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From the Editor

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From the Editor

International Social Work Continuing Education Challenges

This Fall 2013 edition is reflective of the eclectic content of today's social work and the various systems across the glove that provide services. Nations like Canada, the United States, much of Europe, Japan, and South Korea have had several decades to develop carefully planned and focused systems to provide human services. Some are nationalized systems planned from the central government and delivered in closely supervised programs to local neighborhoods, families, and individuals. In other cases there are a variety of service systems reflecting traditions of local governments, religious organizations, and private charities. Carter and Wilson in "Reflecting on the Need for Social Workers to Consider Various Models of Disability when Working with Parents of Children with Autism" and Moodie-Dyer and Collins in "Social Work Engagement in Early Childhood Education and Care Advocacy and Policy" display the variety of systems involved in providing services. Arias in "Mental Health Clinicians' Reports of Their Cultural Intelligence" and Dombo and Bass in "Caring for Your Clients While Caring for Your Baby: Responsible and Ethical Planning for Parental Leave" are reflective of the fact that the individual social worker is often the most complex dimension of the service delivery effort and must be carefully considered in change efforts with clients. Crohn and Williams in "The Efficacy Of Two In-Service Training Programs: From The Perspective Of Program Directors And Supervisors" examine the effectiveness of training in terms of satisfaction reports from participants and note that training itself, apart from the training content, can serve to provide benefit to participants by permitting social interaction beyond work assignments. Choe, Kelly, and Kyonne provide a broad cultural focus beyond individual clients and social workers to the impact of the development of a nation's social welfare system on personal wellbeing across a nation in "The Quality of Life in Ideal-Typical Welfare Regimes: The Case of the Republic of Korea." This research suggests that the change of a traditional culture with a strong emphasis on being family-centered to one shaped by industrialization and individualism may create powerful, unintended consequences of anomie and higher suicide rates. The authors call for moving away from a democratic, individualistic, capitalistic system to one that idealizes values of social ties and socialized cooperation. But they do not detail what this more "idealized" system would be.

If one examines broad themes in the world today, one must conclude that many factors that give rise to the complex variety of social welfare programs to address local, regional, and national needs and the transformation of traditional society are either shrinking or have disappeared entirely. Industrialization in North America, Europe, Japan, and Korea has transformed societies from small, largely self-sufficient families and communities into urban centers with highly individualized populations. But these populations are now experiencing high levels of chronic un- and under-employment. Globalization has shrunken manufacturing in much of the West and in many cases caused the end of many manufacturing activities. The United States, as an example, created much of radio and television, but today manufactures few if any receivers or electronic components. The story of the loss of manufacturing extends from electronics to autos, steel, household consumer goods, and clothing. Family formations are lagging in the United States and Europe and Germany like Japan is now moving into both an aging society and one that is shrinking.

Demographers estimate, as an example, that in 50 years the German population will decrease by 19 percent. Levels of employment, satisfaction with life, and population growth are significantly influenced by cultural factors such as individual identity, family roles, neighborhood characteristics, and employment settings. Starting with Eng-

land and then rapidly followed by Germany, France, most of Europe, the United States, and Japan, formerly rural societies became more urban and individualized during the 19th and 20th centuries. These same societies are now undergoing de-industrialization, higher unemployment, and some are now a rate of population decline.

The loss of manufacturing means a loss of wealth with reduced funding to provide for social welfare needs. This is intensified with population stagnation and now population decreases. To some extent the slowing of family formation is accompanied by an increase of two and in some cases of three generations in the same household. These two emerging trends of *de-industrialization* and the *slowing of population growth or absolute reduction* may be the great challenges facing societies in this century.

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