

Summer 2024 Editorial: Critical and Innovative Views of the Impact of Violence, Clinical and Community Practice, and Social Work Education

Carol Hostetter
Valerie D. Decker

In the Summer 2024 issue of *Advances in Social Work*, we continue our examination of violence and social work's response in the three initial papers. The next 13 articles focus on clinical and community practice, through both empirical work and conceptual pieces. We wrap up this issue with a guide to conducting evidence synthesis reviews, which can help improve our understanding of the literature in whatever field we dive into.

Consequences of Violence

Our previous issue addressed gun violence with several compelling articles. We open this issue with a powerful examination of the lives of 13 men through *Salaam and Bruhn's* mixed-methods study. Beginning their lives with ACEs scores above 8, then having over 12 arrests each, the men describe their trauma and make suggestions for lowering violence in their communities.

Who else is affected by violence, and what can be done to help them? *Morris and Martinez* show us the work being done by women whose loved ones have been murdered. The Women Survivors of Homicide Movement in Boston, MA, provides a case study of community-based advocacy and the gains that can be made to support survivors of violence.

Hill and Soprych address ways to help survivors of violence through a community practice called the *Tree of Life*. This group storytelling intervention is used at Chicago Survivors, an organization dedicated to aiding survivors of gun violence through narrative healing practices. Social workers are called on to join in the initiative and provide both practice and research skills.

Responses to Violence and Injustice

Myers addresses concerns similar to the opening article about challenges facing African American men. Systemic racism and the failures of the social work profession have created long-standing distrust for clinical social work, among many African American men. Myers presents improvements that can be made in assessment, diagnosis, and clinician engagement through the therapeutic dyad.

African American women can also be better served by social workers, according to *Alford*, who directs clinicians to acknowledge and fight against the Strong Black Woman stereotype. African American women could instead be supported through a therapeutic framework that synthesizes Black Feminist Thought, Intersectionality, and Social Constructivism Theory.

Carol Hostetter, LCSW, PhD., Editor and Professor Emerita, School of Social Work, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.
Valerie D. Decker, MSW, Assistant and Managing Editor, School of Social Work, Indiana University, Indianapolis, IN.

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Bussey, Eliach, and Jemal conducted a case study examination of Community Wise, a clinical intervention based on critical consciousness theory. Using data from Community Wise sessions, the authors show the value of critical dialogue and difficult conversations that connect macro and micro contexts by exploring issues of power, privilege, and oppression.

Turning our attention to clinical supervision, **Norris** identifies how this mentorship of new social workers can be used as a way to develop their skills in social justice-focused practice. This shift away from the medical model and evidence-based practice toward the Critical Relational Model offers promise for clinicians to look beyond the four walls of the interview room and engage in a more socially-just practice.

Rao utilizes the critical social work perspective to examine power imbalances in the US healthcare system, and to advocate for true equality and equity in health care. Decrying the current state of healthcare, characterized as slightly better than inaction, she seeks to bring more attention to the need for a comprehensive answer to the problem of healthcare inequities.

The focus of the qualitative exploratory study by **Marmo, Pardasani, and Vincent** is on senior centers serving the needs of LGBTQ+ citizens. Themes uncovered, such as adaptation, interconnectedness, virtual preference, and lack of service can guide future practice. Pivoting from in-person to online services during the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a variety of experiences.

Responses by Social Work Education

Social work education once again is a fruitful area of study for our authors. Responding to the charge by CSWE to include environmental justice in the curriculum, **Thibeault, Jamie, and Cherry** conducted a case study examining the awareness and concerns that undergraduate and graduate social work students experienced. Students appeared to need more clarity about what environmental conservation and environmental justice are, as well as increased practice opportunities.

Continuing the look at the needs of social work students, **Anderson** provides a thorough examination of the development and usage of the ACEs survey in social work and related professions. Finding that social work students have some of the highest rates for each ACE type and the total ACE score than other students, we see the implications for social work educators. High ACE scores may call for more attention to students' life histories, but they can also be considered a potential benefit for entering a helping profession.

As we examine who we teach, we also must look at who our students serve. **McCarthy, Mariscal, Wahler, and Johnson** studied how prepared MSW students were to practice in the field of substance misuse. Their quantitative survey contributes to our understanding of the relationship of students' wellness strategies to their practice readiness. Pro-active stress management had the most impact on several measures of student readiness to address substance misuse.

Shifting our focus from who and what we teach, to how we teach, **Orwat, Dentato, and Herweh** explain an evidenced-based interprofessional education (IPE) experience that can be used by other programs to meet their IPE needs. The emphasis on clinical skills for client substance use with diverse populations may be of particular interest to social work educators.

Another article about social work pedagogy examines the effectiveness of Team-Based Learning (TBL). **Minnick, Weathersby, and Hobson** surveyed 166 social work students to learn how they felt about being taught with TBL, and how well they learned course concepts with this method. Results indicate that TBL was a successful teaching strategy on both aspects.

Chiarelli-Helminiak, Elias-Lambert, Lane, and Papanikolaou studied conceptualizations of leadership, through open-ended survey questions of 50 full- and part-time faculty and staff. The major themes were conceptualization of leadership, support for leadership, and barriers to leadership, with a call for more training and fewer barriers to leadership in higher education.

What are Evidence Synthesis Reviews, and How Do We Conduct Them?

Readers of academic journals such as *Advances in Social Work* encounter several types of literature reviews, with names such as systematic reviews, scoping reviews, meta-analyses, evidence gap maps, and qualitative interpretive meta-syntheses. Such reviews can be very helpful for educators, practitioners, and researchers seeking to deepen their understanding of their topic of interest. The differences among the various types, and the process for conducting them, may be confusing to readers. **Marsalis** provides useful step-by-step instructions for conducting high-quality evidence synthesis reviews.