



### Editor's Introduction

<b>Journal:</b>	Professional Development: The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education
<b>Article Title:</b>	<i>Editor's Introduction</i>
<b>Author(s):</b>	<i>Seymour J. Rosenthal</i>
<b>Volume and Issue Number:</b>	<i>Vol. 3 No. 3</i>
<b>Manuscript ID:</b>	<i>33003</i>
<b>Page Number:</b>	<i>3</i>
<b>Year:</b>	<i>2000</i>

Professional Development: The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education is a refereed journal concerned with publishing scholarly and relevant articles on continuing education, professional development, and training in the field of social welfare. The aims of the journal are to advance the science of professional development and continuing social work education, to foster understanding among educators, practitioners, and researchers, and to promote discussion that represents a broad spectrum of interests in the field. The opinions expressed in this journal are solely those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the policy positions of The University of Texas at Austin's School of Social Work or its Center for Social Work Research.

Professional Development: The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education is published three times a year (Spring, Summer, and Winter) by the Center for Social Work Research at 1 University Station, D3500 Austin, TX 78712. Journal subscriptions are \$110. Our website at [www.profdevjournal.org](http://www.profdevjournal.org) contains additional information regarding submission of publications and subscriptions.

Copyright © by The University of Texas at Austin's School of Social Work's Center for Social Work Research. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

ISSN: 1097-4911

URL: [www.profdevjournal.org](http://www.profdevjournal.org)

Email: [www.profdevjournal.org/contact](mailto:www.profdevjournal.org/contact)

## Editor's Introduction

Seymour J. Rosenthal, MSSW

The recently published analysis of the 2000 Census excitedly reported that a dramatic change has occurred in the status of minority groups in the United States. Within the short span of a decade, Hispanic Americans have apparently doubled their population size to become the second largest ethnic group in America, supplanting the African-American population by a slim margin. Part of this impressive increase is tied to cultural factors, though the larger increase is due to the migration, both formal and informal, from neighboring countries where standards of living and levels of social and economic equality tend to drive immigrants northward. This migration will have a significant impact upon social policies and programs in the near future, while elsewhere in the world, social and political shifts are a daily occurrence, and their force will soon touch the shores of all nations.

Stimulated by these dramatic global shifts, and ignited by *Professional Development's* standing commitment to international concerns, the editor has commissioned Beatrice Traub-Werner's article, "Continuing Education Across Boundaries," which serves to establish a foundation upon which future dialogues concerning the international exchange of social work practice will be constructed. The underlying thrust of her article seeks to bolster the support of the wider global practice community, utilizing *Professional Development* as an international forum to advance ethical service delivery based upon best practice models and increased global-cultural sensitivity. Technological advancements and increased geographic mobility have corresponded with the growing immediacy of societal impacts, creating a widening training gap for continuing social work education to fill. Due to this pressing immediacy, continuing education initiatives must be informed by the various emerging perspectives of practice communities around the world, fostering a global, cross-cultural exchange and knowledge base. *Professional Development* will serve as a global forum to advance a shared,

cross-cultural dialogue to assist these increasingly overlapping continuing education endeavors.

In this issue of the journal, Ronald E. Hall's article, "The 'Warmth' Profession," addresses the "devalued" nature of social work practice in America, seeking to dispel the myopic myth of the tender yet obtuse practitioner. Hall contends that social work has evolved to the level of professional status and employs the practice's ethical orientation and autonomous technology as validation of this fact. "Using Focus Groups to Design an Interagency Training Program for Child Welfare Workers" speaks to the need for continuing education to emphasize interagency collaboration to ultimately achieve a greater, holistic approach to service delivery. The authors utilize a focus group model to streamline their interagency training program, ensuring the development of cross-discipline relevance and competency. While local needs inherently determine training content, the focus group model proposed herein can be applied to the vast array of global service communities attempting to infuse its practitioners with a multidisciplinary practice perspective.

Michael L. Hall and Robert H. Keefe's article expands upon the findings of an earlier piece published in *Professional Development*, Volume 1, Number 3, concerning "The Managed Behavioral Health Care Provider Self-Perceived Competence Scale." Since the majority of private social work practitioners must work with the managed behavioral health care system, Hall and Keefe's adapted scale is presented as an additional tool for continuing education workshops that are in need of a comprehensive self-assessment instrument to increase practitioner confidence in interfacing with managed care providers. Hall and Keefe present a convincing argument for their evaluation tool to be incorporated into continuing education training seminars to measure increases in practitioner self-confidence, so that the effectiveness of service delivery is directly impacted.

---

Seymour J. Rosenthal is former Director of the Center for Social Policy and Community Development, Associate Dean for Research and Community Development, and currently Professor, School of Social Administration, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122.

## **Editor's Introduction (continued)**

---

The final article in this volume, "Distance Education: Teaching Practice Methods Using Interactive Television," addresses the technological impacts of the twenty-first century upon traditional methods of social work education. Christine Hagan Kleinpeter and Marilyn K. Potts's article reports on a comparison study between traditional in-class MSW

learners and long-distance MSW learners, wherein the somewhat controversial findings indicate that there is no significant difference between the academic achievements of the two cohorts. This study is important in that it can enhance the dialogue surrounding "technology and tradition" in both the academic and continuing education communities.