

EDITORIAL

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With the Fall 2012 issue, *Advances in Social Work* is pleased to bring you its *third* issue of the year (Volume 13, No. 3). When the editor (me) informed his staff (also me): “I would like you to prepare, copyedit, and release three issues in 2012,” his staff replied “Are you serious, boss?” Now this small and not very self-aware staff is relieved that the three issues have all been carefully produced, and more than grateful to the co-editors of the two previous special issues: Drs. James Daley and Anthony Hassan for the *Military Social Work* issue (Vol. 13, No. 1), and Drs. Khadija Khaja and Joseph Varga for the *Global Problems: Local Solutions* issue (Vol. 13, No. 2). If you have not yet already done so, I would urge you to visit those issues on our website. I will say, however, that in 2013 we only plan to produce the usual two issues, and intend to keep it that way for the foreseeable future!

I would also like to take this opportunity to express appreciation to our expanding roster of reviewers. With the three issues this year, and a generally increasing number of manuscript submissions, many reviewers have been asked to do multiple reviews, and most have responded in a thorough and timely fashion, only occasionally needing a gentle reminder. The results are apparent in the quality of articles published. Moreover, several authors, even including those whose manuscripts were rejected, have expressed appreciation for both the constructive nature of the reviewers’ feedback and the relatively quick timelines from submission to initial decision.

This Fall 2012 issue contains 9 articles on a range of topics. It begins with Michelle D. Garner’s “Advancing Discussion of Federal Faith-based Social Service Policies through Overview and Application of Established Health Services Research Models.” She perceives a lack in the literature of an appropriate analytic framework for critiquing the merits of federal policies regarding faith-based organizations’ (FBOs) provision of human services, and suggests applying the theoretically-based policy analysis model introduced by Aday and colleagues (2004) to that task. She concludes that their effectiveness, efficiency, and equity policy analysis framework is an appropriate lens through which to consider FBO policies.

The second article, “Re-imagining Citizenship, Re-imagining Social Work: U.S. Immigration Policies and Social Work Practice in the Era of AZ SB1070,” by Hye-Kyung Kang, is also policy-related. “Guided by poststructural and postcolonial theories, this paper uses a critical discourse analysis method (Fairclough, 1992, 1995) to illustrate how subject positions, such as ‘immigrants’ and ‘citizens,’ were produced and transformed through legal and policy discourses over time and illuminates binary oppositions that resulted in promoting citizenship as a system of exclusion” (Kang, 2012, p. 511). Kang’s historical analysis of U.S. immigration laws illuminates how the intersections of race/ethnicity-based restrictions and binary constructions such as native-

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born/foreign, deserving/undeserving, and safe/dangerous have produced an exclusionary and inequitable version of citizenship.

Continuing with the thread of critical analysis, Marcus Herz and Thomas Johansson, from Sweden, provide the next article: “‘Doing’ Social Work: Critical Considerations on Theory and Practice in Social Work.” They argue that the current emphasis on evidence-based practice reflects a form of social engineering that reproduces and strengthens dominant discourses and perspectives. They offer instead the idea of a more deconstructive and reflexive form of practice which they call “doing social work.” As they note: “While race, gender, age, sexuality, and class, for example, are often treated as stable categories, almost as parts of a personality, we suggest that these ‘categories’ are constantly evaluated, deconstructed, and put into motion. Doing social work would then be a demanding social practice, with critical and ongoing discussions about changes at the physical, social, and cultural levels as an important tool and practice” (Herz & Johansson, 2012, p. 535).

The next three articles contain sophisticated quantitative analyses to address measurement, theoretical, and intervention goals. Elizabeth A. Segal, M. Alex Wagaman, and Karen E. Gerdes present the next installment in an impressive program of research attempting to develop measures that adequately capture what is meant by the concept of empathy. In “Developing the Social Empathy Index: An Exploratory Factor Analysis,” their results help “to refine the conceptualization of social empathy as a construct with three components: 1) interpersonal empathy (as measured by the EAI); 2) contextual understanding of systemic barriers; and 3) macro self-other awareness and perspective-taking” (Segal, Wagaman, & Gerdes, 2012, p. 554).

Next, Jacky T. Thomas also explores empathy, using regression analyses to address the question posed in the title of the article “Does Personal Distress Mediate the Effect of Mindfulness on Professional Quality of Life?” She begins with the notion that upon observing another person who is suffering, some people exhibit an urge to help (presumably an indicator of empathy) while others experience an aversive reaction characterized by anxiety, withdrawal, or avoidance (personal distress). In addition, the literature suggests that mindfulness is associated with better professional quality of life indicators (lower levels of burnout and compassion fatigue, and higher levels of compassion satisfaction). Using a sample of 171 LCSWs, Thomas found some support for a potential mediating effect of personal distress on the relationship between mindfulness and the professional quality of life measures.

Mediation effects were also observed by Ann MacEachron and Nora Gustavsson in the article “Peer Support, Self-efficacy, and Combat-related Trauma Symptoms among Returning OIF/OEF Veterans.” Using a sample of 216 Veterans returning from the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan who attended weekend retreats sponsored by Vets4Vets, their study analyzed pre- and post- measures of perceived peer-support, self-efficacy, and PTSD symptoms. In addition to finding that increased peer support and self-efficacy were associated with reduced PTSD symptoms, they found support for both situation-specific and general theoretical models of self-efficacy serving to mediate the relationship between peer support and PTSD symptoms.

In “Perceptions of Administrative and Supervisory Support in Public Child Welfare,” Tonya M. Westbrook and Josie Crolley-Simic present the results from a portion of a survey of 1033 employees of a public child welfare agency. They compared the perceptions of administrative and supervisory support reported by child welfare employees with and without social work degree backgrounds. The results indicated that child welfare employees with social work degrees perceived less support from administrators and supervisors than did employees without social work degrees.

The final two articles focus on issues related to social work education. In “You Make Them Do What?": A National Survey on Field Seminar Assignments,” Bruce Dalton reports on the extent to which MSW programs use field seminars, how often such seminars meet, whether or not online components are used, and the extent to which required foundation and concentration year field assignments are seen as appropriate for inclusion in field seminars. Results show considerable variations in whether and how field seminars are used, leading to Dalton recommending that field seminars be required components of field education.

Similarly, Kristen Faye Bean and Taylor E. Krcek report results from a survey of the top-25 schools of social work regarding the extent to which disability content was included in their curricula in this issue’s concluding article, “The Integration of Disability Content into Social Work Education: An Examination of Infused and Dedicated Models.” Bean and Krcek conducted a content analysis of 1620 course titles and descriptions from these schools’ curricula. They found that 80% of the schools included disability content in course titles or descriptions. However, of the 1620 course titles and descriptions analyzed, only 7% included disability-related terms. Other findings of note included: “Twenty percent of the courses with disability content used the dedicated model, while the remaining courses infused disability content into courses with other main topics. Only one course description mentioned covering the ADA. Developmental and childhood disabilities were reported the most often in the course titles and descriptions” (Bean & Krcek, 2012, p. 643).

Thus ends the issue, and another year. For next year, we are eagerly anticipating the Spring 2013 special issue of *Advances in Social Work* focusing on *The Impact of Socio-Economic, Cultural, Political, and International Factors on Latinos/Latinas in the United States*, edited by Dr. Irene Queiro-Tajalli. The submission deadline for that issue has passed; we received nearly 30 manuscripts for review. Stay tuned for an announcement and call for papers next summer for a 2014 special issue on a topic yet to be determined. Of course, we will produce a “regular” issue with a range of topics in the Fall of 2013. So, there is still ample time to write and submit manuscripts for that issue, and I encourage you to do so!

Meanwhile, enjoy the current issue, tell your colleagues about *Advances in Social Work*, and urge them to register to submit articles and to join our cadre of reviewers.

Happy Holidays!

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