWE programs seeking cultural proficiency in serving Indian people.

### **Integrating the “Shadow Curriculum” Into the Academy**

The route for the effective integration of the shadow curriculum (traditional Indian way) into the institutionalized curriculum (dominant master script) begins by building familial and community connections between the social work program (and respective host university institution) and the student’s extended family and respective tribe, including both formal and informal tribal leaders that reflect the student’s primary support system.

In the dominant institutional model, faculty rarely interact with students’ family, generally only on very special circumstances, e.g., at new student orientation, when students are either in academic jeopardy or being recognized for academic excellence, and at commencement. Otherwise faculty-student-family interaction is generally not encouraged. It is viewed as intrusive to the broader expectation that the student should be dealt with as an autonomous individual responsible for him or herself—the mark of maturity. Privacy and confidentiality laws and regulations reinforce this standard. The shadow curriculum begins with a view of the family, extended family, ancestors, and tribe as the most important and essential relational bond between the university and the student. In tribal colleges, extended family members are in positions of power as teachers, administrators, advisors, counselors, and consulted elders and spiritual advisors. Here, non-Indian faculty and staff assimilate tribal values and comprehend traditional practices and also appreciate and support effective survival strategies—there is a deep-felt sense of cultural understanding or awareness (*wo’a’blaza*).

Universities whose mission and purpose are to educate a diverse student population and are interested in the inclusion of traditional American Indians in their respective settings can implement a number of feasible measures to both integrate and infuse traditional content and traditional indigenous native (American-Indian) pedagogies that respect and support both tribal and pedagogical sovereignty as standards for practice.

First of all, social work programs serving traditional Indian homelands should examine the biases in their theoretical orientations and

practice frameworks to ensure that alternative theory and value bases are included in their curricula. The incorporation of ethnography and use of narrative theory drawing on cultural oral traditions, the use of contextual and family-systems approaches to social services that emphasize prevention and use risk reduction strategies may reduce the cultural dissonance experienced by indigenous native students from homeland (reservation) communities, by providing theoretical frameworks that are much more consistent with traditional values than more individualistically-oriented intervention approaches. Shriver (2004) offers a detailed discussion of alternative models and approaches in social work practice that addresses this concern. Along with an examination of cultural bias in theoretical models, social work programs should also look at their student service policies to see if there is sufficient flexibility to accommodate cultural needs of Indian students, e.g., are there ample leave or "stop-out" policies that allow Indian students to return home for periods of time to assist family members and to participate in cultural practices (mourning periods, spiritual commitments, etc.)? This specific question was raised by Professor Bates (personal communication, 2004) and echoed by Marjane Ambler (2004) in the "Editor's Essay" in the recent edition of the *Tribal College Journal of American Indian Higher Education*.

Second, social work programs that are situated near native indigenous homelands can explore ways to work together to advance mutual goals and interests; recognized tribal elders may be invited to participate as consultants and advisors or cultural guides to assist university personnel in navigating the cultural differences and issues that will often surface in

cross-cultural dialogue between the dominant and traditional communities of the academy and traditional tribal leadership groups (both formal and informal). Social work faculty from CSWE-accredited programs can arrange visits to tribes and develop relationships on a one-on-one basis with faculty at tribal colleges; faculty might also attend the annual AIHEC conference that addresses many of the issues discussed in this paper in practical terms. A directory of tribal colleges is available through AIHEC. Where there is interest and openness, faculty may coordinate student visits and exchanges to, and workshops with, the respective native homelands and tribal colleges. In such a dynamic social context faculty can encourage inter-cultural student discussions, visits with community and reservation elders and cultural keepers, thereby establishing some common ground for collaboration in creating a "nondiscriminatory learning context" effectively building their own respective "shadow curriculum." Where tribal colleges and visiting institutions identify common and compatible interests and mutual trusts, they may develop more formal agreements of cooperation and become partners where they identify ways of sharing resources, developing innovative recruitment programs that include collaboration with high schools serving a majority Indian population on reservations, providing pre-college preparatory programs that specifically address the academic vulnerabilities identified by Wells and others (1997) discussed above (e.g., Upward Bound programs, etc).

For collaborating institutions the options for ensuring cultural proficiency are endless. They can develop cross-listed courses, distance learning/tele-courses, Blackboard chats around

topics of interest, as well as jointly developing opportunities for innovative practicum, faculty exchanges, collaborative studies and research projects, etc. with tribal colleges and community colleges serving native indigenous students. It is in this later stage that CSWE-accredited social work programs begin to access the "shadow curriculum" in a meaningful way and find opportunities to infuse the shadow with the institutionalized curriculum, where both can benefit from the new synthesis or even newly uncovered antitheses (e.g., ethical dilemmas, value conflicts, relational patterns, etc.), which may create or sustain impasses. Here cooperating institutions can work together to overcome such obstacles once they are identified.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This paper is an invitation for an engaged dialogue and creative exploration of common concerns and interests between tribal colleges, traditional spiritual leaders, tribal leaders, and elders with social work educators, social work practitioners, and educational policy advocates. The authors conclude with a sense of optimism and hope that CSWE (2001) accreditation standard 6.0 can serve as the catalyst to help shape a traditional shadow curriculum in true partnership between accredited social work programs and tribal colleges genuinely committed to supporting tribal sovereignty. Such partnering will challenge the colonial residue from the 19th-century American-Indian education policy in the U.S. and better reflect and assert the profession's commitment to cultural competence by inventing and designing more inclusive, fluid, responsive, and non-discriminatory educational environments for the development and delivery of social work

curricula and practice with Indian people in the homelands. The CSWE (2001) accreditation standard 6.0 is really a mandate for such innovation.

### **Accreditation Standard 6.0: Inviting Social Work Educators to Think Out-of-the-Box: Suggestions for Transformation in American-Indian Social Work Education**

The authors recognize there are countless pressures and pulls from multiple constituencies on all CSWE-accredited social work programs, and that the last thing our colleagues often need is yet another demand for accountability from yet another constituency. The purpose of this article is not to ask the impossible of our social work programs and require ever-greater expenditures with ever-decreasing resources in the ever-increasingly competitive educational environment. What the authors are asserting is that when CSWE-accredited universities partner with or otherwise collaborate with tribal colleges, a new synergy can actually be generated and valuable resources shared among both educational partners, with potential benefits to faculty, students, and administration. Such transformative activities can also have a ripple effect in the way we view the mission, scope, and very identity of the social work profession. We are suggesting that partnerships between CSWE-accredited university programs located near federally recognized American-Indian reservations present a potential cost benefit to both partners. The authors are concerned that social work education is not being incorporated in tribal colleges and that the perception that human services and other counseling degree programs are more workable for Indian stu-

dents may limit tribal access to professional social work, further alienating the profession from tribal relevance (see above discussion by Klein and Clifford). Accreditation standard 6.0 provides an opportunity for re-engagement by the profession with the federally recognized tribes. It's not too late. Maybe some fresh ideas are needed to activate action.

### **Contemporary Chinese Social Work Education: Cross-Cultural Comparisons of Resistance and Transformation in Social Work Education**

Accredited social work programs interested in partnering with federally recognized tribes could take some cues from our Chinese colleagues who are involved in broad-based educational reforms that are prompting a rigorous analysis of social work practice and education across China that promise to have ripple effects across the profession. Presently, the very core mission of the social work profession is coming under close scrutiny in the face of historical and cultural analysis by indigenous Chinese social work educators and others. This Chinese analysis is relevant to traditional American-Indian experience, particularly in that indigenous Chinese scholars have scrutinized the profession's western biases embedded in its core identity, methods, skill-sets and knowledge-bases, its historical association with Christian evangelization, and the over-emphasis on individual (casework) treatment and empiricism over communal (tribal) and cultural (shamanic) resources and strategies for intervention (Fulcher, 2003; Nimmagadda & Cowger, 1999; Ng, 2003; Tsang, 2000; Tsang & Yan, 2001; Yuen-Tsang & Wang, 2002). There is a growing chorus arguing for substantial change in the way social work is taught and practiced

in China, including increasing calls for greater indigenization in social work education and pedagogy through the 21st century (Cheung, Sharon, & Liu, 2004; Jinchao, 1995; Voss, 2004; Xia & Guo 2002).

### **Policy Themes for American Social Work Transformation in the American Indian Homelands: Cues From the Contemporary Chinese Experience**

In the wake of modernization that re-established social work as a sanctioned profession in China in 1986 after its formal abrogation in 1952 (Chamberlain, 1991), Yuen-Tsang & Wang (2002) analyzed developments in social work education in China over the past decade. They noticed some important features that could have bearing on this discussion about social work education in the homelands. A few parallels will be drawn here after summarizing the researchers' key points. They noted that Chinese social work educators rejected borrowing directly from the West and "indiscriminately transplanting those universally accepted standards and models *en bloc* to the Chinese context. Instead, they took a complementary stance whereby universal norms and standards were used as helpful guidelines and references to complement indigenous understanding and practices" (p. 382). Likewise, among tribal colleges across our native homelands, American-Indian faculty and their colleagues are critical of blindly incorporating non-Indian standards and models, and are engaged in a broad-based indigenization process across their curriculum (see AIHEC et al., 2000; White Hat, 1999). From their analysis of this developmental process, Yuen-Tsang & Wang (2002) noted three major features of Chinese social work education transformation in contemporary China, which the

authors assert are also relevant to social work education in our native homelands.

First, they noticed a *commitment to community development and social integration*. In response to the China Association for Social Work Education where “it was unanimously agreed that the role of social work education was ‘to develop high quality social work expertise, to enhance social development, and to improve the welfare of the people,’” they noticed that “social work education positioned itself as a catalyst for community improvement and social development” (p. 382). In many ways, this is true about social work in the native homelands. Social work should not be an abstraction or just about the administration of mandated social and child welfare programs. It must be a catalyst for social transformation and community improvement. Likewise, research or methods of social inquiry must be related to these transformation goals as well. Here, participatory action research (PAR) (Healy, 2001) is particularly fitting as it draws on core assumptions that reinforce genuine social transformation. PAR assumes that the causes of social problems and oppression lie in macro-social structures and that authentic social change can only be achieved by social transformation. Second, it argues that social forces reinforce the privileges of the “haves” over the “have-nots” and that the dynamics of society maintain this relationship. Finally, PAR seeks “to empower participants to take control of the political and economic forces that shape their lives” (Healy, 2001, p. 95). Selener (1997) noted that “participatory research assumes that returning the power of knowledge generation and use to ordinary, oppressed people will contribute to the creation of more accurate, critical reflection of social reality, the liberation of hu-

man potential, and the mobilization of human resources to solve problems” (p. 28).

Second, Yuen-Tsang and Wang (2002) also noticed the pragmatic role that developing *partnerships with government in educational and service development* played in Chinese social work programs. The fact that most social work graduates are employed by the government drew a close connection between social work education and a “heavy emphasis on knowledge and skills pertaining to working with the government bureaucracy” (p. 384). Similarly, most graduates of tribal colleges, for example, from Sinte Gleska University, the tribal college affiliated with the Rosebud Sioux Tribe are recruited for tribal service, often as tribal police, health-care providers, and in support of other tribal services, e.g., human services, drug and alcohol treatment, and tribal administration (White Hat, personal communication, 2004). So, social work education in the homelands needs to teach and relate to tribal law, customs, and procedures on a priority basis—not the other way around, i.e., learning non-Indian law, practices, and procedures and only afterward learning the indigenous bureaucracy.

Finally, Yuen-Tsang and Wang (2002, citing Wang) noted in their analysis “a commitment to the *indigenization of theory and practice in social work in the Chinese context*” (p. 384). Here, “indigenization” was defined as the need to “consider the traditional Chinese culture, the impact of the market economy on people’s livelihood, as well as the impact of collectivism and welfarism on the mentality of the people.” (p. 384). Curricula at tribal colleges are committed to the indigenization and integration of traditional knowledge, values, and prerogatives throughout the curriculum. Social work education needs to actively engage in this discovery process, not with a rigidly

prescribed *a priori* set of standards, but with the capacity to transform its core knowledge, values, and skills within the tribal context in which it is to function. The process needs to be dynamic and interactive versus static and reactive.

It is argued here that if social work education is to be relevant to traditional American Indians living on federally recognized reservations, American social work education must enter a similar period of transformation and indigenization in our native homelands (reservations) as our Chinese colleagues are currently engaged. CSWE-accredited social work programs can support and assist in this creative developmental process. The CSWE (2001) accreditation standard 6.0 provides an impetus for such developmental work.

In closing, the authors recognize they speak from a distinct Lakota cultural and tribal vantage point, and are aware that indigenous people across the Americas and around the world have very different and varied cultural practices, styles of relating, and views about education and pedagogy. This paper is offered not as an overgeneralization about traditional indigenous people, but as an affirmation that traditional indigenous people everywhere have something very important to contribute in educating future social workers. As we reflect on the 30 years that have passed since the American-Indian Movement occupation and confrontation with the U.S. government at Wounded Knee, South Dakota, the authors challenge the social work profession to re-examine the plight of American-Indian education policies and indigenous experiences in light of CSWE (2001) accreditation standard 6.0 to ensure that this standard is not an empty document—words on paper without a commitment to real social change.

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**Richard W. Voss** is associate professor, Undergraduate Social Work Department, West Chester University. **Albert White Hat, Sr.**, is instructor of Lakota Studies, Sinte Gleska University. **Jim Bates** is professor emeritus, Eastern Washington University. **Margery Richard Lunderman** is an elder and **Alex Lunderman, Jr.** is a community activist, Ring Thunder Community, Rosebud Sioux Indian Reservation.

Address correspondence to Richard W. Voss, West Chester University, Undergraduate Department of Social Work, 114 Rosedale Ave., West Chester, PA 19383; e-mail: rvoss@wcupa.edu.



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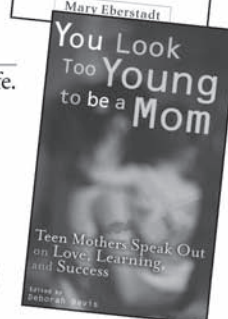
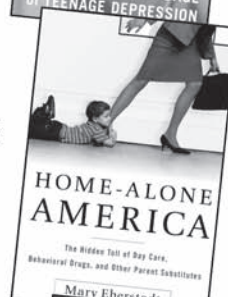
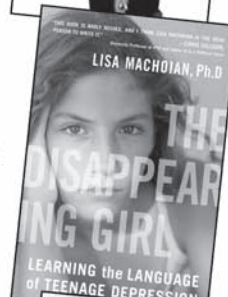
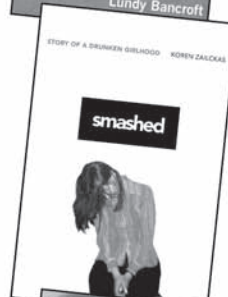
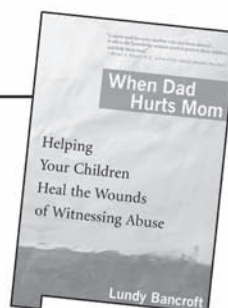
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# STUDY ABROAD AND VALUES DEVELOPMENT IN SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

**Elizabeth W. Lindsey**

University of North Carolina at Greensboro

This article presents results of a qualitative study of values development in U.S. and Scottish social work students who participated in a study-abroad program. Six themes emerged: opening the mind to new ways of thinking; awareness and insight into one's own values and beliefs; social awareness and challenges to societal values and beliefs; appreciation of difference, cultural sensitivity, and anti-discriminatory practice; social justice; and professional identity development. Implications for social work study-abroad programs and future research are discussed.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL VALUES has historically been identified as an important aspect of the evolution of professional identity and socialization for social work students (Towle, 1954; Reamer, 1999). Social work education programs encourage students to examine and understand their own values as well as learn to apply the values and ethics of the profession. Traditionally, social work students have been challenged to examine both personal and professional values within the context of academic course work and field experiences. The purpose of this article is to explore how a study-abroad experience affected students with respect to their personal and professional values. The author describes the findings related to values development from a larger qualitative study of how social work students perceive their study-abroad experience to affect them, both personally and professionally.

## Literature Review

Literature in three areas is relevant to this study: social work values, values development in social work, and study abroad.

### Social Work Values

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW, 1999) Code of Ethics cites six core social work values on which effective and responsible practice is based: Service, Social Justice, Dignity and Worth of the Person, Importance of Human Relationships, Integrity, and Competence. These values are each defined in ethical principles and explicated more fully in the Code of Ethics. The seven ethical principles require social workers to "help people in need and to address social problems; . . . challenge social justice; . . . respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person; . . . recognize the central importance of human relationships; . . . behave in a trustworthy manner

[integrity], . . . and practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise" (Ethical Principles Section).

The British Association of Social Workers (BASW, 2001) Code of Ethics for Social Work is very similar to the NASW Code. The BASW Code outlines five core values and principles: Human Dignity and Worth, Social Justice, Service to Humanity, Integrity, and Competence. The NASW value of the Importance of Human Relationships has no parallel in the British code.

Pumphrey (1959), who authored a landmark study of social work values that served as the basis for Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) curriculum requirements around values and ethics, defined values as "formulations of preferred behaviors held by individuals or social groups. They imply a usual preference for certain means, ends, and conditions of life, often being accompanied by strong feeling" (p. 23). Rokeach (1968) noted that values have motivational, cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. It is the behavioral component of values that is addressed in codes of ethics that guide professional practice. Towle (1954) linked the affective components of values with practice behavior when she emphasized the importance of developing "feelings and attitudes that will make it possible for the student to think and act appropriately" (p. 8). The universal recognition within the profession of the importance of professional values development is evident in the CSWE (2001) requirement that all social work programs include content on social work values and ethics in their curricula.

### **Values Development in Social Work Education**

Reamer (1999) has asserted that social work values must be at the center of social

work education. Noting that personal values have a great influence on how students view clients and the work they do with clients, Reamer emphasized the importance of social work students clarifying their personal values in relation to the values of the profession. An important function of social work education is to facilitate the process of professional values development, which requires students to engage in self-reflection with respect to both their personal and professional values. This process of values development is a part of socialization into the social work profession that begins within the educational context, but which is an ongoing process.

Bargal (1981) proposed a five-stage model of social values development as a part of the socialization process for social work and other human service professions. According to this model, many factors affect values development, both before and after exposure to social work education. Before a student enrolls, antecedent factors such as socioeconomic background, early life experiences, and personality factors, as well as anticipatory socialization that occurs before a student actually enrolls in a social work program, influence values. Once students graduate and begin work, Bargal asserts that work in a bureaucratic organization and crystallization of a professional world view affect values development. During the third stage, the professional training period, this model suggests that social work educators can influence the development of students' values in two ways: "accentuation of values brought by the student" and by helping students acquire "structures and new combinations of values and world views" (p. 48). While Bargal acknowledges that the process of professional

values development is ongoing, his model emphasizes the role social work education can play in that process.

Haynes's (1999) model for teaching social work values places great importance on helping students integrate four dimensions of values: personal, social, political, and professional values. There is evidence to suggest that exposure to content on professional values as well as engagement in activities that facilitate student self-awareness and reflection on their personal values in relation to the values of the profession can have a positive effect on the development of professional values (Royse & Riffe, 1999). Social work educators teach values and ethics through a variety of instructional and learning techniques that address the motivational, cognitive, affective, and behavioral components of values. Such strategies include lecture, role-play, discussion, games, case studies, and field experience (Black, Congress, & Strom-Gottfried, 2002; Haynes, 1999; Jordan, Karban, Mansoor, Masson, & O'Byrne, 1993; Koerin, 1977).

The literature suggests that study abroad allows students to examine their own values, world views, and cultures (Carlson, Burn, Useem, & Yachimowicz, 1990; Carlson & Widaman, 1988; Sell, 1983). Therefore, it would seem that a study-abroad experience designed specifically for social work students and aimed at highlighting similarities and differences in culture, values, and world views would be particularly beneficial for both personal and professional values development.

### **Study Abroad**

Study abroad has a long and valued tradition in undergraduate liberal arts educa-

tion (Bowman, 1987). Carlson, Burn, Useem, and Yachimowicz (1990) report that students who study abroad benefit in many ways, including increased commitment to peace and international cooperation; greater interest in transnational affairs; greater emphasis on international understanding; greater empathy of the viewpoint of other nations; improvements in their general learning style; a greater degree of intellectuality; an enhanced academic style; improved work habits; and greater persistence. Until recently, however, there has been little interest in study-abroad programs specifically for social work majors or graduate students.

The past 10 years has seen increasing attention to international social work (McMahon, 1994). One of the outgrowths of this interest has been a growing number of baccalaureate social work programs that offer a wide variety of study-abroad opportunities (Johnson, 1996). However, the literature has yet to keep pace with these developments in social work education, and little effort has been made to formally study the impact of such programs on students.

In reflecting on the study-abroad experience of a group of social work students participating in an international seminar in Lapland, Witkin (1999) observed that students "learned a great deal both in and out of class—not just facts, but the reflective and reflexive learning that comes from . . . questioning, in the face of others' lived experience, what they had taken for granted" (p. 414). Witkin noted that students began to realize that social problems such as HIV/AIDS, poverty, and violence "do not stop at the borders of different countries" and that exposure to how other countries are dealing with such issues "stimulates new ideas and visions of what it means to be a social worker"

(p. 414). While Witkin's comments are encouraging, they are based on anecdotal observations rather than empirical study.

In an article describing an international internship for BSW students in Mexico City, Krajewski-Jaime, Brown, Sifter, and Kaufman (1996) offered a conceptual framework for understanding how students move through stages of acceptance of a culture other than their own. They also provided an anecdotal assessment of the experience, based on use of the Inter-cultural Sensitivity Scale throughout the 7-week program and review of student reflective logs. However, the small sample size ( $n=11$ ) and lack of explanation of research methodology were serious limitations of this study.

In the only evaluation of the impact of a social work study-abroad program located, Boyle, Nackerud, and Kilpatrick (1999) reported an increase in cultural competence for two groups of faculty and students who participated in a program in Veracruz, Mexico. Using the Multi-cultural Counseling Awareness Scale (MCAS) as a pre- and post-test, the authors found an increase in participants' knowledge of multicultural issues, skills relating across cultures, and awareness of cultural distinctiveness. Analysis of qualitative data from reflective journals revealed participants' perceptions of the elements of the experience that had an impact on them, including the social diversity they found, the demands of living in a foreign country, exposure to social work education and practice in Mexico, and being in a society where the basic unit is the family.

The literature cited above suggests that study abroad offers a unique opportunity for students to confront both differences and similarities in many aspects of culture and values, as

well as develop specific skills in multicultural competence, which is an important component of ethical social work practice. Yet we have little empirical evidence to support this view.

### **Comparative Study of Social Policy and Social Work in the United States and Scotland: A Study-Abroad Course**

In 1987, two social work departments, one in North Carolina and one in Glasgow, Scotland, began a program that features alternate-year exchanges of faculty and students. One purpose of this program is to enable students to compare social services, policy, and social work practice in the two countries, with a view toward understanding their own system better and learning about alternative approaches to social problems. A second purpose is to provide students with an opportunity to experience a culture different from their own as a way to promote personal growth, enhance their cultural sensitivity, and expand their world views.

The program began with U.S. baccalaureate social work students and Scottish diploma and undergraduate students, but has since expanded to include U.S. master's-level students. An explanation about social work education in Scotland is in order, as their system differs from that of the United States. Until recently, it was not necessary to have an undergraduate degree to become qualified as a social worker in Scotland. Students who wanted a social work qualification could either attend a social work training program full time for 2 years and receive a diploma or take the 2-year diploma course in conjunction with 1 year of additional education and receive an undergraduate degree in social work. Scottish students enrolled in both types of programs participated in the study abroad course over the years. However, with

the increased attention to professionalism in Scotland, in recent years the diploma programs have begun to disappear, and students are enrolled in social work undergraduate degree programs. Beginning in 2004, the required qualification to practice social work in Scotland was a 4-year honor's degree. In Scotland, the master's degree is a research degree, not a practice degree, and no Scottish master's degree students participated in this course.

The course, which is co-taught by faculty from each social work department, involves a combination of lecture, discussion, and exercises, in addition to agency visits for the foreign students. Course requirements include keeping a weekly journal of their reflections on the learning and experiences that are occurring; a final summative reflective paper; and a group presentation that compares services, policy, and practice in the two countries for a particular problem or vulnerable population. The U.S. students receive a grade for the course, but thus far the Scottish students have not, due to the highly prescribed nature of their curriculum that has little room for elective courses.

When the course is held in the United States, both U.S. and Scottish students participate in a 3-credit-hour class during the summer, and the Scottish students also participate in a program of agency visitation. When the course is held in Scotland, only U.S. students participate because there is no summer social work program at the Scottish university. However, the U.S. students also participate in a program of agency visitation in Scotland, and both groups of students engage in social activities with students and professors from the host country. The class meets for 4 weeks, 4 days a week for 3 hours, leaving the students with long weekends to

travel and explore the culture of the country they are visiting. Group visits to local cultural sites are also included early in the program to facilitate group bonding and to help students develop a level of comfort in exploring the host country.

Between 1996 and 2001, 29 U.S. and 16 Scottish students participated in the program. The focus of the course has varied somewhat over the years; however, there has always been an emphasis on at-risk children, youth, and families. In 2001, the course content was expanded to include other at-risk and vulnerable populations including elderly persons and persons with mental illness. Regardless of the specific course focus, there has always been an emphasis on the relationship between cultural values and social policy, issues of diversity and cultural competence, and social work ethics in both countries.

Through readings, lectures, and class discussions, students learn how the values of each culture contribute to differences in social policy, legislation, and social work practice. Field visits to agencies also allow students to identify underlying philosophies and values that contribute to program development and social work intervention. We emphasize the importance of recognizing and working with cultural diversity and examine differences in patterns of ethnicity and culture within each country. While African Americans and Hispanics are large ethnic and cultural minorities in the United States, there is little diversity in Scotland. Approximately 2% of the population are ethnic minorities (General Register Office for Scotland, 2003), and the majority of these people are from the Asian subcontinent (India, Bangladesh, Pakistan). We examine

institutional racism and oppression in both cultures and social services systems. We also examine how each country approaches social work practice with diverse populations, comparing and contrasting the philosophies of anti-discriminatory practice in Scotland and multicultural competence in the United States. We also introduce both the NASW and BASW codes of ethics and engage students in case studies around similarities and differences in the two codes.

### Research Question and Method

The original research question for this qualitative study was: What is the impact of study abroad on social work students? The findings presented here are related to one of the major themes that emerged from analysis of student journals and papers: Values Development. Other findings will be presented in subsequent papers.

Beginning in 1996, all students who enrolled in the course were asked to keep weekly journals as a course requirement. Students were given the following instructions for their journals:

Students will keep an ongoing journal in which they record their reflections on readings, class discussions, interactions with students and faculty from the other country, and presentations. These logs should indicate that the student is keeping up with the readings and should be reflective, showing depth of thinking and/or feeling about the readings and topics under consideration. These logs are not to be summaries, but rather reflections of your ideas and feelings about what we are studying.

In 2000, an additional final reflective paper was added, and students were asked to summarize their learning and reflections after having completed the entire class experience. The data for this study were the weekly journals and final reflective papers of only those students who studied abroad. Therefore, although U.S. students participated in courses taught in the United States alongside Scottish students, the data from those U.S. students were not included in the study because their experience was qualitatively different from that of U.S. students who actually studied in Scotland.

The Institutional Review Board for Research Involving Human Subjects at the U.S. university approved the project. Students were asked for permission to use their work in this research. Participation was completely voluntary, and decisions not to participate had no impact on students' grades. In 1997, most of the Scottish students did not complete the journals because they were not receiving course credit. Course expectations were made clearer in subsequent years, resulting in better compliance with assignments.

Therefore, the data in this study were from 19 BSW and 10 MSW students from the United States and 12 Scottish students, for a total sample size of 41 of the 45 students who participated in the program during these years (91%). The students were predominantly female; only 1 Scottish and 2 U.S. students were male. Students ranged in age from 20–47 years, with Scottish students generally being somewhat older ( $M=33.4$  years) than the U.S. students ( $M=26.6$  years).

The data were analyzed using a modification of the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), as analysis was done after

data collection was completed rather than being done simultaneously with data collection. There were no *a priori* hypotheses, and we used open coding to identify themes in relation to the original research question. Open coding involves approaching the data with no existing coding schema or framework, but allowing categories of findings to emerge directly from the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1999).

The methodological limitations of this study are typical of most qualitative studies. However, strategies recommended by Krefting (1991) were used to enhance the rigor of the study for applicability, credibility, and dependability/consistency of the findings. These terms parallel the quantitative concepts of generalization or external validity, internal validity, and reliability.

The small sample size, lack of randomization, and lack of control or comparison groups limit the generalizability of the findings. However, within the qualitative paradigm, generalizability is conceptualized as applicability or transferability, that is, the extent to which "findings fit into contexts outside of the study situation that are determined by the degree of similarity or goodness of fit between the two contexts" (Krefting, 1991, p. 216). It is the researcher's responsibility to provide enough rich, thick description (Geertz, 1973) to enable readers to decide the extent to which findings are transferable to other situations of interest. To enhance the applicability of this study, substantial information about the study-abroad program has been provided.

The issue of internal validity is also generally a concern in qualitative research due to researcher subjectivity and the desire to capture the multiple realities of research participants

rather than test a hypothesis. The qualitative counterpart of validity is credibility, or what Krefting (1991) calls the "truth value" (p. 215) of a study. The credibility of this study was enhanced by the use of multiple coders to minimize researcher subjectivity and maximize the ability to discover multiple realities reflected in the student work. Furthermore, use of extensive direct quotations from the student narratives provides evidence in support of the findings.

Use of multiple coders and code-recode procedures also enhanced the dependability or consistency of the findings. There were two coders for each transcript, one of which was the author. Two MSW students provided the second coding. Both students were trained, and inter-coder agreement was established through consultation among all three coders throughout the data analysis process. All transcripts were subjected to open coding. All transcripts were then subjected to additional rounds of coding to test the categorical schemas that were emerging, until no new categories emerged.

Once major themes were identified, the researcher decided to focus on one of the most predominant themes that emerged: Values Development. A reanalysis of the data, again using multiple coders and code-recode procedures, was done in relation to that theme and its subcategories.

## Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the impact of study abroad on social work students, as revealed through their personal narratives in journals and a final reflective paper. The open coding and constant comparative analytic process identified three major themes, one of which is presented in

this article: Values Development. The other themes, Personal Growth (other than values development) and Knowledge of Specific Social Work Approaches and Interventions will be presented elsewhere.

In relation to Values Development, six categories or subthemes emerged: Opening the Mind to New Ways of Thinking; Awareness and Insight Into One's Own Values and Beliefs; Social Awareness and Challenges to Societal Values and Beliefs; Appreciation of Difference, Cultural Sensitivity, and Anti-Discriminatory Practice; Social Justice; and Professional Identity Development. Following are descriptions of these themes along with illustrative quotations and explanations of how each category relates to the core social work values as outlined in the NASW and BASW codes of ethics.

### **Opening the Mind to New Ways of Thinking**

Students reported becoming more receptive to new perspectives and ways of thinking as a result of living and studying abroad. While both Scottish and U.S. students wrote about how the course helped them expand their thinking about approaches to social work, the U.S. students also spoke about a more general opening of the mind to different ways of thinking, not just in relation to social work. For instance, one U.S. student wrote, "I learned how distorted our ideas and perceptions of a place can be if we do not experience it for ourselves . . . Overall, I feel that this experience has allowed me to grow and become more open-minded." Another U.S. student wrote, "This experience has really opened my eyes to the rest of the world. I feel that it has made me more diverse in my thinking." Yet another wrote, "My trip

has made my world bigger, . . . exposed me to diverse people and places. I opened my eyes to new experiences."

One Scottish student echoed the sentiments of many of the U.S. students when she wrote, "Working with the U.S. students has been a really positive experience and a marvelous way to open up your mind and make you really think and challenge your own views and values and see things from other perspectives." In general, however, when the Scots wrote about receptivity to new ideas, it was almost always in relation to learning a different way to deal with a social issue or problem. For instance, Scottish students were intrigued with the idea of family group conferencing, describing it as "brilliant" and "an excellent move in the right direction to enable parents and extended family members to become involved," and they believed this new approach would be useful in Scotland as well. U.S. students were similarly struck by the Scottish approach to dealing with juvenile offenders, which focuses more on children's "needs rather than deeds." Learning about different approaches to social problems helped open the minds of both groups of students to new ways of thinking, yet the Scottish students seemed to be less likely than the U.S. students to entertain new ideas related to issues other than social work.

With respect to professional values, this opening of the mind seems to facilitate the process through which students examine the relationship between their personal values and those of the other country, as well as those of the profession. The dynamics of this process seem to support a general willingness to entertain new ideas, some of which are related to specific social work values, as indicated below.

### **Awareness and Insight Into One's Own Values and Beliefs**

Enhanced self-awareness and insight, both intrinsic to values development, were important outcomes for the U.S. students. In fact, although all students described their learning about social work and different approaches to social problems, the U.S. students tended to find that their most significant learning was about themselves. One student wrote, "Looking back over this time and thinking about all my experiences, the one that speaks most loudly to me is regarding what I have learned about myself." A U.S. undergraduate wrote, "I have a new sense of clarity now, about myself, my needs, and about other people as well. I feel stronger and more confident than I ever have in my life." Another U.S. student found that, "On a personal level, I have learned I have certain limits that are acceptable at this point in my life and how to exercise options for myself in the face of adversity."

For many students, enhanced self-awareness was directly related to examination of their values, as these two students, one U.S. and one Scottish, indicated: "[The trip] has permitted me to gain a better understanding of my values and perspectives," and "[The course] has made me more aware of my personal value base and how I can improve my attitude and practice." One student noted that the process of learning about oneself seemed to occur "mainly through interactions with the other group members, but also by watching how I adapted to being in Scotland as compared to how others in the group adapted to this new environment."

While comments about examining personal values were prevalent among the U.S. students, only two other Scots noted increased

self-awareness, both in relation to personal attitudes about a specific course topic:

I found that many of my views were quite negative about myself growing old in that I didn't want to, and I felt like I had nothing to look forward to . . . it helped me begin to think about how I felt about aging and the risks I would be scared to be at. In fact, I don't think I have thought so much about growing old in my life before.

[The class] made me think about my subconscious feelings of older people, and I realize that there are issues for me to explore at a personal level to ensure that these do not affect my ability and level of good practice.

As with the first theme, Opening the Mind to New Ways of Thinking, this enhanced self-awareness also seemed to contribute to an overall disposition among students to engage in self-reflection with respect to personal and professional values as well as other issues they confronted. Thus, while this finding is not associated with a particular core professional value, it seems to support the entire process of critical engagement with new ideas and ways of thinking about themselves as individuals as well as the profession of social work.

### **Social Awareness and Challenges to Societal Values and Beliefs**

This theme is related to two core social work values: social justice, as manifested in the concept of social responsibility, and the importance of human relationships. Many of the students had not been abroad before and, thus, had never been directly exposed to the societal values of a

country other than their own. Studying abroad gave them the opportunity to experience the values and norms of the host country, in the face of which they were often forced to re-evaluate both their own and their country's values and norms. This was especially true of students from the United States, as they were less likely than the Scottish students to have visited other countries and were unaware of some of the major value differences between the United States and Western European democracies that operate on a more socialistic, less capitalistic approach to government and social services. The U.S. students were particularly struck by two differences in societal values they observed: individualism versus collectivism and the slower pace of life in Scotland than in the U.S., which they associated with a higher value being placed on human relationships. Noting different ideas about social responsibility in the two countries, two U.S. students wrote,

Another very striking difference in the cultural and social environments of the United States and Scotland is the reliance on individualism versus collectivism. The United States is known for its highly individualized culture. The "every man for himself" attitude spills over into almost every aspect of American life from education to work to daily exchanges with friends, colleagues, and even strangers. Having grown up and lived in this environment my entire life, the more collective nature of the Scottish culture became apparent to me early on in my stay. In general, people seemed more friendly and willing to help . . . Scots seem to be accustomed to helping take care of each other.

[In the U.K.] a person's rights are viewed almost strictly in the context of how they affect others. This concept is almost completely foreign to Americans. We are very focused on our rights as individuals and less concerned with how our actions affect others.

Many U.S. students noted the impact of the Scottish view of social responsibility on social policy, as this student did: "I believe this collective attitude is also reflected in their social policies, including areas such as child welfare, homelessness, health care, and drug addiction." Also recognizing the link between the value of collectivism and social policy, another U.S. student observed,

Although the individualistic nature of American society has its advantages, I can't help but imagine that we might have something to learn from Scotland in terms of taking care of our people, especially our children. The fact that we are one of the few Western countries not participating in the [United Nations] Convention on the Rights of the Child seems to provide even further evidence that our standards of care are not what they should be.

U.S. students were challenged to examine another dominant U.S. social value as they noted that the slower pace of life in Scotland seemed to place more priority on human relationships than on work or consumerism. For instance, two students observed:

The slower pace of life in Scotland was also evident in the small number of es-

tablishments that are open late at night or around the clock. The United States is filled not only with all-night diners but also with 24-hour shopping of all sorts. The lack of these establishments in Scotland promotes a slower, more family oriented social structure than that which we find in the nonstop consumerism of the United States. Businesses and shops closing early and on the weekends allows for time spent socially with family and friends.

I decided that, although it might not be as convenient to procure services, the Scottish people have a good idea by closing early. I think that the families in Scotland have more time to spend with one another because the stores and businesses are closed. In the U.S. we are all about consumption. We feel that we must have access to all things at all times.

One Scottish value that U.S. students had great difficulty accepting was the extent to which social life was built around drinking. In a comment that was typical, one U.S. student noted,

It amazes me that people can function in any sort of productive way when so many seem to drink so much. . . . I see the pub as the locus of social activity, and it causes me to wonder how large the fellowship of Alcoholic Anonymous must be here in Scotland.

On the other hand, some students viewed the different norms around alcohol as just that—

differences. Conversations with Scots seemed to help these students put the prevalence and acceptance of drinking within a cultural framework that allowed them to be less judgmental. For instance,

In my opinion, the most important aspect of this difference is the culture created around alcohol consumption in our respective countries. In the United States, drinking is used to excuse unacceptable behavior. Glaswegians, however, do not seem to have created a similar culture around alcohol consumption. They drink on a more regular basis than Americans and do not seem to use drinking as an excuse for anything.

Socially, what I found most interesting was how much time the people spend at pubs. This is a norm for the Scottish. The people migrate there to relax and socialize.

Another societal value difference that both Scottish and U.S. students noted was the extent to which children are valued and how they are treated in the two countries. As one Scottish student wrote,

I found it interesting that in Scottish law the children's rights are paramount, but in North Carolina there are no children's rights. America is not part of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and this is reflected in their law, whereas in 1991 the UK government agreed to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Students often noted that one way this difference in law is reflected in practice is that Scottish social workers are more likely to listen to children's points of view than are social workers in the United States. For example, one student wrote, "I believe that the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 was a piece of legislation that gave children a voice. I believe that is extremely important because many times children's voices are overlooked by adults." Another U.S. student wrote,

According to the Children (Scotland) Act, children in Scotland also have a right to be heard in decisions that affect their lives. The Children's Hearing is set up to allow for the children to have their voices heard. In the Hearings that I observed, the panel members asked the child if there was anything they wanted to add. As far as I know, there is no such right for children to have a voice in the United States.

The fact that Scottish law treats children who have committed crimes within the same hearing system that deals with cases of abuse and neglect made a very powerful impact on the U.S. students, as illustrated by this quotation:

Another major difference between the United States and Scotland is the way in which young offenders are dealt with. If a child within the United States commits a crime, then they go to the juvenile court where they are put up in front of a judge. In Scotland, young offenders are dealt with through the Children's Hearing system, which consists of three lay members and the Reporter. This system's aim is to

support those children who are troublesome as well as those who are troubled. I feel that this system is more effective in dealing with young offenders as it is all about support and rehabilitation, and although the U.S. system may argue these same principles, I believe that the Hearing system is less threatening than that of the juvenile courts.

Also referring to how juvenile offenders are treated in the United States, one Scot wrote that "U.S. boot camp appears harsh and controlling, and I hope that Scotland can intervene/assist children with severe problems without resorting to such a rigid regime." Another Scot's reaction to visiting a juvenile court in the United States was quite typical of her peers:

There was one particular thing that did shock me and that was the use of shackles on some juvenile offenders. I appreciate the need for safety in respect of violent, aggressive juveniles; however, I did find it barbaric that youths had to be treated in such an ancient manner. Furthermore, the use of makeshift cages to hold male and female offenders in while awaiting the court's decision of their punishment made me think of animals in the pound.

Scottish students were less likely than U.S. students to discuss being confronted with challenges to their country's values. Instead, as Scots learned more about certain U.S. values and norms and their impact on social policy, they expressed disagreement with them. Thus, exposure to some U.S. values seemed to reinforce for Scottish students their agreement with

the values and norms of their own country. A notable example of this is how Scottish students reacted to what they learned about the health-care system in the United States. Typical reactions were: "I was not aware of how privileged we are in Scotland to have a National Health Service available, regardless of your financial situation," and "Good health should be a right and not a privilege."

### **Appreciation of Difference, Cultural Sensitivity, and Anti-discriminatory Practice**

Both Scottish and U.S. students came to appreciate, at a deeper level, the importance of being open to difference, cultural sensitivity, and cultural competence. This finding is related to the professional values of Importance of Dignity and Worth of the Person and of Competence. For example, one Scottish student wrote, "Another topic which is very important is that of cultural sensitivity, religious beliefs, and how important it is for social workers to be aware of cultural differences and how that would affect their approach to any case." Another Scot emphasized how important this learning had been:

If I had to choose one thing that this course has made me more aware of than any other subjects or issues discussed, it would have to be my own understanding of anti-discriminatory practice. Although it is a significant part of our own training back in Scotland, I never realized just how much attention has to be given to the importance of it in a practice situation.

While Scots generally understood that the United States has a diverse population, U.S.

students did not realize the increasing diversity of the Scottish population and the importance of cultural competency in countries other than the United States. One U.S. student wrote:

My image of Scotland had not previously included such a wide variety of culture and religions. It must also be necessary for social workers in Scotland, as it is in the United States, to be culturally aware and sensitive to many groups of people.

Although they had learned about concepts related to diversity in social work courses and field experiences, most of the Caucasian U.S. students had never actually experienced what it was like to be in an environment where they were not members of the dominant culture. The study-abroad program allowed them to have this experience. As one student wrote of her experience traveling in France, "We were immediately identified as foreign. Foreign, what a strange word for an American."

One result of the experience of being a foreigner seemed to be an enhanced appreciation for the struggles immigrants face in their new countries. Thus, U.S. students became even more aware of the importance of cultural competence in social work practice. One student reported,

A significant learning experience . . . occurred during my trip to Paris . . . It was very interesting to be in a city where English was not the native language . . . I did get to experience what it must be like for individuals who immigrate to another country. It was an uncomfortable feeling, and we were taken advantage of on a couple of occasions because we were foreign.

This experience of being exposed to different cultural norms and points of view and being an outsider led two students to observe, "I can already tell that my appreciation for cultures other than my own is growing just through exposure;" and "It is still a shock to my ego to realize that Americans are not the center of the universe."

### **Social Justice**

The core value of Social Justice, so integral to social work, addresses the nature and impact of oppression on vulnerable people. Both Scottish and U.S. students became aware of social justice issues that are common to the two countries, primarily racial and ethnic discrimination, as well as issues that are more unique to each country.

Many U.S. students believed that because Scotland is such a homogenous country, racism and discrimination would not be the problems they are in the United States. They were surprised to discover the universality of racism and oppression. After a visit to a museum that depicts the social history of Glasgow, one U.S. student noted:

One fact that proved to be especially surprising to me was the fact that slavery had also existed in Scotland, as I suppose it did in other parts of Europe. For some reason, I had concluded that the United States was the only country that participated in slavery. I don't think that this fact made me feel better, as though America somehow wasn't the only oppressive country. But rather, it helped me to see a larger picture. I realized that the practice of slavery was widespread and that many

more people than I had even imagined had been affected.

Another student, impressed by commonalities regarding racism and oppression in the two countries, wrote, "Although the ethnic makeup of Scotland differs greatly from that of the U.S., with minorities being much smaller in number, disparities in the treatment of people are very similar." Yet another student said,

I didn't really know anything about racism in the UK, but I do now. I thought they didn't have problems like that, but I guess all countries have racial problems. It is really sad. I thought there might actually be a place out there that looked at a person as a person, not a skin color.

In response to a class session on anti-discriminatory practice conducted in Scotland by a social work professor who was originally from India, one U.S. student wrote,

[The professor] discussed what he calls the "visibility factor" and how this affects people's lives. This really made me stop and think. I have encountered people of various ethnic backgrounds who were born and raised in Scotland. They consider themselves (and are) Scottish, but may be discriminated against because they have dark hair and skin. On the other hand, I am by no means Scottish, but do not feel as subject to the "visibility factor" because I have blonde hair and blue eyes. I think the "visibility factor" is a universal concept. As future social workers, it is something I think we should be conscious of, especially

in regards to how it affects people's lives on a daily basis.

Scottish students also recognized similarities in how the two countries treated minorities:

Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for minorities to be ignored by the system or to fall through its cracks because of some institutional racism and also a lack of understanding. This is a problem in the United States and in Scotland.

One form of cultural tension and oppression that was surprising to U.S. students is the sectarian conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Scotland. Two students wrote:

Although racism, sexism, and homophobia are cultural and social issues in both countries, sectarianism plays a much greater role in Scotland than in the U.S. Although I had previous knowledge of the problems between Catholics and Protestants in Scotland, I was unaware of the amount of violence and discrimination occurring as a result of these religious differences. This is evident not only in the segregation within the city along Catholic and Protestant lines, but also in the street fighting and rivalry inherent in the city's religiously affiliated football teams.

Although prejudice due to religious affiliation does occur in the United States, it appears to be more prevalent in Scotland and the United Kingdom. Strong differences in religion are sometimes played out

through sports, in particular European football . . . A deeper look at Scotland's culture finds very similar prejudice and racism, although in perhaps a different form, as in the United States.

A Scottish student summed up her perspective on oppression and discrimination within the two countries by sharing her observation that "The U.S. students . . . appeared more at ease with different religions than a lot of people I know in Scotland, whereas [the] United States has a bigger 'problem' with racial prejudice than Scotland."

### **Professional Identity Development**

The experience of comparing social work in the two countries helped many of the students more fully understand and identify with the social work profession (core value of Integrity). One student wrote, "The experience stirred new feelings inside about social work and how and where I fit in the profession." Yet another example of how study abroad had a positive impact on students' identification with the social work profession is illustrated by this quotation:

I was not feeling very enthusiastic about social work being my profession before I went on this trip. During this trip I saw ways in which I could enjoy and feel satisfied with my job without running into burnout. I also realized that when I do get out there I will be a part of a community that will support me and understand when I am feeling a little weary.

One thing that surprised students from both countries was how similar the codes of

ethics are for the two countries. As she studied the two codes of ethics and applied them to case examples from both countries, one Scottish student noted: "I noticed a similar ethos running through both. They highlight the importance of treating service users as individuals ensuring their dignity and worth." Other similarities students noted included concern for "professionalism," "the importance of confidentiality and culture awareness," "boundaries with services users," and "the precedence . . . [given] to a social worker's professional responsibility over their own personal interests."

In one area, however, students found a difference in the two codes of ethics that reflects a difference in the societal norms of the respective countries. Two U.S. students wrote:

The difference in the language in the codes of ethics of the two countries offers further proof of the difference in culture. Where we use "self-determination," the BASW chooses to use "self-realization," which seems to indicate a greater appreciation for the common good rather than the individual.

I also found our comparison of NASW's and BASW's codes of ethics to be very enlightening. One of the differences that really made me think about social work as a profession was NASW's concept of self-determination versus BASW's concept of self-realization. When I stopped and thought about it, I realized that these are very different concepts.

Another important way in which this program enhanced students' professional develop-

ment was by helping them see the importance of reflecting on their own practice and being open to the idea of applying some of the best of what the other system has to offer. For instance, several U.S. students who planned to work with children believed that they could incorporate some of the child-centered approaches Scots use, even though in the United States social workers are not bound by law or the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child to do so. For instance, one young woman wrote,

I have always felt that children in the social service system are overlooked. So much is done "to them" without them knowing that is going on. . . . As a child protective services investigator, I can ask the children how they feel and what they would like to happen and take what they have to say into consideration. I can also advocate for change regarding policy on the macro level. This is where I can start using the knowledge I obtained from my experience in Scotland.

A Scottish student wrote, "Having something to compare my own practice with has highlighted both my strengths and weaknesses and given me great opportunity to think about how my own practice can be improved."

## Discussion

The findings from this study indicate that study abroad may have an important role in fostering appreciation of and commitment to professional social work values. Living in and observing a society in which there are different concepts of social justice from those of the United States and where the dignity and worth of

individuals and human relationships are more highly valued, seemed to help U.S. students develop a deeper sense of appreciation for these values. This experience also seems to enhance students' commitment to the integrity of the profession, as exemplified by their deepened understanding and commitment to the mission, purpose, and ethics of social work, which they come to understand as universal rather than simply a U.S. or U.K. phenomenon.

Gibbs and Gambrill (1999) stress the importance of self-knowledge as a link to values development. The study-abroad experience seems to enhance students' self-awareness, especially with respect to recognizing and, at times, challenging their own values, biases, beliefs, and ways of thinking as well as those of their country. In addition, by being exposed to a different culture, they developed more sensitivity to and appreciation of diversity, which they could directly relate to social work practice. Experiencing their chosen profession in another country helped them identify even more strongly with social work as they came to see themselves as part of a profession that is world-wide and has the capacity to effect change across the globe.

It is interesting to note that the study-abroad experience seemed to be somewhat different for Scottish and U.S. students. Although both groups seemed similarly affected by their learning related to cultural sensitivity and anti-discriminatory practice, oppression, and identification with the social work profession, this was not the case with respect to the other themes that emerged.

The U.S. students' journals reflected much more realization of enhanced self-awareness and a sense of challenging some of their per-

sonal values and those of the United States. This was rarely the case with Scottish students, who did not tend to write about increased self-awareness and were much less likely to question their own values or those of their country. Similarly, the U.S. students' journals included many more references to a changing world view as a result of having been exposed to a different country, but this theme was not as predominant in the Scots' journals.

While the journals themselves do not shed much light on reasons for these differences, my 9 years of experience with this program and conversations with Scottish colleagues have led me to three possible explanations. First, such differences may be because of differences between the two groups of students by age and previous exposure to other cultures. The Scots were, by and large, older than the U.S. students, and may have been at a different stage of development. Their life experiences may have resulted in a higher level of self-awareness prior to studying abroad. By virtue of having lived longer, they may have already developed a more expansive world view than the U.S. students. Given the historic and current connection between Scotland and the rest of Europe, through both proximity and membership in the European Union, it is likely that the Scottish students were more familiar with cultures other than their own prior to visiting the United States. Television, radio, and newspapers in the United Kingdom regularly cover news on the continent, so Scots are exposed to various cultural, social, and political perspectives. Furthermore, Scottish students were more likely to have traveled abroad prior to the study-abroad program than were the U.S. students. Thus, it is not surprising that the U.S. students' journals reflect more wonder and new

awareness of differences between their country's values and those of other countries than do those of the Scots.

A second possible explanation for the differences in the two student groups' tendency to challenge their own and their countries' belief systems may have something to do with the fact that the Scottish collectivist view of social responsibility is more compatible with the mission and values of social work than is the dominant U.S. value of individualism. Both U.S. and Scottish students commented extensively on the differences in the two countries with respect to social responsibility, especially as enacted in social service legislation, policy, and practice. However, the Scots were much less likely to see value in adopting values or practices of the United States than the U.S. students were to appreciate the values and practices of Scotland. The most obvious differences were in the areas of health care, children's rights, and services to troubled children. U.S. students noted that the UK universal health-care system is more congruent with the social work value of equal access to resources than is the U.S. health-care system. Similarly, they noted that the emphasis on children's rights, enshrined in legislation in Scotland, is lacking in the United States. Also, they found the Children's Hearing System to be a much more compassionate and appropriate approach to dealing with troubled and troublesome children than the U.S. child-welfare and juvenile-justice systems. Again, given that Scotland reflects a more socialistic approach to democracy as compared with the more capitalistic approach of the United States, it is not surprising that social work students would find more affinity with the legislation, policy, and services of the former.

Conversations with two Scottish colleagues who have also taught this course have suggested a third possible explanation of the differences in the two student groups with regard to the relative lack of emphasis on self-reflection and enhanced self-awareness in the Scottish students' journals. According to R. McGoldrick (personal communication, May 2003), "there is traditionally much less emphasis on what you as an individual think and feel in Scotland than is my perception of the United States." M. Smith (personal communication, July 2003), agrees with this statement and further notes that social work education in Scotland does not emphasize self-reflection and self-awareness to nearly the extent that social work education in the United States does, perhaps reflecting the cultural difference noted by McGoldrick.

While the two groups of students do appear to have benefited somewhat differentially in relation to their values development as a result of participating in this program, it was apparent that both groups did benefit in significant ways. Students from both countries reported an increased appreciation of cultural differences as well as a deeper understanding of the importance of cultural sensitivity and competence to social work practice. Furthermore, both Scottish and U.S. students reported an enhanced identification with the profession. Both groups wrote extensively about new approaches to social problems that they hoped to incorporate into their practice back at home.

This study provides support for some of the impressions and findings reported by other authors. For instance, the students in this program, like those described by Witkin (1999), became aware of the global nature of social and human problems and developed a deeper and

broader understanding of the profession of social work. This study also supports Witkin's perception that the self-reflection involved in study abroad is an important part of the learning experience. Both Krajewski-Jaime et al. (1996) and Boyle et al. (1999) reported enhanced cultural awareness and sensitivity associated with their study-abroad programs, and these same themes are reflected in almost all of the student journals in this project.

### **Implications for Social Work Education and Future Research**

This was an exploratory study with the usual limitations of qualitative research, as described previously. However, the findings provide a beginning understanding of how study abroad can be valuable for enhancing values development among social work students. This educational experience involved a structure, activities, and assignments designed to maximize student learning and reflection. Students' journals indicated that their most valuable learning experiences were visiting agencies, talking to practicing social workers in the host country, and getting to know people there on a personal basis. Classroom lectures and exercises provided them with a framework to learn about the two systems as well as to understand the policy and practices they learned about through the agency visits. The journal assignment helped focus their attention by requiring that they reflect critically on their learning, experiences, and their reactions to the world around them. Classroom time was also used to help students process what they were experiencing. Based on the experiences of these students, all of these types of in- and out-of-class activities are worthy of being included in study-abroad programs.

This study seems to indicate a very specific benefit for U.S. students who study abroad, as evidenced by the ways in which the experience challenged their dominant belief systems about the United States and its place in the world. In a time when U.S. citizens in general adhere to the notion that U.S. values, customs, and approaches to government are superior to those of other countries and support government policies that aim to impose these on other countries, it is particularly valuable for U.S. social work students to see there are alternative ways of thinking, governing, and meeting the needs of citizens. This type of experience can help reduce the chauvinism that is almost inevitable among U.S. citizens who are not exposed to other cultures and can encourage students to think more critically about U.S. policies and approaches to dealing with important social issues such as child welfare, poverty, and health care.

Future research is needed to further explore the relationship between study abroad and values development as well as other aspects of social work education and professionalization. Such research should clearly outline the nature of the educational experience as well as seek to identify factors that promote values development and other types of learning that may occur in study-abroad experiences. Another fruitful area of study is the possible influence of taking classes with social work students from another country, but in one's own country rather than abroad. For many students who cannot study abroad, it is possible that interaction with students from a different country may, in and of itself, provide valuable learning opportunities for personal and professional development.

Hopefully, as study-abroad programs in social work proliferate, we will see more

research in this area, which will, in turn, help social work educators design even more effective study-abroad experiences. The following quotation sums up the impact of study abroad on the values development of social work students in this program:

Every aspect of [this] experience lends itself to deepening the understanding and development of the values and ethics of the profession. By broadening our horizons and learning about other cultures and social services systems, . . . we are preparing ourselves to be more informed, more flexible, more open-minded, and more tolerant. All of these are characteristics of an effective, committed social worker.

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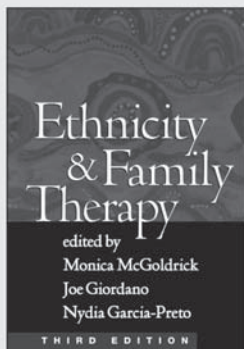
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**Elizabeth W. Lindsey** is professor, Department of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

Address correspondence to Elizabeth W. Lindsey, Department of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, P.O. Box 26170, Greensboro, NC 27402-6170; e-mail: Betsy\_Lindsey@uncg.edu.

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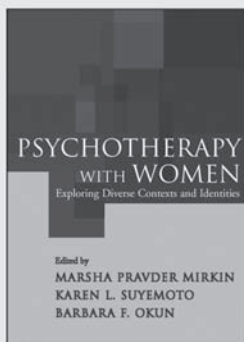
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# BEST PRACTICES INQUIRY: A MULTIDIMENSIONAL, VALUE-CRITICAL FRAMEWORK

**Christopher G. Petr**

University of Kansas

**Uta M. Walter**

University of Kansas

This article offers a multidimensional framework that broadens current approaches to “best practices” inquiry to include (1) the perspectives of both the consumers of services and professional practitioners and (2) a value-based critique. The predominant empirical approach to best practices inquiry is a necessary, but not sufficient, component of seeking state-of-the-art knowledge. A best practices inquiry is improved when it is broadened to include experiences and preferences of consumers, the wisdom of professionals in a given field, and a critical appraisal of the values inherent in best practices interventions themselves. Implications for social work education are discussed.

SOCIAL WORKERS at the bachelor’s, master’s, and doctoral levels undertake a variety of work responsibilities (including direct service, program development, administration, scholarship, grant writing, consultation, and research) that require them to be competent and skilled at ascertaining and implementing the “best practice” for their clients and agencies. This article focuses on the process for investigating and determining current best practices, here termed “best practices inquiry.” As defined in this article, best practices inquiry is the process by which an investigator (practitioner, scholar, administrator, or consumer) ascertains the current state-of-the-art approaches, models, and interventions for a given problem and target population.

This article presents a comprehensive, multidimensional, value-critical approach to

best practices inquiry that has been developed in a doctoral-level social work course at the University of Kansas. As will be discussed more fully below, traditional approaches to ascertaining current best practices focus on thorough and systematic review of the quantitative literature, identifying the most effective, empirically-validated interventions for a given target population and problem. Clearly, this empirical perspective is an indispensable component of any best practices inquiry.

The principal contribution here centers on broadening the method and collective base of what is considered “best practices” from which social workers can draw in their professional decision making. As Manela and Moxley (2002) note, “best practices” is a broader term that is not solely reliant on having satisfied research criteria.

The method of best practices inquiry presented here incorporates additional perspectives on best practices that warrant inclusion in a broadened approach: qualitative research, professional practice wisdom, and consumer experiences. It also includes a framework for conducting a value-based critique of the best practices themselves and the use of that critique to make recommendations about how best practices in a particular field can be improved. The article concludes by discussing implications for social work education.

### Context for Best Practices Inquiry

Although “best practices” is a common term in the social work lexicon, no definition of the term could be found in two social work encyclopedias (Davies, 2000; Edwards, 1995) nor in the *Social Work Dictionary* (Barker, 2003). According to Manela and Moxley (2002), “best” practices are those practices which experts believe represent the state of the art in a particular area or field of practice. In this section, the authors conceptualize “best practices” broadly, building on the term “evidence-based practice”, which itself is a broader term than “empirically-based practice.” We begin with the latter, most narrow conceptualization.

According to Gambrill (2003) and Cournoyer (2004), empirically-based practice (also termed empirical clinical practice) was a concept that promoted a model of social work practice based on scientific evidence. The *Social Work Dictionary* (Barker, 2003) defines “empirically-based practice” as a type of intervention that uses research as a problem-solving tool, conceives of problems and outcomes in measurable terms, and collects data to monitor interventions and evaluate effectiveness. According to empirically-

based practice, the practitioner should select treatments based on his or her scientific support and systematically measure and evaluate his or her own work with the client. As Cournoyer (2004) points out, empirically-based practice is widely used and highly regarded in psychology and social work, while “evidence-based practice” is preferred in medicine.

Gambrill (2003) and others assert that “evidence-based practice” is a broader term than “empirically-based practice” in that it considers external research findings in the context of the appropriateness of their application to an individual situation, ethical issues such as informed consent, and client values and expectations. Franklin (2001), for example, states, “the basic principle for evidence-based practice is to choose interventions based on the best empirical evidence that are also appropriate for the client and situation” (p. 131). The experts in deciding whether or not and how to apply an empirically-based practice guideline to a given client situation are the clients and providers themselves. Thus, evidence-based practice is viewed by its proponents as extending and enriching empirically-based practice toward integrating practice and research, while honoring ethical guidelines (Gambrill, 2003). The *Social Work Dictionary* (Barker, 2003) adds the notion of practice wisdom to its definition of evidence-based practice, defining EBP as the use of best available empirical knowledge “combined with professional ethical standards, clinical judgment, and practice wisdom” (p. 149). Still, despite the acknowledgment of non-empirical factors, it is the empirical evidence that is central to evidence-based practice, as its name denotes (MacDonald, 2000).

Calls for empirically-based and evidence-based practices have been issued from policy-makers and other authorities, who stress the need for performance-based accountability in social programs. Years ago, Lisbeth Schorr, in the highly influential book *Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage* (1988), stated that “reliable evidence about interventions that work has become more important than ever” (p. 268). Since then, the *Report of the Surgeon General on Mental Health* (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999) also urged to hasten the introduction of new evidence-based interventions for treatment and prevention in diverse service delivery settings and systems and recommended the education of mental health providers about “scientifically-proven prevention and treatment services” (p. 14).

Professionals and government agencies also endorse and promote an evidence-based approach. The American Psychological Association, Division of Clinical Psychology commissioned reviews of the literature to ascertain the scientific evidence for the efficacy of various treatments, resulting in *A Guide to Treatments That Work* (Nathan & Gorman, 1998). In Britain, the Department of Health has invested heavily in a project to help social service departments develop evidence-based practice by establishing the Centre for Evidence-based Social Services at the University of Exeter (Webb, 2001). In addition, government sponsored initiatives and institutions support a variety of online clearinghouses and collaborations that promote EBP for various fields of practice (Thyer, 2002), including the Cochrane Collaboration, the National Guideline Clearinghouse in Health Care, the “What Works Clearinghouse” in education, and the National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice.

Examples of the empirical approach to best practices inquiry include meta-analyses and other comprehensive reviews of research (Gorey & Thyer, 1998; MacLeod & Nelson, 2000; Shadish et al., 1995; Sprague & Thyer, 2002) and books such as *Social Programs That Work* (Crane, 1998). In both cases, quantitative research is surveyed and included in the review and summary of findings if certain quality criteria are met. These criteria vary somewhat from one author to another, as seen in the examples of Gibbs and Gambrill (1999), Nathan and Gorman (1998), and Crane (1998). In the latter case (Crane, 1998), for example, the criteria included whether a program has statistically significant effects on the treatment group, effect size, cost-benefit ratio, length of time the effects last, quality of the evaluation in terms of comparison groups, whether or not the evaluation was conducted by an independent evaluator, number of replications, and fidelity of implementation.

The empirical approach to best practices inquiry is driven not only by concerns about performance and accountability, but also by ethical considerations. The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (1999) states that “Social workers should critically examine and keep current with emerging knowledge relevant to social work and fully use evaluation and research evidence in their professional practice” (5.02(c)). This guideline also pertains to the ethical mandate of informed consent, because professionals need to know the evidentiary basis for alternative practices and policies in order to fully honor the informed consent principle (Gambrill, 2003).

Critiques of the empirical and evidence-based models have been advanced by authors both within and without social work (Beutler,

2000; Friedman, 2003; Hoagwood, Burns, Kiser, Ringeisen, & Schoenwald, 2001; Hurlburt & Knapp, 2003; Krill, 1990; Schön, 1983, 1987; Witkin, 1998, 2001). A full discussion of these is beyond the scope of this paper, but objections center on the difficulties and costs in applying research results to real-world routine practice situations, disagreements about what constitutes evidence, the mis-match between homogenous research samples and the more complex and culturally diverse clients served by agencies, the relegation to secondary status of other equally important strategies for improving services such as increasing access to care and other systems issues, and the subversion of clinical judgment and individualized care.

### **From “Evidence-Based Practice” to “Best Practices”**

It may be that the above critique applies more accurately to “empirically-based” practice, and not as directly to “evidence-based practice.” “Evidence-based practice” broadens and improves upon “empirically-based practice” in important and helpful ways. The broadened notion of evidence-based practice recognizes the importance of the professional and the consumer in determining the relevance of the evidence to the situation at hand.

If, as evidence-based practice asserts, the multiple perspectives and experiences of consumers and professionals are vital in implementing research at the clinical decision-making level, at the point where the best practices inquiry is put to use, might not they also be vital to the best practices inquiry itself? Would not such an expanded inquiry, that integrates empirical knowledge with consumer and professional viewpoints, help

the administrator, practitioner, and consumer at the practice, program, and policy levels, know better how to, or whether to, follow the empirical guidelines?

In a fashion similar to evidence-based practice’s incorporation of professional and consumer wisdom at the implementation stage, the best practices inquiry should itself take account of the wisdom of professionals and consumers, as well as the results of qualitative research. Bereft of these perspectives, inquiry into best practices is incomplete and therefore less useful to social workers and clients. The incorporation of qualitative research and of consumer and practitioner perspectives into the best practices inquiry is important because new information is added to deepen the understanding of best practices. New information can take the form of constructive consumer or professional ideas about program components that have not been quantitatively evaluated. New information can also be gained from individual insights that are not captured in the aggregate data. Additionally, consumer and professional perspectives provide critiques of current best practices, guide the development of future research, and offer direction for the modification and improvement of best practices.

So, the best practices inquiry model presented here expands on the inquiry process for evidence-based practice in two ways: first, the inquiry searches for relevant information from qualitative studies, consumer perspective, and practice wisdom; second, the inquiry incorporates a value-critical analysis of the results to identify the strengths and weaknesses of current best practices.

For comparison purposes, the five steps of evidence-based practice as directly quoted

from Gambrill (2003, p. 7) are listed below, followed by the steps in an expanded best practices inquiry.

1. Converting information needs related to practice decisions into answerable questions.
2. Tracking down, with maximum efficiency, the best evidence with which to answer them.
3. Critically appraising that evidence for its validity, impact (size of effect), and applicability (usefulness in practice).
4. Applying the results of this appraisal to practice and policy decisions. This involves deciding whether evidence found (if any) applies to the decision at hand (e.g., Is a client similar to those studied?) and considering client values and preferences in making decisions as well as other applicability concerns.
5. Evaluating our effectiveness and efficiency in carrying out steps and seeking ways to improve them in the future. (Sackett et al., 2000, pp. 3–4)

By comparison, the steps and skills that students must master in order to conduct a comprehensive best practices inquiry are presented in Figure 1 and discussed below.

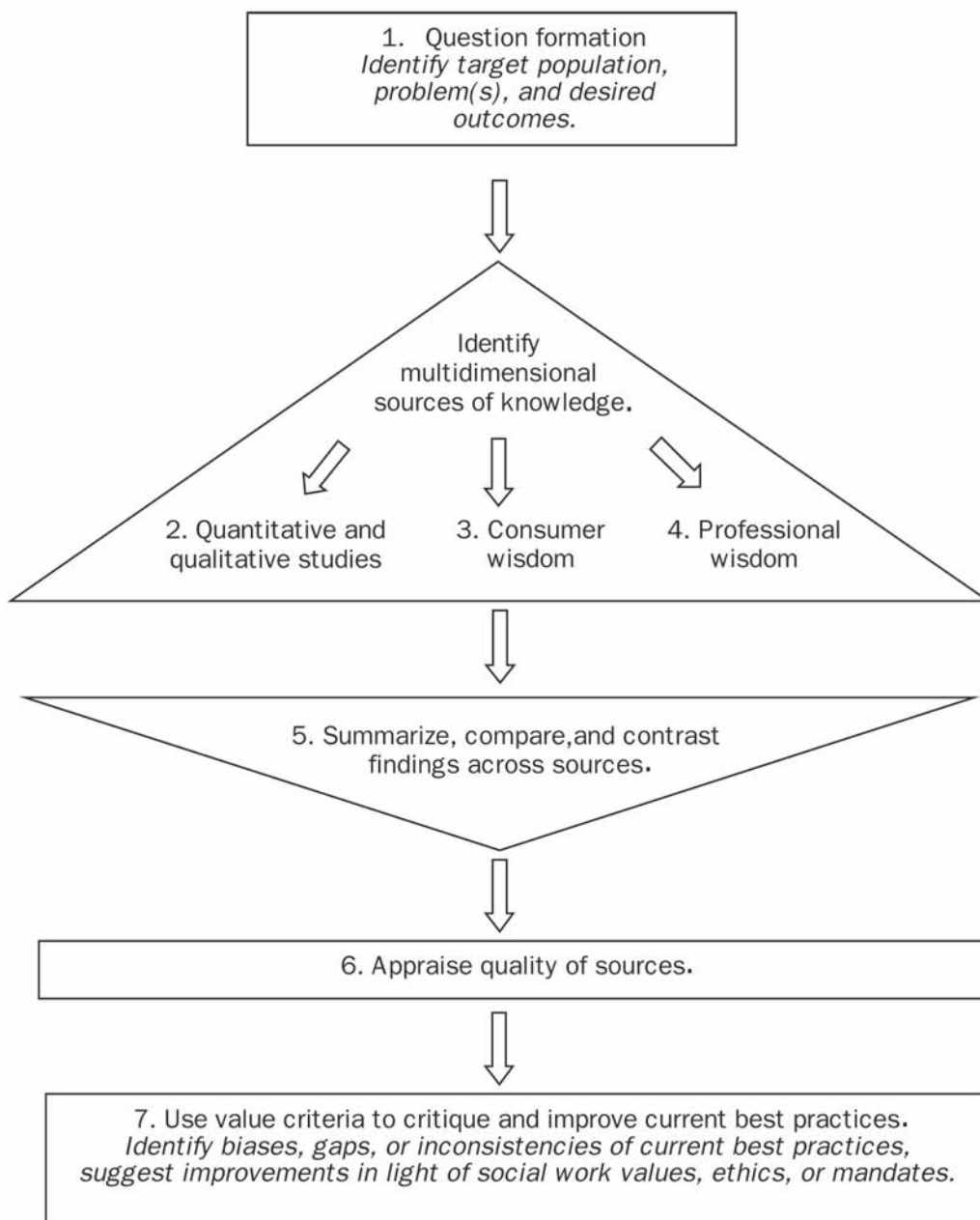
*Step 1. Identify the question for the best practices inquiry.* What is the target population, the problem(s), and the desired outcomes that are the focus of the inquiry? For example, what are best practices to achieve a set of desired outcomes for the treatment of men who engage in domestic violence . . . for psychosocial supports for the terminally ill . . . for treatment of attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder in

teenagers . . . for preventing the occurrence of child abuse? This question-formation process differs from the first step in the EBP process in that it is not restricted to a practice-level decision of a direct services provider regarding an individual client situation, but also can be generated by an administrator or researcher who is interested in a broader population and application.

It is important to note that the question is centered on achieving one or more desirable outcomes for a given population. It is essential to specify the desired outcomes, because the best practices to achieve one outcome with a given population/problem may be different from practices aimed to achieve another outcome with the same population/problem. For example, in the area of spousal abuse, if the desired outcome is reduction/cessation of physical abuse on the part of the perpetrator, the best practices to achieve that goal could be different (more targeted at the individual perpetrator) than the best practices which lead to the desired outcome of preserving the marriage (targeted at both the perpetrator and the couple), or the best practices for assisting the abused spouse to leave the relationship altogether (more targeted at the spouse).

*Step 2. Find quantitative and qualitative research articles that address the question.* As discussed earlier, the importance of determining the quantitative evidence relative to the question is unquestioned, and various methods to do so are well established (Cournoyer, 2004; Crane, 1998; Gibbs & Gambrill, 1999; Gorey & Thyer, 1998; MacLeod & Nelson, 2000; Shadish, Ragsdale, Glaser, & Montgomery, 1995; Sprague & Thyer, 2002). In addition to quantitative evidence, a multidimensional best practices

**FIGURE 1. Steps for a Multidimensional Best Practices Inquiry**



inquiry is enriched through incorporation of relevant qualitative research.

Qualitative studies aim at an in-depth understanding of phenomena or experiences that takes into account the relationships, meanings, biases, and ambiguities of the context in which they occur (Creswell, 1998). Qualitative research traditions include ethnography, grounded theory, narrative, case study, and evaluation research (Padgett, 2004a). Although highly variegated, all qualitative approaches view knowledge as tied to the meaning people attribute to events. Thus knowledge evolves and emerges from its situational and cultural context (Creswell, 1998). The utility of qualitative designs is exemplified in mixed-method research, in which the findings from the two methods can be compared and contrasted, enhancing the capacity of the study to generate and test theory (Gioia, 2004; Padgett, 2004b).

*Step 3. Find sources for the consumer perspective on the question.* In the steps of the EBP above, the individual consumer whose circumstances generated the practice-level decision question is consulted in Step 4 relative to implementation of the research results. Here, in a best practices inquiry, the consumer perspective on the question is sought in the literature and other sources.

Obtaining information about the consumer perspective is highly consistent with empowerment values of the social work profession. Qualitative research studies that explore consumer experiences in a focused and structured manner are valuable sources for consumer wisdom. Examples of this type of source include Petr and Barney's study (1993) of "reasonable efforts" to prevent placement of children with disabilities, Smith's (2000) study

of recovery from a psychiatric disability, and Berg-Weger, Rubio, and Tebb's (2001) study of family caregivers of the chronically ill. Another important source are consumer organizations, such as the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, which distribute position statements on a variety of issues affecting their membership, including their views on current best practices. A third vital source for the consumer viewpoint is first-person accounts of consumers or ex-consumers. A variety of articles and books (Elridge, 1994; Grandin, 1995; Jamison, 1997; Lundin, 1998; Nassar-McMillan, 1995; Phillips, 1995; Walen, 2002) as well as films—including *A Child Called It* (Pelzer, 1995), *A Beautiful Mind* (Grazer & Howard, 2001), *Ladybird, Ladybird* (Hilbin & Loach, 1999), *Boys Don't Cry* (Hart, Vachon, Sharp, Kolodner, & Peirce, 1999), *Ponette* (Sarde & Doillon, 1997), or *Second Best* (Radclyffe & Menges, 1994)—provide powerful insights into consumers' experiences with adversity and the factors that were helpful or harmful in response.

*Step 4. Find sources representing the perspective of professional wisdom relative to the question.* In the EBP inquiry steps, professional wisdom is important in Step 4, in deciding whether and how to implement the research results in the particular client situation. Here, similar to Step 3 of the best practices inquiry regarding the consumer perspective, sources for professional wisdom are sought in the literature and other sources.

Professional practice wisdom is the wisdom of experienced professionals and practitioners who operate in the real practice world, a world that is quite different from the research-about-practice world. Professionals "put it all together;" that is, they integrate the multitude

of contextual and individual factors that produce knowledge about best practices. For Krill (1990), practice wisdom is the unique process in which a worker creatively integrates knowledge about self, the client, and the interpersonal situation. For Klein and Bloom (1995), practice wisdom is a personal system of knowledge that is value driven and that is derived from both the experience of the client situation and the use of empirical information.

By incorporating collective and public sources of practice wisdom, the best practices inquiry relies less on the practice wisdom of the individual practitioner. Sources of collective practice wisdom include at least four different types or categories. One is program descriptions, especially of new programs and approaches that have not yet been fully evaluated, but that are based on sound theory, experience, and values (see for example, Biegel, Tracy, & Corvo, 1994; Hodge & Williams, 2002; Indyk, Belville, Lachapelle, Gordon, & Dewart, 1993). Another source is *professional organizations* such as the Child Welfare League of America that issue position papers or standards of practice in a given area. A third source are *single first-person accounts* of the experiences of learned practitioners over time and in particular situations (see, for example, Armstrong, 2001; Astin, 1997; Cohen, 1996; Hoffman, 2002; Katz, 2002; Welch, 1998; White, 1997; Yalom, 2002). With his recent book *The Gift of Therapy*, Irvin D. Yalom (2002), for instance, published what he called an "open letter to a new generation of therapists and their patients" filled with advice and wisdom accumulated over 45 years of therapeutic practice. Similarly, Armstrong (2001) shares his insights gained over the course of 25 years as a school social worker. A final source are

*professional commentaries* on existing practices, which expand thinking and programming in innovative directions; for example, in the area of domestic violence (van Wormer & Bednar, 2002) or interventions for female youth identified as having serious emotional and behavioral disorders (Walter & Peterson, 2002).

*Step 5. Summarize the current state-of-the-art best practices relative to the question.* This step, which does not appear in the EBP format, includes identifying similarities and differences among the consumer, professional, and research perspectives. Are there areas of agreement, even consensus, between and across the perspectives? That is, are there practices that are deemed exemplary by more than one perspective or by all three—research, consumers, and professionals? Conversely, are there areas of disagreement, in which the ideas about best practices in one perspective are contradicted by notions from another perspective? Given these comparisons, what can be said about the preferred activities, approaches, structures, and interventions for achieving positive outcomes relative to the question?

*Step 6. Assess the overall quality of the sources.* What is the strength of the support for the best practices described in Step 5? This step is similar to Step 3 of the EBP inquiry, in which the empirical evidence is critically appraised. Here, however, the critical appraisal applies to the quantitative evidence as well as to the qualitative research, consumer perspective, and practice wisdom.

As mentioned previously, there are many different methods and procedures for ascertaining the quality of quantitative studies (Crane, 1998; Gibbs & Gambrill, 1999; Gorey & Thyer, 1998; MacLeod & Nelson, 2000; Shadish et al.,

1995; Sprague & Thyer, 2002). Standards for the rigor of qualitative inquiries vary according to the academic tradition upon which they draw. Social work frequently uses Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria of "trustworthiness," i.e., the need for the research to be believable to an audience, to evaluate qualitative studies as to their credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Briefly stated, findings should "ring true" to those who provided the data, and thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) should provide enough contextual information about participants, researcher, environments, and actions to judge the consistency of insights and their informative value for different situations. Unlike quantitative inquiries, qualitative approaches are thus not focused on statistical likelihood but on lifelikeness, or verisimilitude, that allows for a deepened understanding of a given phenomenon.

While there are established standards for the evaluation of quantitative and qualitative studies, clear criteria for the evaluation of the quality of the consumer and professional sources and information have not been developed to date in the literature. The credibility of the source is important, so that the best practices inquiry would value endorsements of practices from large organizations or influential individuals. A source that has been widely quoted and is noted for its wide influence on changing practices is generally better than a source whose opinions have not been recognized or noticed by others. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it is essential to consider the vested interests of the source for potential bias. For example, an individual or organization affiliated with the residential treatment of children may be inclined to endorse the benefits of residential

treatment, based in part on legitimate experiences and in part on self-preservation.

After the quality of individual sources has been assessed, the writer assesses the overall strength of the support for the current best practices, across all the perspectives. Generally speaking, this is the "sum" of the individual ratings of quality. Overall support is judged strongest for topics when the quantitative and qualitative research is extensive and rigorous, and when consumer and professional sources are credible, influential, and independent. Finally, overall support for the best practices is strongest when there is consensus, or at least extensive common ground, among all the perspectives.

*Step 7. Use value criteria to critique and improve current best practices.* In EBP inquiry, this step is not emphasized, so considerable discussion will be devoted to explicating the rationale and procedures for conducting this value-critical analysis.

In evidence-based practice, it is enough for the inquiry to determine the empirical support for practice; it is then up to the practitioner and consumer to apply the results of that inquiry as warranted by the situation. Yet scholars, doctoral-level students, and many creative and innovative administrators are expected both to critique and to advance the state-of-the-art. Best practices should not be viewed as immutable, but as starting points for improving services and agency practices (Manela & Moxley, 2002). Conducting a methodical, multidimensional review that summarizes current best practices is only one part in a full inquiry. The other part is to apply evaluative criteria to identify the gaps or problems that exist in current practices and then to make specific recommendations for

improvement. Otherwise, current best practices are accepted as the end point.

Criteria for judging the overall quality of best practices ultimately are value criteria. Just as there is an ethical mandate for practitioners to hold and provide knowledge about the extent to which interventions are empirically validated, so it is ethically necessary for social workers to consider and evaluate the merits of all perspectives on "state-of-the-art" practices against the values and ethical standards endorsed by the profession. For example, even though we value empirical support, social workers would be unlikely to endorse a program that physically or emotionally abused clients, no matter how much the research validated its success in achieving desired outcomes, because it would violate the code of ethics. The code of ethics is the first set of value criteria to be considered, but additional, broader values that are not explicit in the code are also essential.

To further illustrate this point, consider "least restrictive environment" (LRE), the legal and practice principle that is widely (though not universally) endorsed. It holds that services should be delivered in the environment that is least restrictive of a client's personal liberties. This principle, or value, was instrumental in the deinstitutionalization of patients from mental hospitals (Foley & Sharfstein, 1983) and in the inclusion of children with disabilities in regular classrooms (Turnbull, Turnbull, Shank, & Leal, 1995). Employing this principle in Step 7, the value-critical analysis, a comprehensive best practices inquiry asks, "How do these best practices measure up to the standard of services in the least restrictive environment? Even if current best practices are effective, could they be just as effective in a less restrictive environment?"

This value-critical analysis can involve a wide range of ethics, values, principles, and standards that are explicitly or implicitly endorsed by the social work profession, policymakers, practitioners, the legal system, and the society at large. For example, in addition to LRE, general value criteria for best practices include respect for diversity and difference (or cultural competence), ethical treatment of clients including informed consent, safety for all participants and staff, empirical support for interventions, sound theoretical base, and client empowerment. We also believe that services should be accessible, affordable, accountable, and linked to others in the community. Most of these value criteria apply across all realms of social work practice, but others may be specific to the population and problem of concern. For example, "family-centered practice" (Petr, 2004) is a value principle that is highly relevant to services for children and their families, but perhaps not to other populations. Thus, selection of the value criteria that are relevant to a given best practices inquiry depends in part on the question being investigated.

To illustrate how value criteria apply to the improvement of current best practices, speaking hypothetically, a review of the empirical literature might reveal that inpatient programs with certain standard interventions, such as group therapy and psychoeducational groups, have been shown to be effective in the treatment of adolescent substance abusers. Suppose further that qualitative research about the consumer and professional perspectives concur. In a value-critical approach, focusing on the LRE principle as an evaluative criterion, one could ask whether the same results, or better, could be achieved in a shorter program, or in a day

treatment program. It is not assumed that current best practices should be accepted or implemented unconditionally. Consider this same example but change the focus of the value-critical analysis to the value of cultural competence. Perhaps the program's effectiveness has only been established with White, middle-class males. In this case, the best practices inquiry, using the value criteria "respect for diversity and difference," would identify this weakness in the current state-of-the-art and seek to target this area for improvement. Recommendations could focus on replicating the program with more diverse groups or modifying the program for females and persons of color, based on what we know about culturally competent services to these populations.

The value-critical analysis places the summary of best practices in its proper context, allows for strengths and weaknesses to be identified, and facilitates improvements being made. Practitioners, consumers, and program developers then have the information they need on how to understand, interpret, implement, and improve on current state-of-the-art.

### **Implications for Social Work Education**

This multidimensional, value-critical approach to best practices inquiry can be used in the education of social workers at all educational levels. In the spirit of critical thinking, it provides a concrete framework with which students can appraise not only the quality of available research, but also the values that guide the research, policies, and practices in a particular field. As aforementioned, the framework has been piloted in a doctoral-level class in which students spend most of the semester immersing themselves

in the literature about best practices in their chosen topic area, and following the complete steps outlined above to produce a comprehensive paper on best practices in their chosen topic area.

One student, writing about best practices in the psychosocial realm with the terminally ill, concluded that current best practices in that area (hospice and related programs) were based largely on professional wisdom about what was effective, with little empirical support. Using the value-critical framework, the student also concluded that the current best practices were designed without experience with or sensitivity to the needs of diverse persons of color. In her recommendations for improvement, the student suggested both more outcome research and solicitation of the opinions of consumers of color regarding needed changes that would increase the model's sensitivity to diversity and difference.

Another student found general empirical support for certain practices relative to adults with the dual diagnosis of substance abuse and a major psychiatric diagnosis. Then, using a value-based critique inspired by the perspectives of female consumers and professionals, the student opined that outcomes for women could be enhanced by sensitivity to gender-specific issues such as many female consumers' identity as mothers and to their frequent histories of sexual abuse.

A third student explored best practices for working with street children, and published a concise, abbreviated version of the class assignment (Dybicz, in press). This example will be discussed at some length in order to provide a more extensive illustration of the process and product.

In his article, Dybicz attempted to build on previously published studies that had described the mental health functioning and needs of street children in Colombia, South America. These quantitative studies had great historical impact in that they had dispelled the myth of the street child as delinquent, thus encouraging a move away from correctional methods and interventions, which had previously been considered best practices. These descriptive studies also helped programs see that the factors leading children into street life were rooted in extreme poverty.

Despite an extensive search of the research literature, the author was unable to uncover any quantitative research focusing on the efficacy of any particular approach. Because of the paucity of intervention research, qualitative research articles focusing on best practices, conducted in Africa, Latin America, and Mexico were the primary sources for the research perspective. The main sources for professional wisdom were a UNICEF report and information from the Web sites of two organizations addressing the problem, one with an international membership and focus, and one based in Brazil. These sources gave detailed information about practice methods, yet the experience and voice of actual practitioners was notably absent. With respect to the consumer perspective, the author was able to find two credible sources. Both were studies drawn from qualitative interviews, and both were conducted in Africa.

Several aspects of best practices were common to all three perspectives. These included communicating respect to the street children for their strength and resiliency, emphasizing voluntary participation, rejecting residential care, and working to prevent the problem through

community development. In addition, consumer and research perspectives emphasized meeting basic needs over the long term (job training) rather than in the short-term (providing food, clothing, and shelter). In this regard, the author noted that it was interesting that micro-enterprise interventions were seen as short-term measures to meet immediate needs, rather than building skills that could be taken into adulthood. The research and professional wisdom sources emphasized engagement skills and a broad approach.

There were, as well, messages that were distinct to each perspective. Consumers—the youth themselves—strongly supported formal education at regular school, rather than classes provided by agencies. Professionals emphasized job creation and skill development that would lead to income. Unique to the research perspective was an emphasis on the need to track outcomes related to political consciousness-raising, especially about legal and human rights.

Finally, the author used the values of empiricism, least restrictive environment, respect for diversity, and accessibility to recommend that improvements in current best practices should focus on enhancing intervention research, continuing the movement away from residential care, initiating gender-sensitive programming, and increasing the percentage of street children who receive services.

In this doctoral class, the best practices inquiry assignment forms the basis for a follow-up assignment that asks the students to use their first paper to design an innovative program for their target population. In effect they are asked to translate their conclusions about best practices and recommendations for improvement into a

specific program design. Before submitting the written product, the students invite a consumer and a professional to class to hear an oral presentation of the program design. These guests give their feedback and ideas, which the students incorporate into the final written paper.

At the BSW and MSW levels, the above steps can be modified to suit the purposes and objectives of the course and overall curriculum. At the BSW and MSW levels, students in research classes can use the framework to position research in its proper value context, and assess the applicability of research to practice situations. In foundation and advanced-level practice classes, the framework can help prepare students for practicum placements, as they research the best practices for the populations they serve. In social work administration, this framework can be incorporated into program design and program development courses, to emphasize that new programs need to be based on the very best available knowledge about current best practices. At all levels, the process reinforces that students—in their future positions as practitioners, administrators, researchers, and scholars—must view current best practices as transitory, not as immutable.

To reinforce the importance of multiple perspectives, students can be assigned to obtain direct data about the consumer and professional perspectives by conducting interviews of consumers and professionals, then synthesizing this with the empirical data on best practices in their chosen area. This first-hand experience can enrich the literature review, demonstrate concretely the intelligence and insight of consumers and professionals, and solidify the students' commitment to obtaining multiple perspectives in their future work.

### Summary and Conclusion

The main thesis of this paper is that evidence-based inquiry into practitioner-level and program-level best practices is a necessary, but ultimately insufficient, approach to best practices inquiry. The traditional evidence-based approach to best practices inquiry can be dramatically improved in two fundamental ways. First, following the lead of current thinking about evidence-based practice at the direct service level, best practices inquiry can itself incorporate consumer and expert professional opinions and perspectives on best practices in a given arena. This, together with available qualitative research, provides a richer context for consideration of the empirical evidence and allows the user of the best practices information to make more fully informed decisions. Second, best practices inquiry can be enhanced by incorporation of a value-based critique of current best practices that moves beyond description of current state-of-the-art to identify areas in which current best practices can be improved. More than a critique of the empirical base and study methodology, this comprehensive critique uses the combined consumer and professional perspectives as well a value-critical analysis to suggest areas for innovation and improvement. In learning how to conduct this expanded approach to investigating best practices, social work students will be prepared to synthesize, analyze, and apply knowledge in a given field to the benefit of client populations.

Because this article was limited in its scope to introducing the main elements of a broadened approach, many important questions and issues remain to be addressed in a more comprehensive fashion. These include how to ensure and evaluate the quality of sources (an

issue extant for the quantitative perspective as well as the qualitative, consumer, and professional perspectives), how to determine which values to incorporate into the value-critical framework of a specific inquiry, and how to use the model effectively at different levels of the curriculum.

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**Christopher G. Petr** is professor and **Uta M. Walter** is doctoral student, School of Social Welfare, University of Kansas.

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Address correspondence to Christopher G. Petr, 102 Twente Hall, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, 66045; e-mail: [chrisp@ku.edu](mailto:chrisp@ku.edu).



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# UNIVERSAL INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN: A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR ACCOMMODATING STUDENTS IN SOCIAL WORK COURSES

**Elizabeth Lightfoot**

University of Minnesota

**Priscilla Gibson**

University of Minnesota

This article provides an analysis of the current method of accommodating students with disabilities in social work education and presents a new framework for providing universal access to all students in social work education: Universal Instructional Design (UID). UID goes beyond adapting already developed social work curricula to fit the needs of an individual student with a disability, to building in accommodations in the front-end of curriculum design that promote a more inclusive environment for all students. The 4 components of UID are discussed, along with the challenges to its implementation.

UNIVERSITIES HAVE BEEN STRUGGLING with effectively accommodating students with disabilities in the classroom since the passage of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and more recently, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). These laws require universities to make reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities. While many universities are complying with these laws (Nelson, Dodd, & Smith, 1990), there is still much confusion about making effective and appropriate accommodations. There are debates about who shoulders the costs of accommodations (Selingo, 1998), what should qualify as a disability (Wolinsky & Whelan, 1999), and whether accommodations are fair to students without disabilities (Williams & Ceci, 1999). Along with this confusion there are numerous studies documenting the difficulties students with disabilities still face in higher education (Paul, 2000; Wagner,

D'Amico, Marder, Newman, & Blackorby, 1992) and social work education in particular (Reeser, 1992). Proactively promoting equal access to all students in courses and field placements, including students with disabilities, fits with the values of the profession.

There have been numerous recommendations for making accommodations for students with disabilities in social work education (Alperin, 1988; Bricout, 2001; Cole & Cain, 1996; Cole, Christ, & Light, 1995; Pardeck, 1999; Pardeck, 2002). While ensuring accommodations is legally and ethically necessary, altering existing curriculum and educational practices *ex post facto* for students with disabilities may not be the best approach. This article discusses the limitations of the current method of accommodating students with disabilities and presents a new framework—Universal Instructional Design (UID)—for accommodating *all* students.

### Current Means of Accommodating Students

The ADA requires colleges and universities to make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities so they can have an equal opportunity to receive an education. The ADA defines a disability as (a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, (b) a record of such impairments, or (c) being regarded as having such an impairment (42 U.S.C. § 12101 [2]). A "reasonable accommodation" is a modification of a course, field placement, or other educational activity to allow equal participation and equal access to education. Reasonable accommodations in classrooms can include note taking, flexible testing, interpreters, texts on tape, or tutoring. Accommodations at field placements can include flexible hours, adaptive equipment, or other job accommodations. This breakthrough for social work students with disabilities allows them equal access to courses, field placements, and other educational activities, but there are several disadvantages to using reasonable accommodations as the *only* means of ensuring equal participation.

First, a social work program is only required to provide an accommodation to a student with a known disability. Unlike the elementary and secondary educational levels that operate under the requirement to actively identify students with disabilities (Silver, Bourke, & Strehorn, 1998), at the university level students are responsible for self-identification and self-disclosure (Johnson & Fox, 2003). Thus, in order for a student with a disability to receive an accommodation, a student has to both disclose that he or she has a disability and become certified in some manner as having a

disability. This requires students who think that they might have a disability to prove they have a disability, usually by getting documentation from a physician or other professional. In addition, students may have a continuing obligation to verify eligibility.

While for some this might not be a barrier, for others this can be a substantial burden in several ways. For instance, students must be aware that such accommodations are available and know the proper procedures for obtaining disability certification. While many universities have prominent disability centers and instructors make this information easily available, universities and instructors are not required under the ADA to provide outreach to students with potential disabilities. Further, the certification process can be a substantial burden, as testing for some disabilities can be prohibitively expensive, particularly learning disabilities. Documentation or certification of a disability is significant because, absent such proof, instructors at many universities are advised not to offer accommodations.

Second, while making disability a special category can legitimize the accommodation needs of students with disabilities, it also requires students and faculty members to focus on the student's disability, instead of his or her ability. This can put the focus on a student's deficiency, as opposed to on the university's inaccessibility. An emphasis solely on a student's limitations without a corresponding emphasis on societal barriers is the type of discrimination that adherents of the social model of disability decry (Oliver, 1990).

A related concern is the very nature of self-identification or self-disclosure. Because trust plays an important role in self-disclosure for stu-

dents with disabilities (Bricout, 2001) the necessity of informing instructors while in the beginning process of building an educational relationship might impose a barrier. Thus, by purely following the anti-discrimination approach to accommodating students with disabilities the university and instructors may be inadvertently stigmatizing the very students they are trying to accommodate (Johnson & Fox, 2003).

Third, the requirement of designing accommodations to fit the individualized needs of a student often results in accommodations being added onto an already developed curriculum, rather than building the accommodations into their initial design. This results in increased work for both the student and faculty, who must constantly negotiate add-ons to the curriculum, and the resulting accommodations may not result in equal learning opportunities for students with or without documented disabilities.

Finally, when appropriate accommodations are added on to the curriculum, students who do not have a documented disability are not entitled to these accommodations. Thus, an accommodation, such as extra time for a test or the provision of class notes, might also benefit an English Language Learner (ELL), a nontraditional student, or a student with a different learning style. As these students would not have access to this accommodation, it can lead to a perception that accommodations for people with documented disabilities are not fair to students with other needs.

While accommodations should always be available for students with documented disabilities, the current model of adding on accommodations to the curriculum for those who are certified as having a disability is not sufficient. UID, a model that builds in as many accommo-

dations in the initial design of the curriculum, is an appropriate additional model for making social work education accessible for all students. UID does not negate the need for individual accommodations, but attempts to minimize the need for such accommodations.

### **Universal Instructional Design**

UID goes beyond adapting already developed curricula to fit the needs of an individual student to building in accommodations in the front-end of curriculum design. UID is an adaptation of the concept of *universal design*, developed in the field of architecture as a way of going beyond simply complying with disability codes, toward developing spaces and structures that accommodate the widest spectrum of users possible (Center for Universal Design, 1997). The classic universal design example is the curb cut. Curb cuts, which were designed to allow people who use wheelchairs to have access to streets and sidewalks, make travel easier for a wide variety of people beyond the initial target population, including people using strollers, shopping carts, scooters, hand trolleys, and bicycles. The curb cut is not a special accommodation only for people with disabilities, but rather is a fundamental part of the design that allows all people similar access.

In translating the concept of universal design to social work education, UID entails varying the format of courses to provide universal access for students with varying types of needs, including learning styles, family situations, cultural backgrounds, and abilities. By designing curricula to meet the widest variety of learner needs, there will be fewer individual requests for accommodations based on disability or other needs. This is beneficial

not only for the student with a disability who will have to self-identify as having a disability less frequently and spend less time arranging accommodations, but also for the instructors, who will have to make fewer individual accommodations. Analogous to the curb-cut example, a universally designed course will benefit not only students with documented disabilities, but also students who do not self-identify as having a disability, ELL students, students with extensive work and family obligations, and students with varying learning styles.

The Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST, 2000, p. 3) has delineated four fundamental assumptions of UID. These assumptions are:

1. Students with disabilities fall along a continuum of learner differences rather than constituting a separate category;
2. Teacher adjustments for learner differences should occur for all students, not just those with disabilities;
3. Curriculum materials should be varied and diverse, including digital and online resources, rather than centering on a single textbook; and
4. Instead of remediating students so that they can learn from a set curriculum, a curriculum should be made flexible to accommodate learner differences.

Of course, it is impossible to design a course that is completely accessible to all students, and universities and instructors should not interpret an effort to more universally design a course, seminar, or field placement as a replacement for making legally required accommodations for students. However, the more universally

designed a course, seminar, or field placement is, the less likely course accommodations will be necessary *ex post facto*.

### UID in Social Work Education

There are numerous concrete changes instructors can make in their courses to create a more universally accessible educational environment for all social work students (Curriculum Transfer and Design, 2000). The following four core components of UID in social work education have been adapted from the Curriculum Transfer and Design Program (CTAD):

1. Develop a welcoming classroom and field environment;
2. Focus on essential components of course and field curriculum;
3. Use multi-modal instructional method and incorporate natural supports; and
4. Provide flexible means of evaluation.

Underlying all four components is a strong emphasis on the use of accessible technology as a means to ensure universal access to instructional material (Center for Applied Special Technology, 2000). The following section will describe each of the four components and their incorporation of accessible technology and provide examples relevant to social work education.

*Develop a welcoming classroom and field environment.* The first component of UID is to make classrooms and field placements safe, trusting places for all students, including students with disabilities and other learning needs (Bricout, 2001). This can be achieved in a number of ways, most importantly by encouraging instructor–student interaction. This can be fostered by holding office hours

that are convenient and cordial, by ensuring that there are multiple modes of communication between students and instructors (class, e-mail, chat rooms, phone), and by modeling and encouraging a climate of trust, respect, and support. Blackboard, WebCT, or other classroom management software can be useful in increasing communication lines among students and between students and instructor. Instructors can also require individual conferences as a normal part of student-instructor interaction, rather than only relating to specific course issues. Forming a learning community in the class is important for making students feel welcome, and instructors should be clear about what their expectations are for students (Jehangir, 2003).

Instructors can also explicitly make their classes welcoming to students with disabilities by placing an accommodation policy in their syllabus, emphasizing this policy to students on the first day of class, and providing information on how students can contact the student disability office. This eases at least some of the burden for students with disabilities, as it provides them with the knowledge that they can receive accommodations if they have a documented disability and alerts them to the appropriate channels for seeking such documentation. It also demonstrates to other students in the class that the instructor views accommodations as a fair and important part of his or her educational philosophy.

This welcoming environment is also necessary in field placements. Providing field instructors with training on historical and current discrimination that people with disabilities experience, accommodation obligations under the ADA, practical resources for creating uni-

versal access, and the universal design approach to accessibility will benefit not only students in field placements but also present and future employees within their organizations.

*Focus on essential components of the curriculum.* The second component of UID is to design all learning activities to focus on the essential components of the curriculum. The purpose is to develop a nondiscriminatory baseline of knowledge and skills required for student mastery in a course or field placement (Curriculum Transfer and Design, 2000). To develop these essential components instructors can refer to accrediting standards, licensing requirements, departmental guidelines, course objectives, and faculty and field instructor knowledge. After determining the essential components, the instructor can then decide which parts of these essential components are accessible to all students, and which might not be accessible to some students. By returning to these essential components and analyzing accessibility, an instructor can then plan course delivery methods to make the essential components accessible to a broad variety of students.

For example, instructors may teach policy courses with closed-book quizzes and final papers. After returning to the essential components, they may find that short-term retention is not essential for this course and decide to alter the quiz. They may also find that expository writing is essential; however, this component may be less accessible to some students with learning disabilities or some ELL students. This does not mean that writing is an inappropriate component, but rather gives instructors insight into how it might be inaccessible, and a forewarning that writing assignments might need to be modified for certain students. If

instructors anticipate that expository writing assignments may cause difficulties for certain students, they can build in accommodations to create more universal access, such as allowing all students ample time for completing writing assignments, or at least anticipate accommodation requests. After returning to essential functions, the instructional methods and evaluation tools can be designed to focus explicitly on these essential functions in the most widely accessible manner possible.

*Multi-modal instructional methods.* The third component of UID is to use multi-modal instructional designs that include natural supports for learning the essential components, so that course material is accessible to all students. Many of the accommodations typically requested for students with disabilities are accommodations that can benefit many students (Curriculum Transfer and Design, 2000). For example, instead of an instructor providing lecture notes only to a student with a documented disability, an instructor can post lecture notes on the Internet before class. This allows all students multiple means of accessing course material without requiring individual students to disclose a disability to receive such access. This benefits students with visual impairments who can preview the notes with a screen reader; ELL students who can look up definitions before class; and students with a learning style that benefits from listening more intently. The key in UID is to anticipate accommodation needs inherent in course components and to include a variety of instructional methods that would meet these needs.

Many good course instructors already include a variety of instructional methods, such as rotating between lectures, small and large

group discussions, multi-media, and individual reflection. Similarly, field instructors can use a variety of methods for instruction, such as modeling skills, providing written feedback, or allowing students to audiotape supervisory meetings for future reflection. Other basic ways instructors can make lectures more accessible are by speaking distinctly, facing the class while speaking, providing outlines, allowing tape recorders in class, explaining technical terms, using charts and diagrams, and reading handouts out loud. A variety of technological tools can also improve course access, such as self-paced tutorials with built-in assessments, electronic flashcards, threaded discussions, interactive animations, and study-guides. While using technology to present key information is an important component of UID, technology has its own accessibility issues and should be assessed for its accessibility (Bricout, 2001).

By using a variety of instructional methods and presenting material in a number of manners, the instructor will not only meet the learning needs of a wider variety of students, but also will likely encounter fewer requests for accommodations.

*Provide flexible means of evaluation.* UID calls for allowing students in courses and field placements alternative ways to demonstrate their mastery of essential components, be evaluated frequently, and be provided with regular feedback. For example, in the earlier illustration of the expository writing essential component, an instructor can design a variety of assignments and activities to address this activity. An instructor can have the students write during class, in brief take-home assignments, and in a final term paper, with opportunities for frequent instructor and peer feedback. Instructors can

use course management software to allow for easier feedback on writing and point students toward online writing tutorials for help with specific topics. With interactive technologies such as online quizzes or learning modules, assessment becomes more than measuring outcomes, but rather a teaching tool that provides instant feedback and diagnoses learning needs that helps students with further learning (Rose & Meyer, 2000).

UID also suggests allowing options in demonstrating mastery of course components. For example, if an essential component of a Human Behavior course were to demonstrate an understanding of child development theories, students could be given the choice of writing a paper, making a professional presentation, or developing a multi-media presentation. In each option students would be demonstrating mastery of the same component, but presenting it in a way most meaningful to their learning needs. Offering these types of choices obviously becomes more difficult in larger classes or for instructors with large teaching loads.

### Conclusions

Students are entitled to the most up-to-date pedagogy that social work has available. While UID is a new approach and its effectiveness needs to be further researched, it appears to be an approach that minimizes stigma and is inclusive to a broad array of learners. Theoretically, developing a course from a UID approach would also reduce the amount of instructional time spent on retrofitting course materials to meet the learning needs of individual students with disabilities on a case-by-case basis. If a course is developed to be widely accessible to learners with multiple needs, then the instruc-

tor might not have to be consistently retooling course material based on individual accommodation needs.

UID's primary limitation is that it can require an enormous amount of faculty time and instructional support to both develop and teach courses with a UID philosophy (Johnson & Fox, 2003). It assumes that instructors have ample technological support for developing and maintaining extensive course WebPages, posting handouts prior to class, and developing online exams. Further barriers include faculty's attitude, budgetary constraints, and administrative support (Johnson & Fox, 2003). However, the more social work educators can make courses and field placements universally accessible in their initial design, the more equitable social work education will be for all students.

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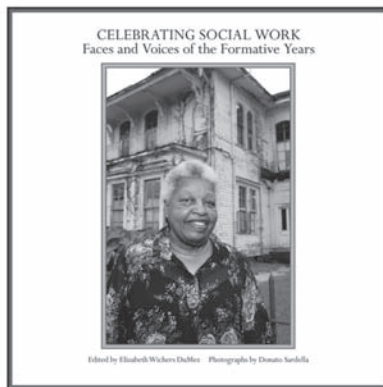
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**Elizabeth Lightfoot** is assistant professor and **Priscilla Gibson** is assistant professor, School of Social Work, University of Minnesota.

Address correspondence to Elizabeth Lightfoot, 105 Peters Hall, School of Social Work, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108; e-mail: elightfo@che.umn.edu.

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**Elizabeth Wickers DuMez** previously managed the Office of Ethics and Professional Review at the National Association of Social Workers, served as staff in the Division of Standards and Accreditation at the Council on Social Work Education, and taught social work at George Mason University. Her direct practice entailed working in public welfare and with disabled children.

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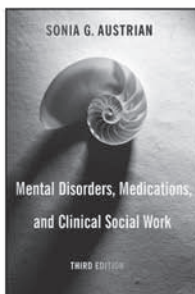


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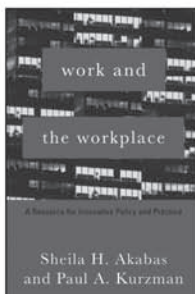


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# PERCEPTIONS OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE PROFESSION'S ETHICAL STANDARDS THAT ADDRESS RELIGION: A NATIONAL STUDY

**David R. Hodge**

University of Pennsylvania

Professional interest in spirituality and religion is growing. In light of this growth, the ethical standards designed to guide social workers' conduct in the area of religion have never been more important. This article explores perceptions of compliance with the profession's ethical standards that address religion among a sample of graduate students ( $N=303$ ) affiliated with the National Association of Social Workers. Findings indicated relatively high levels of compliance. These perceptions were independent of a number of demographic, spiritual, and religious variables. Implications for social work education and practice are discussed.

THE PROFESSION'S treatment of religion is a matter of ethical concern to all social workers. The National Association of Social Workers (1999) Code of Ethics lists four standards that explicitly mention religion (1.05c, 2.01b, 4.02, and 6.04d). In addition, given that religion is the basis for numerous cultural groups, at least two standards implicitly refer to religion (1.05a and 1.05b). These ethical standards are designed to shape the profession's posture toward religion, ensuring that its interaction occurs within certain prescribed parameters that are conducive to sound social work practice.

Various definitions exist for both religion and the associated construct of spirituality (Canda & Furman, 1999; Carroll, 1998). While religion and spirituality are generally conceptualized as distinct but overlapping constructs (Hodge, 2001), debate exists regarding which is the broader construct (Pargament, 1999). For the purposes of this paper, religion, which can be defined as a visible, measurable manifesta-

tion of an inward spiritual reality (Pargament, 1997; Musick, Koenig, Larson, & Matthews, 1998), is used as the broader term. This usage is consistent with the Code's mention of religion but not spirituality.

In light of recent trends, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) ethical standards related to religion have rarely been more relevant. Empirical research, client desires, cultural diversity, and developments within the profession itself have all served to focus increasing amounts of attention upon this subject.

A growing body of empirical research indicates that religion is a significant strength in individuals' lives (Johnson, 2002; Koenig, McCullough, & Larson, 2001). In what is perhaps the most exhaustive review to date, Koenig et al. (2001) examined over 1,200 studies on religion, most of which were conducted in the past few decades. These researchers found that religion was consistently associated with a wide range

of salutary outcomes in the areas of mental and physical health.

Religion often plays a role of increased significance for many populations of particular interest to social workers, such as African Americans, immigrants, women, the elderly, and people who are poor (Davis & Robinson, 1997; Gallup & Lindsay, 1999; Kanya, 1997; Pargament, 1997). Interest in religious belief has increased among the general population (Gallup & Lindsay, 1999), and many clients desire to have their religious beliefs and values integrated into counseling settings (Arnold, Avants, Margolin, & Marcotte, 2002; Bart, 1998; Privette, Quackenbos, & Bundrick, 1994; Rose, Westefeld, & Ansley, 2001).

As the American cultural mosaic has diversified over the past few decades with the addition of growing numbers of Muslims (Hodge, 2004a), Hindus (Hodge, 2004b), and other people of faith (Melton, 1999), the importance of culturally competent service is increasingly recognized (Dunn, 2002). Clients' religious worldviews can affect attitudes and practices regarding a wide range of issues of importance to helping professionals (Rey, 1997).

The social work profession has responded to and reflected these changes in a number of ways. Miller (2001) reported that at least 50 social work programs now have specialized courses on religion and spirituality, up from 17 in 1995 and a handful in 1990. The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) recently added a specialized symposium on spirituality at their Annual Program Meeting and its (2001) *Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards* now addresses religion and spirituality. The recently-issued *NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice* (2001) directs

social workers to consider religious cultures in their work with clients. Indeed, Canda and Furman (1999) reported that there is "an explosion of interest" (p. 72) in religion and spirituality among social workers.

Given the emerging nature of the interest, it is perhaps unsurprising that relatively few studies have examined the views of social workers on various topics related to religion (DeCoster & Burcham, 2002). Among graduate students, researchers have explored students' ( $N=124$ ) attitudes about clients' religion (DeCoster & Burcham, 2002) and students' ( $N=208$ ) views and experiences regarding the role of religion and spirituality in social work education and practice (Sheridan & Amato-von Hemert, 1999). At least two studies have examined the beliefs of social work faculty about the inclusion of content on religion and spirituality in the social work curriculum (Dudley & Helfgott, 1990; Sheridan, Wilmer, & Atcheson, 1994).

Among practitioners, a variety of issues have been investigated. Studies have explored practitioners' personal and professional attitudes and behaviors toward religion and spirituality with samples in Virginia (Bullis, 1996; Sheridan, Bullis, Adcock, Berlin, & Miller, 1992), North Dakota ( $N=142$ ) (Furman & Chandy, 1994), and Utah ( $N=340$ ) (Derezotes, 1995). Similar topics have been explored using national samples in the United States ( $N=2,069$ ) (Canda & Furman, 1999) and the United Kingdom ( $N=789$ ) (Furman, Benson, Greenwood, & Canda, 2004). Researchers have also compared the religious beliefs and practices of social workers ( $N=145$ ) with those of the general public (Hodge, 2002) and explored the role of social workers' ( $N=70$ ) religious beliefs in the forgiveness process (DiBlasio, 1993).

These studies, however, are characterized by two important limitations related to the nature of the sample and the response rate. Most of the studies have used local or regional samples (e.g., Bullis, 1996; DeCoster & Burcham, 2002; Derezotes, 1995; Dudley & Helfgott, 1990; Furman & Chandy, 1994; Sheridan & Amato-von Hemert, 1999; Sheridan et al., 1992; Sheridan et al., 1994). For instance, DeCoster and Burcham's (2002) study of students' perceptions was based on a sample drawn from one university while Sheridan and Amato-von Hemert's (1999) study was based on a sample drawn from two universities. While such research represents an important contribution to the literature, it is impossible to generalize the results beyond the local university population.

A number of studies have drawn from national samples, although low response rates have frequently been reported. More specifically, Canda and Furman's (1999) study of NASW-affiliated direct practitioners achieved a 26% response rate while Furman and associates' (2004) study of British Association of Social Work (BASW) practitioners reported a 20% response rate. These studies provide important insights into the beliefs and practices of social workers, but the response rates are well below the 50% rate that is necessary to be able to generalize the results to the larger sampling frame (Babbie, 1998).

In addition, none of the above studies have examined perceptions related to the profession's ethical standards that address religion. Given that the NASW (1999) Code of Ethics is intended to guide social workers' decision making and conduct in the area of religion, it would seem particularly important to examine perceptions in this area. Because the profession is increasingly

addressing religion in educational and practice settings, it is important to ascertain the degree to which its ethical standards are informing its interaction. These standards provide the ethical yardstick with which to measure the profession's treatment of religion. Ideally, social workers should interact with religion in the manner prescribed by the profession's ethical standards that deal with religion. To the extent that this fails to occur, room for improvement exists.

Accordingly, this paper explores perceptions of ethical compliance with the NASW Code of Ethics' (1999) standards that address religion. Ethical compliance can be thought of as the process of conforming or adapting to the attitudes and actions embodied in ethical statements such as those found in the NASW Code of Ethics and other professional ethical codes (Hess, 1996). As part of this study, I also test to see if any of the following variables are associated with perceptions of ethical compliance: demographics, religious tradition, self-identified religious movement, Christian orthodoxy, and spiritual or religious motivation.

## Method

### Rationale

The extant data indicate that the current cohort of practitioners has had little training in spirituality and religion (Canda & Furman, 1999; Derezotes, 1995; Furman & Chandy, 1994; Furman et al., 2004). In what is perhaps the best study to date ( $N=2,069$ ), Canda and Furman (1999) found that 73% of NASW-affiliated practitioners received no content on spirituality and religion during their graduate training. Further, only 17% of respondents agreed that social workers generally possess the knowledge to address spiritual and religious issues.

In keeping with the increased attention to spirituality and religion, current educational programs are much more likely to address these topics (Miller, 2001). Among *US News*-ranked graduate social work programs ( $N=56$ ), over three quarters (77%) report incorporating content on spirituality and religion into various aspects of their curricula (Kilpatrick & Puchalski, 1999). Consistent with these developments, a study of students at two universities ( $N=208$ ) found that 88% of respondents received at least some content on spirituality and religion during their graduate training (Sheridan & Amato-von Hemert, 1999).

Consequently, a decision was made to survey graduate students who were nearing completion of their educational programs. In light of the changes that have occurred in professional education, the present cohort of students may be better trained to address issues related to spirituality and religion.

In addition, graduate students commonly have a number of years of experience in the profession, allowing them the opportunity to integrate their past and concurrent professional experience with their present educational training. Given the extant trends, it is also possible that their views may represent the direction of future trends more accurately than the current cohort of practitioners. Further, this is an understudied population, suggesting that research on this group should be prioritized. No study that I am aware of has explored issues related to spirituality and religion with a nationally representative sample of graduate students. It is also important to explore perceptions of ethical compliance through the eyes of practitioners and educators, who offer a different vantage point on the issue of ethical compli-

ance. However, based upon the above factors, a decision was made to begin by exploring the perceptions of graduate students.

### Participants

The study's sample consisted of a state-stratified random sample of NASW-affiliated graduate students. To ensure that as many respondents as possible had completed significant amounts of their educational program, potential respondents were contacted during the spring semester. To minimize the inconvenience to students, contact was made during the middle third of the semester.

### Design and Procedure

The survey was administered over the telephone, a methodological approach that tends to foster higher response rates and more accurate responses than mailed questionnaires (Babbie, 1998). All calls were made by a trained research assistant. Up to eight calls were made to reach each potential respondent.

From a list of 494 names, 303 individuals agreed to complete the survey, 49 individuals declined to participate, and, in a further 142 instances, no one was reached at the listed number. Thus, it is possible to calculate at least two response rates. If it is assumed the instances where no one was reached represent potential respondents, then the response rate is 61% (303/494). Conversely, if it is assumed that the instances where no one was reached do not represent potential respondents (e.g., student moved, wrong number, etc.), then the response rate is 86% (303/352). Both rates, however, are well above the 50% rate widely accepted as adequate for analysis and generalization to the wider population (Babbie, 1998).

### Demographics

The sample characteristics are reported in Table 1. The mean age of the sample was 35.5 ( $SD=10.5$ ). Of particular interest are the number of semesters of graduate education ( $M=4.1$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ) and the number of years spent in social work ( $M=5.5$ ,  $SD=5.9$ ). To tap experiences in these areas, potential respondents were asked the following two sequential questions: "Counting your current semester as one semester, how many semesters of graduate social work education do you have?" followed by "How many years have you been in the social work profession?" The mean number of semesters of graduate education was over four. This suggests that the respondents, as a group, were nearing the completion of their social work programs. The average respondent had spent approximately 6 years in the profession of social work. These two findings suggest that the sample had sufficient experience, in aggregate, to be able to accurately

assess the profession's compliance with the standards that address religion.

### Dependent Variables

The questionnaire was developed in two steps. The dependent variables for the study consisted of students' perceptions of the profession's compliance with the ethical standards that address religion listed in the NASW (1999) Code of Ethics. The four standards that explicitly address religion (1.05c, 2.01b, 4.02, and 6.04d) were formatted into questions based upon phrase completion methodology (Hodge & Gillespie, 2005). To ensure comprehension of the basic format, these four questions were pilot tested using a stratified random sample of NASW-affiliated graduate students ( $n=136$ ). For the final survey, the two standards that implicitly mention religion (1.05a and 1.05b) were added to the survey using the same methodology that had been refined in the pilot study.

**TABLE 1. Characteristics of Student Respondents by Gender, Marital Status, and Race ( $N=303$ )**

| Characteristic  | <i>n</i> | %    |
|-----------------|----------|------|
| Gender          |          |      |
| Female          | 265      | 87.5 |
| Male            | 34       | 11.2 |
| Marital status  |          |      |
| Single          | 109      | 36.0 |
| Married         | 142      | 46.9 |
| Widowed         | 4        | 1.3  |
| Separated       | 7        | 2.3  |
| Divorced        | 28       | 9.2  |
| Partnered       | 8        | 2.6  |
| Race            |          |      |
| White           | 230      | 75.9 |
| Black           | 31       | 10.2 |
| Hispanic        | 15       | 5.0  |
| Asian           | 10       | 3.3  |
| Native American | 3        | 1.0  |
| Other           | 7        | 2.3  |

The six ethical standards, as used for survey purposes, are listed in Table 2. As mentioned above, four standards in the NASW (1999) Code of Ethics explicitly mention religion (1.05c, 2.01b, 4.02, and 6.04d) and at least two standards implicitly refer to religion (1.05a and 1.05b). Items 1.05c, 4.02, and 6.04d in Table 2 represent essentially word-for-word renditions of the content that addresses religion. Item 2.01b represents a similar summarization of the standard's content as it relates to religion. The two standards that implicitly address religion deal with cultures/cultural groups. As implied in the introduction, faith groups tend to form particular cultures based on collective norms stemming from shared spiritual experiences. Thus, in keeping with the 2001 *NASW Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice*, the two standards that mention culture/cultural groups are generally understood to include religious cultures or groups. Items 1.05a and 1.05b in Table 2 represent summarizations based

upon this understanding. As was the case with the pilot testing reported above, comprehension of the items appeared to be good. Essentially, the only problems that occurred during the study involved item 1.05b. Some respondents asked to have this item repeated, perhaps due to the length of the item. In retrospect, a shorter, more concise summarization should have been used.

Potential respondents were read each ethical standard listed in Table 2 and asked to indicate how well the social work profession complied with the ethical standard. Individuals were asked to indicate their answer on an 11-point response key, which ranged from complete violation of the ethical standard (−5) to complete compliance with the ethical standard (+5). For statistical analysis, a constant was added to each item so that the values ranged from 1 to 11 with higher values indicating higher levels of ethical compliance.

In addition to the demographic questions and dependent variables, the survey included

**TABLE 2. Summary of Six NASW Ethical Standards That Address Religion as Used in Telephone Survey of Participants**

| Standard | Summary of Standard as Pertains to Religion to Which Survey Participants Responded                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.05a    | Social workers should recognize the strengths that exist in religious cultures.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 1.05b    | Social workers should have a knowledge base of their client's religious cultures and be able to demonstrate competence in the provision of services that are sensitive to clients' religious cultures and to differences among religious people and religious groups. |
| 1.05c    | Social workers should obtain education about and seek to understand the nature of social diversity and oppression with respect to religion.                                                                                                                           |
| 2.01b    | Social workers should avoid unwarranted, negative, religiously-based criticism of colleagues and clients.                                                                                                                                                             |
| 4.02     | Social workers should not practice, condone, facilitate, or collaborate with any form of discrimination based upon religion.                                                                                                                                          |
| 6.04d    | Social workers should act to prevent and eliminate domination of, exploitation of, and discrimination against, any person, group, or class on the basis of religion.                                                                                                  |

a number of additional items that functioned as independent variables. Given the exploratory nature of the study, it seemed reasonable to posit that perceptions of compliance with the religious standards might be related to some religious/spiritual constructs. Widely used variables include measures designed to tap religious preference or tradition, religious movement self-identification, orthodoxy, and religious or spiritual motivation.

To test whether religious tradition was associated with perceptions of ethical compliance, a religious preference item taken from the General Social Surveys (GSS) was used (Davis, Smith, & Marsden, 1998). Individuals were asked, "Thinking about your religious faith, would you describe yourself as Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, some other type of faith, or no faith at all?"

Recently, some scholars have argued that movement self-identification, or movement ID for short, is a better predictor of attitudes than more traditional measures of religious tradition (Smith, 1998, 2000). Movement IDs can be understood as representing a discrete sub-tradition (e.g., mainline Protestants) within the context of a larger faith tradition (e.g., Protestantism). Religious movement IDs for Protestants, Catholics, and Jews were taken from the GSS (Davis et al., 1998). More specifically, self-identified Protestants were asked if they self-identified as "fundamental," evangelical, mainline, or theologically liberal Christians. Because of the degree of public animus associated with the term "fundamentalist Christian" (Bolce & DeMaio, 1999), the term "theologically conservative" is used in subsequent discussion. Self-identified Catholics were asked if they self-identified as traditional, moderate, or

liberal Catholics, and self-identified Jews were asked if they identified as Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, or none of these. Protestants and Catholics also had the option of volunteering none of the above, although this option was not presented to them initially as was the case with Jewish respondents. Finally, although not a movement ID, individuals who indicated that they were affiliated with "some other type of faith" were asked how they would describe their theological or spiritual beliefs on a 4-point scale (very conservative, conservative, liberal, very liberal).

To explore whether orthodoxy was associated with perceptions of ethical compliance, Fullerton and Hunsberger's (1982) six-item measure of Christian orthodoxy was used. This scale has been used by a number of researchers to measure acceptance of well-defined, central tenets of Christianity (Paloutzian, 1999). Although those who self-identify as Christians have affirmed a variety of beliefs, this scale taps those "bedrock" beliefs that are essentially unanimously agreed upon among all branches of Christianity. In Paloutzian's (1999) review of the scale, he assessed the instrument to have good validity and reliability, with Cronbach's alpha in the .90s achieved with a number of samples. A sample statement is, "Jesus was crucified, died, and was buried, but on the third day He arose from the dead." Individuals are asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a Likert response key. Given the nature of the items, the scale was administered only to self-identified Christians. With the sample used in this study, a Cronbach's alpha of .76 was obtained.

Perhaps the most widely used framework in the psychology of religion is the concept of

religious or spiritual motivation (Burris, 1999). The intrinsic measure is designed to measure spiritual motivation within the context of a religious tradition (Allport & Ross, 1967; Knox, Langehough, Walters, & Rowley, 1998). A sample item is "My religious beliefs are really what lie behind my whole approach to life." Individuals indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a Likert scale. The intrinsic measure is widely held to be both a valid and reliable measure of motivation, with Cronbach's alphas commonly in the 70s and 80s (Burris, 1999). Hoge and Carroll's (1978) six-item measure was used in this study.

In keeping with the recommendation of Burris (1999, p. 147) regarding the use of the intrinsic measure, individuals were told that "if you disagree with the premise on which an item is based, the appropriate response is to indicate 'strongly disagree' instead of leaving the item blank or skipping the question." Given that a number of questions in the intrinsic measure presuppose a religious belief, this procedure allows individuals such as atheists to record low levels of motivation, which would be appropriate from a theoretical viewpoint. For respondents whose religion does not include the concept of a god (e.g., many Buddhists traditions), individuals were instructed to use the concept of transcendence/sacred as an alternative. A Cronbach's alpha of .89 was obtained with the sample used in this study.

Given the relatively few missing values (i.e., <1% for all dependent variables and the orthodoxy and intrinsic measures), missing data were not judged to be a significant problem (Kline, 1998). For the orthodoxy and intrinsic items, missing data were imputed using the EM algorithm procedure, or the series mean

in instances where the EM algorithm failed to produce a value. In situations where the dependent variables had missing variables, listwise deletion was used (Cohen & Cohen, 1983), as was the case with other variables.

## Findings

### Independent Variables

The results are presented in three subsections. In the first subsection, findings are presented on religious tradition, orthodoxy, and spiritual motivation, as well as the relationships between these three variables and the study's demographic variables. In the second subsection, findings are relayed on relationships between the three independent variables. In the last subsection, results are presented on the six dependent variables, as well as relationships between the dependent variables and (a) the demographic variables, and (b) the independent variables. I begin by presenting the univariate findings for the three independent variables.

*Religious tradition, orthodoxy, and spiritual motivation.* As far as I am aware, Table 3 provides the first picture of the religious characteristics of NASW-affiliated graduate students to appear in the social work literature. The largest group by religious tradition consisted of Protestants (35.0%), followed by religious "others" (25.4%), Catholics (24.1%), individuals with no religion (7.6%), and Jewish adherents (6.9%). Within each of the three major religious traditions (i.e., Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism), liberal movement IDs were selected most often. Similarly, among respondents who indicated that they were affiliated with some other type of faith, the majority reported that they held liberal theological or spiritual beliefs.

Possible associations were explored between the demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, marital status, and race/ethnicity) and the religious characteristics (i.e., religious tradition, orthodoxy, and intrinsic motivation). To meet statistical assumptions, the religious tradition variable was recoded into Protestant, "other," Catholic, and none. One-way ANOVA indicated that age was significantly associated with the recoded religious tradition variable ( $F=3.51$ ,  $p=.016$ ) with Tukey's post hoc test indicating that respondents with no religious tradition ( $M=31.39$ ) were significantly younger than respondents in "other" religious traditions ( $M=38.18$ ). Although gender and marital

status were unrelated to religious tradition, significant differences in affiliation did occur among African Americans and Whites ( $\chi^2=13.87$ ,  $df=6$ ,  $p=.031$ ). Chi-square analysis indicated that Whites were significantly more likely to report Catholic affiliation (25.4%,  $n=58$  versus 6.5%,  $n=2$ ) while African Americans were significantly more likely to report affiliation with "other" traditions (45.2%,  $n=14$  versus 22.8%,  $n=52$ ).

As can be seen in Table 3, among self-identified Christians of all stripes, half ( $n=88$ ) held non-orthodox beliefs and half ( $n=88$ ) held orthodox beliefs. Age, gender, and race were unrelated to orthodoxy. Chi-square analysis

**TABLE 3. Self-Reported Religious Characteristics of Social Work Graduate Students (N=301)**

| Religious Faith                                            | <i>n</i> | %    |
|------------------------------------------------------------|----------|------|
| Protestant                                                 | 105      | 35.0 |
| Liberal                                                    | 41       | 13.5 |
| Mainline                                                   | 37       | 12.2 |
| Evangelical                                                | 22       | 6.6  |
| Conservative                                               | 4        | 1.3  |
| Other                                                      | 1        | 0.3  |
| Catholic                                                   | 73       | 24.1 |
| Liberal                                                    | 45       | 14.9 |
| Moderate                                                   | 20       | 6.6  |
| Traditional                                                | 8        | 2.6  |
| Jewish                                                     | 21       | 6.9  |
| Reform                                                     | 11       | 3.6  |
| Conservative                                               | 4        | 1.3  |
| Orthodox                                                   | 1        | 0.3  |
| Other                                                      | 5        | 1.7  |
| Other type of faith                                        | 78       | 25.4 |
| Very liberal                                               | 28       | 9.2  |
| Liberal                                                    | 28       | 9.2  |
| Conservative                                               | 7        | 2.3  |
| Very conservative                                          | 3        | 1.0  |
| None                                                       | 24       | 7.6  |
| Orthodox or not (only asked of self-identified Christians) | 176      |      |
| Yes                                                        | 88       | 29.0 |
| No                                                         | 88       | 29.0 |

indicated that marital status was associated with orthodoxy ( $\chi^2=8.30$ ,  $df=3$ ,  $p=.040$ ) with perhaps the most substantive difference occurring between single and married respondents. Among single respondents, 61.9% ( $n=39$ ) reported non-orthodox beliefs while among married respondents, 44.3% ( $n=39$ ) reported non-orthodox beliefs.

The mean of 4.67 on the intrinsic measure indicated that the sample was relatively motivated by their religious belief system (see Table 3). Age was associated with intrinsic motivation ( $r=.183$ ,  $p=.002$ ). In other words, the older the respondent, the higher the level of spiritual motivation. Gender and marital status were not associated with intrinsic motivation. However, one-way ANOVA indicated significant differences in intrinsic motivation among racial/ethnic groups ( $F=6.40$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Consistent with other findings (Gallup & Lindsay, 1999; Taylor, Chatters, Jayakody, & Levin, 1996), African Americans ( $M=5.80$ ) reported higher levels of spiritual motivation than Whites ( $M=4.59$ ), others ( $M=4.55$ ), and Hispanics ( $M=4.09$ ). No significant differences existed between Whites, others, and Hispanics in terms of intrinsic motivation.

### Relationships Between the Independent Variables

Before examining the dependent variables, possible relationships were also explored among the independent variables (i.e., religious tradition, spiritual motivation, and orthodoxy). One-way ANOVA indicated significant differences on intrinsic motivation among adherents of various religious traditions ( $F=24.71$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Tukey's post hoc test indicated that respondents with no religion ( $M=2.45$ ) recorded significantly

lower levels of intrinsic motivation than Jewish adherents ( $M=3.70$ ), who in turn recorded levels of intrinsic motivation that were significantly lower than those recorded by Catholics ( $M=4.59$ ), other traditions ( $M=4.81$ ), and Protestants ( $M=5.37$ ). No significant differences emerged between Catholics, other traditions, and Protestants. These results are consistent with theory in that individuals with no religious tradition reported low levels of spiritual motivation relative to those individuals who are affiliated with a religious tradition.

Respondents who recorded orthodox beliefs recorded higher levels of intrinsic motivation than non-orthodox respondents ( $M=5.61$ ,  $SD=1.06$  versus  $M=4.47$ ,  $SD=1.44$ ;  $t=5.99$ ,  $p<.001$ ). Finally, Protestants were more likely to report orthodox beliefs than Catholics (67% versus 51%;  $\chi^2=4.90$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p=.027$ ).

### Perceptions of Ethical Compliance

The univariate findings for the six dependent variables are presented in Table 4. The results suggest that, as a group, the respondents felt that the profession was doing a reasonably good job complying with the NASW (1999) Code of Ethics' ethical standards that address religion. With mean scores in the 8 to 9 range, students' perceptions clearly fell on the compliance end of the continuum. Further, the results were relatively consistent across all the ethical standards.

Analysis was conducted to see if any of the demographic variables were related to any of the six dependent variables. A correlation matrix was constructed, consisting of the dependent variables, age, number of semesters of social work education, and number of years in the social work profession. No significant associations emerged. In other words, age, number of

semesters of social work education, and years in the profession were not associated with students' perceptions of ethical compliance.

Gender and marital status were unrelated to perceptions of ethical compliance. Conversely, one-way ANOVA indicated that race/ethnicity was associated with the first three ethical standards (i.e., 1.05a,b,c). However, Tukey's post hoc test indicated the existence of significant differences between groups for only the first ethical standard. Thus, in terms of recognizing the strengths that exist in religious cultures (i.e., 1.05a), Hispanics ( $M=7.87$ ) recorded lower perceptions of ethical compliance than Asians/Native Americans and Others ( $M=9.30$ ) and African Americans ( $M=9.39$ ;  $F=3.75$ ,  $p=.011$ ). No significant differences existed between Whites and other groups regarding students' perceptions of compliance with ethical standard 1.05a. Although analysis failed to uncover significant differences with the other ethical standards, it is noteworthy that Hispanic students recorded the lowest or second lowest perceptions of compliance in every case. Given this pattern, it is possible that an increase in power might

have revealed that Hispanic students perceived lower levels of ethical compliance than other racial/ethnic groups.

Next, possible relationships between the independent and dependent variables were explored. Religious tradition and Protestant movement ID were unrelated to students' perceptions of ethical compliance. In other words, there was no association between students' perceptions of ethical compliance and either religious tradition or Protestant movement ID, although as was the case with race/ethnicity, lack of power due to the small number of evangelical Christians may have been a factor in the failure to detect significant differences. Similarly, orthodoxy and intrinsic motivation were also unrelated to students' perceptions of ethical compliance. Put differently, students' perceptions of compliance with the profession's ethical standards that address religion were not associated with either orthodoxy or the level of religious motivation.

Given that race/ethnicity was associated with some of the independent and dependent variables, possible relationships between the

**TABLE 4. Student Perceptions of Compliance With the Profession's Ethical Standards That Address Religion**

| Standard                                                              | <i>n</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>Median</i> | <i>Min</i> | <i>Max</i> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|-----------|---------------|------------|------------|
| 1.05a---Recognize strengths in religious cultures                     | 303      | 8.48     | 1.74      | 9             | 3          | 11         |
| 1.05b---Demonstrate knowledge competence regarding religious cultures | 302      | 8.04     | 2.25      | 8             | 1          | 11         |
| 1.05c---Obtain education about the oppression of religious people     | 303      | 8.26     | 2.29      | 9             | 1          | 11         |
| 2.01b---Avoid religiously based criticism of colleagues and clients   | 302      | 8.69     | 2.10      | 9             | 1          | 11         |
| 4.02----Avoid religious discrimination                                | 300      | 9.34     | 1.75      | 10            | 2          | 11         |
| 6.04d---Eliminate discrimination against religious people and groups  | 302      | 9.15     | 2.04      | 10            | 1          | 11         |

independent and dependent variables were explored for each racial/ethnic group. Although lack of power may have been a problem with Hispanics and African Americans, there was no association between perceptions of ethical compliance and orthodoxy and intrinsic motivation among White, Black, or Hispanic social work graduate students.

### Discussion

This study breaks new ground in at least two areas. First, it provides a nationally representative picture of NASW-affiliated graduate students' religious characteristics. Second, this study represents perhaps the first examination of perceptions of compliance with the profession's ethical standards that address religion in which the results can be reasonably generalized to a national sampling frame. I discuss the implications in both of these areas as they intersect the profession's treatment of spirituality and religion.

The perceptions and demographic characteristics of graduate students are important for a number of reasons, including the fact that they represent the practitioners, educators, and researchers of the profession's future. Consistent with research on social work educators (Sheridan et al., 1994), practitioners (Hodge, 2002), and psychologists (Shafranske, 2001), the social work students in this sample appeared to affirm less traditional, more personally constructed forms of religion. Relative to the general population, students disproportionately affirmed liberal identifiers (Davis et al., 1998; Gallup & Lindsay, 1999) and half the Christian students held beliefs inconsistent with Christian orthodoxy. Within each religious tradition, those who selected liberal movement

IDs or those with liberal theological or spiritual beliefs were a majority.

It is important to note, however, that there is no necessary link between nontraditional or liberal beliefs and lack of spirituality. Rather, the opposite was the case. As the relatively high scores on the intrinsic measure indicate, students were motivated by their religious belief systems. In other words, the NASW-affiliated graduate students in this study exhibited a relatively high degree of spiritual motivation.

The relative religious homogeneity of the sample may be cause for concern, however, as social work increasingly integrates spirituality and religion into various professional forums. As new paradigms of service provision are developed for interacting with clients' spiritual and religious assets, it is critical that the voices of all major religious traditions are engaged in the professional conversation. Just as the lack of diversity tends to foster bias in the areas of gender, race, and so on, it fosters bias in the area of religion (Amato-von Hemert, 1994; Wambach & Van Soest, 1997).

Consequently, the apparent underrepresentation of traditional Catholics, evangelical Christians, and other mainstream religious populations should warrant the profession's attention. As is the case with gender, race, ethnicity, and other areas of diversity, the profession should strive to ensure that its religious demographics are reflective of the wider society's cultural mosaic. As Haynes and White (1999) stated, we must do more than just talk about diversity, we must implement specific strategies to ensure that our work force represents the nation's diverse demographics.

Given that social workers are increasingly being called upon to interact with clients' re-

ligion in practice settings, compliance with the profession's ethical standards is of critical importance. The results in this study suggest that the profession is headed in the proper direction as it wrestles with expanding the scope of diversity to incorporate religion, at least as seen through the eyes of NASW-affiliated graduate students. Their perceptions of ethical compliance were relatively high. Further, assessments of compliance were not associated with religious tradition, Protestant movement ID, orthodoxy, or level of intrinsic motivation. This suggests that NASW-affiliated graduate students' perceptions of ethical compliance are widespread and not unique to any particular population.

Similarly, students' perceptions of ethical compliance were independent of demographic characteristics, with perhaps one exception. Hispanic respondents recorded lower perceptions of compliance on one standard (i.e., 1.05a). Given the pattern of responses, it is also possible that an increase in power would reveal that Hispanic students perceive lower levels of ethical compliance on a number of ethical standards. Future researchers might consider over-sampling Hispanics to obtain sufficient numbers to explore this possibility. It is also important to note, however, that Hispanic students still rated the profession on the compliance end of the continuum, rather than the violation end.

Whether or not NASW-affiliated graduate students' high perceptions of ethical compliance are directly related to the increasing amount of attention paid to spirituality and religion remains an open question. This study inquired about ethical compliance in the profession rather than in education. While it is likely

that students factored in their educational experiences into their responses to some degree, it is impossible to know to what, if any extent, perceptions were related to the increasing content devoted to spirituality and religion in educational programs. Further research, with a different set of questions, is needed to answer this question.

A number of limitations are associated with this study. Approximately 4% of NASW-affiliated graduate students did not have a listed phone number. Consequently, the sample may not be completely representative of the NASW graduate student membership, although there is little reason to believe that the perceptions of NASW students who report phone numbers differ from those who do not report phone numbers. Also noteworthy is the fact that six respondents' experience in the profession was limited to having completed one semester or less of graduate education. Thus, a small percentage of the sample (<2%) had a very limited experience from which to assess the profession's level of ethical compliance. It is not uncommon for outliers to exist in aggregated data, however, and the average number of semesters completed and years in the profession suggests that the sample, as a whole, was well situated to provide an assessment of the profession's level of ethical compliance.

It is perhaps more important to note that most social work students are not members of NASW. Only some 30% of graduate students in accredited social work programs are affiliated with NASW (T. Lennon, former director of information services, CSWE, personal e-mail communication, February 4, 2004). Thus, the results cannot be generalized to all social work graduate students. Indeed, it is possible

that self-selection biases may have affected the results. It is conceivable that students who chose to affiliate with NASW, social work's largest professional organization, may be predisposed toward providing positive assessments of the profession's level of ethical compliance, while students with less favorable impressions of the profession's ethical compliance may be more inclined to refrain taking out NASW membership.

Another limitation of the study is its reliance upon self-report rather than experiment, content analysis, or the observation of actual behavior. This study reports perceptions of ethical compliance rather than actual ethical compliance. Consequently, it is quite possible that the perceptions reported may change, based upon the sample that is surveyed.

Further research should be conducted with non-NASW-affiliated graduate students. As noted above, it is also important to explore the perceptions of practitioners and educators, who offer a different perspective on the topic, as well as Hispanics and evangelical Christians. Researchers may also wish to examine perceptions of ethical compliance among other religious populations. Views among such groups as Muslims, Hindus, and other under-represented, more traditional populations should also be explored. As is the case with other areas singled out in the NASW (1999) Code of Ethics, such as gender and race, it is important to ensure that the protection afforded by the Code is applicable to all groups, not just those who reflect the dominant secular culture's values.

The research presented in this study represent what is likely the first nationally generalizable exploration of the topic of ethical compliance regarding the standards that

address religion. While further research is needed before anything definitive can be said about the topic, at least through the eyes of NASW-affiliated graduate students, the profession is perceived to be exhibiting high levels of ethical compliance.

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**David R. Hodge** is a post-doctoral fellow with the University of Pennsylvania's Program for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society.

Address correspondence to David R. Hodge, University of Pennsylvania, Program for Research on Religion and Urban Civil Society, Leadership Hall, 3814 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104; e-mail: dhodge@sas.upenn.edu.

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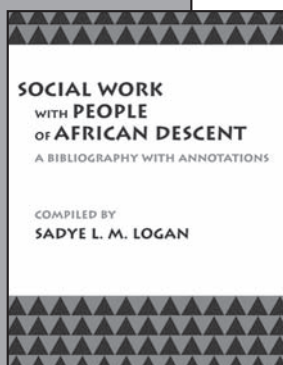
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# CAREER DECISIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF SOCIAL WORK FACULTY: A GENDER COMPARISON

**Lynn C. Holley**

Arizona State University

**Diane S. Young**

Syracuse University

This study uses quantitative and qualitative findings from a mail and online questionnaire to examine the experiences and perspectives of 76 doctoral-degreed social work faculty about the factors that affected their career decisions. The authors discuss similarities and differences between women and men in job-related decision making. Respondent perceptions of gender-related barriers and organizational supports when working toward career goals are presented and implications for social work education programs are explored.

SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION PROGRAMS experience difficulty filling faculty openings. The rapid growth of bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs in social work has not been accompanied by an increasing number of doctoral-degreed social work faculty to fill these positions, and schools continue to experience faculty shortages (Karger & Stoesz, 2003). As academic institutions strive to recruit and retain diverse faculty members, an understanding of, and appreciation for, the multiple factors that individuals consider when in the job market are critical. Examining the experiences that potentially and profoundly shape career decisions for individuals with doctorates in social work can assist social work education programs as they consider organizational changes conducive to faculty recruitment and retention.

The purpose of this article is to highlight findings from a survey of doctoral-degreed social work faculty about the factors that affected

their career decisions and to explore the similarities and differences between women and men related to these decisions. The literature review focuses on personal considerations and job-related characteristics that influence career decisions. The article presents quantitative and qualitative findings on participant concerns in deciding which job(s) to accept and their perceptions and experiences of both gender-related barriers and organizational supports when working toward career goals. Implications for social work programs are also explored.

## Literature Review

Women comprise about two-thirds of social work faculty, a proportion that has been fairly consistent in the past (Lennon, 2002). Women in social work academia, however, continue to fall behind men in professorial rank, tenure status, and median salary (Lennon, 2002; Petchers, 1996; Schiele & Francis, 1996). Lennon (2002)

reported that in graduate only and joint (BSW and MSW) programs, 10.4% of women are full professors, 16.7% are associates, 19.6% are assistants, and 33.9% are instructors and lecturers. Almost 24% of men are full professors, 17.7% are associates, 16.4% are assistants, and 27.2% are instructors and lecturers. In baccalaureate programs, 8.9% of women are full professors, 21.1% are associates, 33.3% are assistants, and 29.2% are lecturers and instructors. Almost 20% of men are full professors, 23.2% are associates, 24.4% are assistants, and 23.4% are lecturers and instructors. Women are thus disproportionately found in the lower ranks. Differences between men and women in rank and tenure status exist for both White faculty and faculty of color. Among 90 former Council on Social Work Education Ethnic Minority Doctoral Fellows working as full-time faculty members, approximately half of the men and only one quarter of the women were tenured (Schiele & Francis, 1996). In addition, a greater percentage of the women were assistant professors and a greater percentage of the men were associate or full professors. For faculty members with a doctorate teaching in graduate and joint programs, salary discrepancies are the greatest at the full professor rank, for both White women and women of color, with men earning more (Lennon, 2002).

### **Personal Considerations**

Explanations for gender inequities in academia include personal considerations such as deference to a spouse's career, the timing of the tenure process to occur roughly during the child-bearing and child-rearing years, and other family responsibilities that disproportionately affect women (Bielby & Bielby, 1992;

Finkel, Olswang, & She, 1994; Hochschild, 1975; Petchers, 1996; Singer, Yegidis, Robinson, Barbee, & Funk, 2001; Young & Wright, 2001). For some individuals, these explanations are especially relevant to career decisions. Petchers (1996) examined trends among faculty in social work programs from 1977 to 1993 and found only a small increase in the number of senior faculty women, despite the increase in the number of women earning doctoral degrees. In her article, she raises the concern that when universities are unwilling to hire their own graduates or to hire couples, individuals who are less geographically mobile may have trouble finding a suitable academic position. In the past, women from diverse professions have typically been more reluctant than men to move because of family considerations (Bielby & Bielby, 1992).

A related primary consideration that affects career decisions is family care-giving responsibilities. Young and Wright (2001) discuss experiences combining motherhood and a tenure-track academic appointment and the personal and professional sacrifices reported by 22 women faculty mothers in social work programs. Singer and colleagues (2001) focus on the sandwich generation, individuals in the workforce caring for both children and elders. In a survey of 69 deans in graduate schools of social work, 90% of 11 care-giving issues (e.g., requests for leave time to take care of children or to take care of elders) occurred in over half the schools. Interestingly, in their examination of what variables moderated the effect of care-giving problems on organizational effectiveness, they found that the percentages of male and female faculty did not have a significant effect.

### Job Characteristics

Given the multiple responsibilities that many individuals have, overall workload likely is one critical factor that social work and social welfare doctoral graduates consider important in making their career decisions. A study of a national sample of social work faculty found that they spent 42% of their time on teaching, 29% on scholarship/research, 16% on service, and 13% on administrative activities (Seaberg, 1998). Respondents reported that time available for research was inadequate because of the demands of teaching, committees, and administrative activities. This study also found that women taught more courses per year than did men, and the author recommends that workload policies be monitored, in part to identify any differences related to gender and rank.

Whether faculty in higher education perceive that they receive support for research may be important to consider in recruitment and retention efforts. An exploratory study of nursing faculty found that the most important characteristics in deciding whether to apply for and accept a position were "research support, salary, autonomy of the nursing unit (e.g., school status), and potential for professional collaborations" (Froman, 1996, p. 241). As Froman notes, some of these characteristics are relatively fixed (e.g., autonomy of the school), while others are relatively alterable (e.g., salary).

In studies of faculty in higher education, time commitments have been found to be significant predictors of both female and male faculty members' intentions to leave their institutions (Barnes, Agago, & Coombs, 1998). Work overload has been found to be a major stressor for faculty, with women reporting more stress than men (Smith, Anderson, & Lovrich, 1995).

Perceptions of the overall quality of work-life also are important in understanding aspects that may attract and retain faculty in higher education (Johnsrud, 2002). Quality of work-life, including factors such as salary, working conditions, and research support has been found to affect morale, which in turn affects intent to leave (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002). A study of faculty at one research university found that, while most faculty were satisfied with their work environments, women were more likely than men to report unwanted sexual attention, sexual harassment, and discrimination from other faculty and other demeaning and oppressive behaviors (Bronstein & Farnsworth, 1998). Another study at a research university found that women shared the university's commitment to research, but perceived that they received less recognition than did men, reporting experiences of being ignored in meetings, not being included in informal networks, and being labeled as good only at teaching despite extensive publications (Olsen, Maple, & Stage, 1995).

CSWE has used the accreditation process to address discrimination against women by requiring schools to demonstrate efforts to recruit, retain, promote, and compensate women equally with men (Bentley, Valentine, & Haskett, 1999; Trolander, 1997). There are indications that progress is being made, and some authors suggest that CSWE's accreditation standards and the efforts of CSWE's Commission on the Role and Status of Women are partially responsible for positive changes (DiPalma & Topper, 2001; Trolander, 1997). DiPalma and Topper (2001) used CSWE's annual program directories from 1985 to 1996 to learn what progress women had made in reaching higher levels of

administration. They looked specifically at the positions of dean or director for graduate social work programs and director for baccalaureate programs. For BSW directors, women went from 43.4% in 1985 to 57.2% in 1996. For MSW deans and directors, women went from 29.3% to 44.7%. Many faculty members (women and men) do not aspire to administrative positions, but this change serves as one indicator of women's status within the profession and how it is changing.

### Method

#### Sample and Recruitment Procedures

The sample for this exploratory study comprises individuals who completed their doctorate in social work or social welfare in 1985 or later. Multiple probability and non-probability sampling approaches were used to identify a diverse group of doctoral graduates who had selected various academic career paths. To recruit graduate-level faculty for the study, 13 schools were randomly selected from a list of CSWE-accredited graduate social work programs and all 168 faculty members listed on the selected schools' Web sites were e-mailed directly. Because fewer BSW programs had Web sites through which faculty e-mail addresses could be obtained, two steps were taken to recruit faculty from such programs: an announcement was posted on the Baccalaureate Program Directors' (BPD) listserv and letters were sent to the directors of a random selection of 79 CSWE-accredited baccalaureate programs asking them to forward information on the study to eligible faculty members. In an attempt to recruit doctoral graduates who had not sought positions in academia, respondents were asked via a survey question to recommend

others for participation, and these individuals were e-mailed when contact information could be identified. In an attempt to make meaningful comparisons between groups on various dimensions of diversity and because early respondents were primarily White, heterosexual, and reported having no disabilities, e-mails later were sent to 23 members of three CSWE commissions (i.e., the Commission on Racial, Ethnic, and Cultural Diversity, the Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Expression, and the Commission on Disabilities and Persons with Disabilities). The commission members' participation was requested and they were invited to forward the survey to colleagues.

Seventy-six questionnaires were submitted via U.S. mail and online between October 2002 and March 2003. The response rate cannot be known because it is not possible to determine how many eligible individuals read the BPD listserv message, how many received the survey from their deans, directors, or colleagues, or how many of those solicited for participation fit the sample parameters (e.g., recipients of doctorates in social work or social welfare between 1985 and the time of the study). In addition, in a small number of cases, e-mail addresses for potential participants were no longer valid.

The sample includes 55 (72.4%) women and 21 (27.6%) men. Participants range in age from 31 to 64, with a mean age of 49 ( $SD=7.0$ ). Twelve (16.0%) participants identify as people of color; 16 (21.1%) identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or other than heterosexual; and 2 (2.6%) identify as people with disabilities. Sample size does not allow for analysis by subgroups within gender (e.g., women of color, White women, men of color, White men), so these variables are not included in analyses. Table 1 provides

an overview of sample participants by gender, academic position held, and age.

### Questionnaire

The 38-item questionnaire asked for demographic data and information on doctoral education, post-doctoral employment, factors related to selecting places of employment since receiving a doctorate, and organizational supports and barriers related to attaining career goals. Participants also were asked to address whether they faced any gender-related concerns when making decisions about employment or working toward career goals. A small number of female and male faculty members of diverse ethnicities and sexual orientations piloted the questionnaire and suggested changes were made to it. The final questionnaire was estimated to require 15 to 30 minutes to complete and included online and paper versions. Twenty-one surveys were returned via mail and 55 were submitted online.

### Data Analysis

*Quantitative analysis.* When substantively appropriate, response options were collapsed

to reduce the number of cross tabulation cells and allow for use of chi-square (e.g., the five responses for emphasis of doctoral program were reduced to whether the program's priority was on preparing students for research or had another emphasis; the four possible responses for tenure status were reduced to whether or not the participant held tenure). Chi-square test of independence was used for analysis of nominal-level variables (e.g., gender, emphasis of doctoral program, whether or not the participant sought a tenure-track position upon completion of the doctoral program, and tenure status). Differences between means in interval-level data were analyzed using *t* tests. When interval-level data are highly skewed the median is reported in addition to the mean.

*Qualitative analysis.* Qualitative data were entered into Microsoft Access 2000 which allows for queries to be run focusing on specific survey items. The researchers independently examined the qualitative data to develop initial codes and identity themes that emerged (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Ryan & Bernard, 2000). After these themes were independently identified, the authors compared coding and

**TABLE 1. Sample Population by Academic Position Held, Gender, and Age**

|                     | Women    |          |          | Men      |          |          |
|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|                     | Age      |          |          | Age      |          |          |
|                     | 31 to 40 | 41 to 50 | Over 50  | 31 to 40 | 41 to 50 | Over 50  |
| Position            | <i>n</i> | <i>n</i> | <i>n</i> | <i>n</i> | <i>n</i> | <i>n</i> |
| Assistant professor | 4        | 9        | 7        | 3        | 3        | 2        |
| Associate professor | 0        | 11       | 8        | 0        | 5        | 6        |
| Professor           | 0        | 2        | 7        | 0        | 0        | 0        |
| Other               | 1        | 2        | 2        | 0        | 1        | 1        |

*Note.* Two participants did not indicate their year of birth and so are not included in this table. "Other" positions were associate dean/MSW program director, lecturer (*n*=2), staff research associate, clinical assistant professor, associate faculty, and associate professor adjunct.

findings. Although no formal reliability tests were used, there was considerable consistency between the two analyses. In the few instances where there were differences, the data were reviewed again for clarification. In the discussion that follows, study participants will be referenced and quoted by their study identification number.

## Findings

### Doctoral Degrees

Participants have held their doctorates for 1 to 18 years, with a mean of 8.0 years ( $SD=4.8$ ). Women were slightly older than men when they received their doctorates (female  $M=41.1$  years old,  $SD=7.0$ ; male  $M=40.5$  years old,  $SD=6.3$ ), and men had held their doctorates slightly longer than women, but these differences were not statistically significant. Nine participants had received their doctorates between 1985–1988, 15 between 1989–1992, 17 between 1993–1996, 25 between 1997–2000, and 10 in 2001 and 2002. They had earned their doctorates at 37 different universities (one participant did not provide this information). The overwhelming majority ( $n=71$ , 93.4%) of the participants earned PhDs, while 5 (6.6%) held DSWs.

When asked to describe the emphasis of their doctoral programs, 49 (64.5%) indicated that the priority of their doctoral programs was to train students for research, 13 (17.1%) reported that the priority was to prepare students for both research and teaching, 5 (6.6%) said the priority was preparation for teaching, 5 (6.6%) said the priority was on clinical practice, and 4 (5.3%) said their programs had other emphases. There were no gender differences in whether programs prioritized preparation for research or had another emphasis.

### Post-Doctoral Positions

*Number of positions.* Participants had held positions at 72 different institutions since obtaining their doctoral degrees. Two (2.6%) participants had not yet obtained a position, 28 (36.8%) had held only one position, 25 (32.9%) had held 2, 12 (15.8%) have held 3, and 9 (11.9%) have held 4 or 5 positions since receiving their doctorates. Four (5.3%) of these positions were post-doctoral fellowships. Women had held more positions than men (female  $M=2.2$ ,  $SD=1.2$ , male  $M=1.7$ ,  $SD=1.1$ ;  $t=1.69$ ,  $df=74$ ,  $p<.10$ ).

*Reasons for changing positions.* Participants were asked why they had changed positions if they had done so since accepting their first position after obtaining their doctorates. Of the 46 individuals (60.5% of participants) who had held more than one position, 26 women and 5 men (41.0% of participants) responded to this item. As seen in Table 2, both women and men provided multiple responses related to professional opportunities. The most common reason in this category, given by 6 participants (4 women and 2 men) was that they changed positions because they wanted to be at an institution with increased support for research. One woman who had several reasons related to professional opportunities explained,

I did not think that my first position was the best fit for me. . . . I have many new and more extensive opportunities to pursue my research and teaching interests at this institution. In addition, my skills are highly valued here, which was less so the case in my first position. I had positive working relationships with faculty at the first school, but that is not sufficient

to keep a person in a job. Finally, the pay increase was significant, and far greater than I could have achieved at the first position. (115)

In addition, 8 women and no men offered family-related factors as at least part of the reason they switched positions. These reasons included being near their or a partner's family of origin for the sake of their children; relocating because of a husband's or partner's employment; and being able to obtain jobs for both herself and a partner.

### Importance of Job Characteristics

Participants were asked to indicate the importance of 22 factors in their decisions about

accepting their current positions, where 4=*of extreme importance to me*, 3=*of moderate importance to me*, 2=*of little importance to me*, and 1=*of no importance to me*. As seen in Table 3, seven job factors had overall means of at least 3.0. Women's means on each of these seven items were above 3.0. Men's means were at least 3.0 on four of these seven job factors, and men also rated *salary* and *benefits* at 3.0 (see Table 3). Factors are listed in descending order of overall importance with the factors identified as least important located at the end of the table. Only one gender difference was statistically significant, with women significantly more likely to rate *overall workload expectations* more important than did men ( $t=2.03$ ,  $df=72$ ,  $p<.05$ ).

**TABLE 2. Respondent Reasons for Changing Positions, by Gender**

| Reason for change                                   | Women    | Men      |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|
|                                                     | <i>n</i> | <i>n</i> |
| Professional opportunities                          |          |          |
| Increased support for research                      | 4        | 2        |
| To accept tenure-track position                     | 2        | 2        |
| Better "fit"                                        | 3        | 0        |
| Increased pay or opportunity for increased pay      | 2        | 1        |
| Career opportunity/mobility                         | 3        | 1        |
| 1-year position ended/couldn't keep job             | 2        | 0        |
| Other professional opportunity reasons <sup>a</sup> | 4        | 0        |
| Family/personal reasons                             |          |          |
| Family considerations                               | 8        | 0        |
| Geographic preference                               | 4        | 0        |
| Other family/personal issues <sup>b</sup>           | 3        | 0        |
| General climate                                     |          |          |
| University not supportive of lesbian faculty        | 2        | 0        |
| Change of deans                                     | 1        | 0        |
| Other climate-related reasons <sup>c</sup>          | 1        | 1        |

<sup>a</sup> "Other professional opportunity reasons" mentioned by individuals included opportunity to teach in school of social work; to use my clinical skills; to pursue my teaching interests; opportunity for curriculum development at new position.

<sup>b</sup> "Other family/personal reasons" included immigration status change; stalked by student.

<sup>c</sup> "Other climate-related reasons" included state atmosphere for education; no status for social work on campus.

**TABLE 3. Mean Ranking of Factors Identified as Important in Considering Whether to Accept Current Position, by Gender**

| Factor                                                                                             | Overall  |          | Women    |          |           | Men      |          |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|----------|-----------|
|                                                                                                    | <i>N</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>n</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>n</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| Availability of tenure track position                                                              | 73       | 3.27     | 52       | 3.17     | 1.133     | 21       | 3.52     | .873      |
| Relative emphasis on teaching, research, and service                                               | 75       | 3.27     | 54       | 3.33     | .727      | 21       | 3.10     | .831      |
| Support/opportunities for research                                                                 | 75       | 3.21     | 54       | 3.31     | .820      | 21       | 2.95     | .921      |
| Overall workload expectations*                                                                     | 74       | 3.20     | 53       | 3.32     | .728      | 21       | 2.90     | .944      |
| Geographic location                                                                                | 76       | 3.09     | 55       | 3.13     | 1.072     | 21       | 3.00     | 1.000     |
| Support/opportunities for teaching                                                                 | 75       | 3.13     | 54       | 3.11     | .839      | 21       | 3.19     | .680      |
| Number of classes taught each term                                                                 | 76       | 3.07     | 55       | 3.11     | .854      | 21       | 2.95     | .865      |
| Benefits (e.g., health insurance, retirement plan)                                                 | 76       | 2.97     | 55       | 2.96     | .816      | 21       | 3.00     | .949      |
| Salary                                                                                             | 75       | 2.95     | 54       | 2.93     | .773      | 21       | 3.00     | .775      |
| School's or institution's reputation                                                               | 76       | 2.93     | 55       | 2.98     | .871      | 21       | 2.81     | .928      |
| Requirements/standards for achieving tenure                                                        | 75       | 2.88     | 54       | 2.91     | .976      | 21       | 2.81     | .928      |
| Environment for persons of color within the school/university                                      | 75       | 2.80     | 54       | 2.87     | .870      | 21       | 2.62     | .865      |
| Primary foci of school (e.g., mental health, school social work, strengths perspective, diversity) | 75       | 2.77     | 54       | 2.85     | .878      | 21       | 2.57     | .870      |
| Environment for persons of color within the larger community                                       | 76       | 2.71     | 55       | 2.80     | .890      | 21       | 2.48     | .814      |
| Size of faculty/institution                                                                        | 76       | 2.64     | 55       | 2.64     | .910      | 21       | 2.67     | .856      |
| Accessibility and environment for people with disabilities within the school/university            | 75       | 2.47     | 54       | 2.48     | .885      | 21       | 2.43     | .870      |
| Availability of mentors in your area of focus                                                      | 75       | 2.45     | 54       | 2.50     | 1.023     | 21       | 2.33     | .913      |
| Accessibility and environment for people with disabilities within the larger community             | 76       | 2.41     | 55       | 2.42     | .875      | 21       | 2.38     | .865      |
| Support/opportunities for community service                                                        | 75       | 2.33     | 54       | 2.37     | .977      | 21       | 2.24     | .831      |
| Environment for lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender individuals within the school/university          | 75       | 2.32     | 54       | 2.37     | 1.051     | 21       | 2.19     | .814      |
| Environment for lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender individuals within the larger community           | 76       | 2.22     | 55       | 2.27     | .990      | 21       | 2.10     | .831      |
| Opportunity for employment for spouse/partner in community                                         | 73       | 2.00     | 52       | 1.98     | 1.163     | 21       | 2.05     | 1.071     |

\* $t=2.03$ ,  $df=72$ ,  $p<.05$

### Overall Workload

Women reported working a mean of 49.8 hours per week ( $SD=12.2$ ), while men reported working a mean of 45.6 hours ( $SD=12.0$ ), though this difference was not statistically significant. Participants reported spending an average of 39.3% of their time in teaching activities ( $SD=20.8$ ; median=40%), 30.2% in research activities ( $SD=23.5$ ; median=25%), 17.6% in administrative activities ( $SD=20.6$ ; median=10%), 32.9% spent no time on administrative tasks, and 12.7% in service activities ( $SD=8.9$ ; median=10%). Men reported spending more time than women on teaching and administrative activities, while women reported more time spent on research and service, though independent-samples  $t$  tests indicated that none of these differences were statistically significant.

### Publications

Since obtaining their doctorates, participants averaged 8.6 ( $SD=9.8$ ) peer-reviewed journal articles, .5 ( $SD=1.0$ ) invited journal articles, 2.6 ( $SD=4.4$ ) book chapters, .4 ( $SD=1.0$ ) books as author, .2 ( $SD=.6$ ) books as editor, and 3.9 ( $SD=10.4$ ) other publications. They had received an average of 2.8 ( $SD=4.0$ ) grants totaling an average of just over \$1,100,000, though over one third ( $n=27$ , 35.5%) had not received any grants. Independent-samples  $t$  tests found no statistically significant gender differences related to any of these products.

### Seeking and Achieving Tenure

*Seeking tenure.* The vast majority of participants ( $n=62$ , 81.6%) indicated that they sought tenure-track positions upon completion of their doctorates, 10 (13.2%) did not do so, and another 4 (5.3%) already had tenure when they

completed their doctorates. These responses varied by gender, with all men indicating that they sought tenure-track positions. When the 4 women who indicated that they already had tenure were removed from the analysis, men were significantly more likely to have sought such a position ( $X^2=4.78$ ,  $df=1$ ,  $p<.05$ ).

*Reasons for seeking/not seeking tenure-track positions.* After indicating whether or not they sought a tenure-track position upon completion of their doctoral programs, participants were asked to explain their reasons for seeking or not seeking such a position. Of those who sought a tenure-track position ( $n=62$ ), almost half ( $n=30$ , women's  $n=20$ , men's  $n=10$ ) did not provide a reason for doing so. Among those who provided an explanation, the vast majority (women's  $n=17$ , men's  $n=7$ ) said they wanted to be involved in teaching, research, or the "academic life" that is part of this type of position. Four participants (3 women and 1 man) cited the "security" that comes with achieving tenure.

In contrast, all study participants who said they did not seek a tenure-track position provided a reason for this decision. Four women offered family-related reasons, such as "family obligations. . . make it unrealistic for me to relocate at this time" (117); "I had young children and was not intent on immediately furthering my career" (118); and "I decided to spend a few years doing research only because it allows me to work flexibly while raising a baby" (141). An additional four women said they already had tenure when they completed their doctorates. One woman each said that she: had a clinical practice and wanted to teach only part time; wanted to continue conducting mental health research; was working to complete 2 years of post-MSW practice experience; became a

non-tenure-track clinician educator; and had taken a non-tenure-track position to increase quantitative and grant-related skills.

*Achieving tenure.* At the time of the survey, 25 (47.2%) of the women had achieved tenure, as had 11 (52.4%) of the men; chi-square analysis indicated no difference by gender in whether or not participants held tenure. Of those with tenure, 4 women and no men had achieved tenure prior to earning their doctorates and 2 women and no men had achieved tenure within 2 years of earning their doctorates. When including these women in the analysis, the mean number of years from earning their doctorates to achieving tenure was 4.8 ( $SD=6.1$ ). When these six participants are excluded from the analysis, the mean number of years from doctoral completion to achieving tenure is 6.8 years ( $SD=2.2$ ; median=6). It is interesting to note that two women indicated that their colleges do not offer tenure.

### Children

The majority of both women and men in this sample had at least one child, with women having an average of 1.5 children ( $SD=1.6$ ) and men having an average of 1.9 ( $SD=1.5$ ) children. Women ( $n=19$ , 35.2%) were more likely than men ( $n=4$ , 19%) to report having no children, though chi-square test of independence indicated that this difference was not statistically significant. In comparing participants with and without children, there were no significant differences in hours worked per week (no children  $M=48.7$ ,  $SD=15.2$ ; at least one child  $M=48.4$ ,  $SD=10.8$ ), or the number of post-doctoral positions (no children  $M=1.9$ ,  $SD=1.2$ ; at least one child  $M=2.0$ ,  $SD=1.2$ ). In addition, there were no significant differences in whether participants sought a

tenure-track position upon completion of their doctorate. Of those with children, 82.7% sought a tenure position and 13.5% did not (3.8% were already tenured). Of those without children, 82.6% sought a tenure-track position and 8.7% did not (8.7% already had tenure).

In comparing women with at least one child ( $n=35$ ) and men with at least one child ( $n=17$ ), there were no significant differences in hours worked per week (women's  $M=48.3$ ,  $SD=11.0$ ; men's  $M=48.6$ ,  $SD=10.6$ ) or the number of post-doctoral positions held (women's  $M=2.2$ ,  $SD=1.1$ ; men's  $M=1.7$ ,  $SD=1.2$ ). All of the men with children sought a tenure-track position upon completion of their doctorate, compared with 74.3% of the women with children. (Two women with children already had tenure when they completed their doctorates.) Chi-square test of independence is not reported for this analysis because of the number of cells with expected count less than five.

### Gender-Related Concerns, Barriers, and Policies

*Gender-related concerns in accepting position(s).* When asked to describe any gender-related concerns they had in deciding which position(s) to accept since completing their doctorates, 12 women and 9 men provided such responses. Seven of these 9 men said that they either anticipated or experienced discrimination because they are White males. Two of these men said they experienced discrimination during the interview process, with one man saying,

The emphasis on expanding opportunities for "non-White males" has at times made getting interviews a problem. I was interviewed for my first job only after two

"non-White males" were offered the position and turned it down. Pay to "non-White males" is often considerably higher, which reflects a better bargaining position for some female and minority scholars due to their relative scarcity. I believe this set of comments may be less true now than it was [10–15 years ago] when I was last on the job market. (122)

Another man said,

As a White male I was openly discriminated against by those who interviewed me, being told that only a woman or minority would be hired. At the time I accepted this situation as the hypocrisy of the world social work lived in, but now find it to be a most disturbing situation. (181)

Of the three men who said they anticipated discrimination against White males, one said, "As a White male over 40 I was concerned about being at a disadvantage in the market. However, I did not find my age or gender to be as much of a barrier as I had feared" (119). Another man said,

I did wonder if, as a straight White male, I might be at a slight disadvantage. My opinion has always been that the field (and most schools of social work) need more diversity on the faculty, and so if my ethnicity and gender had played against me, I would have accepted that as appropriate. But as I say, this was not a significant concern, just a thought that crossed my mind. (176)

One man said that he had to decide if it "was OK" to be the only male in his program. Another man said that he had no gender-related concerns, but rather that he attempts to stay "constantly aware of the privileges that come with being White, male, heterosexual. . . , and trying to use those privileges in service and advocacy for social work values" (194).

In contrast, only one woman mentioned discrimination during the interview process, saying, "I had deans of major schools of social work ask me directly about my spouse (I wore a wedding ring to my interviews), his work, if I had children, etc." (200). Instead, women's concerns were more likely to be related to the overall university climate for women or to family-related issues. For example, one woman said,

The atmosphere of the university and the community in terms of its acceptance of women, persons of color, persons with disabilities, and gay men and lesbians played an important role in my decisions regarding which positions to apply for and which to accept. However, I would not say that these considerations were related to my PERSONAL gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disability status. Rather, they were indicators of the type of community in which I would like to live and the type of university in which I would like to work. (125)

Three women spoke about their concerns that institutions have feminist values or have women to serve as mentors. One woman who provided a response in this category perceives that women have a more difficult time in the

tenure process: "I also hoped that as a woman I would receive mentoring through the tenure process since I know that disproportionately women are turned down for tenure more often than men" (168).

Of women who offered family-related concerns, three indicated a reluctance or inability to relocate due to family situations, and another said that the conflicting time demands of work and family were of concern to her. In the first category, one woman said the "importance of balancing family and professional needs (also not wanting to commute!) was an important factor in deciding to stay in [this city] and not look for jobs elsewhere" (149).

Two women commented that they had no gender-related concerns. One of these women said that the lack of concern "... is largely because I felt that at both institutions that I have worked ... the balance of men and women has been about equal, and there are senior faculty women (at both the deans are women)" (115). The other woman said, "My institution has very family-friendly policies. I was a new parent when I started this position and was granted an extra year on my tenure clock" (155).

*Gender-related barriers.* When asked if they had experienced any barriers at their institutions related to gender, 15 women and 1 man said yes. Six women used variations on the phrase "good-old-boys mentality" or described incidents consistent with such a culture, with one woman saying that this situation is no longer present. As one woman said, "It seems that there is still a 'good-old-boys' mentality at this university and in this department until this year. It was unexpected" (113). Another woman provided a more specific description related to such a culture:

... [M]y own perception is that the remnants of a male hierarchy and attitudes of "the old boys club" still persist. Some older male faculty still "talk over" women at meetings and, for example, discredit the value of having to attend harassment-prevention training. ... or to actively address the concerns of students in this area. ... There is an expectation to be highly visible, and there also seems to be an expectation that "selling oneself" or promoting oneself (e.g., through the tenure process mechanisms—professional evaluation reports and interviews) should be done in a certain way that does not necessarily sit well with all cultures, mine included. At least I struggle with this; is it a real barrier based on gender or ethnicity? I'm not sure. But I have been advised to communicate differently (i.e., less formally, more "singing and dancing" about any accomplishments, "talk louder at meetings," among other comments). (152)

In addition, 6 women said that gender inequity in salaries continues to persist at their institutions, with one woman noting that a complaint was filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and with the university administration that led to salary adjustments. Two women said that there are few women in administrative positions. Individual study participants described five other barriers. One male participant said that men's family responsibilities are not recognized, and one woman each said that her dean is not interested in White women's issues, her university lacked policies to deal with an experience in which she was stalked, service is not valued, and that she

was not accepted by another department (i.e., non-social work department) to teach progressive courses. In contrast to these barriers, one woman reported that she recently broke the "glass ceiling" by becoming the first woman vice-president of her institution.

*Helpful gender-related policies.* After describing barriers, participants were asked to describe any helpful gender-related university or department policies or practices that they perceived as helpful toward achieving tenure or other career goals. Four general themes emerged from their responses: *support for scholarship, support from (senior) women, family-friendly policies or practices, and formal commitment to gender equality.* Both women and men provided specific examples of policies related to scholarship-support. The most common response in this category, mentioned by 3 women and 1 man, was the policy of granting junior faculty release time from teaching responsibilities during the tenure process. Participants also described specific supports for research, such as "access to research resources internal to the university [and] excellent research office staff" (201). Both women and men noted the importance of supportive deans or colleagues, with women specifying that support of senior women was helpful to them. Three women, but no men, mentioned the existence of family-friendly policies such as stopping the tenure clock for family-related situations or a culture that allowed faculty flexible hours and the option of working at home. Two women said that their respective university's formal commitment to gender equality, as demonstrated in formal affirmative action policies or equity pay adjustments at each school, are helpful.

Several study participants noted, however, that their universities or departments have

no helpful formal policies or practices. As one man said, "Nothing actually formal. People came together, for the most part, on their own for support" (206). One woman said, "No. No supportive policies; I received the most help from my parents who helped out with child care!" (146)

On the other hand, one woman explained that her university's policies and practices are "neutral": "The policies and procedures were neither especially helpful nor represented barriers in terms of my gender. . . . The policies and procedures are neutral as far as I can discern. I think that women are just as likely to receive tenure as men. . ." (125). One man, who has no children, simply responded, "No, nor do I think that there should be" (218).

## Discussion

The current shortage in doctoral-level graduates to fill social work faculty positions makes it particularly important to understand factors that may increase schools' successes in attracting and retaining faculty. In addition, if social work is to be true to its mission of preparing undergraduate and graduate students to work effectively with diverse individuals, families, and communities, than it is critical that faculty possess diverse views and experiences. Unfortunately, little empirical research is available to inform our efforts to recruit and retain diverse faculty.

This exploratory research has sought to understand some of the issues and concerns of women and men as they make choices about their post-doctoral careers. Several limitations are important to consider in interpreting the findings of this study. Although several steps were taken to recruit doctoral graduates with

varied experiences and social group memberships (i.e., faculty in both graduate and undergraduate programs and who were not in academia; faculty who are from various ethnic, sexual orientation, and [dis]ability groups), the lack of a random sample prevents generalization of findings. Overall response rate is low, and the sample is relatively homogeneous on key diversity variables. Further, even though purposive sampling was employed to recruit a diverse sample, the small sample size prevents comparing the views and experiences of subgroups of women and men by ethnic or racial, sexual orientation, and (dis)ability group memberships. Women are slightly over-represented in this sample as compared to their representation among social work faculty nationwide. Finally, findings primarily describe the perceptions and opinions of women and men in academe; it may be equally or more important to understand the views of those who did not enter or who chose to leave the academy if we are to identify organizational changes that are conducive for recruitment and retention of diverse faculty.

Despite these limitations, several important findings emerge from this study. Perhaps most notable is that, for the majority of variables addressed in the questionnaire, no statistically significant gender differences were found. Both women and men received their doctorates from institutions that emphasized preparing students primarily for research. Both genders rated availability of a tenure-track position; relative emphasis on teaching, research, and service; geographic location; and support/opportunities for teaching as being of moderate or extreme importance in deciding whether to accept their current positions. There were no

significant gender differences in time spent in research/scholarship, teaching, service, or administrative activities, or in numbers of publications or grants since completing their doctoral degrees. These findings suggest that the women and men in this sample have comparable work priorities and perform their jobs similarly. Furthermore, the majority of both women and men indicated that there were no gender-related concerns that influenced their decisions about which positions to accept, suggesting that social work academia may have made progress over the years in responding to women's concerns about equal opportunities and treatment.

Several gender differences, however, are important to consider if we are to address issues related to faculty recruitment and retention. Based on findings from this study, some White men are concerned about obtaining interviews for faculty positions. Women, on the other hand, are concerned about the climate for women once they have obtained positions, as voiced in their concerns about the persistence of a "good-old-boys" culture and continuing salary inequities. These concerns of women are consistent with previous research indicating that women continue to report discrimination (Bronstein & Farnsworth, 1998). Another important gender difference was found in participants' reasons for changing employment. That is, while both women and men moved for professional reasons (e.g., upward mobility, increased research support), women's reasons were more diverse and included family-related reasons. Family-related factors also were identified by several of the women as the reason for not seeking tenure-track positions upon completing their doctoral degrees. The

finding that research support plays a critical role in deciding whether to select and remain in positions is consistent with the literature (Froman, 1996; Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002; Olsen et al., 1995), as is the impact of family-related concerns among women (Bielby & Bielby, 1992; Finkel et al., 1994; Hochschild, 1975; Petchers, 1996; Young & Wright, 2001). In addition, the statistically significant finding that women rate overall workload as more important than men in deciding whether to accept positions is consistent with the finding by Smith and colleagues (1995) that work overload is a major stressor for women.

### **Implications for Social Work Education**

The descriptive information presented in this paper suggests that the situation for women in social work academia may be improving at many institutions as noted by DiPalma and Topper (2001). Some gender differences in experiences and perspectives, however, have implications for organizational changes in social work programs. Most issues raised by both women and men are relatively alterable, if programs decide to address these concerns. Such policies and practices include valuing the contributions of both genders and addressing a "good-old-boys" climate that, when present, prevents full participation of women and under-represented social groups (as well as White men who choose to exclude themselves from such networks). A thorough assessment of the current environment within specific institutions provides a good place to begin. For example, is there a commitment to nurturing all junior faculty members? Are equal opportunities provided for participation in the activities that best contribute to promotion and tenure (e.g.,

invitations to participate on grants, nominations to important and visible university committees, opportunities for research leaves or specialized training)? In addition, salary levels provide a concrete expression of an individual's contributions and worth as perceived by the university or department. If gender inequities in salary exist, then gender pay equity measures should be instituted.

Diverse faculties provide rich benefits to their students and the profession. When minority perspectives are given voice, the range of questions and solutions is broadened, enriching the profession's foci and influence. In addition, students must be prepared to work with increasingly diverse populations, and it is hard to understand how this goal is adequately achieved in the absence of diverse role models and perspectives. With many schools actively seeking to hire faculty of color and women, White men in particular may feel at a disadvantage. Another perspective, however, is that individuals who have traditionally experienced privilege based on gender or race can use their influence to work as allies and leaders in the pursuit of social justice. This view was expressed by one male in the sample. Creating a university and department climate where all faculty members are nurtured to full participation in academic life stands to benefit all faculty and assist both men and women to feel more secure about their roles and contributions.

There are other measures that have the potential to address many of the concerns expressed by participants in this study by improving the work-lives of social work doctoral graduates who choose to pursue academic careers. These include providing workload release and structured mentoring programs for

all junior faculty; developing family-friendly policies such as partner/spouse benefits, hiring couples, and "pausing" the tenure clock for caregivers; and creating strong supports for research and scholarship. In addition, such policies and practices may facilitate the recruitment of women who currently perceive that academia is not compatible with family commitments and responsibilities.

Finally, three primary areas of research are needed to address the limitations of this study and build on its findings. First, replicating this study with a larger, more diverse sample would allow comparisons between the experiences and perspectives of women and men of different racial and ethnic groups, various sexual orientations, those with and without disabilities, and so forth. On average, participants considered the university and community environments for persons of color, people with disabilities, or for lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgendered individuals *less* than moderately important when deciding to accept their current positions. This likely reflects the sample's lack of diversity on these characteristics. Second, much could be learned from the perspectives of doctoral graduates who opt out of academia. Would some of these graduates consider pursuing tenure-track positions if certain policies and practices were changed? Third, continued exploration and discussion is needed about the ways that care giving and other family responsibilities affect faculty choices so that we can identify strategies that ensure that women and men who hold such responsibilities are able to fully participate in academia if they so desire.

With the current shortage of social work faculty and the need to attract faculty who bring a variety of experiences and perspectives into

the academy, schools and departments of social work must use multiple strategies for recruiting and retaining diverse faculty. Paying attention to the factors that graduates and faculty state are important is an excellent beginning point.

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**Lynn C. Holley** is assistant professor, School of Social Work, Arizona State University. **Diane S. Young** is associate professor, School of Social Work, Syracuse University.

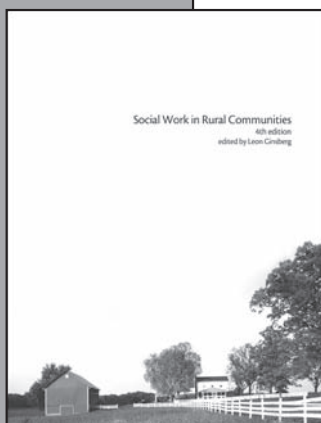
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**COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION**

## SPECIAL SECTION: FIELD EDUCATION IN SOCIAL WORK DIFFERENCES OF TEACHERS', FIELD INSTRUCTORS', AND STUDENTS' VIEWS ON JOB ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

**Moshe Sherer**

Tel Aviv University

**Neta Peleg-Oren**

Florida International University

This study compares the assessment of 30 teachers, 120 field instructors, and 287 students with regard to what students of social work do during their fieldwork practice and the importance they attach to these activities. The study used a Job Analysis Questionnaire developed specifically for this study. Results indicated differences among the three groups. Implications call for more attention and tighter follow-up of teachers on student field work and greater clarity on expected and actual performance of roles as perceived by teachers, field instructors, and students.

FIELD PRACTICE IN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION is the central mechanism for transmitting theoretical knowledge into the practical level of work (Euster, 1999; Schneck, Grossman, & Glassman, 1991; Vayda & Bogo, 1991). What social work students do during their fieldwork is a crucial issue for social work education. This study deals with the extent to which academic teachers (teachers), field instructors (instructors), and students agree on what social work students do in their fieldwork and how they rank the importance of these activities.

In social work, field experience has largely been studied as it relates to the level of practice methodology, the description of relationships with clients, the supervision process, or the agency (Fortune, McCarthy, & Abramson, 2001; Henderson, Stringer, Cawyer, & Watkins, 1999; Itzhaky & Eliahu, 1999; Knight, 2000, 2001). While fieldwork is a critical component in the

social work educational process, the issue of what students actually do during their fieldwork has been only minimally studied in a systematic and scholarly way (Cuzzi, Holden, Chernack, Rutter, & Rosenberg, 1997; Fortune & Abramson, 1993; Knight, 1997, 2000, 2001; Reisch & Jarman-Rohde, 2000; Vayda & Bogo, 1991). Thus, Kadushin (1991) indicated that although field instruction is the most significant part of social work education, it has not had the benefit of sufficient studies by social work researchers.

Little documentation concerning student perceptions of their own training exists, a puzzling circumstance in light of research showing that students perceive their field instruction as the most important part of their studies (Raskin, 1989). Students' degrees of satisfaction and the variables affecting this are the main areas that have been examined (Cohen & Cohen, 1998; Fernandez, 1998; Fortune & Abramson, 1993).

The typical social work program is based on the premise that preparation for professional practice requires a core of knowledge and practical experience that is achieved through supervised training in the field. Teachers, along with field instructors, ensure that social work students will successfully integrate theory into their practice (Knight, 2000; Schneck, 1991; Tolson & Kopp, 1988). Several approaches exist concerning the philosophy and goals of field instruction and its design (Ramsey, 1989). The approach articulated by Brauns and Kramer (1986), by Spiro (2001), and by Spiro, Sherer, Korin-Langer, and Weiss (1998), wherein theoretical studies exist alongside professional studies in the field, is accepted in Israel. The field experience promotes a synthesis between academic forces and practical work in the field via investigation and the performance of interventions in a guided process with the aim of ensuring proper and controlled development of the student (Zastrow, 1994).

Each side of the learning triangle—teachers, field instructors, and students—plays its own part in developing the professional social worker. The academic teachers are at the center of the triangle. They teach intervention areas and play a major role in advancing theory: They convey skills and attitudes, teaching and learning styles in the classroom and in the field, and the goals of supervision in the field. Teachers are expected to direct and monitor student field education (Fernandez, 1998; Fortune et al., 1985). They work in coordination with field instructors in developing student study habits and the desired form of instruction. Together teachers and field instructors rate and evaluate students' professional development.

A few studies have investigated the roles field instructors play in socializing students to

the profession and in transmitting key knowledge, values, and skills (Abram, Hartung, & Wernet, 2000; Bogo & Vayda, 1987). Instructors (usually part-time employees of a local agency) act as field teachers and evaluators, imparting theory and skills and assessing student progress (Schwaber, 1994). Aside from their academic responsibilities, they are responsible for coordinating student involvement in the field between the university and their local agency. Results of several studies clearly indicate that the educational component of instructors' roles and their skills are critical for student learning in field (Fortune & Abramson, 1993; Fortune et al., 2001; Knight, 1997, 2000; Lazar & Eisikovits, 1997).

In Israeli law, a BSW gives students a professional license to work in the field, hence the importance of field instruction at the undergraduate level. Field education constitutes a condition for and basic training of the student to be a professional. Like other social work curricula, the baccalaureate level prepares students for generalist social work practice. Students in Israel spend almost half of the baccalaureate program in the field (16–20 hours a week; about 1000 hours during the last 2 years of study). Because of the lengthy time students spend in the field and its importance in the education process in social work, the experience is meaningful and remembered long after many other aspects of social work courses are forgotten (Shardlow & Doel, 1996). Apart from theoretical studies, students are given weekly supervision from their instructors on their professional involvement with client systems (individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations). In some Israeli universities, field instruction is taught only in the 2nd and

3rd years of study. Accordingly, research for this study was limited to those years.

The clarity of guidelines and the expectations of learning and performance are also critical in field education. The effectiveness of field learning is enhanced when the triad of students, teachers, and instructors work in harmony and continuously communicate goals and expectations (Fernandez, 1998).

Some differences in perceptions of the fieldwork experience, however, may exist; thus, while students and instructors reported most teaching methods as being effective (Knight, 2001; Maidment, 2000), they rated the actual teaching methods of field instruction and those of the classroom differently. Students indicated they were most likely to have access to teaching and learning methods in the field that offered the opportunity to directly observe a field educator in practice. Fernandez (1998) points to the importance and quality of interaction between the instructor and the student in affecting student satisfaction with field education.

Our assumption is that field instruction prepares students to be professional social workers. Due to the high economic costs and efforts universities invest in this activity and in light of the ever-changing social environment around us (Reisch & Jarman-Rohde, 2000), it is important to examine the degree of congruence between the academic expectations of the universities and the actual activities of students during their fieldwork.

### **Job Analysis: A Technique for Studying Field Instruction**

Job analysis is a process that entails a description of the work, identifies and details the components, characteristics, duties, and

requirements of the particular job, and ranks the relative importance of these duties for a given job (Algera & Greuter, 1998; Harvey & Wilson, 2000; Fine & Wiley, 1971; Sanchez & Levine, 2000). The product of job analysis is a description of the job activities and their relative significance. The National Association of Social Workers in the United States used the Job Analysis Questionnaire (JAQ), originally developed by Teare (1981), to define the spectrum of social work tasks and roles performed on the job (Teare, 1983, 1987; Teare & Sheafar, 1995). The JAQ has been used in Israel to study the work of social workers as it pertains to three levels of workers: managers, instructors, and direct social workers (Sherer, 1986a). Virtually no job analysis studies have been conducted that examine the tasks and roles of social work students during their field instruction.

In Israeli universities, student field requirements are set forth in fieldwork manuals that express the philosophies, principles, and guidelines of a particular university. Manuals define intervention aims, determine client characteristics, and detail the stages of evaluation and the methods of intervention, assignments, and guidelines for instructors and students. Literature reviews and examination of field instruction programs, as outlined in the fieldwork manuals of different universities, evince differences in emphasis among social work programs (Ben-Oz & Gor, 1996; Gar, Marnes, & Ganshovsky, 1995; Moshe & Scoop, 1996; Schechter & Tevet, 1998; Shwartz, 1997; Spiro, Sherer, Korin-Langer, & Weiss, 1998).

Aside from learning about the activities of students in the field, our main concerns were differences in perception among teachers, instructors, and students on their understanding

of what roles were performed by students in field and the importance each group attached to those roles.

One might expect that differences would emerge among the three groups. Moreover, it can be assumed that the students did not necessarily adhere to all guidelines. Explanations range from loose instructions and monitoring by the instructors to giving priority to agency needs over field manuals by the instructors. The authors hypothesized that: (1) teachers, instructors, and students would assess differently what roles students actually performed in field; and (2) teachers, instructors, and students would rank the importance of those roles differently.

### Method

#### Sample

The sample was drawn from the complete list of teachers ( $N=88$ ), instructors ( $N=500$ ), and 2nd- and 3rd-year undergraduate students ( $M=1,200$ ) of social work in the five main universities in Israel. Forty 2nd-year and 40 3rd-year students from each university were randomly selected to participate in the study. Two hundred and eighty-seven (71.8%) of the students responded and completed the questionnaires. Sixty randomly selected teachers were asked to participate in the study. Of those, 30 (50%) responded. The sample of field instructors included 250 instructors, of whom 120 (48%) responded.

Questionnaires were distributed during the 2nd semester on the assumption that the students had by then managed to gain enough experience to be able to provide informed answers about their activities in fieldwork. At some of the universities, the questionnaires

were mailed to the students, while at others, teachers in the "Methods of Social Work" course (the main course on intervention knowledge) handed them out. Teachers and instructors received and returned the questionnaires by mail. The foremost reasons for non-response were lack of desire to complete a long and complicated questionnaire, incorrect addresses, and lack of participation from faculty and instructors.

### Measures

A two-part questionnaire was used, which included 10 questions dealing with personal and demographic characteristics. In addition, the questionnaire contained 100 statements related to activities carried out by the students during fieldwork.

The fieldwork manuals of the different universities served as the basis for constructing this questionnaire. The development of this part of the questionnaire included separate analysis of each fieldwork manual by three researchers with the goal of identifying tasks that students need to carry out as part of their work. Afterward, each researcher wrote the tasks in a standard job-analysis style (i.e., statements that include the task to be undertaken and its purpose, such as "calling social services to ascertain the client's rights"). Reanalysis of the expected roles (a cluster of tasks performed under a typical role such as "community intervention" or "casework") was done after listing the statements. Finally, during a series of meetings between the researchers, repeated statements were filtered out, and the statements were randomly distributed in the questionnaire.

Teachers, instructors, and students were asked to rank the statements from 1 to 5, for the rate at which the students performed a

particular task during their fieldwork (current performance), where 1=not at all to 5=very frequently. Respondents were also asked to rank the importance of each task (importance level) for the student's work (from 1 to 5), where 1=such a task is not important to 5=it is of great importance to increase activity in this area.

After preparation of the initial questionnaires, they were pretested by a number of students, instructors, and teachers to resolve any lack of clarity and to correct other errors. The validity of the questionnaire was based on job-analysis tools (Teare, 1983, 1987; Teare & Sheafar 1995) and on those used previously by the author (Sherer, 1986a, 1986b, 1995).

### Findings

The sample consisted of 262 (91.3%) female students, 229 (80%) who were single, and 258 (90%) were born in Israel. Twenty-four (80%) of the 30 teachers were female, with an average age 47.63 years ( $SD=7.15$ ). Exactly 102 (85%) of the instructors were female, with an average age of 41.06 years ( $SD=8.16$ ).

### Job Analysis

*Identifying roles.* Principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation was used to determine the roles from the performed tasks, based on the answers of teachers, instructors, and students ( $N=437$ ) on the "actual performance of tasks" scores (Johnson, 2000). Factor analysis indicated 15 central roles (explaining 55.8% of the variance): community intervention, assessment and evaluation, mediating and referral, supervision, casework intervention, contract development, reading professional material, planning end of treatment, use of computers, teamwork, collecting familial informa-

tion, collecting and assimilating information, broadening knowledge, learning from other workers, and learning and enrichment. These roles became our main measure for studying the activities of the students (see Table 1).

### Roles of Students During Field Instruction by Group

To trace differences among the three groups (teachers, instructors, students), one-way ANOVA on the 15 central roles was used (each of the original variables was multiplied by the factor analysis coefficients score to obtain the relative weight of each original variable on the factors), followed by an LSD Post Hoc test to find specific differences among the groups. The one-way test indicated significant statistical differences on 6 out of the 15 roles (see Table 2).

The main differences existed between the students and the other two groups. Students demonstrated a lower mean score on all the significant results of frequency levels of actual performance of roles than at least one of the other two groups. Differences were indicated between teachers and instructors as well (see Table 2).

One-way ANOVA was used to seek out differences among the three groups on the importance of roles scores (each of the original variables was multiplied by the factor analysis coefficients score for the importance of roles, to obtain the relative weight of each original variable on the factors), followed by an LSD Post Hoc test to find specific differences among the groups. The one-way test indicated significant statistical differences on 14 out of the 15 roles (see Table 3).

The most obvious difference was between the teachers (who yielded the highest mean scores) and the other two groups. The teachers

**TABLE 1. Results of Factor Analysis on Tasks Performed by Students in Field Education**

| Role Performed                  | % of Common Variance | Alpha Coefficient |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| Community intervention          | 7.17                 | .90               |
| Assessment and evaluation       | 5.70                 | .87               |
| Mediating and referral          | 5.66                 | .88               |
| Supervision                     | 5.34                 | .85               |
| Casework intervention           | 3.66                 | .81               |
| Contract development            | 3.65                 | .82               |
| Reading professional material   | 3.48                 | .82               |
| Planning end of treatment       | 3.40                 | .79               |
| Use of computers                | 2.58                 | .85               |
| Team work                       | 2.56                 | .73               |
| Collecting familial information | 2.48                 | .68               |
| Assimilating information        | 2.38                 | .69               |
| Enlarge knowledge               | 2.34                 | .73               |
| Learning from workers           | 2.30                 | .65               |
| Learning and enrichment         | 1.80                 | .55               |

Note. Reliability for the entire scale  $\alpha=.95$ . Explained variance by the factors=55.8%.

**TABLE 2. Actual Performance of Roles in Field Placement by Position**

| Role                      | Teachers |           | Instructors |           | Students |           | $f(2, 434)$ | $p$   | LSD Post Hoc Test* |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|----------|-----------|-------------|-------|--------------------|
|                           | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i>    | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |             |       |                    |
| Community intervention    | 2.35     | .65       | 2.45        | .85       | 2.04     | .77       | 12.30       | <.001 | 2 1 > 3            |
| Assessment and evaluation | 3.31     | .59       | 3.04        | .58       | 3.16     | .72       | 2.83        | —     |                    |
| Mediating and referral    | 3.10     | .50       | 3.40        | .59       | 3.10     | .72       | 8.54        | <.001 | 2 > 1 3            |
| Supervision               | 3.94     | .50       | 3.88        | .60       | 4.02     | .59       | 2.69        | —     |                    |
| Casework intervention     | 3.71     | .49       | 3.69        | .61       | 3.62     | .75       | .61         | —     |                    |
| Contract development      | 3.30     | .61       | 3.63        | .68       | 3.41     | .82       | 4.05        | <.02  | 2 > 1 3            |
|                           |          |           |             |           |          |           |             |       | 3 > 1              |
| Reading prof. material    | 2.65     | .69       | 2.86        | .72       | 2.81     | .82       | .90         | —     |                    |
| Planning end of treatment | 3.86     | .49       | 3.86        | .63       | 3.68     | .85       | 2.62        | —     |                    |
| Use of computers          | 1.63     | .63       | 1.41        | .85       | 1.32     | .76       | 2.22        | —     |                    |
| Team work                 | 3.25     | .72       | 3.30        | .94       | 2.95     | 1.14      | 5.04        | <.007 | 2 > 3              |
| Collecting familial info  | 3.38     | .55       | 2.97        | .82       | 2.79     | 1.02      | 6.10        | <.002 | 1 > 2 3            |
| Assimilating information  | 3.64     | .64       | 3.56        | .64       | 3.69     | .73       | 1.38        | —     |                    |
| Enlarge knowledge         | 2.08     | .68       | 2.57        | .93       | 2.10     | .82       | 13.74       | <.001 | 2 > 1 3            |
| Learning from workers     | 3.08     | .62       | 3.14        | .76       | 3.23     | .81       | .91         | —     |                    |
| Learning and enrichment   | 2.84     | .63       | 2.97        | .70       | 2.99     | .81       | .49         | —     |                    |

\*Groups: 1=teachers, 2=instructors, 3=students

believed that these roles were more important than indicated by the scores for student perception of actual performance. The differences between the instructors and the students were marginal, and in most cases not significant (see Table 3). A new variable was computed to reveal the nature of the relationships between the actual frequency of performed roles and their relative importance. The importance score was divided by the perceived actual performance score; thus, we obtained a relative score: the higher and more positive the new score, the more important the role is than its current perceived frequency of performance, and vice versa. Again, these new scores were subjected to a one-way ANOVA test followed by an LSD Post Hoc test to find specific differences among the groups (see Table 4).

In most cases, the teachers held a different opinion from that of the instructors. Teachers thought that the actual rate of performance

of given roles should be higher. The instructors were more content with the rate at which students performed their roles than were the teachers or the students (see Table 4).

Another interesting result was that, except for a few cases, the mean scores were positive and high, meaning our subjects believed that students should emphasize their efforts in these areas.

### Discussion

Results indicated the existence of 15 central roles in fieldwork. Respondents returned different perceptions of the rate at which students actually performed these roles, and they ranked the importance of these roles differently. On the one hand, nearly all teachers and students felt that most of the roles should be performed at a higher rate of frequency than they perceived students to actually be performing them, while instructors were

**TABLE 3. Importance of Roles Performed in Field Placement, by Position**

| Role                      | Teachers |           | Instructors |           | Students |           | <i>f</i> (2, 434) | <i>p</i> | LSD Post Hoc Test* |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|----------|-----------|-------------------|----------|--------------------|
|                           | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i>    | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |                   |          |                    |
| Community intervention    | 3.46     | .62       | 3.08        | .75       | 3.08     | .76       | 3.63              | <.03     | 1 > 2 3            |
| Assessment and evaluation | 4.04     | .48       | 3.46        | .43       | 3.52     | .54       | 15.81             | <.001    | 1 > 2 3            |
| Mediating and referral    | 3.61     | .40       | 3.32        | .42       | 3.35     | .54       | 4.07              | <.02     | 1 > 2 3            |
| Supervision               | 3.70     | .62       | 3.31        | .48       | 3.42     | .50       | 7.03              | <.001    | 1 > 2 3<br>3 > 2   |
| Casework intervention     | 3.72     | .55       | 3.31        | .47       | 3.32     | .55       | 7.57              | <.001    | 1 > 2 3            |
| Contract development      | 3.98     | .60       | 3.35        | .46       | 3.46     | .57       | 15.31             | <.001    | 1 > 2 3            |
| Reading prof. material    | 4.19     | .41       | 3.71        | .43       | 3.71     | .54       | 12.21             | <.001    | 1 > 2 3            |
| Planning end of treatment | 3.70     | .60       | 3.31        | .45       | 3.35     | .56       | 6.19              | <.002    | 1 > 2 3            |
| Use of computers          | 4.08     | 2.26      | 2.75        | 1.33      | 2.75     | 1.32      | 11.67             | <.001    | 1 > 2 3            |
| Team work                 | 3.97     | .59       | 3.46        | .55       | 3.44     | .73       | 8.18              | <.001    | 1 > 2 3            |
| Collecting familial info  | 3.57     | .54       | 3.22        | .60       | 3.17     | .75       | 4.36              | <.013    | 1 > 2 3            |
| Assimilating information  | 3.65     | .51       | 3.37        | .46       | 3.41     | .53       | 3.62              | <.028    | 1 > 2 3            |
| Enlarge knowledge         | 3.82     | .60       | 3.61        | .66       | 3.82     | .66       | 13.74             | <.001    | 3 > 2              |
| Learning from workers     | 3.56     | .47       | 3.30        | .54       | 3.36     | .60       | 2.30              | =.101    | 1 > 2              |
| Learning and enrichment   | 3.62     | .46       | 3.31        | .51       | 3.50     | .57       | 6.75              | <.001    | 1 > 2<br>3 > 2     |

\*Groups: 1=teachers, 2=instructors, 3=students

more content with the existing rates at which roles were performed.

Six significant differences on current rate of student role performance were indicated among the three groups. On three variables we found that the instructors thought that the students performed their roles at a higher rate of frequency than was perceived by the other two groups. On two other variables, instructors perceived roles performed at a higher rate than the teachers perceived the performance of these same roles. On one variable the teachers gave the highest scores, and on another one, a higher score than the students. In reporting rate of performance, student scores were higher in

only one area compared to the teachers (contract development).

Assuming that the students were the only ones who actually knew the current rates at which each role was performed, it seems that of the three groups the instructors were the most remote from reality. Considering that they were the group closest to the students in the field, they should have had a better understanding of what the students actually did. The teachers' remoteness was to be expected: they were not as involved as the instructors in the actual field experience.

The following could explain the remoteness of instructors from students: instructors are probably not very knowledgeable of the rate at

**TABLE 4. Importance by Actual Performance of Roles**

| Role                      | Teachers |           | Instructors |           | Students |           | <i>f</i> (2, 434) | <i>p</i> | LSD Post Hoc Test* |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------|-----------|----------|-----------|-------------------|----------|--------------------|
|                           | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i>    | <i>SD</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |                   |          |                    |
| Community intervention    | 1.54     | .38       | 1.33        | .36       | 1.65     | .61       | 14.85             | <.001    | 1 > 2<br>3 > 2     |
| Assessment and evaluation | 1.39     | .31       | 1.08        | .25       | 1.18     | .45       | 7.84              | <.001    | 1 > 2 3<br>3 > 2   |
| Mediating and referral    | 1.19     | .20       | 1.00        | .22       | 1.13     | .30       | 10.62             | <.001    | 1 > 2<br>3 > 2     |
| Supervision               | .95      | .17       | .87         | .18       | .87      | .23       | 1.75              | —        |                    |
| Casework intervention     | 1.01     | .16       | .91         | .17       | .95      | .26       | 2.48              | .085     | 1 > 2              |
| Contract development      | 1.26     | .32       | .96         | .24       | 1.08     | .43       | 8.91              | <.001    | 1 > 2 3<br>3 > 2   |
| Reading prof. material    | 1.74     | .69       | 1.39        | .44       | 1.44     | .54       | 5.28              | <.005    | 1 > 2 3            |
| Planning end of treatment | .97      | .18       | .88         | .19       | .96      | .32       | 3.62              | <.028    | 1 > 2              |
| Use of computers          | 2.94     | 2.52      | 2.20        | 1.32      | 2.36     | 1.37      | 2.92              | <.055    | 1 > 2 3            |
| Team work                 | 1.30     | .37       | 1.17        | .52       | 1.41     | .82       | 4.48              | <.012    | 3 > 2              |
| Collecting familial info  | 1.08     | .20       | 1.16        | .38       | 1.28     | .56       | 3.81              | <.023    | 3 > 1 2            |
| Assimilating information  | 1.04     | .20       | .98         | .23       | .97      | .30       | .74               | —        |                    |
| Enlarge knowledge         | 2.03     | .68       | 1.58        | .62       | 2.10     | .88       | 17.13             | <.001    | 1 > 2<br>3 > 2     |
| Learning from workers     | 1.21     | .30       | 1.11        | .32       | 1.11     | .38       | 1.03              | —        |                    |
| Learning and enrichment   | 1.33     | .33       | 1.16        | .29       | 1.26     | .44       | 3.57              | <.029    | 1 > 2<br>3 > 2     |

\*Groups: 1=teachers, 2=instructors, 3=students

which students perform specific roles. Either their responses indicate a *desire* for students to perform the central roles according to the rates they reported, or the instructors really did not know what their students actually did in their practice.

Interestingly, except for two cases, the students indicated the lowest mean scores on current performed roles. While it can be assumed that teachers are relatively isolated from the actual work carried out by students, this should not be the case with instructors. We expected to find higher levels of agreement between students and instructors with regard to perceptions of roles performed by students. Students believed that they dedicated much of their efforts to the supervision role (the highest mean score of all performed roles: 4.02, based on an approaching significance level of  $p < .06$ ). Despite the significant differences among the groups, the mean scores on this role were high in all three groups, indicating that they all thought that students were highly involved in supervision.

Actual rates of role performance of students can stem from instructions given to them during their fieldwork, as opposed to those given to them in the classroom by their teachers and their own experiences at work. The gap between students, teachers, and instructors may signify the level of maturity and professionalization on behalf of the students. Conversely, it may reflect their general misperceptions. The data do not allow an examination at a greater depth. Cavazos (1996), who found that social work students were not given assignments in the field that reflected the foundation curriculum content, supports this explanation. He further suggested that students might dedicate a great deal of field time studying the particular agency

and the way it works. Furthermore, it is possible that some tension between coursework and fieldwork is expected, thus no model that integrates classroom study and fieldwork will be applicable due to actual demands of fieldwork that are dynamic and unpredicted to some extent, and that other sources, such as peer group learning, play a role in professional learning (Eisikovits, 1989).

In part, these differences may result from legal necessities that programs of field instruction deal with certain populations in specific ways (Euster, 1999). For example, welfare laws in Israel require responses to the needs of the elderly. Given the scarce resources of workers, this might imply less attention to other needs (Spiro et al., 1998). Such differences may stem from different preparation and emphasis given during formal and informal instruction, from influences of other organizational members (Klieman, Quinn, & Harris, 2000), as well as from the needs of the job itself. Because fieldwork is such an important part of preparing the student for work, these differences need to be examined. Do they meet study and experience requirements that will ensure that students acquire the knowledge needed for professional social work?

The most important finding with respect to the importance of roles was that significant differences among teachers, instructors, and students were indicated on all roles. Except for one role (enlargement of knowledge), teachers perceived that there was a need to expand activities in all roles. Students thought generally the same, and on three variables they indicated significant differences from their instructors. It seems that teachers were eager to get results on all activities, so they indicated

that the activities were important. What about instructors? Why did they not think the roles were more important? Possibly because they believed that students performed reasonably well, so there was no need to emphasize their activities. This was not the case with teachers. Although they thought that in three cases students performed the highest compared with the other two groups, they still believed that those activities were more important and should be more frequently performed. Another issue concerns the relatively high level of agreement on importance of roles between instructors and students. Is it because both really work in the field and they know better?

These findings are underlined when studying the results of the new score, importance by frequency of performance. In no case did instructors believe that the role was performed at a lower rate than it should have been, as distinct from the other two groups. In most cases teachers were the ones who thought that roles were performed at a lower rate of frequency than they should have been. Students held the same opinion.

What are the reasons for these results? What is it that hinders students from performing roles at higher rates of frequency than currently reported? Is it instructors who inhibit students from enlarging their activities? Because teachers and students agreed on most roles, it seems instructors held different views about students' activities in the field. The relatively small differences between teachers and students indicate that despite the expectation that teachers would push for higher achievements, students, in most cases, were as eager to expand their activities as teachers.

It is possible that instructors were influenced by agency demands. They are the ones

who have to bring together the expectations of the university, the needs of the agency, and the abilities of the students. It is also possible that they are more likely to think along the lines of job descriptions rather than on the full range of learning activities students are expected to complete in order to address educational objectives defined by the university. Even students thought that some activities should be enlarged beyond the existing rates at which these roles were performed. Perhaps instructors thought that there were other important roles? It is possible that curriculum standards tend to push an enormous amount of content into social work programs, thus the intent to achieve a corresponding experience in the field is a bit unwieldy.

Schools of social work should pay attention to the results of this study. Our unique investigation indicates significant differences of opinion regarding rates at which students perform specific roles and the differences in ranking of these roles in importance by teachers and instructors. Except for some minor differences of opinion that are a fundamental part of social work, teachers and instructors should have similar views on the rates at which students perform their roles and ranking the importance of these roles. One can expect general agreement because fieldwork manuals, training, monitoring, evaluation, and joint work are all common to both teachers and instructors. This is not what was found. Our results bear on schools' expectations, for if students perform different roles at different rates than expected, or moreover, different roles than expected, do they receive proper training?

If instructors really think that students are involved to a reasonable level in the per-

formance of different roles, they will most certainly not try to urge students to higher rates of activity in the performance of these roles. While rates of performance of roles are not indicators of student competence in areas of practice, we assume that actual activity during field practice is essential for educating and preparing students for professional activity. These results should be taken seriously, and proper steps should be taken to correct this situation. Enhanced collaboration among all three parties should be used to narrow the gaps explored in this study.

Students indicated their wish to be more involved in various roles during their fieldwork. Fulfilling this wish is important because it has been suggested that social workers tend to perform the same tasks even after they start working in specialized fields (Raymond, Teare, & Atherton, 1996a, 1996b). Given that the rates at which students performed their roles will be higher in their future (Neugeboren, 1988), social work schools should be attentive to this and be open to these ideas and the needs of students, especially because these views correlate with professional expectations of involvement and direct activity in the field. Moreover, this may lead to imaginative techniques that will prepare better change agents (Eisikovits, 1989).

### **Summary and Conclusions**

The main limitation of this study is rooted in its inability to draw clear conclusions; many unanswered questions arise concerning the meanings and implications of our findings. Another limitation was our response pattern. While we found no differences between those subjects who participated in the study and

those who did not, a response rate of 50% (of teachers and instructors) is problematic. Caution, therefore, is needed in generalizing these results, and it is recommended that they be treated as a preliminary step in the study of students' tasks and roles in the field.

The current study points to significant differences of perception with respect to the rate at which roles were performed and the importance assigned to those roles by teachers, instructors, and students. The central question arising from the data is, What is the meaning of these differences and how do they affect the character of graduates and the level of preparedness to work in various areas of social work?

Analysis of the data showed that teachers probably held unrealistic views about what students do in their fieldwork. This means that the information social work schools have about student roles performed during fieldwork is probably incorrect; moreover, higher differences were indicated concerning the relative importance of roles. Again, teachers were the most remote from what instructors and students thought. It is easier to accept this last difference, for teachers should be the ones to show the way, thus striving for higher levels.

It is clear that further in-depth study is needed. The differences of opinion on current rates of role performance and the importance assigned to these roles by teachers and instructors should be explored. The structure of field instruction needs clarification; the need to know if it is effective has to be paramount. It is possible that the field is changing and current models of field instruction need to be revised. Implications of these data need to be examined by studies in other countries to validate and enlarge the scope of our findings.

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**Moshe Sherer** is senior lecturer at Tel Aviv University, Bob Shapell School of Social Work. **Neta Peleg-Oren** is research associate, Community-Based Intervention Research Group (CBIR-G), Florida International University.

Address correspondence to Moshe Sherer, Bob Shapell School of Social Work, Tel Aviv University, Ramat Aviv Tel Aviv, Israel 69978; e-mail: Sherer1@post.tau.ac.il.

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University of North Carolina

Given the prevalence of domestic violence and the likelihood that many victims will not receive services from specialized domestic violence providers, this article provides a framework for contextualized assessment that can be used by generalist practitioners. Drawing from stress and coping theory, the authors discuss the relevance of assessing appraisals and emotional responses within the context of environmental and individual risk and protective factors. Through an illustrative case assessment, the authors describe the contextualized assessment process and its ramifications for strategic safety planning.

NEARLY 25% OF WOMEN experience some form of physical or sexual assault, or both, by a partner in their lifetime (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000b). Annually, between 1.5 million (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000b) and 2 million women (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980) are assaulted by a current or former intimate partner. The need to provide effective safety planning to battered women is also fueled by the robust evidence of health and mental health consequences of intimate partner violence such as physical injury (Bachman & Saltzman, 1995; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000b), depression (Campbell & Lewandowski, 1997; Golding, 1999), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Golding, 1999; Herman, 1995), as well as the radiating impact on children and others close to the abused woman (Riger, Raja, & Camacho, 2002).

Because violence against women is so widespread and represented among the clientele of

varied social service providers, we believe it is critical to see contextualized assessment and strategic safety planning with battered women as a function of all social workers (much like assessment for child/elder abuse or suicidality). Moreover, evidence indicates that many endangered and battered women do not access services from domestic violence specialists but do encounter a range of other social service providers (Macy, Nurius, Kernic, & Holt, 2004; Tolman, 2003). We are concerned here with efforts in the foundation social work curriculum to prepare entry-level generalist social work practitioners for that moment when they begin to suspect that a woman is being threatened or abused by someone she knows.

Traditional safety planning is a vital component of helping battered women in crisis to achieve safer situations. Safety planning is a crisis-oriented approach that focuses attention

on immediate safety needs and whose intent in practice is often toward having the woman leave the relationship. See Table 1 for typical issues covered in safety planning. While leaving an abusive relationship is an important option for victims/survivors, applying this as a prescription to all women can be harmful, as it neglects the complexity of the choices facing many women and implies that women who

return or who stay with an abusive partner have failed at leaving. Many women will choose to stay with their partners and work to end or diminish the abuse (Campbell, Rose, Kub, & Need, 1998); for others, leaving does not end the abuse as the batterer continues to stalk and endanger the woman (Fleury, Sullivan, & Bybee, 2000). Other women will leave and return to the batterer several times in the course of deciding

**TABLE 1. Components of a Traditional Safety Plan**

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**If you are still in the relationship:**

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1. Think of a safe place to go if an argument occurs—avoid rooms with no exits (bathroom) or rooms with weapons (kitchen).
  2. Think about and make a list of safe people to contact.
  3. Keep change with you at all times.
  4. Memorize all important numbers.
  5. Establish a “code word or sign” so that family, friends, teachers, or co-workers know when to call for help.
  6. Think about what you will say to your partner if he/she becomes violent.
  7. Remember you have a right to live without fear and violence.
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**If you have left the relationship:**

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1. Change your phone number.
  2. Screen calls.
  3. Save and document all contacts, messages, injuries, or other incidents involving the batterer.
  4. Change locks, if the batterer has a key.
  5. Avoid staying alone.
  6. Plan how to get away if confronted by an abusive partner.
  7. If you have to meet your partner, do it in a public place.
  8. Vary your routine.
  9. Notify school and work contacts.
  10. Call a shelter for battered women.
- 

**Checklist of items to take with you:**

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1. Social security cards and birth certificates for you and your children
  2. Marriage license
  3. Leases or deeds in your name or both your names
  4. Checkbook
  5. Charge cards
  6. Bank and charge account statements
  7. Insurance policies
  8. Proof of income for you and your spouse (pay stubs, W-2s)
  9. Documentation of past incidents
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*Note.* Excerpted with permission from the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (n.d.).

to continue or end the relationship; and for some women, leaving poses more risks, both in terms of harm from the batterer (Campbell, 1992; Goetting, 1995) and social and economic costs, which women may see as more burdensome than the abuse (Peled, Eisikovitz, Enosh, & Winstok, 2000; Rhodes & McKenzie, 1998).

Safety planning will be most effective if it occurs within a contextualized assessment process that illuminates the deeper struggles and multiple harms that women balance when making decisions about continuing or ending relationships. Traditional safety planning is a necessary but insufficient strategy for addressing the complex needs of women who are in varying degrees of relationship to the batterer. As Peled et al. (2000), note

It is commonly assumed that freedom from violence entails leaving the abuser . . . . Recent literature on social work intervention . . . with intimate violence . . . often uses the rhetoric and ideology of empowerment as an important guiding principle. However, in the context of battered women who stay, the concept seldom is carried beyond the ideological and prescriptive levels. Attempts to operationalize the means by which those women can become empowered are scarce. (p. 12)

In this paper, we provide a heuristic model for operationalizing an empowerment approach for working with battered women. This approach promotes contextualized assessment with battered women to strategically plan for safety. It helps illuminate multiple harms salient to the woman's perspective of

her life and options. Although our knowledge about the epidemiology, risk factors, and consequences associated with domestic violence has mushroomed in the past 25 years, the available evidence on effective interventions for preventing or safely ending violence against women has not developed at the same speed (Wathen & MacMillan, 2003). Given the current state of research, a model for assessment with battered women needs to be derived from a strong theoretical basis in order to offer a rationale for practice interventions. The model offered here is grounded in stress and coping theory, as efforts to augment the safety of battered women and their children nearly always takes place within a situation of high stress for the women. Stress and coping theory offers a useful framework for assisting persons within stressful situations to identify the meaning of the situation and to evaluate the resources they have available to cope.

We turn first to a discussion of the components of a contextualized assessment that influence a woman's landscape of choices and the interpretation of multiple harms she may face. Next, we discuss elements of a strategic safety-planning process that extends the focus on physical harm to include other forms of harm that a woman might experience, such as threats to children, harm to other valued relationships, and economic hardships. We conclude by demonstrating the contextualized assessment process through application of the heuristic to a case illustration.

### **Contextualized Assessment With Battered Women**

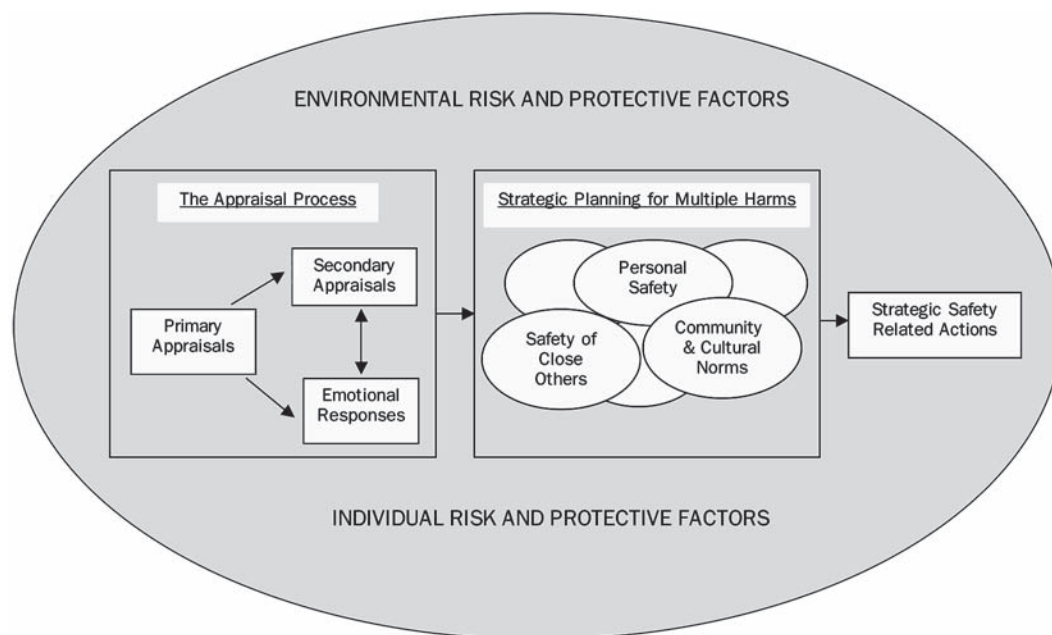
In order to operationalize a core value of promoting social justice for battered women,

we are focused here on assessment aids that help generalist social workers recognize the diversity of women's experiences and guide practitioners in helping battered women articulate their contexts, concerns, and goals. Toward this aim, we draw on stress and coping theory (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus & Smith, 1988; Smith & Lazarus, 1993) to identify two critical assessment components. These include (a) appraisal processes that shape a battered woman's perception of her threat context, options, and capacities, and (b) identification of key environmental and individual risk and protective factors that shape her perception of her threat context. Stress and coping theory specifies both momentary processes wherein each event is appraised as well as a developmental model that incorporates personal history and environmental conditions

in determining exposure and responses to stressors over time. Any given coping experience becomes part of a lifespan sequence that has long-term effects for the individual's physical and psychological well-being and vulnerability or resistance to stress.

Figure 1 presents a model for contextualized assessment that can be used in conjunction with traditional safety-planning processes to explore dynamics that influence the choices available for battered women. It is beyond the scope of this paper to detail a full conceptual model of all forces involved in the development of or intervention with domestic violence. Other sources are available that provide tools for specialized education and training in domestic violence interventive services (Davies & Lyons, 1998; Dutton, 1992). Rather, our purpose is to highlight variables that are important to

**FIGURE 1. Contextualized Assessment for Strategic Safety Planning That Integrates Environmental and Individual Risk and Protective Factors Into Interventions With Battered Women**



social work assessment and that might affect a woman's ability to develop and carry out a meaningful safety plan. The first step in this process is to understand how a woman perceives her circumstances, so we turn now to elaboration of the appraisal process.

### **The Appraisal Process**

Social cognition describes how people make sense of themselves and others. It involves interpersonal processes through which people derive meaning from their experiences, create cognitive models of this meaning, and then draw on these models to predict outcomes, pursue goals, and make determinations about how to engage with their social environment (Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Social cognition theories inform the appraisal processes of stress and coping, which have been widely applied across a range of health and social problems (see Kaplan, 1996; Rice, 2000; Zeidner & Endler, 1996, for examples). Appraisals, motivated by threats to well being, involve a search for information and the construction of meanings that guide actions in response to these stressors. We focus here on three interrelated activities of the appraisal process: primary appraisals of stressors/threats, secondary appraisals related to response possibilities, and management of emotional responses.

*Primary appraisal* involves the recognition of a threatening circumstance and the personal evaluation of its potential for harm or loss (Lazarus, 2000; Nurius, 2000). There can be variability both in the magnitude and qualitative nature of this evaluation. The same behavior may be seen as more or less threatening to different women. Personal life history or the immediate context of the violence, for example, may shape

the primary appraisal process. Moreover, the same kind of violence may have differing levels of threat associated depending on the context of different kinds of harm she may anticipate. For example, a woman may appraise violent behavior differently once a child is involved than she did when only she experienced the abuse. In addition, threats can be difficult to recognize and thus appraise within interpersonal relationships. In the early stages of the relationship, behaviors that indicate abuse are usually subtle and ambiguous; monitoring for the perception of threat is counterintuitive to forming friendship, dating, or spousal relationships; and the abuser as well as others may "prime the pump" of self-doubt by reinforcing beliefs that the behavior is something other than abuse or that the woman is somehow complicit in causing the abuse. An abusive partner may tell a woman, "If you'd have dinner ready on time, I wouldn't get so angry," or, "I get jealous of your friends because I love you so much." An outcome of the difficulty in identifying threat from an intimate partner is that many women who are battered do not describe the relationship as abusive (a lack of recognition of this type of threat) and the appraisal of threat may not happen without external intervention (Dutton, 1992; Lindhorst, 2001; Wolf, Ly, Hobart, & Kernic, 2003). Primary appraisals that threat is occurring galvanize a coping response process, but alone are not sufficient to direct that response.

*Secondary appraisal* focuses on what can be done about the troubling event or condition. This appraisal evaluates coping resources and options, accountability, implications of potential actions, and facilitates decisions about what response options to choose and how to go about

them. Again, there can be great variability here. First, there will be variability to secondary appraising as women question: "What are my options here? Which option is best? Am I capable of doing this? What kinds of help resources do I have? What are the consequences of taking any action?" It is important to note that appraising often happens on a tacit rather than explicit level, meaning we often are not fully aware of our own appraising and how this is shaping our view of options and actions.

Next, secondary appraisals depend on what *kinds* of harms or threats the abusive behavior represents to the woman. Appraisals are reflective of underlying beliefs, goals, and commitments. Women who are highly committed to maintaining their relationships despite serious problems will have very different appraisals of their circumstances and options relative to women who do not share this commitment. Heron, Twomey, Jacobs, and Kaslow (1997) cite this kind of difference, emphasizing the importance of appreciating a battered woman's beliefs, goals, and commitments, and how these shape appraisals and coping behaviors. Appraisals are windows into the woman's system of meaning, which will carry sociocultural history and context. Thus, understanding ways that the appraisal process mediates between objective characteristics of partner abuse and the woman's behavioral response helps practitioners better appreciate ways that cultural values such as racial preservation and belief that it is a woman's duty to maintain the family—as found among African American women in Heron et al.'s (1997) example—can lead to differential appraisals of meaningful options for coping with partner abuse.

*Emotional responses* are inherently part of appraising significant life stressors and threats. If we were emotionally neutral about an event, it would not be stress-invoking and no coping processes would be activated. However, due to the enormous impact of our emotional state on our capacity to take in information, make decisions, and act, it is useful to draw attention to variability in emotional states likely to derive from appraising partner abuse. A woman who blames herself or feels she has not lived up to an expectation is likely to feel guilt or shame, whereas those who blame the perpetrator may be more likely to experience anger. Uncertainty about one's resources or ability to manage the situation will result in anxiety or fear, whereas a sense of irrevocable loss or helplessness will foster sadness (Smith & Lazarus, 1993). Differences in women's answers to questions inherent in secondary appraising, such as those noted above will generate different emotional states, and multiple conflicting emotions are common.

Various circumstances may represent a harm that is of higher priority (e.g., not losing her children, not risking her family or community support) to a given woman than the violence that may continue to be directed at her by the abuser. When intervening with battered women, it is important to note that women employ a variety of coping efforts, some of which may appear perplexing or troubling to those outside the situation, but which may have served a woman well in helping her to continue with other aspects of her life while living with an abusive partner or with the aftermath of violence. Recent studies indicate the likelihood that battered women evoke a number of strategies that may shift over time

as initial efforts are found to be ineffective in controlling the violence (Goodkind, Sullivan, & Bybee, 2004). Various strategies such as placating the abuser, seeking help from formal and informal institutions, resistance or fighting back need to be understood in light of each woman's appraisals, the harms she is trying to avoid, the goals she is trying to accomplish, and ways that her own personal and environmental factors are shaping her circumstances, choices, and likely outcomes.

Women's intrapsychic appraisals and emotional responses are embedded within a personal history that has created a unique set of individual risk and protective factors for her. This internal appraisal process is further shaped by environmental risk and protective factors related to her social-structural positionality, policy context, and availability of community resources. In the following sections, we briefly illustrate potential assessment issues that social workers should consider at the environmental and individual levels.

### **Environmental and Individual Risk and Protective Factors**

Although it is beyond the scope of this paper to exhaustively review all factors that hold risk and protective functions for coping with partner violence and for self-protection, we can describe critical environmental and personal dimensions that have been identified as erosive or buffering to effective coping to illustrate their importance for assessment.

Battered women face differing social environments based on aspects of their social location, their access to financial resources, the policy environment in which they live, and the level of development of supportive institutions

in their community. Risk for domestic violence is not evenly distributed among all women, and is correlated with aspects of social identity. National surveys have found that women are more likely to be victims of violence when they are younger, are in families with incomes less than \$10,000, are African American or American Indian/Alaska Native women, and are heterosexual (Bachman & Saltzer, 1995; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000a; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000b). Social-structural positionality acts to enhance and inhibit access to beneficial environmental resources for groups of women depending on their race/ethnicity, class, age, sexual orientation, and disability status. For instance, women of color face institutionalized racism that affects the accessibility and usability of institutions such as the criminal justice system (Hamby, 2000; Kanuha, 1994). Status characteristics affect women's risk for exposure to violence and should also be understood for how they differentially affect women's resources for safety.

Research on factors associated with leaving abusive relationships notes that access to financial resources plays a significant role in a woman's ability to decide to end an abusive relationship (Strube & Barbour, 1983, 1984; Wuest & Merritt-Gray, 1999). Analysis of data from the 1992 National Alcohol and Family Violence Survey (Aldarondo & Kantor, 1997) shows that family income was the single most powerful predictor of the cessation of battering, with lower income families more likely to report continued violence. Although provision of resources is insufficient to assure an effective coping response, resource accumulation and mobilization is a core strategy for coping with abusive relationships (Wuest & Merritt-Gray, 1999). Long-standing patterns of discrimina-

tion based on race and gender in the labor market have disadvantaged women of color, particularly African American, Hispanic, and American-Indian women (Amott & Mattaei, 1991; Catanzarite & Ortiz, 1996; Kemp, 1994), making access to resources, which facilitate effective coping, more difficult. Women's access to supportive financial assistance such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) also differs widely across communities. States such as Idaho, Oklahoma, and Wyoming have all decreased their TANF caseloads by over 90% from their 1993 levels (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2004), indicating that access to TANF in these states may be more problematic for all women. In a related and worrisome vein, emerging research suggests that male partners may be at higher risk of intimate homicide when welfare benefits decline (Dugan, Nagin, & Rosenfeld, 2003).

The TANF situation illustrates how the local policy environment affecting each woman is a critical area in the assessment process. Other significant policy contexts for battered women include family law, criminal justice, and immigration laws. Recent research on the effects of divorce policy indicate that access to unilateral divorce has been associated with large declines in domestic violence and intimate homicide (Stevenson & Wolfers, 2003), yet increases in divorce may result in an increase in the homicide of unmarried partners (Dugan et al., 2003). The federal Violence Against Women Act (1994) enacted changes to national criminal justice policy (Valente, Hart, Zeya, & Malefyt, 2001) that have led to federal funding initiatives to states and cities aimed at changing local law enforcement practices. While policy changes in the criminal justice system, such as the adoption of more ag-

gressive arrest policies may reduce exposure to violence for unmarried women, other changes such as the increased willingness to prosecute violators of protection orders may actually lead to increased spousal homicides (Dugan et al., 2003). Battered women who are immigrants face additional challenges within a policy context in which they may face deportation if their spouse is found guilty of abuse, or where they may be penalized for accessing welfare benefits when attempting to flee abuse as evidence of poor moral character, further affecting their immigration status (Menjivar & Salcido, 2002).

Communities differ in terms of the resources that they have available for battered women. Abused women have reported that accessing domestic violence services or staying at a domestic violence shelter were the strategies most likely to improve their life situation (Goodkind et al., 2004). Battered women who participated in a comprehensive advocacy intervention after exiting a shelter program experienced less violence and a higher quality of life than women who did not receive the intervention (Sullivan, 2003). These studies, coupled with research suggesting that the density of battered women shelters is associated with lower levels of femicide (Stout, 1989) and that legal advocacy may decrease the rate of intimate partner homicide for White women (Dugan et al., 2003), indicate the importance of the availability of community resources for battered women. While this is not an exhaustive listing of environment-related issues that affect battered women, it does provide an overview of the kinds of areas that social workers should consider when creating a contextualized assessment that pays attention to environmental risk and protective factors.

In addition to environmental dimensions of risk and protection, safety planning must also address the different intrapsychic contexts that battered women face. There are, of course, a host of contextual factors related to women's socioeconomic and sociopolitical histories that will shape how she appraises the relationship, the violence, herself, her options, and likely outcomes associated with a range of response possibilities (Campbell & Soeken, 1999; Holtzworth-Munroe, Smutzler, & Leonard, 1997). Any generalizations need to take into account diversity within groups as well as across groups, particularly with respect to context and culture. For example, in a study of women of Japanese heritage living in the United States who had experienced partner violence, Yoshihama (2002) found that country of birth affected the choice of coping strategy, perceived effectiveness, and level of psychological distress. Women born in Japan generally selected a lower ratio of active to passive strategies, and perceived active strategies to be less effective compared to U.S.-born women. This and related work underscores the "multiple harm" contingency embedded within the experience of many battered women. In this case, women born in Japan may have more culturally anchored harm to consider in the use of active strategies (such as confronting or leaving an abusive partner). Active strategies may be viewed as culturally incongruent, leading to withdrawal of social support and greater psychological distress.

Among the more extensively researched factors on an individual level that have been found to be related to women's capacity to cope with abuse are prior and ongoing exposure to violence, such as childhood abuse and neglect, sexual assault, and previous intimate partner violence.

Women who have experienced any of these forms of violence are at higher risk for revictimization (Gidycz, Coble, Latham, & Layman, 1993; Irwin, 1999; Malinosky-Rummell & Hansen, 1993). Although not yet fully theorized, experiences of violence are believed to affect subsequent risk of revictimization through mediating factors such as distorted cognitions (e.g., negative views of self, insecure attachment, schemas that shape relationship choices), negative attributions related to self-efficacy (e.g., self-blame, powerlessness), and psychological distress stemming from the abuse and sequelae (Gold, Sinclair, & Balge, 1999; Messman & Long, 1996).

Psychological distress reactions, as manifested in mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, PTSD, or substance use disorders are by no means universal among survivors. Trauma researchers have theorized that whether victimization leads to disorders such as PTSD may be based on the severity of the trauma, the woman's subjective interpretation of the experience, and how she makes meaning of the traumatic events (Maldonado & Spiegel, 1994; Walser & Hayes, 1998). Thus, women's primary and secondary appraisals, emotions, and coping with prior violence may influence the development of trauma symptoms, which in turn, affect coping capacity for subsequent threats (Arais & Pape, 2001), and make safety plan development or implementation seem challenging or overwhelming (Kuyken & Brewin, 1999). Particularly when more acute or prolonged violence exposure is involved, traumatizing stress holds potential for deep impact on cognitions, appraisals, beliefs, and coping behavioral actions (Arias & Pape, 2001; Brown, 1994; Dutton, 1994; Herman, 1995; Miller, Veltkamp, & Kraus, 1997; Nurius et al., 2003).

Coping with prior and current violence may well involve maladaptive strategies such as alcohol and drug use. A battered woman's own substance use can affect how she views and responds to her circumstances, her ability to participate in safety planning, and the kind of safety planning that makes sense for her (Bennett, 1995; El-Bassel, Gilbert, Schilling, & Wada, 2000). Substance use may be derivative of the abuse, and women with preexisting substance abuse may be more vulnerable to control and abuse by aggressive partners.

We argue that effective social work assessment and intervention, particularly safety planning, must take into account these environmental and individual correlates, given their influences on a woman's coping capacity. For example, a woman affected by trauma symptoms may be experiencing heightened states of vigilance or dampened emotions that color how she appraises the relationship violence and what she believes are realistic coping options. On the other hand, while depression may mediate the relationship between psychological abuse and a woman's problem drinking, this relationship can be offset in part by higher levels of social support (Arias, Street, & Brody, 1996). These examples highlight the importance of attending to multiple forms of harm as well as resources that need to be considered in safety planning.

### **Strategic Safety Planning to Address Multiple Harms**

Our clinical experience indicates that the potential for serious injury to the battered woman or her children is often uppermost on the mind of practitioners. So, it is not surprising that safety planning is largely configured

around the logistics of physically separating from the violent perpetrator. But many women are also seeking safety from other harms that could be triggered by or in other ways may be in tension with leaving the relationship. These harms could include loss of the relationship with this particular person; loss of the valued role of being partnered and attendant feelings of guilt, sadness, shame, and rejection; loss of other important relationships, such as the removal of children by child welfare authorities, or isolation from family and community; resource costs such as economic hardship and separation from resources available in the relationship; escalating danger to others or possessions; and other forms of threat such as compromised immigration status or exacerbation of other problems in living (e.g., substance abuse and mental health status) (Hendy, Eggen, Gustitus, McLeod, & Ng, 2003; Wolf et al., 2003). In short, partner violence may differentially signal threat to one's commitments to concepts of marriage and family, of culturally meaningful roles and expectations, of one's fundamental worthiness or efficacy, or fears of loss or harm to others, in addition to threats to one's own physical well-being.

Accordingly, we are arguing that safety planning is best approached as strategic planning. We use the term strategic here to reflect purposeful attention to the multiple kinds of harm a woman sees to be associated with her abuse and any efforts to escape or end the violence. This kind of attention would lead to identifying strategies, resources, and sequencing that include but go beyond traditional safety planning guidelines. Here we highlight four critical dimensions of strategic safety planning: assessing multiple harms, specifying

environmental resources and barriers, identifying developmental aspects of coping, and developing social capital resources.

In coping with domestic violence, the first dimension of strategic planning is to assess the multiple forms of threat a woman may experience. Acknowledgment of these context-dependent demands leads to an understanding that there are multiple forms of "safety" that need to be planned for and that there is no universally effective or ineffective strategy for ending the abuse (Goodkind et al., 2004). Focusing solely on physical safety from violence risks denying competing harms that may be highly salient for the woman and thus prominent in how she is appraising her circumstances and options, her emotional responses, and her behavioral coping choices. Advocating that a woman leave an abusive relationship may not always be appropriate given her vulnerabilities, resources, goals, and perspective. Instead, strategic safety planning depends on careful consideration of the types of threat the woman perceives, the appraisal process that is fueling her perceptions, emotions, and actions, and what outcomes—based on her goals—would be considered successful coping.

A second dimension of strategic safety planning builds on specification of the environmental resources and barriers that will likely confront this particular battered woman. Social work practitioners need knowledge of the institutional "map" related to services for victim/survivors. This knowledge can help practitioners work with a woman to increase her understanding of the labyrinthine social environment that will at times support her efforts toward safety and at other times

erect obstacles in her path. It is important to understand the different levels of access to support within institutions and communities which women will experience. For example, in communities where dual arrests are made by police officers responding to domestic violence calls, careful attention must be paid to the risks and benefits of voluntarily involving the law enforcement system. For impoverished women of color, involving the law enforcement or criminal justice systems comes with a different set of risks than those experienced by more affluent or White women, making negotiation of these systems another source of potential threat (Wolf et al., 2003; Wright, 1998). These examples of environmental risks and supports are critical factors to be evaluated in the safety planning process and differ depending on the woman's community and the policy environment she experiences.

The third strategic dimension of safety planning involves explicit consideration of where the woman is located in her own developmental coping continuum. Coping is a longitudinal, dynamic process that is constantly undergoing change. We are continuously reappraising and reacting on the basis of how stressful and threatening experiences evolve. Through these repeated reappraisals, we develop a sense of patterns both about the stress-evoking circumstances and our own coping effectiveness (Ryan-Wenger, Sharrer, & Wynd, 2000; Zeidner & Saklofse, 1996). These perceptions stem in part from questions like: "How successful was I in doing what I was trying to do? To what extent did that action have the outcome I hoped for? What unexpected outcomes were there, positive or negative? What does this tell me about what I can expect in the

future from this person? From myself? How does this new information affect my thinking and feeling?"

A battered woman's ongoing appraisals, priorities, and capacity to mobilize resources and coping strategies change as a function of her experiences and her movement through interpretive and decisional stages. In a prospective longitudinal analysis of women's responses to battering over time, Campbell et al. (1998) found that most women initiated a process of achieving nonviolence rather than leaving the relationship per se and that this process included: (1) responding to significant events by thinking about, labeling, and conceptualizing what was happening to them, (2) negotiating internally with themselves and externally with the abuser, and (3) trying various strategies to improve the relationship and decrease the abuse. Studies such as this and others (e.g., Pape & Arias, 2000; Zoellner et al., 2000) are indicating that neither severity of abuse nor socioeconomic resources provide adequate explanation of abused women's decision making. In addition to these important factors, battered women's efforts to interpret and cope with their circumstances are dynamic and multidimensional, mediating the relationship of the assailant's behavior and environmental conditions to her decision making and actions.

The fourth dimension of strategic planning involves an educational orientation toward the development of the woman's social capital, or her ability to "plan for process." Strategic safety planning, especially as we address it here relative to practitioners providing services outside of specialized domestic violence programs, occurs at one point in time. However, social workers and battered women need to conceptu-

alize safety planning as an ongoing process that shifts to accommodate the woman's evolution in thinking and feeling, changes in priorities, and the trade-offs she finds tolerable. Thus, rather than a still photo, battered women and social workers need to think of strategic safety planning as a rolling depiction of multiple concerns and environmental assets and barriers situated alongside intrapsychic changes in appraisals. This requires what Campbell et al. (1998) call creative interventions that help abused women monitor their ongoing safety (reflective of their multiple harms) as they negotiate efforts toward freedom from violence (see also Sullivan, Campbell, Angelique, Eby, & Davidson, 1994). To illustrate the use of contextualized assessment and strategic safety planning, we turn next to a case example drawn as a composite from the authors' clinical practice.

### **A Case Illustration**

Inez is a 36-year-old Mexican immigrant working as a hotel maid in an urban area. Inez's husband who is a United States citizen helped her come to the States two years ago. Inez was at first reluctant to move away from her family but agreed because she believed her new husband to be a good person who loved her and because she thought she would have the possibility of a better life. A few days after her arrival in the States, she and her husband got into an argument and he beat her. The physical violence continues to this day. Inez has a green card but finds the immigration policies and information confusing, so she is uncertain about what her immigration status is now. She is afraid to draw attention to herself for

fear of deportation. Her husband says that without him, Inez is "illegal" and that he will turn her in if she tries to leave. Inez sends money back home to her mother who is ill and her sister who takes care of her mother. She worries that if she does not send this money her mother and sister will not survive. Her husband tries to take more and more of her money from her job each month. Inez struggles to learn English and does not have many friends because her husband will not allow socializing with other women she meets at work. Lately, her husband has been pressuring her to get pregnant. Becoming a mother is very important to Inez, yet, she also worries whether her child would be in danger from her husband. Inez does not want to keep living as she is, but she does not know where to turn for help. Inez regularly attends Catholic services at a church nearby her home.

This case illustrates the importance of educating social workers to provide contextualized assessment services across all social work settings and not limiting such screening efforts to specialized domestic violence programs. A potential client such as Inez may eventually seek help from a domestic violence program if the language and culture of the agency are welcoming to her (Lee, Thompson, & Mechanic, 2002; Perilla, Bakeman, & Norris, 1994). However, she is probably more likely to seek help from a Latino/Hispanic community agency, a health-care clinic, or from a religious institution. Social workers in a broad range of agencies and settings, such as health care, criminal justice, child welfare, or economic services, are as likely

to encounter vulnerable violence survivors as social workers in domestic violence agencies (Macy et al., 2004).

This case study illustrates the complexities and challenges of helping battered women toward safety because of the multiple harms to Inez's well being. Traditional safety plan protocols (see Table 1) while helpful in considering immediate needs, may not lead to the development of an intervention that takes into account the complex, multiple harms that Inez is balancing. Traditional safety plan protocols for women like Inez who are still in relationships recommend thinking about safe people to contact, a safe place to go if an argument occurs, and what to say to a partner when he becomes violent. These steps are relevant for Inez, but most likely will not fully address her needs because they fail to account for Inez's tenuous citizenship status, her socioeconomic status, the sociocultural dimensions of her situation, her commitment to assisting her mother and sister, and her social isolation. A social worker using traditional safety planning as a basis for intervention will likely soon realize that these protocols are a beginning, but her clients need fuller elaboration and guidance regarding the multiple harms they may face.

We suggest augmenting traditional safety planning with the contextualized assessment process described in Figure 1. In Table 2, we provide an overview of the contextualized assessment heuristic, link it to sample questions a practitioner could ask that are reflective of each aspect of the assessment, and note the value-added relevance of these components for assessment and planning. Next, we illustrate dimensions of this contextualized assessment based on the case example.

TABLE 2. Linking Contextualized Assessment With Strategic Safety Planning

| Coping Components    | Examples of Assessment Areas and Sample Questions                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Relevance for Assessment and Planning                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Primary Appraisals   | Ask how the client labels and defines the violence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "You have told me that your partner has threatened you. Can you tell me what effect this has had on how you think about your relationship? What are you most fearful of or worried about at this point?"</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Ascertain if violence is perceived as a threat. If so, helps clarify what is being threatened (safety, relationship, or other). Helps the worker identify where to start with the client in terms of education, initial interventions, and safety planning.                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Secondary Appraisals | Ask how the client views coping options and the personal meaning these options and constraints hold for her. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Are there things you or others have done that seemed helpful? Things that seemed to make it worse?"</li><li>• "What are your ideas about the best ways to make yourself safer in this situation?"</li><li>• "Do you feel you can do these things?"</li><li>• "Do you have concerns about what might happen if you do (action X) or do not do (action Y)?"</li><li>• "What are the consequences of taking no action?"</li></ul> | Shows what options and actions the client has considered as well as what factors she considers as barriers or supports to these options. Helps the client to articulate the personal meaning that her circumstances hold for her, including beliefs about causes, accountability, and efficacy as well as goals or commitments that are most deeply threatened. Helps the worker to create a realistic intervention plan with the client. |
| Emotional Responses  | Ask about the client's emotions and feelings about the violence and her feelings about her options. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• "Can you tell me about your feelings about your situation?"</li><li>• "How are you feeling about the options you have for making yourself safer?"</li><li>• "What are your strongest hopes and fears related to this situation?"</li></ul>                                                                                                                                                                                               | Clarifies emotional impact of appraisals and options. Provides emotional context to actions and coping responses. Identifying and acknowledging emotions can help the client feel fully understood and establish a collaborative relationship with the worker.                                                                                                                                                                            |

|                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Multiple Harm and Safety Concerns         | <p>Have the client identify and elaborate the concerns she has related to the violence and her possible coping actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "It sounds like home can be a threatening place to be, but I wonder if there are other things that you are also afraid of that make it scary to think about trying to make yourself safer?"</li> <li>• "How do you see this situation affecting your children?"</li> <li>• "How would people in your family and community view your situation if they knew about it? If you took action to make yourself safer?"</li> </ul>         | <p>Illuminates the multiple threats with which the client must contend. Shows how an action to address one concern may result in difficulties with another concern. Helps the worker fully address the client's concerns when creating an intervention plan and helps the worker to create a collaborative intervention plan based on the realities of the client's life.</p>                                                                                                                   |
| Individual Risk and Protective Factors    | <p>Ask about strengths and resources, as well as vulnerabilities such as physical or mental health concerns, and prior experiences of violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Have you been in unsafe situations in your family/life before?"</li> <li>• "How have you coped with these situations?"</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>Contextualizes the client's life and situation at the micro level. Enables the worker to consider and address potential resources for and potential challenges to safety that the client may not have considered. Helps the worker identify needs, create a comprehensive intervention plan, and make appropriate referrals and connections for the client (e.g., for health care, mental health, or substance abuse treatment).</p>                                                         |
| Environmental Risk and Protective Factors | <p>Ask about socioeconomic opportunities and resources (e.g., neighborhood/community services) and barriers (e.g., discrimination, language/cultural barriers)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "What resources do you have available to help make yourself safer?"</li> <li>• "Where have you gone for help?"</li> <li>• "Have you experienced any problems when you have asked for help from other services?"</li> <li>• "What response do you think you would get from your family/community/law enforcement if you called on the police or courts to help in your situation?"</li> </ul> | <p>Provides mezzo and macro context for the client's life and situation. Enables the client and worker to realistically consider social resources as well as social impediments to safety. Provides guidance for the worker to think about social and community avenues and resources for violence cessation. (For example, a woman of color may not feel comfortable calling the police when threatened with violence, but she may feel that she can go stay with a member of her church.)</p> |

The assessment process with Inez would first turn to investigating her primary and secondary appraisals of her situation and her emotional reactions. For primary appraisals, it would be critical to better understand what threats are prominent among Inez's fears and how she sees them as a threat to her and her family's well being. For example, is she most worried about her physical safety, losing her green card if she leaves her husband, losing the relationship and being alone, not being able to assist her mother and sister, or her fears associated with becoming pregnant? Understanding what Inez perceives as most threatening will help the social worker devise an intervention strategy that is responsive to her current functional state and her underlying goals and values.

Inquiry into secondary appraisals would include understanding Inez's perceptions about coping resources and options, accountability, implications of various actions, and her experience thus far from her efforts to deal with the threats that are of greatest concern to her. This, of course, would include safety from her partner's abusive behavior. However, depending on what emerges as most salient in her primary appraisals, this analysis may well include coping with additional forms of threat, such as the risk of deportation. In addition to acknowledging that Inez is already engaged in coping, spending time on secondary appraisals also helps the social worker better understand Inez's perceptions of self-blame, of her resources or lack thereof, of her abilities to take on new coping actions, of what is likely to happen if she undertakes a given course of action, and of what does and does not seem to work based on her experiences to date.

Understanding the ways in which Inez is already successfully coping with the violence and other salient forms of harm, can help the social worker consider ways in which these coping actions can be augmented or efforts can be differently directed. Along with investigating Inez's primary and secondary appraisals, it is critical that the social worker investigate the client's emotional reactions. This can help the worker build a relationship with the client through demonstration of understanding and empathy, as well as help the worker understand the emotional impact of her circumstances as she perceives them. Considering the earlier primary appraisal examples, if Inez feels sad about the violence but is terrified about losing her green card, this information can help the worker prioritize action steps and advocacy efforts in order to respond with immediacy to the client's emotions and concerns. Similarly, emotional reactions such as guilt associated with self-blame, shame associated with a sense of failure or unworthiness, helplessness associated with a sense of entrapment or powerlessness, anger associated with perpetrator blame, or hopefulness associated with emerging coping options all hold powerful implications for the kinds of strategic planning and safety decisions a battered woman would be equipped to undertake.

The investigation of the client's appraisals and emotions begins to illuminate the client's multiple harm and safety concerns. In Inez's situation, in addition to enduring a violent intimate relationship, other potential harms include the threat of possible deportation, loss of her job if she is deported, and loss of income to support herself and help her mother and sister. Inez may also hold additional personal

or sociocultural concerns, for example, marital role expectations she may hold for herself, religious beliefs that may shape her perceptions, conflictedness about potential loss of a marital partner, or fulfilling a life goal of motherhood within this context.

A social worker using the contextualized assessment also attends to the individual and environmental risk and protective factors in a client's life. This would necessitate going beyond the information provided in the limited case description and mapping the environmental resources and risks in Inez's community. However, it is possible to see how Inez's social isolation and limited socioeconomic resources, for example, may carry risk functions that could increase her vulnerability and impede her coping capacity. Inez also evidences individual protective factors such as her spirituality, her job, and her connectedness to her family of origin that may serve as resources and augment her coping capacity.

Generally, risk and protective factors can also help social workers attend to the client's social-structural position. Being mindful of the socio-cultural and socio-economic complexities of Inez's life will help the social worker develop and implement intervention strategies and safety plans that are ecologically and personally relevant. An awareness of environmental risk and protective factors can also help social workers understand how social, cultural, and economic conditions influence many women's lives in the same way. An understanding of how environmental conditions shape women's options and opportunities for safety as well as increase women's risk and vulnerabilities can lead social workers to consider mezzo- and macro-level interven-

tions, such as advocating for policy change and interagency collaborations.

### Conclusion

In this article we have accepted the challenge Peled et al. (2000) gave to operationalize an empowerment-oriented approach that will help social workers assist women to improve their safety, regardless of whether they choose to leave or stay in an abusive relationship. Contextualized assessment of intimate partner violence involves attention to vulnerabilities across multiple intrapsychic, interpersonal, and environmental dimensions, as well as an evaluation of internal and external resources, available options, and the analysis of relative harm/safety implications of assorted action plans. No one strategy to end violence will work for every woman, and leaving cannot be the only legitimized option social workers offer as we help women create pragmatic, sustainable responses. Acknowledging the complexity of women's situated lives is a challenging task for the practitioner: there are seldom straightforward or uncomplicated solutions available. The proposed framework for assessment engages worker and survivor in a highly dynamic and evolving estimation of relative harms related to her internal, interpersonal, and environmental safety and well-being. The more congruent this analysis is with the woman's perspective, values, and context, the more likely an intervention plan will be realistically achievable and sustainable and support her empowerment and self-determination.

This contextualized assessment process could be used by instructors to teach comprehensive, theory-guided assessment and safety planning skills in the social work curriculum.

Through emphasizing the primacy of women's appraisals within the context of her multiple harm and safety concerns, the assessment tool helps operationalize the social work maxims to start where the client is and to evaluate the interface of person and environment. By assessing safety concerns at multiple system levels, students have a theoretically-driven understanding for navigating the complexities of intimate partner violence intervention, and for responding to the frequently asked question, "Why don't they leave?" Instructors can use the proposed framework to illustrate how women are balancing multiple harms and safety concerns, providing an orientation for students to understand these behaviors in a non-blaming way. The model urges students to understand *from the woman's perspective* the fragmented array of institutional responses and services she is likely to encounter. Social work students will be able to identify the relevance of developing skills to connect women to "hard" resources such as money, transportation, and social support networks, as well as "soft" resources such as providing information on how to understand the terrain of helping services and developing savvy in navigating formal and informal service systems.

Supporting women who are in abusive situations requires a multiple approach in social work education and training: the profession needs generalists with knowledge about how to recognize abuse and formulate basic safety plans with women, as well as specialists who have a more in-depth understanding of the needs of battered women and the systems they utilize. This proposed framework offers a roadmap that helps to focus assessment and intervention, recognizing the complexity of life

circumstances for the women involved. Successful safety outcomes for battered women are predicated on finding sustainable solutions that are salient and meaningful within the woman's life context, realizing that these solutions will invariably change over time.

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**Taryn Lindhorst** is assistant professor and **Paula Nurius** is professor, University of Washington School of Social Work. **Rebecca J. Macy** is assistant professor, University of North Carolina School of Social Work.

Address correspondence to Taryn Lindhorst, University of Washington School of Social Work, 4101 15th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 98115; e-mail: [tarynlin@u.washington.edu](mailto:tarynlin@u.washington.edu).





## TEACHING NOTES

### CHANGING THE NATURE OF THE DISCOURSE: TEACHING FIELD SEMINARS ONLINE

**Gloria K. Wolfson**

University College of the Fraser Valley

**Georgina Marsom**

University College of the Fraser Valley

**Curtis W. Magnuson**

University College of the Fraser Valley

This study examines the benefits and challenges of using distributed learning methods for teaching field practice seminars. Over a 3-year period (2000 through 2002), both in-class and online sections were evaluated in terms of meeting learning objectives and student satisfaction with the learning environment. Due to the small number of students involved each year, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was used. As a result of the findings, the decision was made to offer the 4th-year practicum seminar exclusively online. This article reviews the issues, benefits, and constraints of teaching field practice seminars online.

MOST BACCALAUREATE social work degree programs provide students with a field seminar related to the practicum. This usually involves students meeting regularly with their faculty liaison and other students. The purpose of the seminars is to assist students in sharing experiences and integrate classroom-based learning with field practice (Royse, Dhooper, & Rompf, 2003).

In the BSW program at the University College of the Fraser Valley in British Columbia (UCFV), there are required field seminars in each of the 3rd and 4th years. For some students, especially those who live a long distance from the institution, classroom-based seminars have represented hardship. This is particularly true for 4th-year students who are in practicum 4 days a week. The challenge was to provide a field seminar that would benefit students while overcoming barriers

of a geographical nature. As we were searching for some creative ways to deal with these challenges, online learning began to emerge as a real alternative.

WebCT was selected as the platform for several reasons, chiefly because (a) it had been developed at the University of British Columbia, (b) it was user friendly, and (c) the Ministry of Advanced Education supported its use within a provincial framework.

Thus, in January 2000, a WebCT-based field seminar was introduced on a trial basis. Students were given the option of enrolling in either a traditional face-to-face class or an online seminar. Students self-selected equally between the two sections. In 2001, both online and in-class sections were offered and evaluated. As a result of the 2-year trial, the decision was made to offer both 4th-year sections online beginning in 2002.

### Literature Review

Distance education has been part of the social work curriculum for the past 20 years (Callahan & Wharf, 1989). However, it has tended to take the form of print-based media, with occasional supplementation by teleconference and email (Kelley, 1993). Some experimentation occurred with interactive television, but expense limited its use (Gifford, 1998). Access to social work education remains a problem for those who are rural dwellers, particularly for Aboriginal people living on reserves. In addition, many social work students tend to be more mature, often working part-time or full-time, and have difficulty accessing classroom-based instruction (Callahan & Wharf, 1989).

### Field Practice Seminars

One purpose of the field seminar is to ensure the integration of theory and practice (Kenyon & Power, 2000; Rogers, 1995). Peer support and instructor feedback on the resolution of ethical dilemmas in practice are encouraged in a seminar format (Bogo & Vayda, 1998; Garthwait, 2005). Students have an opportunity to learn about various fields of practice by sharing information about their agencies, clientele, and issues that arise in supervision (Bogo & Vayda, 1998). Students often experience high levels of anxiety when entering a field placement (Royse, Dhooper, & Rompf, 2003). Peer and instructor support have been identified as critical in managing these anxiety issues (Bogo & Vayda, 1998).

### Distance Education

There is no commonly held definition of distance learning (Jennings, Siegel, & Conklin, 1995). Distance learning is sometimes defined as having student and instructor in different

places at different times (Jennings et al., 1995). Other definitions are more inclusive and include face-to-face learning opportunities at a distance from the campus under the rubric of distance education. Distributed learning has come to mean the notion of using technology to supplement some or all face-to-face interaction (Hick, 1999).

As the use of interactive technology is in its relative infancy, research studies on the use of these technologies are only beginning to emerge. However, there are some preliminary findings. For example, it has been reported that satisfaction with the learning experience increases as interaction between learner and instructor and among learners increases (Brown, 2000). There is some evidence that student satisfaction with web-based learning is dependent on its utility, their exposure to it, and their access to technology (Wernet, Olliges, & Delicath, 2000). Certainly, there is ample evidence that students who become familiar with the technology no longer see it as a barrier (Anglin, 1991; Barron & Orwing, 1997).

The effect of technology on educational reform has been enormous. We are moving rapidly from place-based technologies to more interactive ones (Bertram, 1999). There is evidence that learning and student satisfaction are increased as one moves from print to video to interactive technology (Barron & Orwing, 1997).

### Distance Social Work Education

In an experimental study on teaching an introductory social work history course using three different modalities (traditional lecture-based, web page-based, or a combination of web and lecture-based), it was found

that performance on a posttest was higher, and students reported a preference for teacher contact (Faux & Black-Hughes, 2000). On the other hand, students in a doctoral course found the web-based course (including discussions and chat) equivalent to face-to-face instruction (Schoech, 2000). Non-traditional social work students were more likely to prefer web-based courses (Wernet et al., 2000), indicating that the web-based courses are more respectful of their time commitments.

### **Methodology**

The Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work (CASSW) accreditation standards call for a minimum of 700 hours of field placement in BSW programs. Ordinarily, this takes place over 2 years. Most schools offer an integrative seminar in addition to the 700 hours. At UCFV, social work students take practicum in the winter semesters of 3rd and 4th years. The 3rd-year practicum is 3 days a week (315 hours) and the 4th-year practicum is 4 days a week (420 hours). All practica have an integrative seminar, which is in addition to the required practicum hours.

The difficulty was that, in addition to completing a 4-day a week practicum, full-time 4th-year students must also take two three-credit courses (an additional 6 hours per week of instruction). Fitting in a field practice seminar was a challenge. Several students in the program live at some distance from the campus and a few have moved to other areas. Faculty were committed to the idea of maintaining an integrative seminar, and they began to look for ways to accomplish this.

In 2000, WebCT was used to conduct a seminar online. This was a good opportunity

to pilot this delivery method, given that the program had two sections of the seminar, permitting students to self-select. Half the students selected the in-class seminar.

In the spring of 2000, a survey was conducted to evaluate both the 3rd-year (in-class) and 4th-year (online) seminars. Students were asked to evaluate the instruction as well as the learning activities. Thus, the research team was able to compare both of the 4th-year sections with each other as well as compare the 3rd- and 4th-year sections. Criteria evaluated included: convenience of format; achievement of personal learning objectives; achievement of the practicum objectives; encouragement of participation; utility of the case presentation and other assignments; utility of feedback from peers; timeliness of instructor feedback; level and enjoyment of participation; and integration of theory and practice. A Likert-type scale was used for rating, and open-ended questions were used to elicit qualitative data.

In 2001, the school again offered two sections of the 4th-year practicum, one in-class and one online. This time, more students wanted the online seminar than could be accommodated. Again, the seminars were evaluated by survey. By the winter of 2002, a decision was made to offer the 4th-year practicum seminar exclusively online, and a qualitative evaluation process was undertaken. The results of the 2001 survey and the qualitative evaluation of 2002 practicum are discussed later in this paper.

### **Conducting the Seminar**

Students were required to post their weekly learning journals and total number of hours accumulated at their field agency via private e-mail to the instructor. In the discussion area,

several fora (moderated by the instructor) were made available for students. For very sensitive issues, there is the ability to create an anonymous area that allows students to post messages without being identified; this can be very useful in dealing with issues of confidentiality. As well, the course outline and any additional readings were posted on WebCT and then discussed in the discussion area. While there is a synchronous chat area, this was not used extensively.

### Findings

In 2000, a survey comparing both 3rd-year (in-class) and 4th-year (online) seminars was conducted. The results of the 2000 survey provided useful feedback on the utility of using different learning strategies with students. Exercises that worked well in face-to-face interactions did not necessarily translate well to online learning. As a result of the 2000 practicum evaluations, the course outlines for both the 3rd- and 4th-year seminars were rewritten. In particular, the "temperature rounds" were eliminated for 4th-year students, as was the required agency presentation. Temperature rounds are a variation on a round robin pattern of interaction in facilitating group process (Toseland & Rivas, 2005), used in social work classes to help students develop cohesion and new skills by enabling them to become "focused on the activities of the day" (Barlow, Blythe, & Edmonds, 1999, p. 67).

In 2001, a survey was administered to both sections of the 4th-year practicum. Students were equally divided between the online and in-class sections in 2001. A 5-point Likert-type scale was used to collect data. For the purpose of analysis and because of the relatively small

sample size, responses were collapsed into three categories.

All students must meet general practicum objectives and specific personal learning objectives while in practicum. As shown in Table 1, twice as many online students as in-class students indicated that the seminar assisted them in reaching their personal learning objectives. The same held true for the attainment of the practicum objectives. Interestingly, the online students rated the seminar as more beneficial overall than did the in-class students.

In terms of the seminar format encouraging student participation, there were no real differences observed between the groups. Students in the online section were more likely to agree that the case presentation assignment was a valuable learning activity. They were also more likely to agree that they received useful feedback from both their peers and the instructor.

Each group rated themselves equally in terms of participation. However, the online students were more likely to find that they enjoyed the seminar. The online students were significantly more likely to find the required assignments useful. Moreover, they were significantly more likely to find that the seminar assisted them in the integration of theory and practice—the primary reason for holding the seminar.

When asked to rate what aspects of the seminar were the most useful, the online students rated the class discussion (via WebCT) as most useful, while the in-class students rated the case presentation assignment as most useful. It is worth noting that the in-class students did not see classroom-based discussion as particularly helpful to their learning while the online students did see the discussion postings as contributing to their learning.

### Discussion

One of the major benefits identified by students was the ability to participate on their own time. However, some students' participation was less than satisfactory. This necessitated the instructor having to intervene and require greater participation.

Clearly, the online seminar worked for the vast majority of students in a fundamental way. Students who had been reluctant to participate in class found their voice in the online environment. Some resented the necessity to respond to others' postings, while a few reported that the seminar required more keyboarding skills than they thought they possessed.

The evaluation of the experiences of the 2002 field education seminar students was qualitative, based on four open-ended questions: What has been the benefit of this online seminar?; What has not worked for you?; What

would you like to see done differently?; and What would you like to tell next year's students about this online seminar? Although the 2002 evaluation is not a comparison study, the findings of the 2002 survey highlight the similarities and contrasts to the previous years.

As was the case for the seminar students in the two previous years, the convenience of an online course was an overwhelming plus for the 2002 students. When asked to state the benefits of an online seminar, 22 of the 24 students mentioned the convenience of taking the course from home. In addition to citing convenience of an online course, over half of the 2002 students spoke of being able to manage their time better.

Students identified the need for future students to be sure to participate in the discussion and keep up with the reading in order to make the most of the seminar, as about one third of the students thought the workload of

**TABLE 1. Results of 2001 Survey of Online and In-Class Students in an Integrative Practicum Seminar (N=21)**

| Criteria                                    | Online Students (n=10) |              |               | In-class Students (n=11) |              |               |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------------------|--------------|---------------|
|                                             | Agree<br>%             | Neutral<br>% | Disagree<br>% | Agree<br>%               | Neutral<br>% | Disagree<br>% |
| Convenience of format                       | 90.0                   | —            | 10.0          | 72.7                     | 27.3         | —             |
| Achievement of personal learning objectives | 70.0                   | 20.0         | 10.0          | 36.3                     | 45.5         | 18.2          |
| Achievement of practicum objectives         | 80.0                   | 10.0         | 10.0          | 45.5                     | 45.5         | 9.0           |
| Encouraged participation                    | 90.0                   | 10.0         | —             | 100.0                    | —            | —             |
| Case presentation useful                    | 80.0                   | 20.0         | —             | 63.6                     | 36.4         | —             |
| Peer feedback useful                        | 100.0                  | —            | —             | 81.8                     | 18.2         | —             |
| Instructor feedback timely                  | 00.0                   | —            | —             | 90.9                     | —            | 9.1           |
| Check-in activities useful                  | 70.0                   | 30.0         | —             | 54.4                     | 45.5         | —             |
| Participation enjoyment                     | 90.0                   | —            | 10.0          | 72.7                     | 27.3         | —             |
| Participated fully                          | 90.0                   | —            | 10.0          | 90.0                     | 9.1          | —             |
| Integration of theory and practice          | 80.0                   | 20.0         | —             | 45.5                     | 36.4         | 18.2          |
| Required assignments useful                 | 70.0                   | 30.0         | —             | 45.5                     | 45.5         | 9.0           |

an online course to be greater than an in-class seminar. The length of postings and assignments was an issue. It was reported that much more time was required to read everything and make responses than would have been for an in-class seminar.

Distance learning itself was an issue for some students. Several students commented that an internet-based format was not their preferred learning style. Nevertheless, nearly the same number said the online course allowed for easy communication, which exemplifies the many perceptions held by any one cohort.

The 2002 students did not report that an online seminar encouraged student participation but did make related comments to this effect, such as the online course giving students time to think before responding and allowing quieter students to be more vocal. A few thought that students were more able to express their opinions online than in-class because "the necessity of putting my thoughts to pen [sic] made me examine them in-depth." Additionally, the absence of immediate verbal and nonverbal feedback was reported as feeling "safer."

Although this positive element to the online seminar was identified, over half of the students who responded suggested that future online seminars include some type of in-class sessions during the semester. The importance of an in-class meeting was seen to be the opportunity to put names to faces for students and to experience the interpersonal elements of nonverbal communication. Nearly half the students reported they disliked the absence of face-to-face interaction and missed the physical presence of their peers. They also noted that computer-mediated communication could be more easily misunderstood.

### Limitations

This study was not intended to be conclusive. Methods of evaluation differed from year to year and it is difficult to draw conclusions that would be applicable to all programs. Results are based on self-report and the sample size is small. Randomization of students into the online and in-class seminars would have yielded more conclusive results, but that was not possible according to the university's guidelines. Also, there were no attempts to correlate seminar format with performance evaluations by the students' onsite field instructors. Thus, it is not known if the format of the seminar had any measurable impact in practicum learning.

### Conclusions

Online students rated the experience as equally or more favorable than attending an in-class seminar. The ability to participate on their own terms and at convenient times was seen as a definite asset. Some students who had been quiet and reluctant to share in the classroom setting blossomed in the online course. These students felt freer to share their experiences, attitudes, and feelings on a deeper and more personal level.

Generally, the online seminar was successful in assisting students to meet their individual learning objectives and the school's practicum objectives. The convenience of the online seminar outweighed its limitations. One of the recommendations arising from this study is that synchronous (live) chats should become a regular part of the seminar. Another recommendation is that one or two in-person meetings be scheduled, certainly at the beginning and, if possible, at the middle or end of the semester.

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**Gloria K. Wolfson** is director, **Curtis W. Magnuson** is instructor and field education coordinator, and **Georgina Marsom** is instructor, School of Social Work and Human Services, University College of the Fraser Valley, British Columbia, Canada.

Address correspondence to: Gloria Wolfson, director, School of Social Work and Human Services, University College of the Fraser Valley, 33844 King Road, Abbotsford, BC, Canada V2S 7M8; e-mail: [Gloria.Wolfson@ucfv.ca](mailto:Gloria.Wolfson@ucfv.ca).



## BOOKS RECEIVED

### Child Welfare

Dulmus, C. N., & Sowers, K. M. (Eds.). (2004). *How Institutions Are Shaping the Future of our Children: For Better or for Worse?* New York: Haworth Press. \$29.95 (paper).

This powerful book explores the positive and negative effects of social institutions on children and adolescents' well-being. Containing innovative and creative strategies for reducing the negative outlook of children and families in shelters and residential treatment centers, this book offers improvements for care services at locations such as foster homes, urban public housing developments, and homeless shelters. The text also presents new ways to create positive environments, including custody planning for children of HIV-infected women, creating supportive staff-youth relationships, and Life Plans for post-institutionalized youth.

O'Brien, T. M. (2004). *Child Welfare in the Legal Setting: A Critical and Interpretive Perspective*. New York: Haworth Press. \$24.95 (paper).

Revolutionary as well as insightful, this book is a study of the child-welfare system and examines the legality surrounding child welfare workers while highlighting their need

for agency-specific training. This text also provides controversial opinions on emerging issues including family investigations, sanctions for Child Protective Services intervention, "trained incapacity" of social workers, and Title IV E programs. The large-system perspective in this book uses the concentric circle model, the rational legal model of legal and court action, and the ritualized process model to examine child-welfare practice.

### Children and Families

Webb, N. B. (Ed.). (2004). *Mass Trauma and Violence: Helping Families and Children Cope*. New York: Guilford Press. \$40.00 (cloth).

This is an ideal text for all clinicians who deal with families and their children who are coping with major traumatic experiences—from community violence to terrorist attacks. Highlighting the impact of traumatic stress, such as the events of September 11, 2001, this book presents the different therapeutic helping interventions that practitioners have created to assist people who were affected by these chaotic events. Contributors provide a framework for running support groups, conducting brief and long-term interventions, and promoting therapeutic and creative healing through art, music, and play.

### Death/Dying

Deits, B. (2004). *Life after Loss: A Practical Guide to Renewing Your Life after Experiencing Major Loss*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Lifelong Books. \$15.95 (paper).

Wise as well as universal, this book is a classic in the field of grief recovery. Now in its fourth edition, *Life after Loss* has served as a lifeline to more than 100,000 readers since its first printing in 1988. While most books on loss focus on the death of a loved one, the author takes care to address a wider audience. Deits shares his expertise on loss relating to death, divorce, unemployment, and relocation while providing readers with practical advice on how to overcome grief. With newly revised chapters, this empowering text is a must-have for anyone coping with any type of loss.

### Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender

Wehbi, S. (Ed.). (2004). *Community Organizing Against Homophobia and Heterosexism: The World Through Rainbow-Colored Glasses*. New York: Haworth Press. \$19.95 (paper).

This book examines how community organizing can help eliminate sexual oppression while acknowledging the long road to sexual democracy that remains to be traveled. Highlighting the importance of building alliances with social service providers and community organizers, this informative contribution to research focuses on practical actions to liberate sexual and gender expressions and is an essential resource for social service professionals, community activists, and anyone else working to eliminate sexual oppression in all forms.

### International Social Work

Montero, M. (Ed.). (2004). *Leadership and Organization for Community Prevention and Intervention in Venezuela*. New York: Haworth Press. \$19.95 (paper).

This book presents an essential overview of the dynamics of urban, low-income communities in Venezuela. With examples drawn from organizations designed to help a population that has been neglected by its government, this text is a unique source of inspiration. *Leadership and Organization* will instruct readers how community organizations are providing shelter for people displaced by natural disasters, establishing community leadership roles, and transforming the perspectives of community leaders—from narcissistic to altruistic.

### Mental Health

Brandell, J. R. (2004). *Psychodynamic Social Work*. New York: Columbia University Press. \$55.00 (cloth).

This comprehensive guide to psychodynamic clinical practice within contemporary social work treatment reflects the richness of current thinking in dynamic psychotherapy and addresses such important topics as strategies for beginning therapy; establishing a relationship between therapist and client; understanding and using the client's transference and the therapist's countertransference to clinical advantage; methods for treating children and adolescents; and time-limited therapy and dynamically-oriented case management. Case studies are derived from an assortment of venues, including inpatient and outpatient mental health, family service, and corrections.

Coach, M. E. (2004). *America's Quiet Unknown Hero*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America. \$45.00 (paper).

Based on oral history and personal written statement, this book chronicles the experiences of eight Japanese-American men who were former Prisoners of War during World War II. It touches on culture, history, the military, the impact of war, racism, post-traumatic stress disorder, and the counseling that is needed after war. Intuitive and dynamic recounts of what life was like for these men before the war also explore and reveal stories of their 50 years of silence regarding their capture and how they ended up in counseling at the Honolulu Vet Center.

### Research Methodology

Dudley, J. R. (2005). *Research Methods for Social Work: Becoming Consumers and Producers of Research*. Boston: Pearson. \$62.00 (paper).

Specifically designed for introductory social work students, this user-friendly book confronts obstacles that may hinder students' comprehension of research. The text is organized around consumer and producer, highlights the technology used in the social work profession, and illustrates each chapter through the use of charts, graphs, and case vignettes. Providing some of the most respected source databases available, this critical book incorporates examples of social work research and summarizes learning objectives, class exercises, and exam questions pertinent to social work students.

### Social Policy

Schmid, H. (Ed.). (2004). *Organizational and Structural Dilemmas in Nonprofit Human Service Organizations*. New York: Haworth Press. \$24.95 (paper).

This book will facilitate learning about the changing identity of merged community service organizations, the role of congregations as social service providers, the implications of welfare-to-work programs, as well as the issues of nonprofit executive misbehavior and the differences between for-profit and nonprofit organizations. A rich and extensive text, *Organizational and Structural Dilemmas*, will provide readers with useful solutions for repairing or preventing any permanent damage to organizational structure, value, or reputation.

### Social Welfare

Wagner, D. (2005). *The Poorhouse: America's Forgotten Institution*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. \$22.95 (paper).

The term "poorhouse" has been part of our vocabulary for decades even though most Americans are not aware of the actual institution that existed under a variety of names for roughly three hundred years. These institutions, also referred to as poor farms, almshouses, and workhouses, received little or no academic attention, regardless of the millions of poor people detained there. Although the poorhouse's goal was to reform character and "repress pauperism," its overall effects resulted in poor people's exploitation of the institutions as well as the staff and officials of the houses. This book not only explores the history of poorhouses, jails, prisons, and other incarceration institutions, it also delves into the personal accounts of short-term and long-term residents and patrons.

### Social Work Education

Chadwick-Blossey, S., & Robertson, D. R. (Eds.). (2005). *To Improve the Academy: Resources for Faculty, Instructional, and Organizational Development*. Vol. 23. Boston, MA: Anker Publishing. \$37.95 (paper).

This annual publication offers a variety of resources in improving higher education to faculty, staff, department chairs, student-service staff, as well as deans, chief academic officers, and educational consultants. Covering a wide spectrum of issues, this book contains suggestions for ways to transform and expand the role of academic support centers, to create a culture of assessment, and to evaluate the academic and professional development needs of graduate students. Contents also include faculty development in community colleges, the unwritten challenges of service-learning, and promoting a sound process for teaching awards programs.

### Social Work as a Profession

Carson, C. J., Fritz, A. S., Lewis, E., Ramey, J. H., & Sugiuchi, D. T. (Eds.). (2004). *Growth and Development through Group Work*. New York: Haworth Press. \$17.95 (paper).

A comprehensive overview of the field in international, intercultural, and cross-gender contexts, this book examines group work roots and fundamental beliefs and chronicles the evolution of this practice through a collection of peer-reviewed papers presented at the 23rd Annual International Symposium on Social Work with Groups. Presented in the wake of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the book is comprised of papers that reflect a heightened awareness of the importance of social action groups, now and in the future.

Ephross, P. H., & Vassil, T. V. (2005). *Groups that Work: Structure and Process*. New York: Columbia University Press. \$24.50 (paper).

This second edition of the text combines ground-breaking group therapy and practice for professionals who take and are assigned a wide range of roles within the group. The authors draw on examples from different social agencies, low-income communities, and the boardroom through a democratic model that provides practical instruction for day-to-day group situations. This revised edition also challenges and explores the pressure and heightened expectations for groups within large organizations while still highlighting the skills necessary to participate in and lead smaller group settings.

Thompson, R. A. (2004). *Crisis Intervention and Crisis Management: Strategies That Work in Schools and Communities*. New York: Brunner-Routledge. \$27.95 (paper).

A must-read for all educators, faculty, staff, and anyone connected with the school environment, this book presents a comprehensive guide to the prevention, intervention, and management of crisis situations that may strike a community or school at any moment. The text includes a Crisis Management Plan that outlines steps to prevent panic and implement emergency procedures from the onset of the incident until its conclusion. An assortment of checklists, assessment instructions, and suggestions for speaking with the media and parents are only a few examples of this book's detailed and practical crisis management techniques in maintaining our communities, schools, and children safe.





## **GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSIONS TO THE JOURNAL OF SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION**

Manuscripts submitted to the *Journal of Social Work Education* should address either issues relevant to the education and training of social workers at all levels or innovative approaches to social work practice and their educational implications.

Articles should be original, have a sound conceptual or empirical base, and be well argued. Manuscripts are considered original if they make a significant contribution to the advancement of existing knowledge. Conceptual soundness requires defining terms, providing a review of relevant literature, and advancing an intellectually sound argument or discussion. Empirical soundness requires congruence between questions raised and methods used to test them. "Show-and-tell" papers describing ad hoc experiences do not fit the above criteria. Articles should be free of racial, religious, gender, or ethnic bias; they should focus on a key issue; they should be well-organized, up-to-date, and editorially sound. Authors may find it useful to seek editorial help or criticism from colleagues before submitting their manuscripts.

You may submit manuscripts electronically to [jswe@cswe.org](mailto:jswe@cswe.org). Please submit one original copy and one blinded copy and label each accordingly. Electronic files should be word processing files, Adobe PDF files, or ASCII files. You may alternatively submit manuscripts via mail. Please mail one original copy and one blinded copy to the Council's office, Attn: JSWE. Be sure to label each version accordingly. In both cases, please include a cover letter with the names and contact information, including e-mail addresses, of all co-authors.

To ensure anonymity in the peer-review process, all author information (name, position, institutional affiliation, and contact information) should appear in the cover letter only and should be excluded from the blinded manuscript. All self-referential sources cited should not identify the author(s). Please label such self-referential sources as "Author", remove titles, and place at the beginning of the reference list. This applies to both the primary author and all other co-authors. Similarly, names of institutions affiliated with the author(s) and research presented in the manuscript should not be included.

Submissions should conform to the style and publication guidelines established in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (5th edition). Manuscripts submitted for articles should be 15-25 double-spaced pages, not including references, figures, or tables. The font should be in 12-point Times New Roman and the margins should be one-inch all around. Include with the manuscript an abstract of 75-100 words. Submissions that do not conform to the above guidelines will be returned for resolution before entering the review process.

In addition to full-length manuscripts, CSWE accepts submission for the Notes section. Notes include field notes, research notes, and teaching notes. This section features brief reports of promising yet "untested" experimental teaching strategies or curriculum innovations with the hope that readers will be challenged to implement new ideas and evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies, thereby generating new knowledge. Manuscripts must still reflect originality, conceptual and empirical soundness, and be well argued. Manuscripts submitted to the Notes section should not exceed 10 pages and should be written in the same clear, readable, and scholarly style as full-length manuscripts. Please submit manuscripts for the Notes section using the same procedures as above.

The Council on Social Work Education regards submission of a manuscript to the *Journal of Social Work Education* as a commitment to publish herein; simultaneous submission elsewhere is unacceptable. All papers are reviewed by two or three consulting editors. Every effort will be made to notify authors of publication decisions within 3 months of our receipt of a manuscript.

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