



Broad Perspectives in Continuing Social Work Education

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From the Editors: Broad Perspectives in Continuing Social Work Education

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Human Services in the 21st Century

In the 20th Century there were three broad phases of social work that generated these educational concerns. The first phase at the start of the century reflected both the settlement home and the friendly visitor giving rise to two fundamental approaches to social work: community organizational and casework. The Great Depression created social work broadly concerned with temporary employment, food and housing relief and aid to children and the aged. The great economic expansion that occurred after World War II gave rise to varied settings and methods for social work including specializations in child welfare, medical social work, mental health social work, concerns with specific populations such as ethnic groups, poverty, Appalachia, health categories, work in international settings and so forth. This broad diversity of practice methods and practice areas is reflected in the varied contributions for this issue.

Looking Forward for 2009

The first Issue of the year will be reflective of this elaboration of social work as it evolved into the 21st Century. It will be followed by two issues linked with concerns around an international border, the southern border of the United States with Mexico. Katherine Selber of Texas State University serves as the Special Issue Editor. The first issue will examine the history, economy and human services organization and probe the relative weaknesses in certain areas that seem to create conditions that threaten the dissolution of civic order in many areas of Mexico. One article looks at specific issues in California. The second issue will examine more specific impact in cities in Las Cruces, New Mexico; El Paso, Texas; Austin, Texas; Brownsville, Texas and central Missouri. Topics will include child welfare, migrants, illegal drugs and criminal gangs.

Volume 12 Number 1

This edition leads with an article by Larry M. Gant and Julia Paley that describes the inclusion of content from Latin America and Africa into a

course intended to support critical analyses and local action. Nalini Negi working in an human services organizational context examines gender, race and job satisfaction. Professor Negi finds that minority women as compared to minority men have significantly lower levels of job satisfaction and notes the implication with women being typically in the majority in human service organizations. The author does not suggest interventions but urges recognition that gender and race are important predictors in job satisfaction. Evaluation of efforts is an important part of classroom instruction, continuing education and the provision of services. Helen Crohn and Ronnie Berger report some serendipitous findings. Three unexpected findings are: (1) participants valued collegial contact and the opportunity to discuss their work most highly; (2) participants valued gaining cutting edge knowledge less highly; and (3) participants of color perceived that the training programs helped them feel more valued by the agency; boosted their morale; and contributed to their retention at the agency significantly more so than the white study participants. Mary Tijerina looks at the emerging science and health practices coming from genetic knowledge and how that information can be bet used for providers working with children and families. Deborah Smith looks at burnout and job satisfaction. Alexa Smith-Osborne works with a new generation of war veterans and describes the high level of post traumatic stress disorder and the demands and opportunities for social work.

This set of articles reflects the concept of organizational assessment and how social workers can use tools to improve both the quality of organizational life for employees and simultaneously make organizations more successful and creative.

References

Austin, Texas and Columbia, Missouri
March 28, 2009