

Winter 2021
Volume 28, Number 1



Jaycie Gerding, BSW, at the Minnesota State Capitol, St. Paul, MN, on June 3, 2020, at Protest against Racial Injustice after the death of George Floyd. Jaycie is a 2020 BSW graduate from University of Wisconsin River Falls.

FEATURES

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Notes: Update from the Home and Work Environment
- Why Do I Have To Take an Exam To Get a License?
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- Create a Great Social Work Field Education Experience
- Disenfranchised Trauma
- Your Social Work Career Coach: Acknowledge and Embrace the Uncertainty

...and more!

Social Work Role Model:
Devon Lewis-Buchanan



The A-to-Z Self-Care Handbook for Social Workers and Other Helping Professionals

Erlene Grise-Owens, Justin "Jay" Miller, and Mindy Eaves, Co-Editors

Foreword by Linda May Grobman, MSW, ACSW, LSW

Make a Commitment to Self-Care— For Yourself, For Your Agency

Self-care is an imperative for the ethical practice of social work and other helping professions. Using an A-to-Z framework, the editors and contributors outline strategies to help you build a self-care plan with specific goals and ways to reach them realistically. Questions for reflection and additional resource lists help you to dig deeper in your self-care journey. Just as the ABCs are essential building blocks for a young child's learning, you can use the ABCs in *The A-to-Z Self-Care Handbook for Social Workers and Other Helping Professionals* to build your way to a happy, healthy, ethical life as a helping professional. Great for social work courses at all levels, in-agency training, and individual use.

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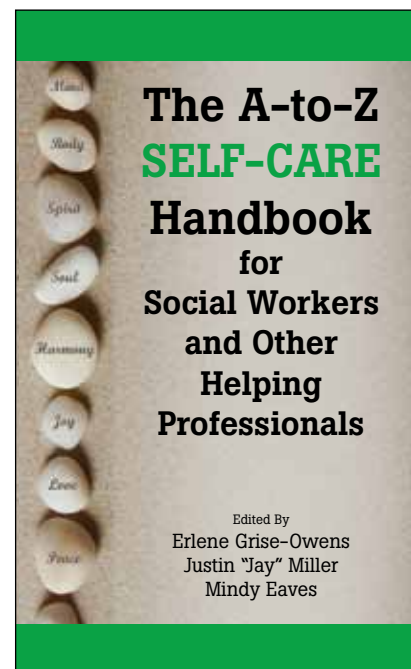
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Visit socialworker.com/selfcare



The A-to-Z Self-Care Handbook for Social Workers and Other Helping Professionals...offers a broad range of concrete suggestions for improving individual self-care that should provide guidance and support to fit a broad range of practitioner needs. The book also includes material in several chapters that notes the important role organizations must take in stress and burnout reduction and support of self-care.

SUE STEINER, PhD, MSW, Professor
School of Social Work at
California State University, Chico
Co-author, *Self-Care in Social Work: A Guide for Practitioners, Supervisors, and Administrators*

...a caring and useful resource for helping professionals concerned about burnout, stress, staff turnover, and wellness.... By focusing on insights and reflections and providing resources and strategies, *The A-to-Z Self-Care Handbook* is a practical guide and an empowering book.

DR. BARBARA W. SHANK, PhD, MSW
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As the leader of a large nonprofit organization, the health and well-being of my colleagues is always top of mind for me. *The A-to-Z Self-Care Handbook for Social Workers and Other Helping Professionals* is just what an organization like ours needed to promote self-care in a way that makes sense for all of us!

JENNIFER HANCOCK, LCSW,
President & CEO
Volunteers of America—Mid-States

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Publisher's Thoughts

Dear Reader,

Welcome to 2021 and to our Winter issue, Volume 28, Number 1, of *The New Social Worker*.

At the end of 2020, we released our Top 10 "and more" for the past year. It is clear from this list that COVID-19 continues to be foremost in social workers' minds. Working for racial justice and equity is a crucial issue that is not new but that has been amplified by the pandemic and recent events, including the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. Please read our "Top 10" at <https://www.socialworker.com/top102020>.



The publisher/editor

After a year of loss and uncertainty, we begin the new year with hope. We know that our hopes will not magically be realized on the first day of the new year. In the first two weeks of 2021, we have continued to see turmoil in the U.S. We also see reasons for hope. What's one thing that gives *me* hope? Social workers—like Jaycie Gerding (on our front cover) and Devon Lewis-Buchanan (this issue's role model).

With this issue, we are looking forward, too, looking at issues that may affect your career in the future. We start with Allan Barsky's ethics column on medical use of marijuana (MuM). This is something that may come up in your practice. What is your role (page 4)? If you have ever thought of having a social work student in your agency, now is a good time to think about how you would create a great field experience (page 8). If you're graduating this Spring, the time to start your job search is now! You may need to adapt your job search during this time (page 10). Following up on an earlier article on disenfranchised grief, we look at disenfranchised trauma (page 14). Podcasts are an accessible tool for social work education. Two social work podcasters provide tips (page 18). Working toward your social work license? You may wonder why you need to take an exam. Isn't the degree enough (page 22)? Did you ever meet someone who started as a colleague and became a mentor and friend? If not, consider seeking one out (page 26). Wondering how to balance living and working in the same space during the pandemic? You are not alone (page 28).

NASW's theme for Social Work Month is "Social Workers Are Essential." See page 16 for our Social Work Month call for submissions, due February 12!

We continue to publish articles on our website between issues of the magazine. See page 25 for recent titles. Be sure to follow us on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/newsocialworker>) to receive the latest updates.

Enjoy this issue, and until next time, happy reading! Stay safe, take care!

Linda M. Grobman

Write for The New Social Worker

We are looking for articles from social work practitioners, students, and educators. Some areas of particular interest are: social work ethics; student field placement; practice specialties; social work careers/job search; technology; "what every new social worker needs to know;" and news of unusual, creative, or nontraditional social work.

Feature articles run 1,250-1,500 words in length. News articles are typically 100-150 words. Our style is conversational, practical, and educational. Write as if you are having a conversation with students or colleagues. What do you want them to know about the topic?

We also want photos of social workers and social work students "in action."

Send submissions to lindagrobman@socialworker.com. See http://www.socialworker.com/Guidelines_for_Writers/ for additional information.



Winter 2021 Vol. 28, Number 1

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Devon Lewis-Buchanan

by Barbara Trainin Blank

Devon Lewis-Buchanan respected his mother's chosen field of social work, especially since she raised six children as a single parent. His proudest moment, Lewis-Buchanan recalls, was when he watched his mother walk across the stage at her Master of Social Work graduation.

Yet, when one day he observed her typing a 20-page paper for her MSW at Barry University, Lewis-Buchanan said to himself, "I'd never do that."

But, as they say, "the best-laid plans," when his dreams as a professional football player fell through, Lewis-Buchanan followed his mother's footsteps in nonprofit work and eventually received an MSW, at the same school of social work.

The MSW graduate was born in the East Flatbush section of Brooklyn, NY. The family moved to West Palm Beach, FL, after his parents split. Lewis-Buchanan didn't have much of a relationship with his father growing up, but his hyphenated last name reflects those of both of his parents.

The transition from New York to Florida was "tough," he says. What helped was football. "My

mother bought me a football when I was 4. I didn't know anything about the game. The ball was black and gold, and I carried it everywhere," he recalls.

He was hurt during the 2012 NFL rookie camp when two players fell on his leg. The loss was, for a long time, "devastating." On the other hand, his mother always seemed to know where he would end up. In high school, he interned with her for community service, working with children and families. "My mom knew my work would involve people. Hers was with young moms doing play therapy and trauma work."

The tryout for the NFL involved a total of 80 guys competing for eight spots. He didn't make it, but did enjoy "living a childhood dream in those three days." Still, it took five years of not having football to cope with not being able to play and the post-football identity.

At first, Lewis-Buchanan considered a teaching career. Instead, he became a case manager at a runaway shelter/group home, where he taught independent living, transition, life skills, and enrolling in college to youth aging out of foster care. "My clients were my own age and maybe they did more for me than I did for them," he says.

In 2017, Lewis-Buchanan founded Inspire Youth, a nonprofit organization that brought behavioral health education to marginalized communities in Riviera Beach. Lewis-Buchanan wanted to provide non-traditional mental health education to his community. Now he would like to turn the program virtual and expand it.

Lewis-Buchanan's interest in mental health issues was stoked by his son Samson, now 8, who five years ago was diagnosed with autism, and by his uncle and best friend, who died at 31 after years of living with schizophrenia. "His family



Devon Lewis Buchanan

treated him with stigma and didn't understand mental illness," Lewis-Buchanan says.

Despite his involvement in the world of community service, he kept hearing a voice telling him that he should return to school. Lewis-Buchanan decided to apply to the MSW program at Barry University and obtained a degree in clinical social work.

Right before he started Inspire Youth, his last job was at Community Action Team, centered around keeping kids out of residential, psychiatric, and group home facilities.

Last year, Lewis-Buchanan was offered a job that combined his love of football with community service. He was appointed Alumni Relations Director of the Raiders, an in-house position in which he helps current and former players with post-career transition and adjustment to the stress that follows life after playing with the NFL.

He was one of the last two candidates to apply for the alumni relations job, and it was "very emotional" for him to receive the job offer. "I felt like Draft day came eight years later," Devon says. The move to Vegas was a huge adjustment, as

Lewis-Buchanan—continued on page 27

Ethics Alive!

When Medical Marijuana Is Both “Legal” and “Prohibited”

by Allan Barsky, PhD, JD, MSW



In various parts of the United States, medical use of marijuana (MuM) is both legal and prohibited. According to the National Conference of State Legislators, 36 states have approved comprehensive programs for MuM and 13 states have approved low-THC/high-CBD products for medical use. Fifteen states have legalized marijuana for recreational use by adults (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2020). States differ in terms of which conditions qualify for MuM. They also differ in terms of how MuM is regulated, monitored, and dispensed.

Federally, marijuana remains a banned substance under the Controlled Substances Act. In 2009, President Barack Obama issued a memo to federal prosecutors encouraging them not to prosecute people who distribute marijuana for medical purposes; still, it is legally possible to be prosecuted for possessing, producing, or trafficking marijuana, whether for medical or non-medical purposes (National Conference of State Legislatures, 2019).

To further complicate the situation, some employers, businesses, and social agencies prohibit their employees from using marijuana. Although some organizations offer exceptions permitting MuM, others do not. For social workers, the question arises, “From an ethics perspective, how should social workers help clients navigate systems when MuM may be legalized by the state, but prohibited by federal laws, the laws of other states and countries, and possibly prohibited by the organizations where they work or go to school?”

The short answer is “informed consent” (NASW [2018] *Code of Ethics*, s.1.03). As with any form of assistance, social workers should ensure that clients are familiar with the nature of the intervention, its potential benefits, and its potential risks. These risks include physical, psychological, legal, and social risks (including problems that may arise within their families and workplaces). Clients have a right to self-determination, including the right to determine whether MuM is appropriate for them. Although social workers do not prescribe MuM (or

any other medications), they may be involved in helping clients make decisions about whether to use MuM and how to maximize the benefits of MuM and reduce the risks of MuM.

Consider, for instance, a clinical social worker who diagnoses a client with a mental illness that may be treated with MuM. The worker may refer the client to a psychiatrist or other physician who can prescribe MuM. In this role, social workers should learn about which physicians act ethically in assessing clients and prescribing MuM, as well as which physicians may be over-prescribing MuM without due consideration of the patient’s actual medical needs and the potential risks of MuM.

Facilitating Informed Consent in a Caring, Objective Manner

Social workers should be caring, nonjudgmental, and objective in their MuM discussions with clients. Social workers may have strong convictions about MuM. For instance, some social workers may feel strongly that psychoactive drugs are risky and should be avoided. These beliefs may stem from personal or family experiences, or from professional experience with clients with substance use disorders. These social workers may provide clients with information about the risks of marijuana. They should not impose their personal beliefs on clients, but rather, engage them in honest discussions about the risks and benefits of marijuana use, focusing on each client’s wishes, situation, needs, strengths, and vulnerabilities (NASW *Code of Ethics*, s. 1.01). Conversely, some social workers may feel strongly that marijuana is beneficial and low-risk. They may support both recreational and medical use of marijuana.

Again, these social workers should avoid imposing their personal beliefs and respect the client's choices about whether to use MuM.

Before discussing MuM with clients, social workers should inform themselves about the different uses of marijuana (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2019). Although there is significant support for the effectiveness of MuM in helping people with some conditions (e.g., nausea, pain, anxiety), the research is less clear in relation to treating other conditions (e.g., epilepsy, inflammation, and substance use disorders). Social workers should consult current research on various methods of using MuM (e.g., edibles, smoking, vaping). Although vaping was originally thought to be a relatively low-risk method of ingesting marijuana, for instance, recent deaths among people who vape have caused considerable concern about the risks of vaping.

When referring clients to speak with physicians about MuM, social workers may offer clients a list of questions to discuss:

1. What does current research say about MuM for treating patients with my condition? How can I obtain access to these studies?
2. What benefits should I experience from MuM? How will I know if MuM is helping me?
3. What risks or possible complications of MuM should I consider? How can I minimize these risks?
4. What types of situations or activities may affect my ability to use or benefit from MuM (e.g., pregnancy, prior mental health or addiction issues, operating machinery for work, driving, crossing state or international boundaries, taking care of young children, noncitizens seeking visas or citizenship)?
5. What is the cost for MuM, and how will it be paid? (Note: health insurance companies do not cover MuM, because it is prohibited federally as a Schedule 1 drug. Also, dispensaries typically require cash payment rather than check or credit card.)

Clients may not know, for instance, that they may be violating federal and state laws if they travel across state or international boundaries with their MuM. They may also not know that their ability to drive or engage in other activities may be impaired when they are using MuM.

Mezzo and Macro Responses

In addition to helping clients on an individual level, social workers should consider how they can help on mezzo and macro levels. Given the historical associations of marijuana with crime and deviant behavior, people who use MuM may face stigma within their families, workplaces, communities, and other social circles. If a spouse or employer, for instance, disapproves of the client's MuM, the social worker could offer information, advocacy, and support on behalf of the client.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act, for instance, employers may not discriminate against employees on the basis of medical or mental health conditions. If an employer disciplines or fires an employee for a positive drug test for MuM, this might constitute a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act or particular state statutes. The laws and court rulings on this issue have varied from state to state. Social workers could provide clients with basic information about the relevant laws. They could also connect clients with attorneys for legal advice, including options for responding to the employer's actions.

Some people may have misconceptions about MuM. For instance, they might view marijuana as a gateway drug; that is, a person who uses MuM may be destined to use and become addicted to more potent and more dangerous drugs. Social workers may respond to these misconceptions by noting that most people who use marijuana do not become addicted to other licit or illicit psychoactive drugs. Although some people who use marijuana do go on to use other psychoactive substances, there are

various reasons for this progression of use. The individual may be more vulnerable to drug use because of psychological or social conditions (stress, trauma, poverty, isolation). One of the advantages of MuM is that the client receives monitoring and counseling, which can address underlying psychological or social issues.

Self-Awareness

According to the principle of respect for the dignity and worth of all people, social workers know that they should not impose their beliefs on others. Being respectful of client beliefs and wishes requires social workers to have a high level of awareness of their own beliefs, feelings, and convictions. To help raise awareness about your own attitudes and beliefs toward MuM, consider the following questions:

1. What do I think about the benefits, appropriateness, and risks of MuM?
2. How did I form my beliefs and convictions about MuM (e.g., through personal or family experience, professional experiences with clients, formal education, reviewing the research)?
3. On a scale of 1 to 5, how difficult would it be for me to respect a client's beliefs or decisions about MuM if these beliefs or decisions conflicted with my own?
4. Which types of assistance could I access to ensure that I am being respectful of my client's beliefs and wishes (e.g., personal reflection, supervision, counseling)?
5. When engaging a client in a discussion about MuM, what can I do to ensure that I am following the ethical principles of respect, care, honesty, and informed consent?

You may consider similar questions with regard to other medication-assisted treatments, for instance, methadone or buprenorphine for opiate addiction, antidepressants for depression, LSD for PTSD, chemotherapy for cancer, or PrEP for

pre-exposure prevention to HIV. Consider why we may have different beliefs and stigma about different forms of medication. Consider, also, how our clients may be affected by the ways our laws regulate or prohibit substances that could be used to treat various bio-psycho-social conditions.

Feel free to share your thoughts in the comments section on *The New Social Worker* website. Please continue the dialogue.

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*The Case for Financial
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book reviews

and more!

Greetings From Phi Alpha

Greetings from the Phi Alpha home office. Phi Alpha is up and running to serve our membership!

Phi Alpha 2020 awards will be announced on our website at <https://phialpha.org/>. The 2021 award link will be available on January 1st.

Phi Alpha is offering advisor and student Zoom meetings to connect, learn, and create new opportunities.

If you are not on our email list, please let me know at PhiAlphaInfo@etsu.edu

Take good care and stay well!



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Grise-Owens
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In the Field

Create a Great Social Work Field Education Experience

by Cassie E. Brown, LCSW

Have you ever asked yourself, “Am I ready to take on a student?” Or maybe your supervisor asked you this question. If your answer is “yes,” ask yourself another rather serious question: “Am I prepared to help the next generation of social workers become flexible and adaptable learners throughout their careers?” After all, a social worker can work with children, substance misuse, adults with serious mental illness, trauma, research, or professional education, all of which I have done. Or we can move into the military, nonprofit leadership, advocacy, or politics, none of which I have tried.

need to learn. We learn to adapt. We grow.

I took over facilitating the field education program at my hospital two years ago. We had gone without students for several years, so we examined what we could do better. I kept in mind the challenges of field education and the memories of the demanding and the tedious parts I had experienced myself. I looked to different sources to create a beneficial experience for students. We created experiences to give a deep understanding of our institution while preparing students to be adaptable, lifelong learning social workers.

not give a 30-second “elevator pitch” about the learning experience, you need to think more deeply. Then talk to your department to determine who has the talent and energy for a student. Your best social worker may be stretched far too thin to provide a good experience. The newest social worker in your department may be a natural teacher. Consider personalities, case loads, areas of interest, and specialties. Assigning a student to an already burning out social worker is not a solution for saving an employee; it’s a recipe for resentment and resignation.

Connect with local colleges of social work.

When I began organizing our new vision for students, I asked to meet with the director of field education for our nearest university. When we met, I was able to ask her pertinent questions to better understand what students needed and wanted. I also articulated what our agency could offer. Her suggestion to accept students in their first year of their MSW program surprised me. I asked her questions about what students at that level may be able to do for our agency, and we opened up to those students. It benefited both of us, and I have been pleased with the students we have had since that conversation.

Create a flyer on what your practicum site offers and requires.

This is your chance to pull your planning together and make certain your vision is a cohesive one. Once you have this flyer, share it with the field education office of the schools of social work in your area. They may have a specific way to distribute it to their students. If you have already connected



I chose social work over other helping professions partially because I desired the ability to change careers flexibly. Of course, the reality is that no one program can prepare us for all of these careers. This flexibility demands lifelong learning. When we change practice settings, we discover areas of growth and new bodies of knowledge we never knew we needed. Through field education, we develop our capacity to build on what we know by identifying what we

We have had two small cohorts of students in the past two years (four and five students). We have gotten some feedback from the college, our field supervisors, and our students. I would like to share some of our most successful strategies.

Plan your practicum.

Think about what students can do at your agency. What do you have to offer a future professional? If you can-

directly with their field education office, this step will be easy!

Get real in your interviews.

Whenever I have talked to other social workers about my job, no matter my setting at the time, someone inevitably says, “I could never work there!” Prepare your students in the interview for what your agency has to offer them, as well as potential triggers, challenges, or obstacles. We all have unique strengths. I plan 20-30 minutes of the interview to be nothing but an introduction to the hospital. I give hospital history, introduce our population, talk about our services and service delivery model, and explain the structure and roles of our social work department. I also include information about our background check and drug testing policies. I want to give enough information to allow them to make a very informed decision. We have had students decline after the interview. That’s great! The students we have gotten have fit wonderfully, and several specifically thanked me for the in-depth interview!

Plan didactics.

This is the centerpiece of our practicum program. We offer weekly hour-long educational presentations for the students throughout the semester. I collaborated with our hospital’s American Psychological Association-accredited placement program to create this piece of our practicum. The director of our psychology department offered insights and ideas that enriched the learning experience and made us a more desirable placement. Didactics pay off by creating an ordered way to impart information about the agency, our mission, and our client population. These take some planning up front, but every agency has experts. One didactic we led was specific to the signs and symptoms of serious mental illness—important information to have at a psychiatric hospital! Didactics even became opportunities for new

social workers at our agency to learn these topics more formally. If your agency has the means, offer these as continuing education for your social work staff or even other professionals in your agency.

Integrate the field competencies.

We aligned the topics of our didactics with the nine competency areas for field education established by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). CSWE requires that students have opportunities to grow in specific areas, such as ethics, research, and interventions (CSWE, 2020). Aligning our didactics with those topics made student evaluations much easier. We added didactics about policy and advocacy that affect our clients, how to apply research, and social work ethics to help round out the experience.

Involve other professionals.

We planned didactics led by nursing, psychology, and even our chaplain. If your agency has a multidisciplinary team, take advantage of that. If you are primarily staffed by social workers, bring in community partners to enrich the students’ experiences. Have a community partner or another professional lead a didactic relevant to your client population. Do you work regularly with psychiatrists? Occupational therapists? Special education teachers? Behavior analysts? Invite them to give an hour-long presentation for your students and staff on their area of practice. Bring your lunch and join your students. Chances are, you will learn something, too.

Give assignments.

Okay, so students reading this article may get upset at this one, but hear me out. These became crucial during the unexpected coronavirus pandemic, but I had already been working on assignments for each cohort. Don’t give busy work when you have that rare and precious “slow day.” Have a run-

ning list of enriching assignments for your students to complete and share with you. Make a list of those articles you would like to read if you had the time and that group whose curriculum that—let’s face it—really needs some new class outlines and modules. Students are at your agency to learn what it means to be a social worker. These are real tasks. Students can provide summaries of research articles, create lesson plans, update you on trainings or classes they attend, and highlight books they are reading for class. But they likely will not initiate any of that. So open that door!

Finally, if you have students who work exceptionally well in your agency, invite them to provide their personal contact information to your director to keep on file for future job openings. Do not pressure them, and inform them they may opt to decline. Students may lose their college email addresses upon graduation, so get their permanent contact information. After the additional thought and work you have put into the practicum, you have developed a pool of future graduates who love your agency and understand your work and culture. They are a valuable resource!

Working with students can be challenging. With a little additional planning, you can create a smoother process for your agency and a better experience for your students. If you take the time to plan the practicum experience, and you integrate some or all of these suggestions, you will know you are doing your part to prepare lifelong learners in our profession.

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Cassie E. Brown, LCSW, has worked with adults with severe mental illness and substance use disorders and has presented continuing education courses on gender diversity, motivational interviewing, substance abuse, treatment resistance, stigma of mental illness, and preventing burnout.

Your Social Work Career Coach

Acknowledge and Embrace the Uncertainty of a Job Search in Unpredictable Times

by Jennifer Luna, MSSW

A job search can be challenging even in the best of times. Now that many of us have settled into the atmosphere of a pandemic environment, we must search for new ways to overcome everyday challenges, such as meetings, appointments, and online learning. Job search for social



workers in 2021 will be equally challenging. However, there are some implications of the pandemic, both economically and systemically, that may provide us new opportunities.

The CARES Act provides resources or grant options for nonprofits, including \$425M for substance abuse and mental health services such as community behavioral health clinics to provide mental health care services and grants to address mental health, substance abuse, and homelessness. There will also be \$1B in community service block grants to local community-based organizations to provide a wide range of social services and emergency assistance.

Although the number of all jobs had dropped significantly since the beginning of the pandemic, after the CARES Act, there has been a significant increase in social work jobs, rising each month. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment in social assistance added 21,000 jobs over the month of October 2020. With this information, and regular updates from the National Coalition for Careers in Social Work Education, we are not seeing a decline in jobs available to social workers, but rather an increase. Social workers must be

ready and available to apply for these positions, as the need will grow over time.

We have also seen growth in the number of macro positions available, many related to social justice unrest. These include roles in advocacy; policy; community organizing; and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Some examples of job titles that you should be on the lookout for are:

- Contact Tracer
- Behavioral Health Care Advocate
- Patient Advocate Representative
- Telehealth Social Worker Remote
- Virtual Telehealth Social Worker
- Telehealth Licensed Clinical Social Worker
- Telemedicine Licensed Social Worker/Therapist
- Policy and Advocacy Specialist
- Equity Officer
- Diversity and Inclusion Strategist
- Health and Inclusion Specialist
- Director of Cultural Competence
- Multicultural Specialist

When and how should I begin my search?

Start your job search now! Beginning a job search is a process, not an

end result. A job search is an opportunity to freshen up your brand, chart your path, and gather tools to build your successful career. Your job search requires basic tools and preparation, including a good résumé, a framework for your cover letter, a computer, and a cell phone. The following are other elements that should be considered during this time.

Create your work space and eliminate distractions. Now that many of us are working from home and interviews are being offered remotely, we must create a good space to conduct our work. Find a quiet, well-lit space in which you can control interruptions. For example, if you have a dog that barks when seeing people or cars, close the blinds. If your room is dark or dull, add lighting or a piece of artwork. You can also use virtual backgrounds, but make sure they are professional and you practice using them with others before you interview.

Make sure that your internet connection is stable and that the audio and camera are all working on your computer. With this in mind, it is important to start this process early so you can troubleshoot any issues. Close unnecessary tabs in your web browser to save memory. Sign in with a friend prior to your meeting, so you can assess that everything is working well. Again, practice cannot be overstated. Before your interview, tidy up your space! Your workspace should be clear of distractions, including sound, pets, and people. If you have to share your screen, make sure that your desktop is clear of distractions, as well.

Don't underestimate the importance of dress. We can get caught up in the habit of dressing from the "top" down when working remotely. However, it

is important to prepare for an online interview just as you would for an in-person one, including dress. Prepare your clothing ahead of time and dress appropriately from top to bottom, to make sure you are prepared for anything (such as having to stand up and grab your power cord during the interview). Avoid wearing bright colors or busy patterns, which might distract the interviewer.

Have a pen and notepad in hand, as well as a copy of your résumé and cover letter that you submitted prior to the interview. Stay engaged in the interview by nodding, listening, and smiling. Don't use the camera/screen as a mirror for arranging your hair or applying make-up. Finally, use hand gestures while you are talking. A nice smile and a wave hello or good-bye goes a long way in building rapport in an online interview.

What if I have a unique situation?

Many people have compared this time to the recession of 2008, when thousands of people lost their jobs, yet many employers were understanding of the situation. If you have been laid off, or had to leave your job because of family responsibilities, make an effort to fill the gap between jobs. You can fill these gaps through volunteer work, learning a new skill or certification, or taking a leadership role in an advocacy or community service effort. These roles will give you skills, professional contacts, and a context by which to explain the gap that you have on your résumé.

People who continue to network and grow after they have been laid off are more upbeat and enthusiastic about their current situation and continue to be desirable candidates for jobs. Although it is not necessary to disclose your absence in the employment sector in your résumé or cover letter, it probably will be addressed in the interview. You may address this up front by answering the "Tell us a little bit about yourself" question. In this statement, you can mention that your company or organization was hit by the financial

repercussions of the pandemic. Be positive in your discussion. Mention things that you have learned and experience that you have gained. Remember, resiliency and flexibility are crucial personal characteristics to have during this time.

Do prepare for online interviews and ask questions to assure that the position will be a good job fit for you. Always remember that the interview is a two-way process, and now more than ever it is important to ask questions. Here are a few of the questions you might consider asking of employers:

- How has this organization been affected by the pandemic?
- What equipment will be provided to work from home?
- How will my professional development be supported?
- How do you build community with staff who are working from home so they don't feel isolated?
- What procedures are in place for employees who come into contact with someone with COVID?

Acknowledge that this search is one that no one could completely prepare for. In addition to the pandemic, political unrest, and the rapidly changing job market, you must assess your personal needs. As you begin preparing for any job search, set parameters for your new job. These may change during the time of COVID. For example, if you are immune compromised or living with someone who is, you might need to work from home. Make a list of factors that you need to consider, such as:

- Will I need to work remotely? If so, for approximately how long?
- What is the technology that I will need if I work remotely?
- How is my future place of employment set up for safety precautions? Will they provide me and my clients with the proper PPE?
- How does the employer maintain communication with staff on a regular basis?

Flexibility Is Key

As you have probably observed, there are delays in nearly everything we are doing in everyday life. Appointments take longer. We must get our temperature taken and have a series of questions asked before we enter buildings. The mail and delivery services have been delayed, and many of the people who help us in government agencies have been furloughed or are working remotely. Please keep these delays in mind as you embark on your search.

The first delay you might run into is in relation to social work licensing. In some states, the licensing testing centers have had to close because of COVID. Although most have reopened, there are safety guidelines in place, and fewer people can test at the same time. These types of delays will definitely overlap in your job search, so try to be patient and not take things personally.

Remember, one of the most important components of the job search in this moment in time is transparency. Let the interviewer know where you are in the licensing process. One of the positive things we have seen regarding the social work job market is that employers really do show patience and grace when hiring. Many are social workers themselves, and they understand the challenges of this uncertain time. They want GOOD social workers!

Remember, you got this!

Jennifer Luna, MSSW, writes about social work career development. Jennifer is a social worker, career coach, keynote speaker, and trainer. She serves as Director of the DiNitto Center for Career Services at the University of Texas at Austin, Steve Hicks School of Social Work. Jennifer utilizes a collaborative yet strategic coaching approach to assist social workers in identifying their strongest skills, areas of knowledge, key strengths, and leadership characteristics.



National Poetry Contest for Social Workers

Accepting poem submissions through January 31, 2021

The University of Iowa School of Social Work conducts an annual, nationwide poetry contest to highlight the creative talent of social workers and to draw attention to social work as a profession.

“Hosting the national poetry contest here in Iowa City is a natural extension of what the School of Social Work has been doing for decades,” says Professor Mercedes Bern-Klug, Director of the UI School of Social Work and one of the contest’s founders. “We have a 29-year track record of offering a summer creative writing seminar for social workers—and the University of Iowa is known as ‘The Writing University.’ In Iowa City—recognized internationally as a UNESCO City of Literature—writing is the air we breathe.”

The contest is open to students, faculty, and alumni from United States CSWE-accredited social work programs. Full contest rules, details, and submission forms are available at: <https://clas.uiowa.edu/socialwork/resources/creative-writing-social-workers>

As in previous years, the top three poems will receive cash prizes and will be published in *The New Social Worker* magazine.

The University of Iowa’s 30th Annual Creative Writing Seminar for Social Workers and Helping Professionals will take place online July 16-19, 2021. Visit <https://bit.ly/SWwriting2021> for details and registration.



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Disenfranchised Trauma: The Impact on Indirect Victims

by Lisa Zoll, LCSW, and Leslie Davila, MS



When my mother found out, she reported it to the police and took my sister through the beginning of the legal and medical processes. I, on the other hand, went to one of my favorite places in the world, my aunt's house, to visit with my cousins. I played all day without a care in the world. That evening, my mother, who I knew was distraught about something, told me that my father had left us. My response was to reassure her that he would come back. I do remember being sad because I was "daddy's girl." Up to that point, we had never been apart. During the next few days, we relocated temporarily out of state.

Much has been and continues to be written about the effects of sexual abuse on the primary victim. Less, however, has been written on the effects on the family of sexual abuse survivors and those close to the primary victim. Siblings tend to be overlooked in terms of the impact of abuse on the overall family structure, system, and dynamics. Siblings of abuse victims have been referred to as "indirect victims," "invisible victims," and/or "secondary victims." A secondary victim is someone who experiences the feelings and impact of trauma without directly experiencing the trauma itself (Schmidt, 2015).

There is a trauma impact from learning of trauma that has happened to a close family member. When this trauma impact is unacknowledged, it can become disenfranchised. The term *disenfranchised grief* is defined as grief that either is not, or cannot be, openly acknowledged, socially validated, or publicly supported. Disenfranchised grief is usually the

result of social stigma attached to a loss (Corr, 1998; Doka, 2002). Trauma may also go unacknowledged and/or unvalidated because the person who is traumatized (e.g., sexual assault, domestic violence) may fear that others will not understand, or that others may minimize their traumatic experience (Hall & Hall, 2017; Rife, 2009).

This article will review a case study, which will include a description of the impact on indirect victims to the traumatic event, as well as the experienced process of integrating the effects of the secondary trauma.

Case Study

I was eight years old when I found out my father had been sexually abusing my sister. It was later that I began to learn the details, which included the number of years and what sexual abuse meant. My frame of reference at that time was a TV movie in which a coach was abusing a 5-year-old member of his team. At that time, I did not fully understand that it involved more than inappropriate touching.

Two months later, we moved back to our home so I could return to school. During this time, my father was arrested, released on bail, and was awaiting trial. The false narrative that I created in my 8-year-old mind was that he was off somewhere thinking that he had made a mistake to leave our family and would return soon.

With the encouragement of a therapist, my mother told me what my father had done. I remember staring at the ground when my mom told me why my father was no longer in our lives. I understood that my father had touched my sister in a sexual way and that it was wrong. According to my mother, my reaction was to call her a liar and to tell her that my father would never do that. There was an understanding that outside of the counselor's office, I was not supposed to talk about what happened. I began to know that our family was "different" and damaged.

I struggled with reconciling the father that I knew with the perpetrator that my sister knew. There was guilt, because he hurt her, and he didn't hurt me. I was confused about how I should feel about

him and how I should feel about my sister. I was sad that I had lost him. I didn't feel special anymore. I became the "hidden child" in the household. I physically and emotionally lost my dad. I couldn't talk about him; I couldn't mourn him. It was like he didn't exist. But he was still very much at the center of our world, because we had to deal with what he did. His actions dictated everything in our lives at that time.

Clinical Implications

We propose that, in addition to caring for victims of primary abuse, practitioners must also work with indirect victims of disenfranchised trauma and their families. A therapeutic framework would include advocacy, assistance, acknowledgment, and validation. Application of these concepts may help foster a trusting and safe environment in the care of all who have been impacted by the experience of trauma.

Advocacy and Assistance

Advocates should be aware that, beyond the care of the primary victim of trauma, other affected family members will likely need supportive measures that should include, but not be limited to, attention to their individual needs, opportunities for therapy, support and intervention, and information. It is often the case that siblings tend to serve as support systems for one another. Such sibling support is likely to continue and heighten after a trauma has been revealed.

In general, siblings are kept out of the circle of immediate care and support. The needs of siblings, who are exposed to the direct trauma of their family member, tend to be overlooked. Supportive assistance may involve helping the secondary victims to weave their experience of trauma into a cohesive story that encompasses their lived experience. The therapeutic goal is to establish a trusting, healing relationship in which transparency, honesty, and openness between the secondary victim and caring adults are encouraged. "The therapeutic relationship is the soil that

enables the techniques to take root" (Lazarus, 2016). Such encouragement will contribute to the positive development of a strong therapeutic alliance and strengthened family bonds, which both serve as important protective factors for the child (Firestone, 2016).

In recent years, research has shifted from identifying what puts children at risk for abuse and neglect to understanding what keeps them safe. Protective factors are conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities, and the larger society that mitigate risk and promote the healthy development and well-being of children, youth, and families (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2020). These protective factors can help children incorporate an understanding of the abuse into a trauma narrative. One of the most important factors in developing resiliency is the protective factor of having at least one stable adult (ideally a parent) in the child's life. Connecting to other adults is also important, whether they are relatives, teachers, family friends, counselors, or social workers.

Acknowledgment and Validation

There are a wide variety of possible responses to be aware of when working with indirect victims of sexual abuse. Care for siblings who are secondary or indirect victims of sexual abuse should include attention to emotional reactions that may include anger, anxiety, fear, guilt, shame, and confusion. Those who have experienced secondary trauma may also struggle with disbelief, concern for the perpetrator, feelings of responsibility, and minimization of the abusive incidents.

Additionally, if there is an emotional attachment to a close relative who is identified as the sibling's abuser, such as a father/mother, brother/sister, or grandfather/grandmother, the child dealing with secondary trauma may be confused about whether to support the victim or the perpetrator ("Immediate effects on siblings," n.d.).

As is the case with disenfranchised grief, trauma that is the result of sexual abuse may go unacknowledged, unvalidated, and/or unsupported. Both direct victims and secondary victims of trauma may experience numerous changes and losses. Clinicians and advocates should encourage a child's acknowledgment of any changes in the family's structure and dynamics. Likewise, the family should be encouraged to acknowledge and validate each family member's needs resulting from the trauma.

Disclosure to children of information about a trauma should be trauma-informed, age appropriate, and should occur in a time frame that is as close to the discovery as possible. Early disclosure provides concrete information to the child, which serves to facilitate the child's ability to build a narrative that is based on facts rather than on an imagined storyline in which the child seeks to "fill in the blanks." The initiation of a healing process that is based on a false narrative may further confuse and delay a healing process.

Conclusion

It is not just the direct victim of the abuse who experiences the trauma. We need to acknowledge the others who are impacted to minimize the effects of disenfranchised trauma. This is done through acknowledgment, validation, and support of all the affected parties. When secondary trauma is acknowledged and validated, a child's experience can be supported, and the process of healing can begin. It is important to provide traumatized children with the space and time to process their feelings in safe, supported, and age-appropriate ways without making them feel the need to worry about other family members.

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Leslie Davila, MS, has a master's degree in criminal justice from Saint Joseph's University and a Bachelor of Arts in sociology and criminal justice from La Salle University. Appointed Director of the Office for Child and Youth Protection (OCYP) of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia in 2011, she oversees the Archdiocesan commitment to protect children and young people and its efforts toward healing and reconciliation for those who were sexually abused as minors.

The New Social Worker's Social Work Month Project 2021 Call for Submissions

The submission deadline is **February 12, 2021**.

March is Social Work Month! The National Association of Social Workers (NASW) has chosen as its 2021 Social Work Month theme: *Social Workers Are Essential*. In keeping with this theme, we are seeking the following:

- *From social work students*: essays (500-650 words) on the theme The Most Essential Thing I Have Learned in Social Work School So Far.
- *From degreed social work professionals* (including practitioners and educators): essays (500 to 650 words) on the theme The Most Essential Thing I Want Social Workers To Know.



Be creative! Think of that “aha” moment when a light bulb went off in your head and changed your thinking about social work.

Submission Requirements

All submissions must include the following to be considered:

- Your name and social work credentials, as they are to appear with your submission
- School you attend or graduated from
- Expected graduation date, if you are a student
- Your contact information (email required)
- Title of the submission (make it creative original, and brief)
- A short bio (no more than 50 words)
- The following statement: “If accepted, I _____ (fill in your full name), grant The New Social Worker/White Hat Communications all rights to this submission. I understand it may be published on its websites, on its social media channels, and/or in its publications”
- Each person may submit ONE entry.

File Formats

- Essay submissions: submit in a Word file.
- Photo submissions: submit original photo in a JPG file, if you wish to include a photo to accompany your essay submission.

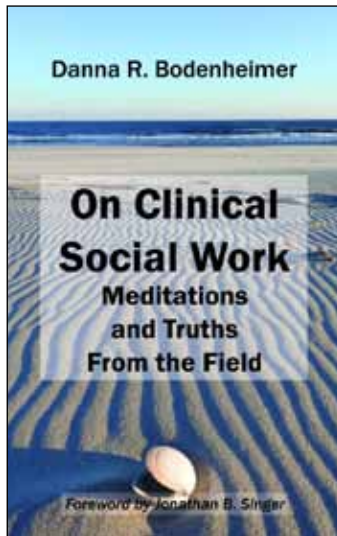
How do I send my entry?

Email your submission and/or questions to **lindagrobman@socialworker.com**. Attach your file(s) to an email, and please include “Social Work Month Submission” and the title of your submission in the email subject line. If you would like to include a photo of yourself, or other photos to illustrate your essay, attach it/them to your email as JPG files.

Please do not send your submissions more than once. Before you send your submission, make sure it is the best it can be! Proofread, make corrections, and edit. It can be helpful to have someone look at your work and give you feedback.

Submissions that do not follow the above instructions will not be considered. **Entries must be received by February 12, 2021.**

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On Clinical Social Work Meditations and Truths From the Field

by Dr. Danna R. Bodenheimer, LCSW

Foreword by Jonathan B. Singer, PhD, LCSW

Through words and images, Dr. Danna Bodenheimer brings to life a wide range of realities for clinical social workers. Consider her a master teacher, supportive mentor, or caring friend--this volume of "meditations and truths" is her gift to you and to the social work profession she loves.

In her own gentle voice and conversational style, *On Clinical Social Work* is a collection of Bodenheimer's writings and photographs. She encourages you to think critically about everything from assessment, diagnosis, intervention, and clinical supervision to the social worker's internal world, anxieties, and self-care. She expounds on attachment and trauma in detail. She comments on current events and how they relate to the clinician's work. Through it all, she weaves themes of social justice and an awareness of macro-level influences on clients' lives.

Images from Dr. Bodenheimer's daily self-care practice of photography offer a glimpse into her deep exploration into the details of both clients' and clinical social workers' everyday lives through the keen focus of her camera's lens.

Building on her first book, *Real World Clinical Social Work: Find Your Voice and Find Your Way*, this volume shows you that you are not alone. All clinicians are seeking the "truth" about their work, and that is okay.

Includes **53 essays and 23 beautiful, full-color photographs**. This breathtaking, full-color hardcover edition is Dr. Danna Bodenheimer's "love letter" to clinical social work. It makes a beautiful gift for a clinical social worker or a student who aspires to be a clinician.

From the Foreword

Danna pays attention to life's details with a psychotherapist's insight and writes about them with the **passion of a slam poet**. She speaks to the soul of social work and inspires us to think about more than just social work.

Jonathan B. Singer, PhD, LCSW
Associate Professor, Loyola University Chicago
Founder and host, Social Work Podcast

I read Danna's writing with excitement because **I know that, in her reflections, I will find some of my own truths**. I find myself thinking that we are so different from each other. After all, we are of different ages, races, sexual orientations, religions, family structures. Yet, I consistently find connection to her thoughts and feelings. Her writing is honest, passionate, and filled with wisdom.

Valerie Dorsey Allen, DSW, LSW
Director, African-American Resource Center, University Of Pennsylvania

Dr. Bodenheimer writes not only about "how to" for social workers but also talks about the role of the social workers themselves. This **emphasis on self reflection** is often missing from treatment manuals.

Sean Erreger, LCSW
Stuck on Social Work Blog

Dr. Bodenheimer's book offers **pearls of wisdom** that all clinical social workers, ranging from novices to seasoned practitioners, can truly benefit from. I plan to include this book as recommended reading on the Advanced Social Work Practice [and] Leadership and Management course syllabi that I teach.

Jack B. Lewis, DSW, LCSW
Assistant Professor, Stockton University MSW Program

Dr. Danna Bodenheimer, LCSW, lives and works in Philadelphia, PA. She received both her bachelor's and master's degrees from Smith College, in addition to attending a post-baccalaureate program in psychology at Columbia University. Danna went on to receive her doctorate in social work from the University of Pennsylvania. Danna divides her time between consulting, supervising, writing, and practicing. After nearly 10 years in private practice, Danna opened the Walnut Psychotherapy Center, an outpatient, trauma-informed mental health practice that serves the LGBTQ population. The practice makes use of psychodynamic therapy and strives to make long-term mental health treatment affordable and available to as many people in Philadelphia as possible. Danna has taught at the University of Pennsylvania, Temple University, Rutgers University, and currently at Bryn Mawr's Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research. She is the mother of two fascinating and inquisitive young boys. She is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) in Pennsylvania.



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The Power of Podcasting in Social Work Education

by Shimon Cohen, MSW, LCSW, and Jonathan B. Singer, PhD, LCSW



In 2019, there were more than 30 podcasts created by and for social workers (Singer, 2019). These podcasts are an incredibly rich and valuable resource for educators and students. They offer a different way to engage students in learning, are readily available on numerous platforms, provide an educational listening experience while commuting, and are often free (Cohen, 2019; Singer, 2019). In this article, we will offer tips for educators on how to utilize podcasts as teaching and assessment tools, as well as tips for students about using podcasts as an educational tool. As podcasters ourselves, we offer tips for anyone who is interested in creating a podcast. We have chosen case examples that highlight issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion as a way of pointing out the transformative nature of podcasting. We hope that, by the end of this article, you are excited about assigning podcasts to your students or creating one yourself.

Promoting Lived Experiences and Storytelling

One of the unique contributions of podcasting is the emphasis on storytelling and lived experience (Berzin

et al., 2015). Critical race theorists note that this emphasis challenges rigid Eurocentric structures of what constitutes knowledge and evidence (Franco, 2020; Kishimoto, 2018; Sue, 2015; Yosso, 2005). Teaching with podcasts by and/or featuring voices of those who have been historically marginalized, such as those who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC), can provide a counter-narrative to the dominant white narrative, amplifying voices of those who are often excluded, especially within academia. Assigning these types of podcasts can inspire discussions about why BIPOC voices have been minimized, excluded, or erased from education and practice. Having students create their own digital stories honors traditions that value oral traditions over written narratives, and it gives them the opportunity to practice telling their stories.

Accessibility

Podcasting is accessible to anyone with a recording device and an internet connection. It challenges structural barriers of publishing journal articles and textbooks, and podcasts are often more accessible due to not

being behind paywalls/subscriptions (Singer, 2019).

Podcasts often come with transcripts, which provide accessibility and allow podcast users to move at their own pace. If there isn't a transcript, contact the podcast host or contact your school's Disability Services office to see if they will provide a transcript. If yes, share a copy with the podcast host so they can post it and make it more accessible.

Easily Integrate With Learning Management Systems (LMS)

Most LMS make it easy to embed podcasts, so students can access them within course modules. You can provide links, but you can also embed the audio player of the podcast. This is usually done by going to the podcast's website, clicking "share" on the podcast episode, and copying and pasting the html code within your LMS. Talk with your LMS support people for assistance.

Tips for Educators

For educators, podcasts can be used for class discussions, writing assignments, assessments, and whatever ways you can imagine.

Class Discussions

You can assign a podcast episode (or episodes) to stimulate class discussion. This can also be used for discussion boards for online classes. We recommend creating a few questions that you want students to think about as they access the episode. *Think-pair-share* (Bain, 2004) is a great activity for class discussions. Students individually think (and could write down some bullet points or a full answer) about the questions, pair up with a classmate (or small groups with multiple classmates), and

share their answers with each other. As the educator, you can join in on each group to see how the conversation is going. You can then bring the entire class back together for a larger discussion based on the small group discussions. This activity works really well to get all students engaged, and especially students who will talk in small groups but not in the larger class. This also works well using breakout rooms on Zoom.

Case Example: Discussion on Meritocracy

Meritocratic ideology is the belief that, in a meritocracy, people are equally rewarded for hard work. In social work, we work with millions of people every day who work hard, yet are systematically blocked from those rewards based on discrimination on the basis of their skin color, gender identity, sexual orientation, legal status, and other identities. This idea came up in an MSW seminar Shimon was teaching. He was facilitating a discussion about the ways that systems presented challenges for individuals and families when a student said, “Well...where there’s a will, there’s a way.” If meritocratic ideology were a bumper sticker, that would be it.

The traditional approach to addressing this comment in social work education would be to facilitate a class discussion about the myth of meritocracy. Instead, Shimon pulled out a podcast on the spot to bring the issue to life. Shimon used the 1619 Project podcast, episodes Part I and Part II, about how systematic racism blocked Black farmers from getting essential bank loans. Although the Black farmers ultimately won a civil rights lawsuit, what they had lost was never replaced.

The 1619 Project podcast episodes are scholarly, provide affective learning, and challenge assumptions about meritocracy without providing answers to typical social work situations. The episodes are accessible through audio content and transcripts, the latter being a great resource for students who want to refer to specific phrases or segments during a discus-

sion. Using think-pair-share or any other technique, the podcast episodes served as a foundation for students to address the following questions:

- Does hard work always equal success?
- What are some reasons it might not?
- How does this example apply to work?
- How does the belief in meritocracy impact social policy?
- How will you as a social worker know if you are using language and practices with clients that reinforce the myth of meritocracy?

Shimon was able to assign the podcast on the fly, because he knew the podcast existed and knew how to use them in transformative conversations.

Writing Assignments

Another standard tool in the social work educator’s tool box is the written assignment. Writing assignments train students on technical writing, evaluate critical thinking, and explore the relationship between person and environment. For years, educators have assigned novels, autobiographies, and novel-like non-fiction to provide shared content and inspire students to think about new concepts. Podcast episodes provide all of these in a relatively short amount of time.

Reflective essays: Episodes of the *Doin’ The Work: Frontline Stories of Social Change* podcast focus on issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion by featuring social workers talking about their frontline experience. Since these episodes are a window to what “real world” social work looks like from the people doing the work, they are ideal for BSW students and MSW students with no prior social service experience, as well as those with experience and looking to expand their analysis. Educators could assign these episodes and ask students to reflect on what the work entails, how they understand it differently after hearing the episode,

and what justice issues are highlighted for them.

Position papers: The *Equity Matters* podcast tackles issues of equity and social justice by interviewing people outside of social work. Students can consider the topics addressed in the podcast, such as closing the digital divide, and take a position on how and why it should or should not be a focus of social work. Depending on the class, the position paper could focus more on micro, mezzo, or macro topics.

Research papers: Scholars know that it is a different experience reading a journal article written by someone you know. Podcast consumers often describe podcasts as intimate because of the direct connection between the listener and the guest. Podcast interviews with researchers can make the researcher and the research more real and less sterile. The *Social Work Podcast* and *InSocialWork* have interviewed dozens of researchers. For example, a student might be interested in the topic of suicide and Black Americans. In 2010, Sean Joe was interviewed on the *Social Work Podcast* about this topic. In addition to the traditional lit review, assigning this episode would provide students with an engaging entree to some of the conceptual issues that they would need to cover in any paper looking at suicide among Black Americans.

Case Example: Reflective Paper on White Supremacy in Social Work

Let’s say you want students to think about racism within social work, specifically the term “white supremacy” and what it means within social work. You could assign the *Doin’ The Work* episode “White Supremacy in Social Work—Charla Cannon Yearwood, LSW, and Laura Hoge, LCSW.” You could ask students to write about the following questions: *Before listening to the episode, what do you think and feel when you see the title of the podcast episode? What does white supremacy mean? How does white*

supremacy show up in social work? What are your thoughts and feelings about the title of the episode after listening?

Assessments

You can have students create podcasts as an assignment! Using podcasts as an assessment tool honors storytelling and provides students with an authentic and creative way to demonstrate their learning. This could be an individual or group project, and it can be about anything that meets your learning objectives for the course. We recommend Anchor (<https://anchor.fm/>) because it is free and allows recording, editing, and publishing from an app. Students can even collaborate on creating a podcast as a group project, and Anchor allows for multiple people to record together. The podcasts students create can be easily shared with each other and made public to get their message out to more people. Some students may decide to continue their podcasts. See Hitchcock et al. (2019) for examples of podcast assignments for field, persuasive arguments, mock testimony, and so forth.

Tips for Students

Students are much more likely to know how to find and consume podcasts than instructors. The following tips are about how to get the most out of podcasts in your degree program.

- If your professors don't assign podcast episodes, ask them to. They might be unfamiliar with the technology, using a standard syllabus they can't change, or haven't had the time to find and assign good episodes. Use your advocacy skills to encourage the use of podcasts.
- If you listen to an episode that is inspiring or on-point for one of your classes, share it with your professor and your classmates.
- Listen to assigned podcast episodes before doing the reading.
- Read the transcript (if available) while listening to the episode, and take notes. These will be useful

when you're referencing the episode in class or in a paper.

- Cite podcast episodes in your papers. The *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) 7th edition* acknowledges podcasts as a legitimate source. *The Social Work Podcast* lists the APA citation for every episode.
- Looking for social work-related podcasts? Check out Melanie Sage's (2019) crowdsourced Google Doc with names and URLs for podcasts.
- Write reviews for the podcast episodes you like. The more positive reviews, the more likely it is for others to find and listen to the podcast.
- Have something to say that no one else is saying? Start a podcast! See <https://www.thepodcast-host.com/planning/how-to-start-a-podcast/> for detailed steps.

Conclusion

Podcasts are an invaluable resource for educators and students. Educators can use podcasts to challenge deeply embedded and oppressive structures. Students can use podcasts to learn on the go, amplify their understanding of concepts, and create their own to add a new voice to the conversation.

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Shimon Cohen, MSW, LCSW, is a social work educator, podcaster, and consultant. He is outspoken and passionate about anti-racist and anti-oppressive social work. He views social work practice, including teaching, as a form of activism focused on a commitment to the radical transformation of society, deeply rooted in social justice. He is the founder, host, and producer of the podcast Doin' The Work: Frontline Stories of Social Change.

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(Editor's Note: See the online version of this article at <https://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/practice/power-podcast-ing-social-work-education/> to see tweet examples we were not able to include here.)

Waking Up

by Lisa Baron, PhD, LCSW

I was a skeptic about the platform of telehealth for psychotherapy. I wondered how I could join my clients through cold glass screens. Could I pick up visual cues and body language? Would my clients feel supported? Was true growth in psychotherapy possible?

Fast forward, seven months later. I have been seeing my clients through telehealth since the pandemic of 2020 began. My client was talking about feeling isolated, numb, and wanting to return to "normal." While I understood and supported her desire, I remembered her prior "normal." She had

previously had numerous traumas in her life. Having made great strides in therapy, she had moved away from destructive relationships, dialed down on addictive behaviors, and continued to strengthen her self-esteem along the way. She had recently reported finding peace in her own company for the first time.

When she said she wanted to return to her "old normal," I took a chance, and asked, "Are you sure you want to go back to your life just as it was before?"

We both paused. She then said, "I'm not going back to that place where we started. Now, I feel like I'm waking up." Through our mutual screens, that was a rich, connected moment.

While thinking about this session days later, I thought about the opportunities that the pandemic has presented to me.

I am an extrovert by nature, with a strong introspective side. I am seeing now that the pandemic has been the catalyst for the introverted side of me to grow. I too, am "waking up."

I have a new appreciation for walking in nature and taking photographs. Relationships have taken on a new significance. I make time for the people who are important to me, and they make time for me. Now, I value quiet time, rest, and pause. Recently, we had three days of rain, and I was content and peaceful reading, writing, and just being. This is new for me.

And although I have been a writer all my life, during this time, I am discovering that I can be more creative with my writing skills, which is giving me challenge and joy.

There is no doubt that I will celebrate seeing my loved ones when the world feels safer. However, I plan on bringing my "current normal" into my "new normal." And I will leave some of the "old normal" behind that no longer serves me.

How are you waking up?

Dr. Lisa Baron is an experienced therapist, group facilitator, and writer, based in Carrboro, North Carolina. She writes from an introspective lens. Dr. Baron's family continues to amaze her, as they, too, continue to "wake up."



I Have My Social Work Degree—Why Do I Have To Take an Exam To Get a License?

by Lavina G. Harless, MSW, LCSW



(Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of articles on the social work licensing process. Thank you to the Association of Social Work Boards [ASWB] for collaborating with The New Social Worker on providing this information to our readers.)

I have my social work degree. Why do I have to take an exam to get a license? The question of “why an exam” has existed as long as licensing exams have, but the current coronavirus pandemic has created challenges that make this question more relevant than ever.

Why are we hearing this question more these days? I think access has a lot to do with it. During the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Pearson VUE test centers used by ASWB for administration of the social work licensing examinations across the country were forced to close because of emergency stay-at-home orders. Even when restrictions began to be lifted, the requirements for physical distancing kept test center capacity at well below 50 percent in many jurisdictions. As a result, many social workers have been unable to complete this important step in the licensing application process.

Those delays have led to renewed questioning of why an exam is needed—why isn't an education and supervised experience enough to prove competence? It's a good ques-

tion. This article explains why the regulatory board relies on all three components of exam, education, and experience when deciding to grant a license to practice.

Social Work and Regulation

As a regulated profession, social work in the United States is not as old as some of its health care counterparts, such as nursing (100+ years) and medicine (300+ years). Social work is a relative youngster by comparison. The first social work regulation was enacted in Puerto Rico in 1934; the first state to regulate social work was California, in 1945. Today, all U.S. states and territories regulate social work, meaning that you have to hold a license to practice the profession. In most U.S. jurisdictions, only licensed social workers are qualified or permitted to call themselves social workers.

In terms of a profession's development, we're a relative newcomer. Our growth, however, has been remarkable. In 2018, according to ASWB membership records, more than half a million social workers were licensed in the United States and Canada.

The reason for our rapid rise is a testament to the reach of our profession. Consider the settings where social workers practice—hospitals, state and local government, clinics, correctional facilities, schools, military bases, and private practice, among others. Consider the people social work touches—some of the most vulnerable populations in our communities depend on social work services, including abused and neglected children, individuals with mental illness and substance use disorders, veterans and their families, and survivors of crime and domestic violence. Consider the ways in which social services help communities and how taxpayers depend on the appropriate management of public

and private funds underwriting these programs. Social work is regulated because it affects public health, safety, and welfare on both a societal and highly personal scale.

Why Is Regulation Important?

The primary purpose of regulation is to protect the public. In the United States, protection of public health and safety through state-based regulation is afforded by the 10th Amendment of the Constitution. Authority to regulate professions at the state level is delegated to regulatory boards. These regulatory boards establish standards for safe, competent, and ethical practice and provide recourse to consumers if they are harmed by a licensed professional who fails to meet those standards. Social work regulation establishes scope of practice, identifying what services a licensee may legally perform, and in most states protects the title of social worker. Consumers rely on these standards of scope and title to protect them when they engage a licensed professional.

A secondary purpose of regulation is to validate social work as a profession. A license indicates that the professional has gained the requisite education and experience and demonstrated competence by passing a licensing exam. Employers rely on licensure as proof that the professional is qualified and legally entitled to provide social work services. Insurers such as Medicare, Medicaid, and other third-party payors require providers to be licensed in order to reimburse them for services. The National Association of Social Workers has worked hard to professionalize social work, establishing a code of ethics and advocating for licensure and regulation.

ASWB, NASW, and the Exams

In the late 1970s, before ASWB was founded, NASW called a meeting with a number of state representatives to explore the idea of developing its ACSW exam into a licensing exam for state use (AASSWB, 1999). The state representatives had concerns about the conflict of interest for a professional association to develop and administer a state licensing exam. These concerns propelled the state representatives to begin formation of an independent organization that would have as its primary objective the development and administration of social work licensing exams. Although NASW was not successful in its bid to develop the exams, it has been supportive of ASWB from the beginning and has found other ways to work collaboratively with state regulatory boards.

The independent organization that the state representatives founded in 1979 was called the American Association of State Social Work Boards, or AASSWB. In 1999, when Alberta became the first Canadian province to join, AASSWB delegates voted to adopt the more inclusive name, ASWB, or the Association of Social Work Boards, as it is known today. AASSWB administered the first licensing exams in 1983 to 464 social workers in New York, Virginia, and Oklahoma. Today, more than 50,000 license applicants test annually.

Why Is a Licensing Exam Needed?

A license to practice social work is a contract with the public that services will be provided in a safe, ethical, and competent manner. Regulatory boards issue licenses to applicants after determining that the applicant meets certain eligibility standards.

When issuing a license, the regulatory board generally considers four components: *education*, *moral character*, *an exam that measures entry-level competence*, and—in some cases—*supervised experience*. All components must be evaluated to ensure that the regula-

tory board makes a well-rounded and informed decision about an applicant's fitness to practice. Let's look at these components and the reason that each is needed.

A *social work education* provides aspiring social workers with the broad foundational knowledge of the profession. This education is intended to serve social workers throughout their careers. In the United States, a degree from a social work program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education is generally required.

Moral character, as determined through background checks, fingerprinting, and other board requirements, demonstrates fitness to practice by providing evidence of personal attributes or the absence of red flags that would give a licensing board pause.

The *licensing exam* provides a fair and objective indication that an applicant who passes the exam has the minimum, or entry-level, competence to practice safely and ethically and without harm to the public. Compared to education, which covers the breadth of various subjects, a licensing exam is focused on practice knowledge and skills that social work practitioners say they needed to know the first day on the job.

Experience, when required, points to training completed in the field or under supervision, providing proof of skills being attained in preparation for licensure.

This multiple component competency model provides checks and balances and a certain stability for decision-making. By itself, each element is not sufficient to ensure competence. The successful completion of an education is an important component but reflects only an individual's ability to learn the fundamental knowledge base for the profession. Moral character is not by itself an indicator of competence to practice. Supervised experience can refine practice skills but doesn't necessarily ensure the broad-based knowledge required for working across the broad range of settings available to licensed social workers. Similarly, passing an exam that tests practice-based knowledge demonstrates that the license applicant recognizes competent and safe practice but does not equate to the deep understanding of the profession gained through education. All components are needed to ensure the regulatory board upholds its mandate to protect the public.

How Does ASWB Know What Practitioners Need To Know the First Day on the Job?

What needs to be measured by a licensing exam is determined by a practice analysis. This comprehensive survey solicits information from a diverse group of licensed professionals about what they need to know and the tasks they need to be able to

Tips for exam candidates during COVID-19

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, ASWB anticipates that access to Pearson VUE test centers and test center capacity will be dependent on local requirements. Pearson VUE must follow local government guidance related to COVID-19 restrictions. When Pearson VUE reduces capacity according to local requirements, the number of available seats on the calendar is reduced immediately and remains at that level until the restriction is lifted. When the restriction is lifted, seats are added to the calendar.

Exam candidates are encouraged to log in daily to their accounts to check test center availability. Cancellations are processed in real time, meaning that seats may become available on short notice.

During the pandemic, ASWB will continue to waive the U.S. \$30 change fee for extensions and fees for COVID-related late cancellations to allow candidates to reschedule without penalty.

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perform the first day on the job. The practice analysis is like a snapshot—it captures at a given point in time what licensees are doing and how important those activities are to competent entry-level practice.

Survey responses shape the blueprints for the exams—the content areas in which questions are asked—and the number of questions in the content areas. A separate blueprint is developed for the Bachelors, Masters, Advanced Generalist, and Clinical examinations. (The Associate exam uses the Bachelors exam blueprint.) These blueprints are the basis for the licensing exams until another practice analysis is done.

To ensure that the content of the exams is relevant to current professional practice, ASWB conducts this survey every five to seven years. Participation in the 2017 practice analysis survey was the largest in the history of ASWB practice analyses. More than 23,000 licensed social workers responded from every U.S. state and territory (except Guam and the Northern Mariana Islands) and all

10 Canadian provinces (ASWB, 2017). The next practice analysis will begin in 2022.

The practice analysis, like the exams themselves, is based on the guidelines of the American Psychological Association, the Joint Commission on Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, the American Education Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education.

When It Comes To Proving Competence, a Degree Is Not Enough.

To become licensed, social workers must demonstrate to the regulatory board that they have the knowledge (education), skills (experience), and ability (exam) to practice safely, ethically, and competently. A degree alone is not enough. For the regulatory board to fulfill its public protection mandate, all eligibility components must be combined in the board's decision to grant a license.

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Poetry

Catharsis

by Robbie G. Singh, MSW

Sorrow, pain—pain and sorrow
 Can I hope for a better tomorrow?
 One blow after the next
 My mind is so perplexed
 Itching to breathe, dying to grieve
 Employer's not providing any medical leave
 I feel like I'm stuck in a well, a personal hell
 Feeling cursed as if I'm under a spell
 Unaddressed symptoms are starting to swell
 When will this pain finally begin to quell?
 So many people suffering in silence
 Facing disparities and increased violence
 Splinters, aches, cuts and bruises
 Have to hold on or else everyone loses
 I know deep down I still have a choice
 So I'm going to fight by using my voice
 Light to dark, day to night
 I will continue to do what is right

Robbie G. Singh is an MSW graduate of the University of Southern California. He is actively engaged with the NASW-FL Immigration Justice Taskforce and NASW-USC chapter. Find more of Robbie's work at www.robbiesingh.com.

Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

The New Social Worker is an essential source of information for social workers; thus, I feel the magazine should include more articles on social workers' role in addressing mis/disinformation at all levels of practice. The following paragraphs detail why I believe the inclusion of such information has important implications at the micro and macro levels of social work practice. Once again, I appreciate the value the magazine brings to the profession and look forward to reading future articles published by the magazine.

I believe social workers have an essential role in helping [curb] the impact of mis- and disinformation at all levels of practice. When I refer to mis- and disinformation, I refer to the broader umbrella term that includes "fake news." Fake news is news articles, often accessed through social media, that are intentionally and verifiably false to manipulate people's perceptions of reality. Fake news delegitimizes the voices of experts, the concept of objective data, and citizens' ability to participate in democracy confidently—all of which undermine our societies' ability to engage in rational discourse.

At the macro level, inaccurate or fake information can affect social movements. For example, one only needs to search Black Lives Matter in Snopes to see many fake stories that can alter the social movement's public perceptions. With an estimated seven-in-ten adults accessing Facebook, these kinds of fake stories have a big audience (Gramlick, 2019). Fake news



only serves to harm further the interests of those already disempowered or targets of discrimination. As social advocates, we must know how we can fight against information that works against the disempowered interests and those targeted by discrimination.

When looking at the micro level, misinformation spread through fake news can have detrimental implications for patients. When that information is regarding the measures a patient takes to keep safe, it can pose risks to their health. Social workers are educated to think critically about the information they select for evidence-based practices. Knowing the importance of sharing critical thinking when it comes to evaluating information found on social media can be helpful for social workers.

Sincerely,
Stephen Netzley(he/him)

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Stephen Netzley is a Master of Social Work student at the University of Houston.

Recent Articles of Interest on The New Social Worker Website

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Reflection on *The Queen's Gambit*: Trauma and Loss, Resilience and Recognition, <https://www.socialworker.com/feature-articles/reviews-commentary/queens-gambit-trauma-loss-resilience-recognition/>

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Social Work Leadership: From Colleague to Mentor to Friend

by Becky S. Corbett, MSW, ACSW

This article is dedicated in honor of my mentor and dear friend, Betsy Clark, may her memory forever be a blessing. Whether we were working alongside of each other—Betsy as the visionary for the social work profession and Becky as the individual who facilitated our operations in moving to action—your wisdom, guidance, and humor carried us through.

Three years ago, Betsy and I wrote *Social Work Leadership: 10 Facts on Why You Should Find a Mentor and What to Expect From the Relationship* for publication in *The New Social Worker*. My favorite fact to help social workers and other helping professionals better understand mentors and the mentoring process, and the one that inspired me to write this article, is #8: *There is no set time limit for a mentoring relationship*. In the best possible outcome, the mentoring relationship eventually transitions into a peer relationship. The relationship continues, but it has been restructured and updated, and it becomes one of professional collegiality.

I firmly believe it's all about relationships. Taking the time to create connections allows you to build successful relationships. Intentionally seeking the advice and expertise of a mentor; sustaining your personal, professional, and philanthropic affiliations; and fostering these connections help you grow and develop faster. Living the philosophy "good people connect with good people" allows you to invest in others and enhance your community.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines a mentor as a trusted counselor or guide, and *Dictionary.com* describes a mentor as a wise and trusted counselor or teacher, and an influential senior sponsor or supporter. Finally, *Cambridge Dictionary* states a mentor is a person who gives a younger or less experienced person help and advice over a period

of time, especially at work or school. Each of these definitions describe Betsy Clark.

5 Lessons Learned From My Colleague, Mentor, and Friend

#1: Use your social work credentials.

Betsy always called me a systems social worker. From supporting my efforts in taking the ACSW credentialing exam to encouraging me to help others connect the puzzle pieces to inspiring me to create Productivity®—an interactive personal and professional organizational tool that helps you improve your decision-making and time management skills in a unique, fun, and interactive way—I can still hear her saying, "Be proud of your social work degree, credential, experience, and person-in-environment knowledge. Beck, lead with your strengths-based perspective."

#2: Failure is not an option.

When your mentor holds you accountable, your achievements blossom. Betsy didn't believe in failure. We both admired Wonder Woman, and in fact, Betsy modeled for me to always hold my head up high—per-

sonally and professionally—just like Linda Carter. When we didn't have all of the answers, and even in the face of uncertainty, as long as we were determined to keep working diligently, we would succeed.

#3: Work will exceed the time allotted.

Becky's time management advice: There are 24 hours in a



Mementoes from Betsy Clark to Becky Corbett.

day. You cannot change the number of hours, only how you use them. Betsy's words of wisdom: *Work will exceed the time allotted*.

Betsy was a firm believer in deadlines. Period. No questions asked. No forgiveness granted. We met deadlines. Now, when I ask a client for extra time on a deliverable, I can feel Betsy watching over me, shaking her head and reminding me to establish and adhere to deadlines. Seven years ago, on my last day

as her Chief Operating Officer at NASW, she walked into my office at 7 o'clock p.m. and unplugged my computer—not allowing me to send any more emails. It was time to move on.

#4: Mentors inspire their mentoring partners.

Betsy made a commitment to invest in me. I believe mentors give of themselves because they see something in their mentoring partners that they do not see in themselves. John C. Maxwell writes, “Mentoring is who you are as much as what you do” (Maxwell, 2008, p. 11). I think John was writing about Betsy. From the moment we started working together, Betsy respected me and used her influence to inspire me to be the most effective nonprofit administrator I could be. During her personal and professional travels, she selected the perfect knickknack to inspire me to keep moving forward. To this day, I keep these thoughtful, motivating gifts on my desk.

#5: Hope.

One of Betsy’s last legacies was writing her book, *Choose Hope (always choose hope)*. She taught us, “The power of social work provides numerous narratives of how hope can be a factor at all levels—for personal growth, in the community, and in society.” As she was publishing this book, she simultaneously encouraged me to write my first book. She was instrumental in my becoming an author.

As mentors do, she invested her time in me and my writing process. Betsy helped me establish writing protocols, she coached and supported me through the writing process, and she held me accountable to agreed upon writing milestones. I am forever grateful for her mentorship. *The Bridge to Hope & Healing: 9 principles to guide you in a moment of crisis* was published in 2019 because of Betsy Clark.

Betsy’s mentoring continues. I can hear her voice, and these words

are currently etched in my brain: *Beck, it’s time to write your second book.*

Bets—Thank YOU for believing in ME. My favorite hand-painted card and quote you gave me says, “She didn’t just survive—she became.” In your honor and memory, I will continue to spread hope and build communities of hope and healing. I am forever grateful for your supervision, mentorship, and friendship.

Resources

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Becky S. Corbett, MSW, ACSW, served NASW under Betsy Clark from 2001 to 2013. She is now President and CEO of BSCorbett Consulting and is a speaker, trainer, and executive coach.

Lewis-Buchanan—continued from page 3

the one to Florida had been when he was younger. And it was particularly “surreal” to move across the country during a pandemic, leaving behind family, friends, and his locally-based mental health activism efforts.

Lewis-Buchanan says today’s athletes are more in touch with their own mental and emotional well-being and are more likely to come out to address their mental health. He also considers it to be his job to disabuse the public of certain notions about athletes. For example, he says, “There is a misconception that they all made millions of dollars playing in the NFL. Many worked second jobs during offseason and had second careers.”

Lewis-Buchanan isn’t the only social worker with a position within the NFL. To his mind, the pioneer is Tish Guerin, LCSW, who “opened doors as the first full-time social worker with an NFL team.”

“To all the social work students and recent graduates in the field, I encourage you to promote your unique skill sets and invest in your personal development,” he says. “Gaining opportunities and having success in non-traditional settings as

a social worker in my opinion is having those unique skills that separate you from others in the field.”

Maria Teahan, PhD, ACSW, LCSW, Associate Dean and Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at Barry, wasn’t initially certain that Lewis-Buchanan would meet the criteria to be interviewed at the school. But he came to the school with a paper addressing why he was choosing social work and why this particular school. “He had the passion and desire to make a difference, as well as solid values. Not to mention he had legacy,” Teahan says.

After his knees were blown out, he might have gone into a mode of anger and broken dreams. But he had a skill set he had learned as an athlete. “We could instantly see his spirit and compassion,” Teahan adds.

Devon spoke at his graduation ceremony, and the players love him, she says. “He’s an excellent student and an incredible human being.”

Freelance writer Barbara Trainin Blank lives in the greater Washington, DC, area. She writes regularly for The New Social Worker and other publications.

Social Work Tech Notes

Update From the Home and Work Environment: Are We Built for This?

by *Stephen P. Cummings, MSW, ACSW, LISW*

I am writing this in November 2020. With few exceptions, I have not left my home since March. The last event I attended was an all-faculty retreat. I supplied the bagels and coffee for that event. That was the last "regular" thing I did before the world changed.

My son is enrolled in an online elementary school program for fifth grade. His school lent him a Chromebook laptop, to attend online classes. He attends gym class via Zoom and follows all the exercises. I admire him for this. Until last week, his school district offered the opportunity to move back into a "hybrid" program, where he could attend classes in his school building intermittently and see his friends. Then we saw a dramatic spike upward in the number of positive COVID-19 cases. The local hospitals are at capacity with no end in sight. The school district rescinded the plan for a hybrid option. Now, all K-12 students are online for the remainder of the academic year.

I continue to work from home. I do not anticipate returning to campus, or traveling to a conference, for at least the remainder of the academic year. That seems optimistic.

"Don't be afraid of COVID. Don't let it dominate your life," our outgoing president said. This is terrible advice, the kind of blustery rhetoric that centers responsibility on individuals rather than larger systems. Going about life as usual has led to the crisis we are in now. Denial of the pandemic is simply willful ignorance. Yet the fallacy that we can "defeat" the pandemic by ignoring it persists.

In my last *Social Work Tech Notes* column, I wrote about the use of technology as a remedy for social work students during the pandemic. We are now engaged in a large-scale online



learning experiment. The results so far are mixed.

What about the practice of social work? For those of us across the various areas of employment, the same expectations for technology use are present. Unless your in-person work is deemed essential and you are still going into your work environments, you are probably working from home, using a variety of applications to carry out your daily routine. Synchronous or asynchronous, from Zoom meetings to Microsoft Teams to one-on-one sessions with clients, we are working with technology to cover the basics of our professional lives.

The good news? Social workers in the field are skilled in the art of adaptation. Yet, if you are a parent or caregiver for people at home with you, the current situation is even more complex. The geography of our living environment has been redefined. What does it mean when work, home, parenting, caregiving, and self-care have to happen in the same place?

What happens to our sense of self? If we have access to this practical technology, it's undeniably helpful, but the new challenges are very apparent. And the future is unknown.

The Built Environment: Are We Built for This?

The built environment refers to the human-made spaces in which we engage. When I discuss this with my students, the concepts of community equity, livability, and environmental justice are forefront in class discussion. This fall, I spent time discussing the qualities of a desirable neighborhood. What do we want in our communities? Students listed indicators—a just environment, walkability, equitable access to all needed resources, renewable energies, support for neighbors.

I felt a loss when we talked about a walkable community. The campus where I work is an exemplar of this quality; I used to walk every day dur-

ing my noon hour to collect thoughts and enjoy some time away from the office.

Now, I remain at home with my family, connecting via internet broadband for all work-related duties. My son stakes out our kitchen table each day for school. At the start of this year online, he announced his intention that his experience “needed to be professional.” I do not know if we will ever meet that standard, but I admire his dedication. One thing seems clear—our home space was most certainly not built for this. Like so many houses in this area of the Midwest, we live in a ranch-style house. The design is focused on a life outside of work, a place to retreat at the end of the workday. Of course, I have worked here in this space, grading papers in the early morning. These work activities are on the periphery of my usual schedule, efforts that are eventually tucked into the backpack and taken to the office.

Now, my work is fully incorporated in a space never built for it. And it is not just the physical space that’s changed. The mental space is also a series of compromises. A parent of an 11-year-old son, everything is happening under the roof, every day. I have a new respect for his teachers. My son struggles with math problems, and his teacher’s aides are his mother and me. He experiences frustration when he cannot navigate his online learning management system. Recording a clarinet solo on his computer for his band class does happen easily. After standing in for his band instructor, everyone is exhausted, and I still have my own students to attend to.

These experiences provide me more empathy for my students. I see them in our virtual social work classroom space, attending from their own respective living environments. As an undergraduate, I lived in a small apartment for years. I can imagine the negotiations with space and time my students are making.

So here we are, in this current reality. Most of us are quarantined to our homes, in an incongruous blending of these two built environments, the physical home designed for personal space, and our new daily work

environment. Now, when I discuss role theory in class, I have new lived experiences I can share as case examples. From my work space, I can turn left and switch to my parenting role with my son, attending class in his virtual space; turn right, and I’m a spouse, conversing about who has meetings coming up in the afternoon, and who can prepare dinner tonight.

Working from home is a privilege. I continue to be employed, and I have the means to do it. This could change, so I continue to hope this is all, eventually, temporary. To move out of this pandemic, the science is clear—wear a mask and avoid large groups. I am not gathering with my family for the holidays. These approaches are going to be tough but necessary. From a perspective of social justice, the following are just a few things I see as important in this current reality.

Provisions for health care. The *Washington Post* reports a shift in health benefit plans to include telehealth support. This is a nice start, but coverage for web-based counseling services seems like a limited step. More comprehensive mental health coverage is always supported, but more so now. Because of the nature of the pandemic, particularly for those who have lost loved ones, or their own livelihood, access to quality mental health care is vital and necessary.

Subsidy for the home/work environment. As I worked on this article today, I received a notification from my Internet Service Provider. I have just exceeded my data cap for the month and will face overage fees. This is due largely to the current demands on broadband internet access in our home. Everyone is working and studying. Broadband is an expensive service, but one our employers assume we all have. Again, I acknowledge working from home is a privilege I enjoy. I also know working from home would be impossible for me without internet broadband. My ISP long ago did away with unlimited broadband use, so data is capped, meaning after the household surpasses that cap, I’m assessed even more fees.

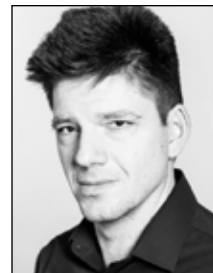
The bottom line—all this work and school at home comes at a cost. Broadband is, at best, an unstable utility in a vastly noncompetitive market. (I have one colleague who works in an area with two ISP providers. She purchases service from both to guarantee access at any given time, should one service fail.) Employers should provide support for broadband use while their staff work from home—this isn’t a choice of convenience, and shouldering the cost of expanded technology use is an undue burden. Of course, even more ideally, expanded broadband would be provided as a public good, reaching rural areas. At the very least, price-gauging and caps should not be a part of this model.

Restore Net Neutrality. The current federal administration struck down net neutrality, which gives ISPs the ability to slow down or prioritize speed and costs for data. This places agencies and schools in a precarious position at a difficult time. This reliance on broadband is like a forced partnership to carry out a major sector of our work. ISPs can simply make it more expensive for people to work from home, if they wish. Net Neutrality restoration could address this risk, benefitting the public.

Conclusion

These are just a few ideas, and by no means are these ideas comprehensive. Each thought here touches on the micro, mezzo, and macro levels of social work engagement. My hope is that this shared global experience will lead to systemic changes in how we use everyday technology. I continue to believe that changes like the ones I mention here are reasonable and not merely optimistic.

Stephen P. Cummings, MSW, ACSW, LISW, is a clinical assistant professor at the University of Iowa School of Social Work, where he is the administrator for distance education.





Reviews

Sex-Positive Social Work, by SJ Dodd,
Columbia University Press, ISBN
9780231188104, 2020, 288 pages,
\$35.00, paperback.

In *Sex-Positive Social Work*, Dodd offers readers clarity about the philosophy of sex-positivity, specific information on how to integrate this approach into work with clients, and education about a broad array of sexuality and gender-related topics.

The book's introduction provides a compelling explanation for the need to end the "conspiracy of silence" surrounding sexuality in social work education and practice. Dodd explains the barriers this creates for many clients and centers the importance of acknowledging sexuality as a part of the larger ecosystem of human experience. The book is organized in 10 chapters that each explore relevant information and interventions that can aid social workers in engaging sex-positivity in practice.

The first three chapters provide practical and specific suggestions for "Creating a Sex-Positive Environment for Clients," including developing self-reflection and awareness around individually held beliefs about sex, establishing awareness of the most effective ways to communicate with clients about sex-related topics, using inclusive intake forms, and setting up one's office in a way that creates a sense of inclusivity and openness for a diverse group of clients. Dodd also offers an introduction to "Anatomy, Physiology, and Arousal," including descriptions of the "reproductive characteristics" of "male" and "female" bodies.

Chapters 4 and 5 provide information about "Sexual Identity" and "Gender Identity" based on research conducted in the field, followed by chapters on "Sex Across the Lifespan," "Communicating About Love and Intimacy," "Alt Sex," "Sexual Dysfunctions and Disorders," and "Ethics and the Sex-Positive Social Worker." These chapters are particu-

larly helpful in encouraging readers to acknowledge myths and stereotypes associated with gender and sex that negatively impact marginalized populations, as well as enhance the reader's understanding and vocabulary for a variety of sexual identities, practices, and experiences.

Dodd's experience as an educator is evident throughout the book. She often uses case examples to illustrate the usefulness and application of the information provided in each chapter. She demonstrates humility by acknowledging the variability of experience and possibility that some terms and descriptions in the book may become "outdated" over time, and she writes with clear, concise, and accessible language that holds space for readers who might be encountering the concepts presented in the material for the first time.

Throughout the book, Dodd provides descriptions of how each section is related to the National Association of Social Workers' *Code of Ethics*, clearly outlining the importance of the information provided and, subsequently, the necessity for social work curricula to engage and embrace the philosophy of sex-positivity in order to improve students' capacity to enter the field prepared to meet clients as whole people (sexual identity included).

As a current student in an MSW program, I am grateful to have read this book. It fills many gaps in the human behavior realm, as well as increased my education in "cultural competence and humility," and has strengthened my ability to connect with clients in practice. Whereas the specific content of the book is generally focused toward a micro-oriented audience with little knowledge/experience in sex-positivity, the information and wealth of resources provided in the text are likely to enhance the competence of social work professionals, students, and educators across the board.

*Reviewed by Danie Brawand (he/they),
MSW candidate at NYU (2021), intern
at The Institute of Human Identity.*

United States Income, Wealth, Consumption, and Inequality, by Diana Furchtgott-Roth (Ed.). Oxford University Press, ISBN 9780197518199, 2021, 293 pages, \$75.00, hardback.

Although Thomas Piketty is not a contributing author to this book, his economic research on income inequality is the background for much that has been contributed by the 15 collaborators Furchtgott-Roth has gathered in these 10 somewhat technical, yet accessible chapters. Piketty analyzed U.S. tax return data and found that middle class median incomes have been in decline since 1979, giving rise to an increase in income and wealth inequality. Most of the chapters are attempts to explain why this is an incomplete and unfair analysis of the U.S. economy.

Self-described as sharing a bipartisan perspective, the progressive viewpoints are limited to the first three chapters, which address various definitions of income, provide an update on Piketty's analysis using post-tax data and international comparisons, and propose a series of modest short-term and long-term policy proposals to increase economic opportunity. The remaining chapters, although independently produced and somewhat inconsistent in the details, present a more conservative interpretation in accord with U.S. government economic analyses.

Chapters 4 (income) and 5 (wealth) present the cases against Piketty using different data sets. Income from labor and market investments have declined in line with Piketty, but adjustments for employer supported benefits (retirement and health care) and government supports (Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid) have arrested the decline. Post-tax analyses show that wealth inequality has grown at much smaller rates than income-based studies suggest. What is clear from these chapters is that the bottom 40% of Americans have become more heavily reliant on government transfers since 1969.

Social workers interested in how social trends contribute to an understanding of income and wealth

disparities will want to focus on Chapter 6. The movement of women into the workforce, divorce, assertive mating, tax rate changes, household size, wage earners per household, and several other factors are used in this chapter to help explain increases in income and wealth inequality, assertions that go unchallenged in this chapter.

Chapters 7 and 8 return to the anti-Piketty theme by demonstrating that race and gender disparities are explained by variation in labor market experience and skill detriments (Chapter 7) and that all quintiles have experienced increases in wealth since 1983 (Chapter 8). The problem with wealth inequality rising is, from this perspective, not a consequence of income decrements but is due to the disproportional negative influence of the 2008 Great Recession on the bottom 90% of Americans.

Chapter 9 provides a summary of public opinion polls related to wealth inequality since 1935 and demonstrates American support for increased opportunities and even income equality, but without support for government-imposed equality through redistribution programs. Chapter 10 argues that income inequality is the product of an unmet demand for highly skilled workers in America that effectively penalizes low skilled workers who are also victimized by low skill immigration, global trade with low skilled countries, and lack of improved productivity in service sector jobs.

As a progressive, I can recommend this book only to those who wish to understand conservative excuses for opposition to progressive ideas like a universal basic income, living wage legislation, decoupling of health insurance from employment, and cost-free college educations. Nibbling around the edges of our current economic system by tweaking existing government programs, protecting the accumulated wealth of the top 1%, denying the clear evidence of race and gender disparities, and defending the status quo will never recreate the opportunity structures to build an inclusive and fair economic system for all Americans.

Reviewed by Peter A. Kindle, PhD, CPA, LMSW, Professor of Social Work at The University of South Dakota.

Social Work, Criminal Justice, and the Death Penalty, by Lauren A. Ricciardelli (Ed.), Oxford University Press, ISBN: 9780190937232, 2020, 281 pages, \$50.00.

Social Work, Criminal Justice, and the Death Penalty offers social workers across the profession a robust foundation for how to navigate the criminal justice system with respect to death penalty cases. It is formatted in three distinct but related sections.

Section I provides a historical understanding of the death penalty, along with court cases, while providing insight into legal procedures and judicial processes in a digestible fashion. It includes constitutional context while highlighting implications and the social work profession's ethical obligations.

Section II focuses on the overarching theme of sociopolitical context that must be considered through a philosophical worldview while considering social theories and understanding the limits of neoliberalism and the impact of poverty, race, substance use, and gender on the criminal justice system. In addition, it explores the impact that death penalty cases have on service providers, including trauma and the public health impact the death penalty has on not only the inmate, but the whole system, including attorneys, prison staff, and jurors. The section provides a detailed plan for participation in advocacy work addressing the death penalty from a social justice perspective. It includes steps such as how to get involved in the process and gain understanding of the problems, as well as understanding the need to evaluate the advocacy project.

Section III focuses specifically on all aspects of the social worker's role as it relates to the criminal justice system, including counseling, case management, and probation services.

It also looks at how social workers are employed in police departments and skills needed for each role. An important aspect is the role of mental illness, intellectual disabilities, and the role of family, and how these areas are overlooked in the criminal justice system in particular as it relates to death penalty cases. There is attention to the issues of immigration and human rights, which are explored and understood through court decisions. Trauma and the role that the ACES study has in death penalty cases are considered, as well as how to follow a best practice strategy through a trauma-informed lens.

In review, this text offers the social worker in direct practice a wealth of information, providing a historical understanding as it relates to death penalty and the role of social workers at not only the micro level of services, but also the macro level. Furthermore, social workers will be equipped to have a better foundation and direction in regard to how to advocate and navigate the criminal justice system as they seek justice.

This text offers tangible steps for the social worker to support, engage, advocate, assess, and provide useful documents to assist clients and attorneys through the legal process of death penalty cases. Echoed throughout this text are skills that social workers bring that are so valuable in bringing about changes at the micro and macro levels in the field of criminal justice and the policy arena.

This text would be a key textbook to have in the social work, criminal justice, and history professor's library and course syllabi for social policy, criminal justice, law, and social work practice. The educator can utilize the discussion sections from the various chapters to facilitate in-class or online discussions, as well as prompts for papers and research assignments.

Reviewed by Lara Vanderhoof, DSW, LMSW, MSW, Associate Professor of Social Work, Social Work Program Director, Tabor College.

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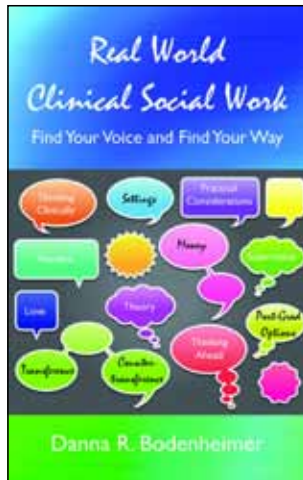
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Real World Clinical Social Work

Find Your Voice and Find Your Way

by Dr. Danna R. Bodenheimer, LCSW

Social work graduate school is only the beginning of your preparation for professional life in the real world as a clinical social worker. Dr. Danna Bodenheimer serves as a mentor or a supportive supervisor as she shares practice wisdom on topics such as thinking clinically, developing a theoretical orientation, considering practice settings, and coping with money issues. She addresses the importance of supervision and how to use it wisely. A frank discussion on the important and rarely-talked-about issue of loving one's client is followed by a practical look at next steps—post-graduate options and finding your life's work in clinical social work. Altogether, *Real World Clinical Social Work* will serve to empower you as you find your own voice, your own way, and your own professional identity.

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What People Are Saying

Danna Bodenheimer's book is the clinical supervisor you always wanted to have: brilliant yet approachable, professional yet personal, grounded and practical, yet steeped in theory, and challenging you to dig deeper.

Jonathan B. Singer, Ph.D., LCSW, Associate Professor of Social Work, Loyola University Chicago, Founder and Host, The Social Work Podcast

[From the Foreword] Using powerful case examples and a series of carefully crafted questions, this book challenges readers to think broadly and deeply about their own social work practice and identity. It is an invaluable companion for beginning social workers and educators alike.

Lina Hartocollis, Ph.D., LCSW, Dean of Students, Director, Doctorate in Clinical Social Work Program, University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice

Reading Danna Bodenheimer's *Real World Clinical Social Work: Find Your Voice and Find Your Way* is like spending a weekend in a wonderful candid conversation with many of our favorite theorists! While sharing her own perspectives and experiences, Bodenheimer invites us to reflect on topics as far-ranging as the essential components of the different modalities we can use in assessing and addressing client needs to identifying the elements that are critical to both the effectiveness of our professional practice and the sustenance of our personal lives. In language that is accessible, oftentimes metaphorical, and yet not at all simplistic, this book also introduces us to some of the clinical experiences of clients and therapists through an interweaving of their stories and theories. ...spending time with *Real World Clinical Social Work* is a real gift to yourself and everyone you serve.

Darlyne Bailey, Ph.D., ACSW, LISW, Dean, Professor, and MSS Program Director, Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research, Bryn Mawr College

It is nearly impossible to begin a career as a budding clinical social worker without the accompaniment of a variably loud inner voice that says, "You have no idea what you are doing." Dr. Bodenheimer befriends the beginning clinician with this incredibly personable and accessible book and says, "Sure, you do." Dr. Bodenheimer uses herself as a vehicle for connection with the reader, and she speaks directly to that inner voice with compassion, understanding, and guidance.

Cara Segal, Ph.D., Smith College School for Social Work, faculty, Private Practitioner, Northampton, MA

"No doubt, new social workers will find this an accessible, practical primer...and a life raft for embarking on the profession!"

*Anne Marcus Weiss, LSW, MSW
Director of Field Education,
University of Pennsylvania, School of
Social Policy & Practice*



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Danna Bodenheimer, LCSW, lives and works in Philadelphia, PA. She graduated from Smith College, earning her bachelor's degree in Women's Studies, and received a post-baccalaureate degree in psychology from Columbia University. Danna began her social work career at the Tuttleman Counseling Center at Temple University. After receiving her DSW from the University of Pennsylvania, Danna began a teaching career and her own private practice. She currently teaches at Bryn Mawr's Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research and is director of the

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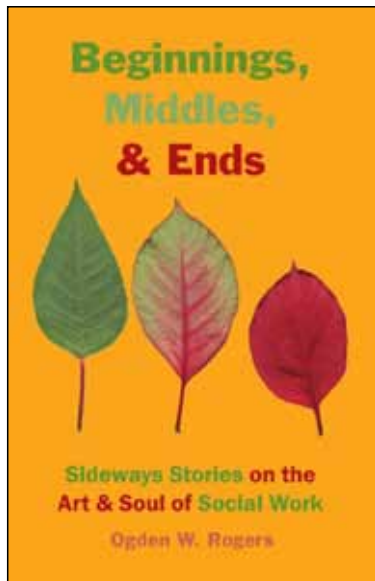
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Beginnings, Middles, & Ends

Sideways Stories on the Art & Soul of Social Work

Ogden W. Rogers, PhD, LCSW, ACSW



A sideways story is some moment in life when you thought you were doing one thing, but you ended up learning another. A sideways story can also be a poem, or prose, that, because of the way it is written, may not be all that direct in its meaning. What's nice about both clouds, and art, is that you can look at them and just resonate. That can be good for both the heart and the mind.

Many of the moments of this book have grown from experiences the author has had or stories he used in his lectures with students or told in his office with clients. Some of them have grown from essays written for others, for personal or professional reasons. They are moments on a path through the discovery of social work, a journey of beginnings, middles, and ends.

With just the right blend of humor and candor, each of these stories contains nuggets of wisdom that you will not find in a traditional textbook. They capture the essence and the art and soul of social work. In a world rushed with the illusion of technique and rank empiricism, it is the author's hope that some of the things here might make some moment in your thinking or feeling grow as a social worker. If they provoke a smile, or a tear, or a critical question, it's worth it. Everyone makes a different journey in a life of social work. These stories are one social worker's travelogue along the way.

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK

"As someone near the end of a long career in social work and social work education, I found the stories of Ogden Rogers in his collection, Beginnings, Middles, and Ends, to reflect so much of my own experience that I literally moved back and forth between tears of soulful recognition and laugh-out-loud moments of wonderful remembrances. There is something truthful and powerful about the artist who is willing to put a masterpiece together and leave the telltale signs of failed attempts. Too many who reflect on their past do so to minimize imperfection, setting standards unreachable by others. Ogden Rogers has charted a course of professionalism that encourages creativity, allowing for errors, and guided by honest reflection and dedication to those whom he would serve. This read is a gift to all, whether they are starting or ending their journey of service to others."

Terry L. Singer, PhD, Dean, Kent School of Social Work, University of Louisville

"I found the stories humorous, sometimes painful, and incredibly honest and real. There is really nothing else out in our literature that is quite like this. It reminds me of when we teach the art and science of social work practice—this is the art."

Jennifer Clements, PhD, LCSW, Associate Professor, Shippensburg University

"...a profound piece of creative literature that will reestablish idealism within senior social workers who are on the threshold of being cynical about their work."

Stephen M. Marson, PhD, Professor, University of North Carolina Pembroke

"Recommended reading for new social workers, experienced social workers, friends and families of social workers, and future social workers because of the variety of anecdotal case presentations and personal perceptions. Truly open and honest portrayals of social work and the helping professions with touching, easy-to-read entries fit within the beginning, middle, and ending framework. This book is suggested for both public and academic libraries to support the career services and/or professional development collections."

Rebecca S. Traub, M.L.S., Library Specialist, Temple University Harrisburg

For the complete
Table of Contents of
Ogden Rogers'
Beginnings, Middles, & Ends

and other information
about this book, see:

beginningsmiddlesandends.com

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Ogden W. Rogers, PhD, LCSW, ACSW, is Professor and Chair of the Department of Social Work at The University of Wisconsin-River Falls. He has been a clinician, consultant, educator, and storyteller.