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ABSTRACT

This journal is committed to publishing articles that reflect the diversity of the practice of school social workers. It offers a way for leaders to reflect on their careers in school social work and record information on the growth and development of the field for future generations. The first issue's section on "Leaders in School Social Work" contains the following articles: "Reflections on an Unfinished, Professional Journey (Robert Constable); Looking over my Shoulder (Marion Huxtable); and "Reflections on School Social Work: Accomplishments and Challenges for the Future" (James P. Clark). Other articles in this issue include: "Educational Placement for Children with Behavioral and/or Emotional Disorders: Overlooked Variables Contributing to Placements in Restrictive Settings" (Andy Frey), and "Joining the 'In Crowd': The Social Interaction and Peer Relations of Preadolescent Youth" (Juanita B. Hepler). Articles in the "Leaders in School Social Work" section in the second issue include: "Becoming a School Social Worker: The Concept of Equi-Finality" (Renee Shai Levine); "Intervention to Prevention: An Evolutionary Process" (I. Lorraine Davis); and "Reflections on 25 Years as a School Social Worker: Joys and Lessons from the Long Haul" (Ronda Parks Armstrong). Other articles include "Sexual Minority Students and Peer Sexual Harassment in High School" (Susan Fineran); "Educational Placement for Children with Emotional or Behavioral Disorders: Past, Present, and Future" (Andy Frey); and "Puppets and Peers in School Social Work" (Michelle A. Romano). (Contains over 250 references.) (JDM)

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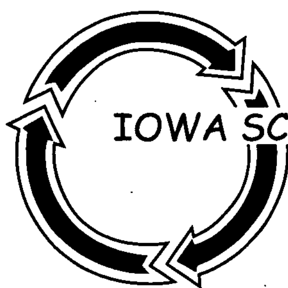

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... serving home, school, and community

JOURNAL OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

Volume 11, No. 1 Fall 2000

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EDITORIAL

On behalf of the Iowa School Social Workers' Association, I am pleased to introduce the Journal of School Social Work. The Journal, established in 1986 as the Iowa Journal of School Social Work and sponsored by the Iowa School Social Workers' Association, has been changed to emphasize the Association's commitment to accepting and publishing papers that reflect the diversity of practice by school social workers in the United States and in the international community.

The Journal has added a section entitled "Leaders in School Social Work" to recognize at least a few of the many who have made important contributions to the development and advancement of school social work at the state, regional, national, and/or international level. We are pleased that Bob Constable, Marion Huxtable, and Jim Clark have consented to reflect on their social work careers and their work to enhance school social work on behalf of those we serve. Subsequent issues will continue a "Leaders in School Social Work" section.

School social work leaders—beginning with the first pioneer home-and-school visitors and visiting teachers just after the dawn of the Twentieth Century—have come forth in every decade, but few are remembered. The Journal, one outlet for leaders to reflect on their careers in school social work and to share their narrative or their story, believes that their narratives should be told so that future generations can look back and better understand earlier generations of leaders and the growth and development of school social work over the past forty years.

The Journal also publishes narratives that describe personal experiences of helping others, effecting social change, and offering new practice insights. Manuscripts are invited that reflect the diversity of our talents—from poetry to practice innovations to full-length articles—and that contribute to better understanding the breadth and diversity of school social work. The next issue will include a Call for Manuscripts on International School Social Work. We will invite the international community to submit their scholarship for a special issue to be published in the Spring 2002. We thank Marion Huxtable, who will be the Guest Editor.

A journal is only as good as its Editorial Board and its editorial staff. The Board, consisting of practitioners, university faculty, and others who serve in various capacities, diligently has reviewed many manuscripts in a short period. The Editorial Board has been magnificent! A special thank you to our Book Review Editor and Associate Editor. Our all-volunteer Board and staff exemplify a long tradition of service to the profession.

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On behalf of the Board and staff we invite you to sample the offerings of this inaugural issue of the Journal of School Social Work, to write letters to the editor, to submit your own scholarship in one of the many categories (see Editorial Policy), and to subscribe to the Journal.

James G. McCullagh, Ed.D., ACSW, JD
Department of Social Work
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REFLECTIONS ON AN UNFINISHED, PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY

Robert Constable

ABSTRACT

The professional life narrative of Robert Constable is an unfolding and continuing history of friendship and collaboration. The author summarizes some of these friendships and some of the events connected with them through education and his development as a school social work practitioner, family therapist, and social work educator, and also through developments in social work education, international education, and ongoing projects in school social work.

I doubt that we really can ever write about ourselves accurately. We live in an interpersonal world and become what we are through interaction with others. And so, in order to define who I am now and how that took place, I reflect on the people I have known and loved and what we have given to each other. My professional journey takes place only through friendships. Nor can it be a complete account, since the future is unwritten, and the many interpersonal stories of family and friends are simply background of a professional narrative.

Beginnings

I grew up during the Second World War, the youngest of four children in a family of Irish and English descent. I was at the tail end of a generation formed by the Great Depression. We lived in a multi-cultural, but predominantly Jewish, neighborhood in the Rogers Park area of Chicago. My mother probably struggled with postpartum depression, although it was never discussed. One of my first memories was of an African-American woman, Jane Lamb, who stayed with us and took care of me until I was age 2, when she left to work in the war industry. Jane was a gift. I still can picture her and hear her humming something to herself and radiating a wonderful calm as she went about her business. As I grew older, I was close to my father, who had a hearing disability. Although he was very busy, he would read stories and even sing nursery rhymes during our time together. He had a very deep, even tragic, understanding of relationships. He shared some of

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what was in his heart with me as I grew older. My oldest brother was in the South Pacific and returned. My next older brother was 10 years older than I, and so I watched him and his friends and their lives in awe. My mother began teaching me to read when I was age 3. Both of us remember me crawling on the newly washed kitchen floor to read the spread-out newspapers.

Our lives were distantly framed by the cataclysm of the Second World War. We knew that many people were suffering someplace far away. The tragedy didn't become clear to me until after the war, when people came to our neighborhood from the camps, children also, having had horrendous experiences, which I could barely understand. The neighborhood had the social and economic organization of American communities during that period. On summer nights people would still sit out on their porches and visit. Others would come during the day to sharpen scissors, sell things, or get a sandwich if they were hungry and itinerant, and they were usually welcome. We knew all the shopkeepers. The friendships we formed in this multi-ethnic enclave crossed every line and generally were fairly deep. School was part of this.

Miss Cleary, the first grade teacher at Joyce Kilmer School, is still one of my ideals of what a teacher should be. She clearly loved teaching. Her cheerfulness, creativity, and high standards were legend. She accepted our outrageousness, and, reaching out to each of us at our level, tried to bring us higher. I loved her class and never saw her other than cheerful, interested, and available. When I was 7 years old, I was moved to the parochial school, but I never forgot the excitement of Miss Cleary's class. For the next 6 years I was taught by nuns, each one different, but very well educated women who prepared us well. As Miss Cleary, they accepted our roughness, but they saw our potential for something better. Their humility was extraordinary. What moved them, a deep and quiet spiritual understanding of things, was available to us. On the other hand, I prefer the freedom and diversity of the public schools.

I left Rogers Park in the early 1950's to follow a family expectation of going to Campion High School, a Jesuit residential high school in Prairie Du Chien, Wisconsin. My father had been educated similarly and valued the experience and lifetime relationships with his teachers and friends. We had a rigorous, classical education in Latin, English, science, Greek, and math. I was very poor in sports, but I did well in theater and enjoyed writing. The most remarkable experience was living in the community of students and teachers. Some of these relationships remain to this day. An extension of this education would be further studies in history, philosophy, and ancient and modern

languages at Georgetown University. I received the Mallory Medal of the University for my work on an issue of the treaty power in constitutional law, but, otherwise, I quietly used all of the possibilities for learning in this rich, international environment of intellectual ferment.

One of the most formative periods of my life took place in 1960, when I studied, backpacked, and hitchhiked through Europe. The tragedies of the War were still evident on the landscape and in people's hearts. Youth hostels provided a framework of friendships for this postwar generation of Brits, Germans, Swiss, Irish, Italians, and Spanish, who would discover new friendships and would eventually support a closer union. Studying for a time in a Swiss University and traveling, I brought French and German to near fluency and resolved to work on Spanish and Italian. I decided to put away my earlier interest in law and focus on something directly related to the needs and development of people. At about the same time, a friendship with my future wife would deepen into marriage many years later and continues to deepen each year. I continue to learn a great deal from her optimism and creativity, lessons that continue to impact on my current work with marriage and family and in school social work. The friendship of marriage transforms people. Only now am I realizing what I earlier took for granted, that this friendship truly transformed me.

Social Work Beginnings

Before I began my studies in social work, I worked as a group worker at a settlement house in a poor Mexican neighborhood on Chicago's Near West Side. We were an international group, partially sponsored by the Cleveland International Program. We lived in the house and learned about the neighborhood through our contact with its families and children. We would have program during the day, group work, and neighborhood work. In the evening we would play with the children and families, sitting out to escape the heat. I had been comfortable at the university, but I was totally naïve to this new world. My rowdy group of 7-year old boys taught me a great deal, and I received good supervision in group work. My group rarely failed to come to our daily 3-hour sessions. Sometimes, I was happy for a rainy day when fewer children came, but rain or shine we had great fun doing little things together. At one time we cooked pancakes together in the kitchen. The fire was too hot and the oil began to smoke. At the same time we had a visitor from India coming down the hall with the director. My boys were getting pretty noisy. The director closed the door and the smoke began to pour out the windows. As soon as the visitor cleared the hall, 13 boys broke loose, running down the hall into

another group, shouting, "We was smoked out from Mr. Bob's room!" After all of our misadventures, I was touched by the efforts of each of the boys to get me to meet their families, and, more than that, by our good bye's. I began to see the power of a group experience. Later that summer, I did community organization for the Pilsen Neighbors Community Council. We formed a block club in an area where I had previously worked for the settlement house. The club, a mixture of Bohemian Americans and Mexican Americans eventually began to develop its own leadership and took the step of picketing the alderman to improve conditions in the alleys.

Social Work Studies—Loyola University

Coming from a brush with group work and social action, I found the predominantly clinical casework orientation of Loyola's masters degree social work program very different. My first field experience was in the student unit that was run by Martha Urbanowski and Marge Dwyer at the Northern District Office of the Cook County Department of Public Aid. The Department, under the leadership of Ray Hilliard, was in the throes of efforts at the time to develop intensive services for people who were caught in the economic and social webs of migration, personal tragedy, and the dynamic and selective economies of this international city. I had to develop a tremendous respect for the efforts that people made to cope with dehumanizing conditions. I was concerned for the obstacles, such as raw racism, economic competition or, more subtly, the need to manage other's lives, that the worlds of the city and our agency placed in their way. I also learned that I could be of help, not as a healer or manager, but as a catalyst for changes, which could take place in the natural and societal systems: at the agency, in the family, in the neighborhood, in schools, and with other helping agencies. I found myself helping a newly arrived African-American family of five to take some control of their situation, to move to better housing and to deal with school problems. I worked with a depressed and abandoned Polish mother of four, strangling from hernia, to get an operation, which she was afraid of, which the medical system was unwilling to perform at the welfare rates, and which needed to be justified to the agency. We didn't talk about systems at that time, but every situation involved every level of systems from the personal to the policy level. I was thoroughly excited and challenged by the work.

I formed a lifelong friendship with Fr. Felix Biestek, who was my teacher for the beginning practice methods course and for "Philosophy of Social Work." His "catechism" of the casework relationship was at its height of popularity. His ideas were deceptively

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simple. What he never identified in his written work, perhaps because it was so obvious to him or because it might be misunderstood, was the philosophic synthesis behind it. The Casework Relationship (Biestek, 1957) was a profound statement of the essence of helping, but the rationale for his idea of practice was hidden and implicit in his work. Felix Biestek's philosophy assumed a realistic epistemology and, with that, a profound understanding of actualities of experience, of action, and of relationships. It was a philosophy of human action through relationships.

It is natural and intrinsically human for persons to act through relationships. In fact, this is almost the only way persons can ever take action. There is nothing artificial or contrived about helping, and it needs no medical, therapeutic justification. Through a relationship, the social worker assists clients to define situations and take action. Through action, both client and situation change. Learning this was a type of virtue education.

Felix Biestek's approach to practice anticipated the strongest research findings about how change takes place, the helping relationship, and the qualities of the helper (Bergin & Garfield, 1994). Nevertheless, what moved him was not the struggle for technical effectiveness, but his conviction that the world had been created good, that each person was a free and dearly loved child of God, and that this was as real as your hand. We had to continue the work of creation through helping relationships, agencies, and societies that respected and carried out the work of God in each human being and in society. Felix Biestek's even handed work on client self-determination (Biestek, 1951; Biestek & Gehrig, 1978) cut through enormous philosophic differences and problems around the issue of liberty and social responsibility to form a sociology of professional knowledge and practice.

In those days I worked with my classmate, Clyde Gehrig, on a special assignment to update the research on client self-determination, and, many years later, the final results were published. Biestek had also done pioneering work in the area of religion and social work. Consistent with his philosophy, he found the concept of a religiously defined social work practice untenable. All social work is a participation in God's work and needed no further label. He often stated that there is no Catholic social work, only Catholics (or others), who practice social work. Professional action had to be immersed in values, and these were inherent to the professional action, not imposed from outside. In this sense, these were religious, whatever the practitioner's creed. Biestek saw the ultimate helping relationship as one with God, who is a person who cares deeply about His children,

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and in His caring respects their freedom and responsibility to act. He would talk about the social worker having off-handed chats with God all day, like Adam walking with God in the garden in the evening's light – about this client, about this situation, etc.

I did my second year placement in the Gary, Indiana Schools. The schools were going through a difficult period, but the possibilities of change were most exciting. I saw great possibilities for working in the school, with the family, the ecological center of childhood. I found myself at silent odds with my field instructor, however. Her approach to practice seemed less open, more symptom-focused, individualistic, and controlling. Focused on pathology in the individual child, the social worker would ignore the strengths of the total situation, including the school or family, to intervene as the healer with control. But the more control one tried to get, the less one really had. We would find ourselves fighting with the client system. I found the approach artificial and unworkable, particularly in the natural environment of the school. The struggle for control put the worker on the defensive and ended with strange distortions and impositions on the realities of a situation. It was clear to her students that she was brilliant, but full of distortions about others. These distortions, clothed in professional power, were ultimately destructive and hurtful. All we could do, as many previous interns had done, was to avoid the distortions, if possible. Only later have I begun to understand the roots of this lack of respect, even in people who wish to assist others.

School Social Work—Evanston

My first job was in the Evanston, Illinois Schools under the supervision of Margaret Quane, chief social worker for the high school and elementary system. The years I spent working in Evanston were deeply formative for me. With 23 fully trained workers for a pupil population of about 5000 children in a multi-ethnic community, the system had placed a high priority on quality work. Hester Burbridge, the Director of Special Services, was a formidable woman, who had pioneered special education. Margaret Quane, one of 10 children in a close family, had become the heart of the social work program and in many ways of social work in Illinois. She never imposed herself, but she had a clear vision of practice. This vision was an essentially open-ended and normalizing approach, involving the school child, the family, the school, and the community acting together. She worked with the strengths of people and helped them to discover their essential good will and the positive ways that they could contribute to a situation. She was constantly and quietly solving disputes among teachers and principals in the high school where she worked. Available

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to everyone, her colleagues could not get enough of Margaret's gentle, calming, normalizing, and sensible spirit. Despite tremendous pressures on her time, she gave me the great benefit of weekly conferences for the 3-year period of my Evanston sojourn.

Prior to working at Evanston, I took part in a workshop with Florence Poole and Jane Wille. Florence and Jane had come to the University of Illinois in the late 1940's from a well-developed school social work concentration at the University of Pittsburgh. With John Nebo, social work consultant for the Illinois State Board of Education, they were largely responsible for developing school social work in Illinois. Many of Pitt's best school social work faculty had left in an ethical difference within the school. Ruth Smalley went on to the University of Pennsylvania; Florence, Jane, and John, to Illinois. Florence and Jane were complementary personalities in a friendship that was to last their lifetime, Jane taking care of Florence in her final years of disability. Their theoretical beginning point in defining school social work practice was the purpose and function of the school in American education. The mission of schools was with the family, to prepare children for life. Social workers worked with the school, the child, and the family, so that this often difficult mission was accomplished with each child, particularly the most vulnerable. Casework was important, but a wide variety of methods were appropriate.

I worked in a junior high school, which enrolled about 850 children in the most multiethnic and economically diverse section of Evanston. Working with about 200 children's situations a year, I learned that my first line of action had to be helping others to do their job in a way that it met children's needs, and, so, providing consultation to teachers and the principal became a most useful tool. There was also short-term work with the family or the child and some very intensive, long-term work with either, depending on one's assessment of the situation. What I had long learned about group dynamics applied to the classroom, together with an understanding of teaching styles and the meaning of a child's coping and the teacher's response, helped me to assist teachers who had any openness to consultation. If I could handle the situation effectively with consultation alone, or with short-term work with the parents, teacher, or child, I would do it. If the situation demanded more, I would work with all three and each in relation to the other. This approach allowed me to work with many situations over the year without becoming overwhelmed. I was assessing situations and helping teachers, parents, and children to discover and use their resources to relate to what the situation needed. And then, where it was needed, I would work

intensively with one or another. The students were my best teachers, and their responsiveness told me that we were going in the right direction. It was much later in my research on the school social worker's role that I realized that there was nothing unique about this approach (Constable & Montgomery, 1985; Constable, Kuzmickaite, Harrison, & Volkmann, 1999). It is inherent in the job. Many people were actually doing the same as a natural response to the societal purpose and the conditions of school. Practice theory for school social work had not yet fully addressed this purpose and these conditions. Florence Poole had begun the process in a seminal article (Poole, 1949), but there was much more to do.

We did an experiment one summer with children coming from the elementary schools into the junior high, matching youngster's needs with different teaching styles and possible classroom dynamics. I reviewed the cumulative records and the computer-generated home room (language arts and social studies) placements of about 500 entering seventh graders, contacted parents when necessary, and worked with the principal on class placement. I replaced about a third of them into more workable homerooms. The following year, even though I followed these children closely, I had effectively cut my referrals of seventh graders in half. A good match between child, teaching style, and the other children in the class helped to buffer the stress that vulnerable youngsters felt in the new school. Also, as long as there were not too many youngsters with difficulties, the pro-social children in the class had a positive effect on the others. A good start produced better results, even when a youngster had been "impossible" to handle in their previous schools.

Social Work Studies—Penn

I happily would have worked in Evanston for the remainder of my career had I not wanted to complete a doctorate with a focus on practice. I initiated interviews at Columbia, Smith, Penn, and Catholic University. Margaret was a good friend of Ruth Smalley, a school social worker and then Dean at the University of Pennsylvania. She recommended I look there. I met with Dick Lodge, then director of the doctoral program. He had been a Broadway actor, and subsequently a group worker. He had played the group worker who apologized to David in the film, *David and Lisa.* The respect for others inherent in that gesture was Dick's style in any case. Our interview was an open-ended dialogue, where he engaged with my questions and opened possibilities. Later, I would realize that the open, engaging style he exhibited was very much a trademark of the theoretical orientation of the school. This was still a period of orthodoxy, an orthodoxy in social

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work of positivist science, medically-oriented practice, and of determinist philosophies of control. Doctoral programs were most vulnerable to this. Shortly afterwards, Dick would become the dean at Virginia Commonwealth University and then Executive Director of the Council on Social Work Education. I came to Penn at a good time. The school was profoundly committed to an open-ended model of practice as process. Jessie Taft's doctoral advisor had been George Herbert Mead. In many ways she reflected the intellectual heritage and social philosophy of John Dewey and George Herbert Mead even more than that of Otto Rank, her analyst and a dissenting disciple of Sigmund Freud.

Four teachers who were of the greatest influence in my professional life were Mollie Utkoff, Lloyd Setleis, Saul Hofstein, and Harold Lewis. I felt in many ways that I was a foster child to these marvelously human teachers. Each had a profoundly and culturally Jewish sense of life as process and relationships as the wine of life. The person was artist and creator within a system of norms and of justice. I can never thank them enough for what they imparted to me.

A 1-year advanced field placement was required in the doctoral program. I did it in the Philadelphia schools with Mollie Utkoff as supervisor. Mollie, a university field instructor, was a woman with great practice experience, a wonderful sense of life as process with limits, but also warm and open to new possibilities. We did a project with children who had been dropped from school. Our goal was to get every child back into school in a setting and with the services where the child had the greatest chances of success. Lloyd Setleis was my practice teacher, who helped me to conceptualize a broader approach to what we then in 1966 called "ecological" assessment and practice. He was one of the sweetest and most giving men I had ever worked with, but he was also capable of the indignation of a biblical prophet, when he sensed injustice. Sometimes, we would hear his booming voice rolling down the corridors of the school. He became social work dean at Yeshiva University.

Saul Hofstein, who lived on Long Island, commuted to Philadelphia to teach a doctoral Human Behavior in the Social Environment class and a unit on interpersonal process. Saul was both an active practitioner and a scholar, open to every possibility in thought without being eclectic in any way. His social work orientation to interpersonal process as an overarching framework allowed him to evaluate each school of thought without rancor. His last class with us and in the university was celebrated with a shared bottle of cognac, which he took out of his commuter's briefcase. Together we toasted life

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with all of its tragic and glorious possibilities and, thanking him, wished him (and each other) *mazel tov*.

Harold Lewis taught research. His approach was to join the conversation of the literature and the scholarship on a level that was simultaneously rigorously analytic and very personal. To be a part of the conversation, one needed to know the persons who were doing the work, to evaluate it critically, and to develop a well-reasoned and balanced contribution to this conversation. This fluid and open model hardly did justice to the profundity of his insights as a teacher. He engaged seriously and profoundly with our work. He taught us to think critically and to evaluate and use research methods appropriately. Later, he became dean at Hunter College. Ruth Smalley had retired four years earlier, and Lodge had left to become Dean at Virginia Commonwealth University at about the same time. The loss to Penn in a short period of time of Smalley and Lodge, and then Hofstein, Lewis, and Setleis would be profound. Lewis became Dean at Hunter College and Setleis eventually at Yeshiva. Hofstein continued the practice he loved and did so well.

I did my dissertation on the home and school visitor in the Philadelphia schools and the non-attendant school child (Constable, 1971). Max Silverstein was my advisor. He had done his major work in psychiatric aftercare. As a Community Fund executive in Los Angeles he had been instrumental in the founding of the School of Social Work at UCLA. He was wonderfully practical and enormously helpful. Few home and school visitors had any background in social work, but the job did demand a certain level of social work preparation. We found that variables dealing with the *relationship* of the visitor with the child and parent were associated with the outcome of the child returning to school. In addition to quantitative work, I did a systematic qualitative analysis of 30 cases. These proved to be as varied as characters and stories from Dickens, but we had developed a framework to make sense of them. Even more clearly than the quantitative variables, they explained why the child might or might not return to school. I completed the dissertation and graduated in 1971. At that time I had spent 3 years as a supervisor at Family Service of Chester County, Pennsylvania, where I had my introduction to working with families and 1 year at West Chester State University, where I was developing an undergraduate program.

Our three children thoroughly enjoyed my graduation ceremony. The reception took place in the University Museum, where I gently removed two of them from a projected climb into a giant and priceless Chinese urn. I could spend much more time talking about what I have learned from our children and the different friendships that

we have developed with each, as we eventually became a family of seven children - two adopted, one biracial, and all unique. Despite a few heart-stopping moments with each, our friendships continue and even deepen. The youngest is now 20 years old, and all are doing very well. One is even doing her graduate work at Penn, and another is well en route to becoming a school social worker.

West Chester State University

Shortly before I had completed the dissertation, I was offered the opportunity of beginning an undergraduate program in social work at West Chester State University, but I would only do this if I could balance academic work with practice with families. It was precisely at this time that NASW formally had decided to treat the undergraduate level as professional. These graduates held many social work positions, but they needed professional preparation. Programs in child welfare, health, mental health, and corrections, particularly public programs, had relied on the bachelors-level graduate for entry level-work. On the other hand, most of the undergraduate social work programs were "pre-professional," that is, without a supervised field experience and without admissions, courses, and evaluations aiming at a professional level of practice..

The Dean of Social Sciences at West Chester, Byron Fleck, an historian, was a remarkably open person, who encouraged and supported the program. I worked closely with Ralph Dolgoff of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) in this and was soon joined by John Main, a doctoral colleague and professor at the University of Pennsylvania and a good friend. John was a superb teacher of practice with a real conceptual grasp of the learning process. We developed our program together. There was a clear liberal arts base, a process of admission into the program, and a developed systems conceptualization for practice at the community and agency level. There was a 3-year progression of courses with fieldwork interrelated to learning tasks at each level. The 3-year field work progression was geared toward the senior placement and an entry-level of practice proficiency. Good supervision and an integrative practice seminar assisted the learning process at this level. Other developing programs at that time used our description and rationale heavily (Constable & Main, 1971).

I did some of my first publications on the integration of field and course work (Constable, 1976), undergraduate admissions (Constable, 1977c), the liberal arts base (Constable, 1977b), and the systems conceptualization (Constable, 1977a). Many of the features of our program became standard for undergraduate education. During this

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period in our history, the program attracted some of the best students in the university, who respected its rigor and liked its creative possibilities. Agencies were most eager to have our students in the field and eventually to hire our graduates. We received support from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, and we were one of the first BSW programs to be accredited by the CSWE as a professional program. Over a quarter century the program has grown to include the masters level also and provides social workers to the agencies in Southeastern Pennsylvania and beyond.

In 1974, I joined what later became the Jane Addams College of Social Work (JACSW) at the University of Illinois at Chicago. A part of my heart will always remain in Pennsylvania. Going back to Illinois, however, would be an opportunity to rejoin school social work and to contribute to the three levels of social work education that were developing at the university.

The 1982 Curriculum Policy Statement

At the same time, I was asked to become a member of the CSWE Commission on Educational Planning. The 1969 CSWE Curriculum Policy Statement (CPS) had limited itself to the Masters level, and there was nothing to guide the *two* emergent levels of social work education. Masters programs always had claimed to prepare for advanced practice. With BSW programs preparing for entry-level practice, these programs now were challenged to prepare beyond the entry level. There was no clearly developed model for this. One problem was an unresolved confusion of *generic* theory with the continuing development of specific practice in different fields; another was the privileged position of education over practice. These confusions made it difficult to differentiate educational levels. There had always been specific preparation for fields of practice from the profession's beginnings through the early 1950's, but these were often seen in a negative sense as "apprenticeships," with the "real" theory development in methods *generic* to many fields of practice.

The resulting theory was incomplete, and by the mid-1950's, unless there was strong leadership, fields of practice, such as corrections and even school social work, tended to be treated as secondary to method theory, the "real" social work theory. The Milford Report (Milford Conference, 1929), the writings of Edith Abbott (1942), and others were most important to the development of "generic" theory and practice preparation, but the expected balance of "generic" and "specific" developed unevenly. Theory bases for casework, group work, and community organization were developed in their time as self-standing methods. In.many ways, this was a great

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achievement. It coincided with a period of development of a united profession leading to the founding of NASW in 1955.

Harriett Bartlett and a number of other leaders of the profession saw the picture in a more complex way. A common base for social work practice needed to be developed, but it did not need to be dominated by methods, abstractions from practice that simultaneously tended to narrow the focus of practice unduly. Bartlett expressed some of this thinking in a seminal article (Bartlett, 1958), which identified the "generic-specific", that is, generic theories together with specific practice as the basis of practice theories adapted to each field. Florence Poole had more or less used the same approach in her 1949 article, which outlined the theoretical basis for school social work practice. However, the confusion in the field, particularly between functional and diagnostic adherents, had made what seemed to be an obvious point difficult to comprehend. Additionally, Bartlett pointed out that a basic resolution of the 1929 Milford Conference, that is, that descriptive research in social work practice should take place and provide a basis for theory development, had not been implemented at all. Theories were incomplete, and our research base, which first needed to describe practice, was underdeveloped. These ideas were crucial in her work on the definition of a common base for social work practice and her book on analyzing social work practice by fields. It was clear from her work and that of William E. Gordon that social work knowledge needed to be "built" (Conference on Building Social Work Knowledge, 1964), and that only when we clearly identified our common orientation could we use well the knowledge from other fields.

I will never forget Jim Dumpson's charge to the CSWE Commission on Educational Planning. As president of CSWE he galvanized us in the midst of heavily politicized struggles between graduate, undergraduate, clinical, and other interest groups, to put aside political alignments and act in the interests of the profession. I believe we did this, often to the consternation of each of these groups at different times. I was a member of the Commission for two terms or 8 years. In a systematic national process, guided by Maury Hamovitch from USC, and then Carol Meyer from Columbia, we did develop a joint Curriculum Policy Statement for the BSW and MSW levels adopted in 1982 (Council on Social Work Education, 1982). Both Carol and Maury, despite differing beginning points, were among the finest committee chairpersons I have ever known. Working with members such as Steve Aigner, Joan Robertson, and Paul Schwartz, an eminently principled process emerged.

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In order to develop a common statement for both degree levels, which differentiated levels of education and practice, we would first of all have to define a common educational base (later called "foundation"). We would have to make some differentiation of entry–level from advanced practice. We would need to deal with preparation for advanced practice and examine the relation that should obtain between these two levels. These would need to be tasks, not simply of the Commission, but of the entire profession, and of social work educators in particular. I chaired the subcommittee, which by 1980 (Constable, Schwartz, Smith, & Vargus, 1979), did provide a definition of a common "foundation" for BSW and MSW programs, of knowledge, values, and skills. There was basic agreement on foundation as it applied to MSW and BSW levels. Our task was to articulate the agreement, which implicitly existed. Most of this work ultimately did find its way into the 1982 and following Curriculum Policy Statements. A special joint NASW-CSWE subcommittee, composed of Carol Meyer, William E. Gordon, Harold Lewis, Ralph Garber, and Constance Williams developed a joint report on specializations in social work education (1979). The report was excellent, but it was perhaps too prescriptive for the place where masters degree education actually was at that time and has never been fully implemented. As a result, advanced education went in a variety of different directions.

The University of Illinois at Chicago

So many of these agendas were interwoven at this time. At the University of Illinois at Chicago, the program had just differentiated itself from its counterpart in Urbana. I worked as associate dean with Sid Zimbalist and then Sam Weingarten in the first difficult steps of the program to define itself. Associate deans work quietly in the background to make things possible. Sid and Sam were very different personalities, but we developed warm and effective working relationships, which lasted and continued through the many difficult periods that the school experienced prior to its stabilization in the early 1980's. With the faculty, we made major curriculum revisions in the graduate program, with much greater definition of the second year. I took a direct hand in assisting the development of the undergraduate (BSW) program through its accreditation. School social work, always a major part of the JACSW program, would be my next thrust. When the bachelors program was accredited, I shifted to develop a second-year concentration in school social work. I also went back to working with families and received supervision in family therapy from Richard Schwartz, then at the Illinois Institute for Juvenile Research. I was

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concerned that we lacked a social work theoretical framework for working with families, and I developed one, based on phenomenological theory (Constable, 1984).

I participated in a small way in the Illinois O'Hare Conference on social work conceptual frameworks in the late 1970's with Anne Minahan, Carol Meyer, and others. I was also in close correspondence with Max Siporin and Hans Falck. We were good friends. I was particularly concerned that values in social work should be defined well in the Curriculum Policy Statement (Council on Social Work Education, 1982), and I had spent some time working on these issues. Hans was a holocaust survivor, who was profoundly concerned about the value and the scientific base of the social work profession. Max had studied everything about social work, and he was one of its greatest scholars. First of all, however, he loved his practice with families and couples. He had a reverence for marriage and used the concept of marriage as a "sacrament" with his students. What connected the three of us in different ways was a concern for the issues raised by Bartlett, for values, and for spirituality.

As part of our dialogue of friendship I wrote two articles on values in social work. The first outlined values as means and as ends of social help, and this was the basis for my work with Steve Aigner in explicating social work values in the Curriculum Policy Statement (Constable, 1983). The second looked at the action component of the helping relationship. Values are not things imposed from the outside, but they are inherent to professional and relational things that social workers do (Constable, 1989).

At one point, I was on a panel in Boston with Bill Gordon, Harriett Bartlett, and others. I had a presentation on a theoretical base for specialization in school social work, which used many of Gordon's and Bartlett's concepts. Bill was a biologist with a deep feeling for natural systems. He would go off alone to a cabin in the Minnesota North Woods for a month at a time, just to be with nature. Harriett Bartlett was a very tall, thin woman with a shock of white hair. She wore a straight black dress that came down to her ankles with a white lace collar. She would tell Gordon, "But, Bill, you never understood social work practice," and she told me privately that I would develop school social work practice in the same way as she had developed social work in the health care field. It seemed expansive at the time and still does today, although I have employed her vision.

Developing School Social Work Education

In Illinois by the late 1960's, a state law was in place that required every school district to provide children access to school

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social work services. Margaret Quane, Gerry Tosby, and others developed the Illinois Association of School Social Workers (IASSW), now the largest state school social work association. In the mid-1970's, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act confirmed the civil right of every child with a disability to receive a free appropriate public education. The regulations came out the following year. At that time, there was a controversy regarding whether the bill was simply more "paperwork" for school social workers or provided a fundamental opportunity for a more developed practice for children with disabilities and their families. Marguerite Tiefenthal, from the Hinsdale Schools, and I worked to develop models for school social workers to help make the intentions of the law possible (Constable & Tiefenthal, 1978).

I took a year's sabbatical to work in schools again and develop models for working with the new legal environment. By the late 1970's, a law was passed, which would require specialized preparation for school social work as a condition for school social work certification in Illinois. The problem was that there were no models for this preparation at the time, and we didn't want such control to shift to education departments. We could imagine scores of highly functionally specific courses dealing with the many different tasks of the school social worker. We developed an educational model that focused on the student's *integration* of course and fieldwork, rather than dozens of courses (Constable, 1978). A well-developed second-year field placement and advanced integrative courses in school social work and education were built on foundation courses in social work. Students were able to choose a concentration, when they were ready, rather than at the very beginning of their studies. The model has proved quite workable, and, after two decades, there is an observable effect on the practice of now approximately 2300 school social workers practicing in Illinois schools.

Developing Literature

In 1979, I was asked to become the editor of the School Social Work Quarterly. We had no national journal since 1955, when with the advent of NASW, The Bulletin of the National Association of School Social Workers was absorbed into the journal, Social Work. I talked it over with Sid Zimbalist, and he suggested that I take the position. The experience of editing a journal was valuable. Much of the work involved helping people with ideas to venture into writing. I was an active editor, helping people to revise their material and encouraging resubmission of material that was promising, but the results of all this work seemed good. We finished one volume of four issues, a selection of still cited articles. In the following volume, we systematically

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attempted to develop areas of school social work practice from direct work through policy and research. School social work practice, policy, and research were different in substance but integrally related to the institutional purpose, the process of education.

The field of school social work practice, policy, and research can be defined best by its practitioners. Working with John Flynn, who developed a special issue on research methods in school social work, we completed the second volume, but the publisher decided to pull the plug on the whole journal. Fortunately, a disaster was turned into a blessing. I knew the work was good, and I felt a real obligation to our contributors. Having retained the copyright on the articles, I added about half again as many articles in a systematic presentation of practice. The volume became a basis for the first edition of School Social Work: Practice and Research Perspectives (Constable & Flynn, 1982). Articles we were unable to use in the book were all accepted into other journals, and I was pleased to have arranged some of this. We have since completed four editions of the book over 18 years, each one about a 60% revision. The book has grown with the field and is well used. The fourth edition (Constable, McDonald, & Flynn, 1999) is being translated into Chinese. Later, I worked as editor of the NASW journal, Social Work in Education and on the NASW Publications Committee. I was particularly pleased that by working closely with suggested revisions of articles, we were able to build the journal to a level of quality and help to develop people who would publish in the field and build the literature.

I moved to Loyola University as full professor in 1985. In some ways it was like going home, but I have missed many of my friends at Illinois. I was deeply touched by Harvey Treger playing his cello for our friendship and as a way of saying goodbye. His big heart was in his music and so was mine. Our children were growing up during the 1980's in a big old house in Oak Park, Illinois. To talk about them would be another article. We did many things, such as backpacking through Europe. We continue to celebrate and cope with life and its vicissitudes together. As our children grow older, and move on to develop their own lives, we remain their cheering section.

I have found myself increasingly involved in projects abroad. Loyola sponsored a study course at its Rome campus for social workers, which Marge Dwyer, Martha Urbanowski, and I put together. I developed a collaborative relationship with Universita Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan and over a decade delivered several papers in Italian on different aspects and problems of social work education (Constable, 1991, 1996). Actually, my Italian wasn't good enough for me to compose in Italian. I would write the papers in English. They

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would be translated into Italian and then, after correcting the paper, I would deliver it in Italian.

Social Work in Eastern Europe

Eastern Europe, with its need to recreate a humane society, was presenting an entirely different challenge to social work. Professional education first had to be developed. With the victory of Solidarity in Poland, my colleague, Stan Piwowarski, and I were invited to provide consultation to Polish universities, and, in 1990, we made a number of trips there, culminating in a full semester's work with Polish universities in Lodz, Warsaw, and Krakow. I did an edited book with Vera Mehta on Education for Social Work in Eastern Europe (Constable & Mehta, 1994). For me, as a child of the Second World War, the work and the friendships developed in those lands of deep suffering and new promise are very special. Later, I worked in Moscow on a possible project of developing social work education and in St. Petersburg in a conference to develop a reorganized *Caritas* of the Russian Republic. *Caritas* is a non-governmental organization of the Catholic Church, existing at every diocesan level and loosely affiliated with *Caritas Internationalis*, an umbrella organization in Rome. Russia posed a particular problem because of its profound need, its emergence from the Communist system, its diversity, and the minority position of the Catholic Church there. There are two dioceses: one, the Diocese of Asia from the Ural Mountains to the Bering Sea; the other, Western Russia, from the Ukraine to the Urals. I had studied some Russian at Georgetown in the 1950's, and, at last, I had the pleasure of using it.

In September 1991, immediately after the collapse of the Soviet Union, I was invited by Caritas of Lithuania to provide consultation. Social work did not exist in Lithuania in any way. There were almost no community services. Welfare services in the previous regime were designed to hide problems. We worked with Sister Albina Pajarskaite, a deeply spiritual person, who also had a doctorate in her area, and we forged an agreement between Caritas of Lithuania and Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas to develop the first social work education program in Lithuania. It would be a masters degree, with a focus on social development. Regina Kulys and I were codirectors of the program. We each spent about half of our time from 1991 until 1997 in Lithuania. We received substantial support from the American National Conference of Catholic Bishops for the project. The program continues, now under Lithuanian leadership (Constable, Kulys, & Harrison, 1999).

There are now 70 masters graduates, and the program flourishes. The thesis research of these graduates and their innovations in services have proven to be very useful for social development in Lithuania. About 12 of these students are now actively pursuing doctoral education, and 2 of these have just successfully defended their dissertation. These will be the leaders of their new profession.

Becoming a social worker in Lithuania was a matter of learning very different values, and so the education process was also different. Our 30 volunteer professors were as midwives to the reborn professional selves of the students. The process was equally formative for the professors. Paul and Sonia Abels helped form the first class of students. David Harrison developed the research program through many years and helped each student complete a substantive masters thesis. Lucia Valciukas, an Australian social worker fluent in Lithuanian, developed the field program. Through the cultural divide, she found herself helping to form each student and nurturing each student's aspirations to practice. Our students have begun to make their contributions to a changing Lithuania. Ruta Butkeviciene brought whole populations of hearing-impaired children out of institutions, into families and normal school placements. Birgita Kimbriene struggled through tuberculosis, but she eventually developed and coordinated an evening school program to train community child welfare and other workers. Ruta Jurkeviene found an unused kindergarten building to develop a residence, where pregnant, post-institutional adolescents, and older adults could share their gifts with each other.

SUMMARY

It all began with reading the captions of pictures of Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini on the kitchen floor. I saw violence glorified as patriotism and mimicked in the games, fantasies, and relations of children. A half century later, working to develop social work in the new societies of Poland and Lithuania, I visited the death camps. I witnessed these well-preserved scenes, where once indescribable violence had taken place, the requiem of any illusions of modern progress. I wept for each person, each relationship, first destroyed by labels, and then by the madness of our modernity and of its social processes. As a student of history, I also remembered what was done at Dresden, Hamburg, Tokyo, Nagasaki, Hiroshima, in the prewar Ukraine, and in the postwar Gulags, in China, and early in the

century, in Armenia. I am a practicing social worker, who has become a teacher and a spinner of theories. I am in many ways ever more a stranger and alien to this culture of death. Might I do something for the delicate relationships, which sustain life in its fullest sense for everyone? I am convinced more and more that nothing else matters.

I continue to work with couples and families as I have done for 30 years, but now with more time. I see couples creating and sustaining structural changes in their marriage and family through communication and through mutual action. I teach at Loyola, where I try to assist doctoral students to develop their ideas into a workable dissertation topic, and masters students in school social work to develop their practice. I also teach about families in Polish and in Spanish universities. Family is very old in both countries, but the ideas that families can be recreated through communication and action and the methodologies of helping are very new. I continue active in school social work mainly through writing and research. Most recently, I completed and published a statewide study of school social work in Indiana (Constable, Kuzmickaite, Harrison, & Volkmann, 1999). The findings shed more light on the multifaceted role of the school social worker on the school team. Our text in school social work is very well used. We do anticipate a fifth edition and may soon begin work on this.

My social work narrative is most of all a narrative of relationships, of friendships, of great people whom I have been privileged to know and who passed on to me ideas to pass on to others. It is a way of affirming that our relational human lives are as powerful as the cry of the littlest child. In a world of manifest tragedy, there is still nothing more powerful, if we allow ourselves to hear it.

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LOOKING OVER MY SHOULDER

Marion Huxtable

ABSTRACT

It is not often that we have the chance to learn the frustrations and satisfactions of a colleague. Readers may catch their own reflection as they look over the shoulder of a school social worker, whose life work has been down at eye level with children. I have found satisfaction in balancing my work helping children succeed in school with strengthening our profession with colleagues around the country and starting to build a global network of school social workers.

I have been a bleeding heart since the radical '60's, when it was more acceptable. Now it is a conversation stopper, and I seldom talk about it. Who wants to hear about mental illness, child abuse, suicide, retardation, and all of the other things that social workers get involved with? So, being invited to write about what I do is a rare opportunity for me to communicate with people who know what it feels like, and for school social workers to look over the shoulder of a colleague, and perhaps catch their own reflection.

When I graduated from the School of Social Work at Arizona State University in 1974, I was offered a job as a school social worker. I accepted, as it was the only job I was offered. I had never heard of school social work, and for the first few months I pestered co-workers about what I was supposed to be doing. I was green as a blade of grass, new to both social work and to the American school system. I started at just under $9,000 on the teacher's salary schedule.

I was disappointed by the salary, which was low by 1970's standards. However, I was happy to have a job, even though I had no special commitment to school social work and did not know how to do it. I learned how very slowly by doing it, and I came to see schools as the ideal place to work with children. At first it was frustrating as I fumbled around for information about social work with children. Books and articles seemed to me to offer little guidance for what I was doing in schools, and my school district offered no supervision. Later, I saw the advantage of being left alone. I found that the schools were happy to let me do as I liked, as long as I did not cause trouble and got

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along with the staff. This left me free to learn how to be a school social worker my way.

There was no shortage of referrals. I had eight schools in 1974 and took requests from teachers informally. Even if I did not solve the problem, they seemed to appreciate that someone cared enough to try. The teachers seemed to me to be the key, and I was there for them as well as for the children. I probably identified more with the teachers than did many of my peers, as I had a degree in education before I was a social worker.

The Strike

I joined the Tucson Education Association, the local affiliate of the National Education Association. My salary increased slowly, and, although the Association did not support all of the social workers' issues, our salary and benefits depended on TEA's bargaining. Public school teachers around the country were bargaining hard and using the threat of strikes, a common bargaining tool with public employees in the 1970's (before the striking air traffic controllers were laid off) to gain power in educational decision-making and improve their miserably low salaries. Shortly after school opened in 1978, the TEA voted to strike. I was shocked that the school social workers, who were more experienced than I was, seemed to take no ethical position and developed no plan of action. More than half of them did not report to work. I was torn between not wanting to be labeled a 'scab' and lose my rapport with the teachers and a belief that social workers should not strike. I crossed the picket line and reported to my office. The other social workers either "stayed home" or went to the assignments given them to teach special education classes. I refused to go to a classroom and was told I could be fired for insubordination. I spent some miserable hours alone at the office reviewing my contract. The next day, my Department Head invented a temporary assignment for me as a crisis counselor, an assignment that I could accept.

The strike was over in 5 days, and teachers (social workers with them) benefited from it. Within 4 years, my salary doubled and it continued to climb steeply for 7 years following the strike. Many teachers had felt it was necessary, but only a few firebrands had enjoyed the experience of defying the school district. Once it was over, few people would talk about it, but for me it had been traumatic, and I needed to express my feelings. I wrote down what I had experienced just so that I could release some of what I had gone through, and this was how I got started publishing my work (Huxtable, 1980). I hoped that my naïve article could spare some other school social worker from being as unprepared as I had been.

Learning To Be a School Social Worker

Since I started with almost no understanding of methods of working therapeutically with children, I wanted to learn some skills. Most of what I had read did not seem helpful, but early in my career I was lucky to hear the child psychiatrist, Richard Gardner, speak. My 20-year-old notes show that in 8 sessions, he covered school phobia, anti-social behavior, psychogenic learning disabilities, and encopresis, as well as sharing the psychotherapeutic techniques that he had developed. I liked his ideas, and I learned to use his ways of developing rapport with children, such as jokes and magic tricks. I struggled to apply his sophisticated therapeutic methods to my work. His insistence that effective therapy is not done in set blocks of time seemed to fit well with practice in schools, where I sometimes saw a child for 5 minutes or a family for 2 hours. It was also good news for me that Gardner claimed that successful therapy depends on the therapist liking children, enjoying doing child-like activities with them, and showing warmth. He believed in the therapist offering a caring adult role model down at eye level, rather than maintaining an unemotional distance. Getting down to eye level with little kids means crouching beside desks, resting chin on hands for counseling, and then being asked why you have yellow teeth. In the 70's, when Gardner put forward the idea that therapy required a warm, nurturing relationship with children, it was seen as radical. Even he would probably think that hugging kids is radical, but school social workers see that many kids need hugs as well as therapy. My female colleagues (social workers and teachers) often give hugs, although I doubt it is considered professional, and we have all heard warnings against it. It is a different story for most of my male colleagues, most of whom have quit giving hugs.

Gardner developed ways of working with children that blended the best parts of different therapies, including a large measure of cognitive therapy. Gardner's psychoanalytic training gave insight to his use of therapeutic board games and mutual story-telling that I knew I did not have, but, after only a little practice, I could recognize symbolism in a child's stories and discovered the remarkable power of stories in discovering the child's feelings. Gradually, I discovered many ways of using stories that made sense in a school as opposed to a clinic. Jokes, magic tricks, stories, and Gardner's board games (together with many copy-cat games since developed) became part of my repertoire.

Gardner was the role model for all my therapeutic work. I still find his book, The Psychotherapeutic Techniques of Richard A. Gardner (Gardner, 1986), the best guide for child therapy. When my

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first paper was published, I had felt satisfaction from thinking that my experience during the strike might help some other naïve school social worker. Since I was excited to be discovering how to work therapeutically with children, I again wanted to share my new knowledge, this time about how I had combined Gardner's mutual story-telling with using children's books in school social work (Huxtable, 1982).

I started to use humor in counseling children, and I was tickled when WHIM, the World Humor and Irony Membership, held two annual conferences (April 1, 1985 and 1986) in Arizona. I did my research and presented a paper on using humor in counseling children at the second WHIM conference (Huxtable, 1987). The literature (aside from occasional authors such as Gardner) presents counseling as humorless, but I suspected that my colleagues joked, teased, bantered, and generally clowned around with the children. A modest survey confirmed this and gave me some examples of how they joked and clowned with children in doing counseling. Part of the fun in working with children is that playing, joking, and enjoying childish things are part of the job. The literature on children's humor showed me what children laugh at in different stages of development and helped me understand how to use humor safely. I wanted to share this and again published what I had learned (Huxtable, 1989). By this time, I was a Consulting Editor of Social Work in Education. The Editorial Board members and other Consulting Editors were leaders in the field of school social work, but I had little understanding of the history of school social work and how these people had influenced it. They were only names to me at the time.

Publishing

I reviewed papers for Social Work in Education for 16 years, the longest tenure of any Consulting Editor. If an article was flawed but seemed publishable, I gave the author detailed suggestions for improving it. If the article was hopeless, I made suggestions for alternative ways of using the article and found something in the article to praise. As an author, I knew it would be devastating to be rejected with no comments, and I had much appreciated receiving detailed suggestions about my articles. Social Work in Education was the best journal for my publications, and I continued to send my articles to the journal, although I was frustrated by being kept waiting for months to hear if the article was accepted and then waiting up to 2 years before it was published.

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Civil Liberties

I wanted to work with children before I went to graduate school. When I applied for jobs in Arizona in 1971, I discovered that I was ineligible to work in a public agency, not because I was unqualified, but because I was an alien. I took my problem to the Arizona Civil Liberties Union and worked as a mental health technician in a private hospital and attended graduate school, while the ACLU took my case to the United States Supreme Court. The Supreme Court ruled in my favor in Huxtable vs. Nelson et al. (Gary Nelson was the Attorney General for the State of Arizona). The Arizona law was declared unconstitutional (Judgment No. CIV 71-161 TUC, January 5, 1973). I became a loyal member of the ACLU and a United States citizen 2 years later, convinced that things could be changed in this country.

I became a Board Member of the ACLU and was immediately appointed to a task force to investigate civil liberties violations by Child Protective Services. We talked with many families who believed that Child Protective Services had abused them and their children. We found egregious cases of coercion, non-compliance with federal standards, inadequate efforts for family preservation, lack of due process, and poorly qualified staff. Unfortunately, in Tucson, as in most parts of the country, protective services had become a law enforcement agency, with little professional social work. Following the report of our Task Force, Protective Services has improved in its handling of civil liberties in the state, but much still needs to be changed in the way investigations are done and in the services provided to keep families together. While many social workers were and still are frustrated with the situation, I think that the child's safety is such a concern for them that they are often unaware of how parents' civil liberties are violated. I wrote an article (Huxtable, 1994) that I was sure would draw a tidal wave of criticism from readers. It registered about two on the Richter Scale, about the same as my other articles. I do not know if the articles were not read or if social workers are not sufficiently involved to express their opinion.

Professional Associations

Although school social work had been established in Arizona since 1920, there had never been a specialty professional association in the state, and there was no contact between school social workers in different school districts. NASW filled the need for school social workers who wanted to participate in professional activities. Then, in 1990, school social workers in Arizona were approached to participate in an initiative to unite school social workers in the western states.

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Frederick Streeck, a school social worker from Washington State who had participated for several years in the activities of the Midwest Council, brought school social workers together from all 13 western states, and the Western Alliance of School Social Work Organizations was formed. Encouraged by the Western Alliance, Arizona formed a state association for school social workers. I was the secretary and later the president for both the Western Alliance and the School Social Work Association of Arizona. In the early 90's, I was also secretary for the National Coalition for School Social Work, which set the stage for the formation of the School Social Work Association of America in 1994. Working with these specialty groups was rewarding after investing 16 years learning to be a school social worker. I still liked my work, but I found it to be emotionally rather than intellectually rewarding. My work did not give me the opportunity to be involved in making policy or developing initiatives beyond my assigned schools, nor did it offer any hope of advancement. I rarely had serious discussions about school social work with my colleagues. The new professional associations gave me the opportunity to work with other school social workers around the country.

Close to home, starting the School Social Work Association of Arizona was exciting. School social workers got to know others from around the state for the first time, and together we learned how to organize our association and became skilled in putting on state and regional conferences that made a profit. The conferences made our association financially strong, and we could afford to pay expenses, so that our members had the opportunity to participate in leadership activities around the country. We also give small grants to members for their school programs. The SSWAA put on several conferences on fostering resiliency, bringing together national speakers and large numbers of teachers, administrators, and support personnel from Arizona school districts. After one of these conferences in my city, a coalition was formed to promote resiliency in our community (http://www.tucsonresiliency.org). A growing number of schools (including several that do not have school social workers) are now using this paradigm, a true social work method. I like this example of how our volunteer work in professional associations sometimes has a wider impact than the work we are paid to do.

Working with school social work associations gave me rewarding contact with school social workers in my state, the western region, and the rest of the country. Professional associations, writing articles, and editing for social work journals give me the satisfaction of interacting with peers, developing reachable goals, and meeting intellectual challenges. I worked with NASW for many years as a

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Board Member of our state association and a Consulting Editor. When school social workers started in 1994 to organize themselves into a separate national organization, the School Social Work Association of America, I and others from western states felt a strong loyalty to NASW, and we worked to make sure that there would be cooperation between the two associations. However, as I became much more closely involved with specialty associations, the School Social Work Association of Arizona, the Western Alliance of School Social Work Organizations, and the International Network, my links to NASW gradually weakened. I also valued my membership in the Tucson Education Association, in spite of my disagreement with the decision to strike. TEA bargains for school social workers, handles my grievances (for example, over lack of space), and is close by to answer my questions about working conditions and benefits.

When my long term as Consulting Editor with NASW ended in 1998, I realized that my only meaningful tie to NASW was cut. Our School Social Work Association of Arizona had worked well with the Arizona Chapter of NASW, which had helped to finance our early stages. However, I found NASW at the national level to be unresponsive, one of many criticisms expressed in audits and by groups of social workers over the years that NASW was slow to correct. The NASW journals now primarily publish articles written by academics, and the makeup of the Editorial Board and Consulting Editor group for Social Work in Education has changed from largely practitioners to mostly academics. I am concerned that practitioners are less likely to read NASW journals as a result. I terminated my membership in NASW after 30 years. NASW does very important work for all social workers and does it very well, but like many large organizations, it seems to have lost the personal touch. I believe that I can be more effective and fill a leadership role in smaller associations that focus specifically on school social work, and I need the stimulation of being actively involved in my professional associations.

International Network

As I saw the power of school social workers being linked through state, regional, and national associations, I decided that this network of school social workers should be expanded to school social workers overseas. In 1990, I started to write to social work associations around the world to find out if social workers were in the schools and how they worked. Most of the time there was no reply. This was before e-mail made things both cheaper and faster. Slowly, I found school social work contacts in about 20 countries and formed the International Network to share the results of my research. The School

Social Work Association of Arizona funded the work. Twice a year, I write to the representatives I have identified in each country and send them the newsletter of the SSWAA, in which there are always two or three articles from school social workers overseas. Occasionally, the International Network became exciting, for example when I helped a school social worker from Ghana find sponsors to enable her to attend the NASW's 1992 World Conference in Florida, and when I was invited with Randy Fisher, President of the School Social Work Association of America, to Japan to talk about school social work with parents and teachers.

There was little interaction, however, between school social workers in different countries until Randy Fisher proposed that the School Social Work Association of America host an international conference in 1999. At SSWAA's request, I worked with my overseas contacts to find speakers and help them attend. I believe there are as many as 24,000 school social workers around the world, including over 14,000 in the United States, a powerful group, if they join forces. Almost 1000 school social workers from 13 countries attended the first international school social work conference in Chicago in April 1999. They shared information about their programs, discovered that children's problems are similar in all countries, and took home a vast array of ideas for their work. For the first time, I met school social workers with whom I had been corresponding for 9 years and new ones who have become good friends. The conference has not resulted in a deluge of international activities. Now we need an international school social work association to foster international relationships and start joint activities. A second international conference, to be held in Europe in a year or two, will be an opportunity to form an international association.. Meanwhile, the number of countries I can include in the International Network is up to 28. This summer I took a class for salary credit on 'Making Web Pages' and used the opportunity to produce a web site for the International Network (http://internationalnetwork-schoolsocialwork.htmlplanet.com/www/), linking it to the sites of the SSWAA and the Swedish School Social Workers Association. My goal is to encourage each national group to produce a web site, so that social work associations around the world will be linked.

As I worked with school social work leaders from around the world during the last 10 years, it became clear that the school social work literature in most countries is sparse. I decided to produce a book about school social work worldwide to give a baseline about our profession at the beginning of the new century and to encourage school social workers to see that this is an international profession. In the

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current global environment, I believe that school social work will be a more effective, credible, and influential agent in education if school social workers around the world recognize the commonalities of their role and unite to upgrade the profession. School social workers deal with local problems, often with little contact outside of their own school or community, and they seldom see themselves in an international role. Yet children's problems are similar in all countries, and they are increasingly influenced by global forces that affect not only the economy but also the local culture and even intimate family problems. The new millennium and the process of globalization have helped to focus attention on the possibility of coordinating the profession's development internationally to make it a more effective force for children. The new ease of international contact makes it possible for school social workers to extend their influence beyond their local sphere of action to advocate worldwide for children and their education. It is an opportunity that has been little used so far.

Isadora Hare, NASW's staff associate for school social work for many years in the 1980's and 90's, is one of the few in the school social work field active with international activities. Isadora has promoted international cooperation through the International Federation of Social Work, advocated for school social work, and encouraged the development of school social work both in the United States and overseas. In 1998, she was featured in Social Work in Education's annual "Leaders in School Social Work" series, not just for her work in school social work but for her contribution to international activities, signaling that the profession is becoming more aware of the importance and potential of collaboration between school social workers of different countries. I wrote an accompanying article, "School Social Work: International Profession," that included the results of my research into school social work around the world and suggesting how the kind of work that Isadora has done in international consultation can be further developed to bring our profession international stature (Huxtable, 1998; Pennekamp, 1998).

International Baseline: School Social Work Worldwide

I wanted to produce a book to document the status of school social work at the beginning of the new century, and I found a co-editor in Eric Blyth, a social work educator from the University of Huddersfield in the United Kingdom. The book provides a baseline of information about our profession in 13 countries. One of the strengths of the book is that the authors, who are leaders of school social work in their countries, include practitioners as well as social work educators. School Social Work Worldwide will be published within the next few

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months by NASW Press (Huxtable & Blyth, in press). We hope it will lead to more international contacts, stimulate awareness of the importance of the literature, and encourage school social workers to unite as advocates for the world's children.

Measuring Compassion

Producing this book reinforces my conviction of the importance of school in children's lives. At school, children can be given much more than academics. At the four elementary schools that I serve, for example, the children are given breakfast and lunch, before and after school care, counseling, guidance, nursing, and much parenting. My school social work readers will know about how schools also provide clothing, food boxes at holidays, home visits, mentoring, training, and nurturing. Over the quarter of a century that I have been working in schools, children's needs have grown as homes have become more stressed. More children live with only one parent, significant numbers have never known one or both of their parents, many are raised by grandparents, more parents are in prison, small children are in day care before and after school, children's parents and grandparents have used and may still be using drugs, and many families rarely sit down to eat together. My own childhood, which was not perfect, seems idyllic compared with the lives of the children I work with.

I sometimes feel overwhelmed by the children's problems. After 26 years, I thought I understood most of what I could feel as a school social worker. But I find it difficult to explain my feelings when confronted by hungry people at a soup kitchen, a memorial service for a child, a child who reports being raped by a grandfather, or a police notice on a street telling me that I am entering a drug dealing area. I see all of the ills of society distilled in the children, and sometimes it scares me. I rely on the resiliency model to combat my own Northern European pessimism and to help my schools teach children how to overcome their problems.

At school, the children spend 6 hours in a clean, healthy, supervised environment, where they are fed, taught, disciplined reasonably fairly, and nurtured. The nurturing comes from many of the staff, not just the social worker. It is part of the job of the school social worker to encourage a nurturing attitude in the staff and to help them understand the meaning of children's behavior. Compassion and caring are the part of social work that is difficult to measure, but they form the background for more measurable parts of the job.

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School Attendance

While it is difficult to measure compassion, improving students' attendance, traditionally part of school social work's mission, is the easiest and most objective part to measure. It is also one of the most valuable. In my first years in school social work, I found that children would be referred to me late in the year after they had already missed 20 or more days of school. It was too late to mend the damage, yet I wasted plenty of time trying to bring these students back to school. It was one of the more frustrating things that I have ever tried to do.

About 5 years ago, I developed a program primarily based on positive reinforcement, the tool we know to be most effective for changing behavior. I decided that I would not concern myself solely with the reasons why the children were absent. I knew that the reasons were complex and multivariate and that I may not find out the truth anyway. I also realized that I could not wait for the children to be referred, but I must start at the beginning of the year. Experience showed that last year's attendance record was both baseline and predictor of future attendance. Since I am at each school only once a week, I also know that others must reinforce the program, although I would necessarily take the lead.

All children who missed 20 or more days last year are in my attendance program. I calculate their attendance regularly as a percentage of days missed for a direct comparison with last year's record, and I give the usual types of positive reinforcement for improvement. This simple program has produced highly significant results year after year. It will be published this year in the School Social Work Journal (Huxtable, in press). I feel a satisfaction with the numerical results of this program, which is different from the emotional satisfactions that I receive from many of my efforts, where I know that I am 'doing good', but do not have statistics to show it.

Goals

I regret that I have not measured the results of the rest of my work as I have done in the attendance program. It has never been required of me, and realizing that measurement would be difficult, I have let it go. I usually know when I have helped a child, and teachers report improvement too. One young teacher even called me her "miracle worker" last year, after I worked with four of her students. I solved another case of a kindergartner who had been soiling her pants for weeks, by making sure that both parents, siblings, teacher, and school nurse followed a simple plan of reinforcement. For a few weeks, my reputation was solid. Then, the child's father in a "dry

drunk" went off the deep end, the parents separated, the stress level in the family went up and stayed high, and the plan rested on very shaky ground. The little girl started to soil again. My success with the soiling problem was approaching zero, and my goals shifted to supporting the family and attempting to have them keep the child's plan going.

In spite of my failure to measure results, I realize that using data in a variety of ways has become more feasible in the last few years with the availability of computers. My goal is to gather and present more of the available data to my teams and to use it to stimulate more logical interventions to reach desired outcomes. This will help to avoid the frustration I often experience with my own and others' efforts when they are crisis oriented, rather than planned to solve anticipated problems.

Much of what school social workers do in a large public institution is designed to meet requirements of the law, rather than to reach a desired outcome for students. There is pressure on the practitioner to produce paperwork necessary for the audit, rather than to document that they have helped children succeed. Special Education provides the best example of how school social workers can spend most of their time in routine required tasks (the developmental history and team meetings) that must be completed before a child can be placed in Special Education. After the child is placed in Special Education, the paperwork requirements continue, and the child continues in Special Education, often without evidence that his or her learning is improving as a result. I am part of an experiment in my school district to skip the expensive and time-consuming Special Education procedures and instead to use available special and regular education staffs, including social workers, to develop innovative services for children who need help. Ongoing assessment, flexibility and creativity, and an absence of bureaucracy are the hallmarks of the Breakthrough Program, which is based on the Regular Education Initiative and uses principles supported by the 1997 Amendments to the IDEA (Huxtable, 1997). With the Breakthrough Program, we avoid labeling, rarely placing a child in Special Education.

Our school social work profession is needed in this new century as much as it was when it began in the early part of the last century. School social workers started out by helping to bring all children, especially the poor and immigrants, into the schools, and later we focused on the students' mental health, then on children with special education needs. Now, we have many options for our work and must maintain control of how we use our skills. Keeping students in school, defending children's rights, and helping them reach their potential are school social work's contribution to educating children.

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Our clients, children, hold the human and intellectual capital that the future of the world depends on. This is school social work's mission, my life-work and yours too, dear reader.

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Marion Huxtable, MSW, has worked as a social worker for Tucson Unified School District in Arizona for 26 years. She is President of the Western Alliance of School Social Work Organizations and Past President of the School Social Work Association of Arizona. In 1990, she started the International Network by researching the existence of school social work around the world and contacting school social work professional associations. She sends the information twice a year in a newsletter to school social work associations in 30 countries.

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REFLECTIONS ON SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK: ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

James P. Clark

ABSTRACT

In this paper the author reflects on the collective accomplishments of school social workers and identifies key challenges to the profession for its future development. Accomplishments and challenges are discussed in the areas of professional identity and specialization, demonstrating results, school social work and school culture, best practices, and leadership development.

I recently became almost painfully aware of the fact that I have been a social worker for a quarter of a century, with 22 of these years devoted to the practice of school social work. The ominous realization that my professional career has actually spanned 25 years has recently given me cause to reflect on my personal experience as a social worker. It also has provided an opportunity for me to develop a set of reflections about the specialty of school social work based on my professional experience.

These reflections have taken the form of summative observations of school social work. They represent what I have learned and what I understand about the collective functioning of school social workers, drawn from the opportunities I have had to work at various levels of the delivery systems of education and human services. As such, I consider these observations to be the synthesis of diverse professional experiences.

I have had the opportunity to work on a multidisciplinary team serving rural Iowa schools, working daily with teachers, principals, students, families, and communities. At the intermediate agency level, I spent several years developing a regional parent-educator project designed to enhance the working relationship of parents and educators to enable them to better collaborate on behalf of students with disabilities. For the past 15 years I have served as Consultant for School Social Work Services at the Iowa Department of Education. In this role I have responsibility for supporting the statewide development of school social work services, as well as the opportunity to contribute

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to the development of state policy and other systemic change efforts that benefit children, families, and communities. In this role, I have also had the opportunity to be involved in leadership activities with state, regional, and national school social work professional organizations. It is with a deep sense of appreciation for the rich opportunities I have had to work at various levels of these systems that I offer the following reflections on the state of school social work.

A Delicate Balance: Professional Identity and Specialization

I have come to question whether school social work really is a specialization within the profession. I have also come to question whether considering school social work a specialization has a useful purpose. Over the past several decades, school social workers have advocated in a variety of ways for the notion that social work practice in schools requires specialized knowledge and skills, and is, therefore, a specialization within the broader profession of social work.

One indicator of this advocacy is the development of the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) School Social Work Specialist Credential that, until recently, included a competency exam based on a systematic analysis of what school social workers considered to be knowledge and skills essential for school social work practice (Nelson, 1990). Another indicator is that many certification and licensing systems governed by state education agencies or other teacher licensing boards require that school social workers have pre-service specialized training in school social work and education. Also, a number of schools of social work have courses or curriculum concentrations designed to prepare students to be school social workers.

Despite what might appear to be significant indicators of specialization, I have come to view the establishment of school social work as a specialization within the broader profession of social work as an ambitious and perhaps laudable ideal that mostly has been unable to be realized. This is evidenced in the reality that the overwhelming majority of currently practicing school social workers have received minimal, if any, graduate level training in school social work. In part, this is the result of a lack of availability of such preparation in most schools of social work. Also, even when school social work courses are available, many social work graduate students are reluctant to devote significant time and energy to specialization course work if they are uncertain about their commitment to practice in the specialization or if they believe that sufficient job opportunities do not exist.

For example, the result of this reality in Iowa is that there are two options for state regulated entry into school social work. The first

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option is to be issued a school social work license, which requires the completion of a prescribed course of graduate study in school social work and education. The second option is to be granted a "statement of professional recognition (SPR)", which requires only the completion of an MSW degree, with no specialized course work. The overwhelming majority of school social workers practice under the SPR option. Retaining the SPR option in Iowa clearly has been a supply and demand strategy, i.e., without the SPR option the demand for school social workers would far outpace the supply, because of the limited number of graduate students willing to devote their attention to the specialization needed to obtain a school social work license. In fact, data collected immediately after the school social work licensing option was added to the SPR option in 1985, indicated that, while there was a slight decline in the applicant pool for school social work positions, all vacant positions were able to be filled (Clark, 1992). More recent anecdotal data suggests that this continues to be the case.

The inability to maintain a current national competency exam for the NASW School Social Work Specialist Credential further compromises the ability of school social workers to claim that there is specialized knowledge and skill required for school social work practice. The specialist exam was the only existing vehicle for articulating the commonly agreed upon specialized knowledge and skills required for school social work practice. It was the only mechanism for reliably documenting whether social workers had acquired these knowledge and skills.

A number of provocative questions emerge from this consideration of whether school social work is a specialty. Does the fact that certain knowledge is needed about any setting in which social work is practiced mean that practice in that setting is "specialized?" Does the need to adapt certain skills to a particular setting mean that practice in that setting is "specialized"? Isn't it expected that social workers will apply social work knowledge and skills in a variety of settings? Does knowledge about the particular setting of schools represent anything more than the social worker's need to understand the "situation" component of the "person-in-situation" configuration? Just how unique do the skills have to be and how unique or substantial does the knowledge base have to be to warrant designation as a "specialization"? Are specialized knowledge and skills acquired only in graduate preparation, or can they be acquired in professional development programs during employment?

To a great extent, the question of whether school social work is a specialization within the broader social work profession is central to the development of an identity among school social workers and to

the relationship of school social workers to their social work colleagues who practice in other settings. Education policy and system reform initiatives of the last two decades persistently have emphasized the need for public schools to link with other child and family serving agencies and service delivery systems, such as child welfare, mental health, juvenile justice, etc. in order to more fully meet the needs of today's children and families. The need for school social workers to work more closely with colleagues in other service systems is heightened by these reforms.

When these initiatives take the form of reconfiguring the delivery of services, e.g., where child welfare, mental health, or juvenile justice social workers are asked to provide services on-site in schools, issues of identity and specialization often emerge. Too often in these circumstances relationships between social work colleagues become stressed. School social workers may think that only school employed social workers know how to work within the culture and structure of the school and that clinical social workers from the local mental health center do not know how to apply clinical knowledge and skills in the school setting. Clinical social workers may think that school social workers have little clinical knowledge and skill and are responding to their presence in a defensive and territorial manner.

If the identity of social workers with their area of specialization compromises the ability to create and sustain collegial relationships, we become less unified as a profession and less effective in our work to affect changes in systems on behalf of our clients. For the sake of our future as a profession and for the well-being of our clients, it is critical that we find ways to create a more unified identity among all social workers and not let the identification with specialized areas of practice fragment us. This might be facilitated by a more collaborative approach to the development of professional development activities, political action, and advocacy for state and national policies that benefit social work clients on the part of the professional organizations that represent our various social work specialties.

Demonstrating Results

Over the span of my school social work career, I have witnessed significant progress in the inclusion of school social work services in major federal legislation and policy initiatives. For example, NASW's advocacy on behalf of school social workers in 1974–1975 resulted in the specific designation of "social work in schools" as a related service in the Education of All Handicapped Childrens' Act of 1975. This has done much to support the development of school social work services for students with

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disabilities and their families. Other examples of legislative and policy support for school social work services include the identification of social work services as an early intervention service in the 1986 amendments to the Education of the Handicapped Act, which created support to states for the development of early intervention services for infants and toddlers and their families and the inclusion of social work in the definition of "pupil services personnel" in the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, in particular the recent reauthorization of the Elementary School Counseling Demonstration Program under this Act.

Though school social workers have accomplished much by attaining this legislative and policy support for our services, the challenge now and in the future will be to document, for policy makers, clients, and ourselves, the results of providing these services. Too often, in the effort to advocate for our inclusion in policy and services provided in the host setting of the school, school social workers have failed to give adequate attention to demonstrating that providing these services makes a difference. More importantly, it must be demonstrated that the results of school social work services make a difference in relation to the priorities and major responsibilities of public schools. For example, as schools respond to increased public and political pressure to raise academic achievement of students, can it be demonstrated that, when school social work services are successfully provided to students experiencing social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties, their academic achievement improves?

Currently, data to demonstrate the effectiveness of school social work services are far too limited in scope and comprehensiveness. Few practitioners collect these types of data with any regularity despite the fact that "the technology for demonstrating outcomes is developed, available and familiar to school social workers" (Clark, 1990, p.56). Also, few university faculty have research interest in this area. Further, the outcome research that is conducted and published is typically focused on practice issues that are of little interest or relevance to schools and education policy makers, and articles reporting results are typically published in school social work journals or other social science publications. There is an urgent need to have these findings and their implications for current education issues published in journals that are read by teachers, school administrators, and education policy makers.

The purpose of demonstrating practice effectiveness should not be thought of as simply providing justification for committing resources to school social work services, although this certainly is one very legitimate use of such data. Effectiveness data along with

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proposals for practice innovation also should stimulate attention to ongoing practice improvement for school social workers and should be offered as a contribution to the knowledge base for new education initiatives. This is why it is important to target publications that are routinely read by educators. School social workers must be viewed by educators as having valuable contributions to make to new policy, practice, and professional development initiatives. These contributions must be readily accessible and in written form, e.g., journal articles, books, technical assistance papers, and training manuals.

A recent personal experience illustrates this. Shortly after the reauthorization of the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act of 1997, the Office of Special Education Programs in the U. S. Department of Education convened a series of national institutes for state education department personnel focusing on the new student discipline provisions, specifically the provisions requiring functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plans. I attended one of the institutes, which took place over 3 days and included renowned key-note presenters and many expert presenters in break-out sessions. In addition, a large notebook was provided to participants that contained what was considered to be literature representing the "state of the art" in conducting functional behavioral assessments and developing behavioral intervention plans. I was terribly disappointed to find that not one of the documents was authored by a school social worker, nor were any of the documents even endorsed by a social work organization. Also, none of the keynote or expert presenters were school social workers. However, our student service colleagues, i.e. school counselors and school psychologists, were represented among the presenters and the literature.

On the national scene, school social workers were obviously not viewed as having a significant contribution to make to the development of policies and practices for these student discipline provisions. We were not visible in the education literature or in professional development and training initiatives in which educators participate. Our dedicated work every day in providing services to students, families, and educators simply is not enough to enable us to be viewed as experts and as essential contributors to important education initiatives. In addition to communicating the results of services and practice innovations to education decision makers and education policy makers, we must be much more active in generating research and innovation and in providing training to educators.

To address the challenge of demonstrating the effectiveness of school social work services and contributing to the development of major education innovations and initiatives, it is essential that new

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practitioner-researcher relationships be nurtured between school social work practitioners and university faculty and that a national research agenda for school social work be developed. The agenda should identify key social work and education issue for which research is needed and develop action plans for completing the research. It is interesting to note that in the mid-1980s, a national school social work research network was established but was not able to be sustained for more than a few years. Professional organizations such as NASW and the School Social Work Association of America should provide leadership in reviving this effort by convening a network of practitioners and researchers to develop and implement a research agenda and to plan for the strategic dissemination of research findings.

School Social Workers and School Culture

I have come to suspect that as school social workers become a more integrated part of the fabric of schools they become enculturated into the school as a social system. While this is not in itself a positive or negative phenomenon, it concerns me that in most schools a predominant element of the culture is shaped by teacher unions that too often function in a protectionistic manner promoting adult-centered school environments, and sometimes even reinforcing unprofessional behavior. For example, it is not uncommon to hear reports of teachers who leave an after school meeting with a parent before the meeting is concluded, because the meeting has continued beyond the time designated in the master contract when teachers may leave.

As school social workers become enculturated into schools, do we risk being influenced negatively by such unionistic expectations? Will the terms of master contracts conflict with professional and ethical obligations to serve our clients? Do our ethical obligations to serve clients beyond the standard hours of the school day and to provide services in locations outside of the school when needed, e.g., making home visits, put us in conflict with the culture of the school or with specific legal provisions of master contracts? In order to ensure the continued development of school social work and the continued presence of our services in schools, practitioners will need to be increasingly ethically vigilant as well as skilled in recognizing and resolving these issues. Attention to the ongoing development of professional standards and the articulation of best practices also are needed.

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Best Practices

A comprehensive description of best practices in school social work is long overdue and desperately is needed by our profession. There is a need to articulate the optimal manner in which every aspect of school social work should be practiced, based on our cumulative experience, professional standards and ethics, and the research and practice literature. The development of best practices can provide continuity for the qualitative development of school social work services, assist in the continued refinement of professional standards, serve as a reference point for program development and program evaluation, guide advocacy efforts for policy and legislation, and can provide a common framework for evaluating the effectiveness of services.

Leadership for the development of nationally recognized best practices should be provided. This can be achieved through a collaborative effort of schools of social work and state, regional, and national school social work professional organizations. It would be most appropriate for NASW and the School Social Work Association of America to lead the development of this initiative.

Leadership Development

School social work is organized extensively in the United States. At this time, there are two national organizations that represent school social workers, NASW and the School Social Work Association of America. In addition, there are four regional councils comprised of state associations in their respective geographical regions. Also, most states have a school social work association or a committee or similar structure within the state's NASW chapter. These organizations provide many opportunities for school social workers to associate with colleagues in professional development activities, to support further organization of school social workers, and to advocate for legislation and policy that benefit our clients. School social work organizations also provide many leadership opportunities for practitioners.

While the number of these opportunities has increased with the proliferation of state, regional, and national school social work organizations, little has been done to purposefully and strategically nurture leadership development. Practitioners with substantial leadership experience in school social work organizations often acknowledge how difficult it is to recruit new leaders and to sustain their participation in leadership over time. There is a growing need to develop strategies for identifying practitioners with leadership potential early in their careers and to provide leadership training for promising leaders. Systems for supporting mentoring relationships with

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accomplished school social work leaders and practitioners new to the ranks of school social work need to be developed. Mentoring systems should take advantage of the rich experiences of school social workers who work at various levels of the education system, i.e. direct service providers, program supervisors, administrators, and state agency employed school social work consultants.

In addition to supporting the development of leadership within school social work professional organizations, there also is a need to support school social workers in pursuing leadership opportunities within the education system and within professional organizations for educators. The school social work contribution to education could be greatly enhanced if more school social workers were represented among the ranks of school principals, superintendents, and other local and state level administrative positions. This, of course, presents a considerable challenge, because many state licensing systems are not easily accessible to school social workers and because most do not have an educator license or certificate. School social workers also should be more active in leadership positions within professional organizations for teachers and administrators.

SUMMARY

I have learned and come to deeply appreciate that every accomplishment leads to another set of challenges. Such is the nature of changing and continually developing systems. School social workers have accomplished much and have contributed a great deal to the well being of youth, schools, families, and communities over the course of the last century. We need to resist, however, the comfort of status quo and strive for continually improving our contributions to the educational system. The reflections offered here are intended to celebrate accomplishments and to provoke action for the future. Our continued presence in schools and our vitality as a profession are dependent on our visionary approach to responding to the challenges we face in the future. My personal hope resides in the confidence that our past resilience is predictive of our future success.

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EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT FOR CHILDREN WITH BEHAVIORAL AND/OR EMOTIONAL DISORDERS: OVERLOOKED VARIABLES CONTRIBUTING TO PLACEMENTS IN RESTRICTIVE SETTINGS

Andy Frey

ABSTRACT

This article discusses often-overlooked variables contributing to educational placement decisions for children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders in the public schools. A brief outline of the educational placement controversy is first provided to readers, followed by the relevance of educational placement decisions to school social work. The remainder of the paper considers the extent that personal bias influences placement decisions for historically oppressed populations. Specifically, the contribution of gender, socioeconomic status (SES), and ethnicity are entertained. The implications concerning school social work practice, social work education, education policy, and research are also discussed.

No controversy surrounding special education in the last 10 years has been as passionate as those regarding the educational placement of children receiving special education services for a behavioral and/or emotional disorder, as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1997). Children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders are disproportionately placed in restrictive settings (Stephens & Larkin, 1995). Specifically, children categorized with behavioral and/or emotional disorders are three times as likely to receive educational services outside of their neighborhood school than other special education populations (i.e., learning disabled, speech/language, physical, or other health impaired, etc.). A controversy exists, as some educators advocate for children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders to be fully included in regular education classrooms (least restrictive setting). At the other extreme, many educators advocate for children to receive educational support exclusively in special classes, their home, or a hospital-based setting (most restrictive).

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Advocates for full inclusion of students concede that restrictive settings may be appropriate for students who are depressed, suicidal, or violent towards others. They, however, do not support restrictive environments based on the argument that availability results in excessive placement (Brantlinger, 1997). Educators favoring more restrictive settings claim that inclusion in neighborhood schools and general education classrooms does not meet the needs of all students with behavioral and/or emotional disorders. Additionally, they suggest full inclusion is incongruent with IDEA, which mandates school districts to provide a continuum of placement options for children with disabilities (Kauffman, Lloyd, Astuto & Hallahan, 1995).

Relevance of Educational Placement to Social Work

Educational placement for children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders exemplifies the mission of social work for several reasons. Falck (1984), Rubin and Johnson (1984), and Specht (1991) describe the traditional social work mission as helping disadvantaged client groups with interventions and improving conditions through social action and reform. Risk factors associated with social status (i.e., child abuse, poverty, children of color, community isolation, crowded living conditions, family stress, etc.) suggest that children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders are often disadvantaged (Kauffman, 1997).

Placement decisions often determine the type of interventions and the location of the child's school. While placement decisions for children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders are determined in an interdisciplinary framework, the social worker's focus proves unique among mental health professions. As advocates for oppressed and disadvantaged populations, social workers not only must understand the pros and cons of the various placement options available to this vulnerable population, but they also must realize the various factors that influence placement decisions. The mission of social work demands that social workers (a) attend to the societal and environmental factors contributing to student's challenges, (b) investigate the cultural aspects of the problem, (c) advocate on behalf of children, (d) strive for interventions that preserve self-determination and dignity to the greatest extent possible, and (e) seek effective interventions that empower students. Providing adequate services for children with emotional issues potentially can strengthen the family unit, connect isolated and disadvantaged families to the community, and increase the likelihood that these children will become productive adults, which also supports the mission of social work.

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Factors Influencing Student Placement

Substantial variation exists among states concerning identification rates of children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders, ranging from .04% to 2.08% of enrollment for the 1992-1993 school year; variation among districts in each state is similar (U.S. Department of Education, 1994). These identification rates compare to Oswald and Coutinho's (1995) conservative estimate that approximately 2% to 3% of school-age children should qualify for special education services due to a behavioral and/or emotional disorder. Less conservative estimates suggest the prevalence of mental health disorders in youths range from 14% to 25% (Saunders, Resnick, Hoberman, & Blum, 1994). Research suggests that economic (per pupil expenditure, number of students receiving services, placement options in the district), demographic (age of diagnoses, gender, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity), behavioral (type of behavior: internalizing versus externalizing), cognitive, and teacher characteristics (teacher efficacy and locus of control) influence identification rates (Glassberg, 1994; Kauffman, Cullinan, & Epstein, 1987; Kauffman, Hallahan, & Ford 1998; Podell and Soodak, 1993; Trent & Artiles, 1995; U.S. Department of Education, 1992, 1996, 1997). These variables, therefore, contribute to identifying students as behaviorally and/or emotionally disordered.

Surprisingly, not all of the factors that influence identification appear to affect the restrictiveness of the educational setting. Bullock, Zagar, Donahue, and Pelton (1985) compared teachers' perceptions of behavioral characteristics of children in psychiatric treatment hospitals and in public school resource rooms and found no consistent differences. In addition to behavioral characteristics, academic and cognitive attributes of children appear to be insignificant determinants in placement decisions once students have been identified as behaviorally and/or emotionally disordered (Kauffman et al., 1987; Luebke, Epstein, and Cullinan, 1989). While some evidence suggests that demographic variables of the child and teacher variables are associated with educational placement decisions, the literature addressing these decisions is not well-developed (State of Connecticut Department of Education, 1987; Frey, 2000).

Trent and Artiles (1995) suggest that, although the diversity of the student body is increasing, children of color and children in poverty continue to be overidentified as behaviorally and/or emotionally disordered and served in more restrictive placements than their peers. This trend, given that the definition of an emotional disorder in IDEA excludes children who are "socially maladjusted" (unless they are also seriously emotionally disturbed), is further confounded, because many

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services conflict with the values and perceptions of certain cultural groups (Forness, 1988). The remainder of this article addresses the extent to which discrimination influences placement decisions for disadvantaged populations. The contribution of gender, SES, and ethnicity are entertained.

Gender

Little research addresses the impact of gender on **placement** decisions. The relationship, however, between gender and **identification** rates of students with behavioral and/or emotional disorders is well documented. Males are identified as behaviorally and/or emotionally disordered more often than females, even though both have equal prevalence rates for childhood psychological disorders (Achenbach, Howell, Quay, & Conners, 1991). The relationship between gender and identification rates partially communicates teacher bias. For example, teachers appear to interpret male behavior more negatively than female behavior. Lindley and Keithley (1991) found teachers attend to boys' misbehavior more then girls' misbehavior, even when the behaviors are indistinguishable.

Several other studies provide insight into the relationship between gender and identification rates. For example, Pearcy, Clopton, and Pope (1993) confirmed previous literature by discovering that children with externalizing behaviors such as aggression are identified more frequently than children with internalizing problems, such as anxiety or depression. Offord, Boyle, and Racine (1989) recognized that teachers frequently overlook internalizing disorders in females. Green, Clopton, and Pope (1996) also found that teachers are less likely to refer females, because they perceive their problems as more likely to disappear over time than the problems exhibited by boys; unfortunately, internalizing problems are as severe and chronic as externalizing problems. Green, et al. (1996) also discovered that differences in academic competence influence a teacher's decision to refer children for mental health services when a child exhibits internalizing problems. Thus, children with internalizing problems who are not struggling academically, a profile common among female students, are not regularly referred. Conversely, children with externalizing problems typically are referred for services irrespective of academic achievement.

As previously stated, little information exists concerning the relationship between gender and **placement**. One can speculate that the biases affecting identification rates also impact placement recommendations. For example, males may be placed in more restrictive placements than females as a result of their behavior being

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interpreted more negatively, the prevalence of externalizing behaviors, and teachers' beliefs that males' problems are more severe than their female classmates. This topic requires further attention in the literature. The behavioral and emotional challenges facing boys and girls are unique and warrant particular identification procedures and separate intervention models. Unfortunately, no literature was identified in the literature review to assist educators in recognizing behavioral and/or emotional disorders in females, and no recommendations to guide or encourage school districts to establish placement options specifically for girls were discovered. Although societal concerns generally focus on overrepresentation of oppressed populations, underrepresentation of females is concerning. Females progress through school, require special education services, and are frequently overlooked, because their behavior often is not interpreted as negatively as that of boys, not overtly disruptive, or not perceived to be severe.

Socioeconomic status

Another demographic variable impacting placement decisions is SES. The literature addressing the presence of teacher bias, based on SES, suggests that children from low SES families are more likely to be referred for special education than similar children from higher SES families (Podell & Soodak, 1993). Few controlled studies have investigated the relationship between SES and placement in restrictive settings. The association between SES and referral rates must provide a catalyst for researchers to hypothesize and subsequently test theories explaining potential relationships between SES and educational placement of children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders.

Podell and Soodak (1993) investigated the influence of teacher efficacy and SES on decisions to refer students to special education. These researchers hypothesized that teachers' willingness to work with difficult students depends upon their efficacy or ability to change undesirable performances (behavioral and academic). Teacher self-efficacy refers to teachers' beliefs that they influence a students' learning ability, given such factors as student family background, IQ, and school conditions. Teachers with high self-efficacy believe they are capable of bringing about positive behavioral changes in children despite factors beyond their control. Conversely, teachers with low self-efficacy lack confidence that teaching may overcome external factors that are not conducive to student learning. Results suggested, for low-SES students, teachers with high efficacy tend to view their regular education placement as more appropriate than teachers with low efficacy. Teachers' judgments regarding regular education placement

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were not significant concerning students with high-SES backgrounds. These findings may be important to understand the overrepresentation of low-SES children in special education. Teacher decisions regarding poor children are susceptible to bias, particularly when teachers regard environmental factors as more influential than teaching strategies. The presence of teacher bias, based on SES, suggests that students may be differentially referred for special education and more likely to receive services in a restrictive setting.

Other evidence suggests an empirical relationship exists between SES and placement decisions. Glassberg (1994) analyzed placement and demographic statistics in order to determine the factors influencing placement decisions and found that students in less restrictive settings tended to live in more affluent areas. Additionally, statistics suggest that a disproportionate number of poor children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders are placed in restrictive settings, indicating SES is a major predictor of student placement (Wilkinson, 1986).

SES differences may affect behavioral styles of children, and behaviors of low-SES children are perceived as problematic in the traditional school setting. Some child advocates assert that, whatever the cause, children in poverty require additional support in the school. For example, Kauffman and Lloyd (1995) explain the need for special placements in some circumstances:

> ...Given that all children have equal educational opportunities to learn in school, there will remain variability in outcomes due in part to the conditions of life outside the school, and students experiencing serious disadvantages in their homes and communities (i.e., environmental risk factors) will therefore remain at a disadvantage in school learning. (p. 10)

Similarly, Edgar and Polloway (1994) acknowledge that racism and poverty have devastating effects on children, but they suggest that this is precisely the reason that additional services are required. Based on their assessment that family social status, not special education, is the primary predictor of post-school success, these authors suggest that "upper and middle class youth will find their way, with the help of family and friends. But what happens to the youth whose family does not have such a network? If they do not have an outstanding skill, talent, or benefactor, they may flounder and never get connected" (p. 442). These same authors (1994) state that "equal opportunity may be cast as either the right to attend the same educational program as all

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other youth or it may be described as the expectation that all our youth will have equal opportunities to succeed in society" (p. 444).

Ethnicity

Another variable impacting placement decisions is child ethnicity. Currently, intense controversy surrounds practices that place culturally diverse children in programs for the behaviorally and/or emotionally disordered. A disproportionate number of minority students are identified as behaviorally and/or emotionally disordered and subsequently placed in more restrictive settings (Coutinho & Oswald, 1996). While many researchers protest that minority children are overrepresented in restrictive settings, clustering all ethnic minority groups in a single category is misleading, because there is great variation within groups. McCabe et al. (1999) examined ethnic representation for children receiving special education services for behavioral and/or emotional disorders and found substantial variations among groups. For example, Asian/Pacific Islander Americans and Latinos are underrepresented in mental health systems and in juvenile detention facilities. Unfortunately, no studies were identified in the literature review concerning Latinos and Asian/Pacific Islander youth receiving services for behavioral and/or emotional disorders in the public schools. Rates of African-American children, however, are 227% that of the expected rate for children receiving services for behavioral and/or emotional disorders in public schools (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1995). Caucasian-American representation concerning services for children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders reflects the child population.

Several explanations exist for the overrepresentation of African-American children in restrictive settings. Perhaps the distribution of not only behavioral and/or emotional disorders, but also of behaviors that are intolerable (e.g., verbal aggression and physical aggression) in integrative settings, are distributed unevenly across ethnic groups. This, in turn, results in more children of diverse cultural backgrounds being identified and subsequently relocated to restrictive settings.

Misbehavior exhibited by some children of color is perceived as being more threatening than misbehavior that is manifested by Caucasian children. Sufficient evidence suggests that behavior of some minority children is interpreted more negatively than that of non-minority peers. For example, African-American children, compared to non-minority children exhibiting the same behavioral characteristics, are more commonly placed in the juvenile justice system than the mental health system (Cohen, et al., 1990). Additionally, Hindman

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(1996) studied the influence of student race on teachers' perceptions of aggression, using videotape vignettes, and discovered that teachers perceive children of color as being more aggressive than non-minority children. Evidence suggesting that a child's ethnicity affects placement decisions in service sectors (i.e., juvenile justice), irrespective of their behavior or needs, parallels the findings that children of diverse ethnic backgrounds are more often placed in restrictive settings within the school system. Thus, it appears that misbehavior exhibited by some children of color, especially that of African-American children, is perceived as more threatening than misbehavior manifested by Caucasian children.

Further, behavior of some children of color is acceptable in the context of their culture but not by majority culture. Achenbach, et al. (1990) support this explanation by demonstrating that deviant behavior differs, depending on the culture in which it is observed. Additionally, Foster (1974) provides dated, yet relevant information on the topic. This author suggests that the reason urban lower class African-American males are overrepresented in restrictive placements is that their culture and lifestyle, as it is played out in the streets, conforms to a different set of organizational rules than those of the school system. Foster suggests that middle class professionals, who are unfamiliar with urban lower class African-American males, are unable to differentiate "streetcorner behavior from either emotionally disturbed, socially maladjusted, or mentally retarded behavior" (p. 41).

Forness (1988) supports this explanation.

> Misidentification of ethnic and culturally diverse children with serious emotional disturbance often occurs due to lack of knowledge of their cultural background, and such youth are overreferred to the juvenile justice system....are often given more pathological labels than symptoms and behavior warrant...services...are rarely culturally sensitive, since the service system is designed for the majority. (p. 130)

Cross, Bazron, Dennis, and Issacs (1989) suggest:

> If you are a racial minority of color, you will probably not get your needs met in the present system. Yet, you are more likely to be diagnosed seriously emotionally disturbed than your Caucasian counterpart. When you do make it into the system, you will experience more

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> restrictive interventions. Cultural traits, behaviors, and beliefs will likely be interpreted as dysfunctions to be overcome. (p. 216)

Forness (1988) further rationalizes that an effective advocacy system and qualified mental health professionals to assist minority children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders are scarce. The research demonstrates that ethnicity, like gender and SES, is related to student placement decisions in complex ways.

DISCUSSION

The literature discussed in this article has critical implications for school social work practice, social work education, education policy, and future research. Concerning practice, a history of the family's cultural background must be considered when placements are determined. Many important aspects of the child and the family, therefore, are overlooked when a trained social worker does not conduct a comprehensive social developmental history. Thus, the current reticence concerning the importance of the social developmental history in IDEA and the educational community is intolerable. When determining placement for culturally diverse children, the youth's level of acculturation should be assessed, as well as parental perceptions and beliefs concerning the troubling behaviors. Additionally, teachers need to understand how behavioral and/or emotional disorders manifest themselves differently in males and females; school social workers should help educators to recognize the signs of internalizing disorders, so that all children in need of services accurately can be identified and served.

Regarding social work education, cultural differences in behaviors and the tendency for educators to misinterpret behaviors of children of color as needing reform, rather than therapy, must be addressed in social work curriculum. Social workers then may help to educate school staff and advocate on behalf of oppressed populations. Additionally, social work education must include gender issues in the curriculum. While all educators must be aware of demographic variables that potentially result in bias placement decisions, school social workers must highlight bias practices and examine the decision-making processes in the majority culture.

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Policy implications also exist. IDEA explicitly must state the role of gender, SES, and ethnicity in identification and placement of children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders. IDEA also must state clearly the qualifications of service providers. Currently, the only reference to these variables is in the socially maladjusted clause in the federal definition. The IDEA provision excludes the identification of children who are "socially maladjusted," and, therefore, the potentially subsequent educational placement decision is confusing. One can certainly argue that children who are "socially maladjusted" are in as much need of mental health support and supplemental academic services as those with a "real behavioral and/or emotional disorder." It is difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish between social maladjustment and a behavioral and/or emotional disorder. Further, the distinction is irrelevant in determining who will receive mental health support. The exclusion of children who are "socially maladjusted" in the federal definition ignores the systemic factors, such as poverty and oppression that place youth at-risk and warrant elimination.

Future research investigating the relationship between gender, SES, and ethnicity and placement may provide insight into the overrepresentation of disadvantaged students with behavioral and/or emotional disorders in restrictive settings. Although an empirical relationship has been established, controlled studies are required to understand the association between SES and placement decisions. The decision to place a child already in special education into a more restrictive environment generally is made in conjunction with special educators and administrators. It is, therefore, important to gather information relative to these professionals' decisions.

Coutinho and Oswald (1996) suggest that further research explore alternative explanations for patterns of ethnic representation in restrictive settings, such as the impact of educator characteristics on placement decisions for children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders. While no research indicates that a child's ethnicity directly influences educator beliefs concerning appropriate placement, the overrepresentation of children of color in restrictive settings suggests it may be an important variable. Future research must examine whether biased referral practices and inappropriate assessment procedures alone contribute to the disproportionate placements of minority children into restrictive settings or if other factors, such as teacher perceptions of minority behavior or teacher efficacy, further exacerbate the problem.

Unfortunately, there are no defined criteria for removing a child from an integrated school setting to a more restrictive placement. Consistency in placement decisions likely will remain unstable until the procedures for placing students in more restrictive environments and

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the continuum of programming options become more uniform nationwide. Further research must assess behavioral characteristics of children across settings. This may assist in developing behavioral profiles of children in different settings and eventually lead to more consistency between districts and states regarding the level of behavior with each placement option. In the absence of behavioral indicators to guide placement decisions, the judgment to place students in more restrictive settings will remain vulnerable to personal biases, which will continue to negatively impact historically oppressed populations.

CONCLUSION

Seemingly associated with demographic (gender, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity), district (size, economic situation and resources, placement processes, and number of students requiring services), and teacher variables (teacher efficacy and attitudes towards children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders), the literature addressing placement decisions proves intriguing. Research suggests that placement decisions are vulnerable to personal bias and likely to negatively impact females, children in poverty, and children of color.

This author deliberately refrains from discussing the preferable setting for educating students with behavioral and/or emotional disorders. Clearly, these decisions must be made on an individual basis, and, unfortunately, the "right" decision depends upon the district resources, the continuum of options available, the student's needs, and the resources available in each placement option. A moral or philosophical belief that all students, in all situations, are better served in one setting versus another, therefore, is nonsensical and impractical. This article demonstrates, however, that there seems to be discriminatory factors influencing the decisions for children with behavioral and/or emotional disorders, and these factors must be acknowledged and considered when initiating or re-visiting a more restrictive educational placement.

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JOINING THE "IN CROWD": THE SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND PEER RELATIONS OF PREADOLESCENT YOUTH

Juanita B. Hepler

ABSTRACT

This article discusses the critical role of social development for children as well as the factors that impact on a child's acceptance by peers. The problems that children with learning disabilities encounter in their social interactions, even in integrated settings, and the impact of gender issues and gender stereotypes on social interactions are reviewed. The author also discusses the results of observational data collected on the social interactions of six fifth-grade girls with learning disabilities. Suggestions for addressing issues related to social development and acceptance in the school setting are included.

Social interactions and peer relationships play a critical role in the daily lives of young children and preadolescents. School social workers are well aware of the importance of these developmental issues and the difficulties children encounter, when they are not accepted by their peers. As helping professionals, they express concern for the well-being of children who are isolated and rejected, and they are cognizant of the fact that such children frequently have no one to play with, may be found standing alone or off in a corner during recess, and often times are teased and ridiculed by others. The purpose of this article is to address these concerns by providing information concerning the social world of children, which would enable school social workers to work more effectively with students.

Several factors impact on the social status of children, including the use of positive social skills (both behavioral and cognitive), intelligence, performing well academically, physical attractiveness, excelling in sports, and having a common name (Hepler, 1995; Dodge, Schlundt, Schocken, & Delugachl, 1983; Gottman & Parkhurst, 1980). The ability to initiate and maintain positive social interactions, being friendly, and helping others, all contribute to acceptance, while the use of aggressive and inappropriate behaviors or

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having a disability increase the risk for rejection (Cillessen, van Ijzendoorn, van Lieshout, & Hartup, 1992).

The consequences for children and youth who have difficulty in their social interactions have been well documented and appear to be long-term, pervasive, and negative. Increased risk for poor school adjustment, school drop out, delinquency, substance abuse, and suicide are all related to poor social adjustment (Coie, Dodge, & Kupersmidt, 1990; Kline, Canter, & Robin, 1987; Kupersmidt, 1983; Parker & Asher, 1987; Seigel & Griffin, 1983). In their oft quoted study, Cowen, Pederson, Babijian, Izzo, and Trost (1973) reported that peer ratings of acceptance were a stronger predictor of adjustment in adulthood than scholastic ability, academic achievement, or self-esteem. Other studies suggest that long-term effects may impact emotional, mental, marital, and employment adjustment in adulthood (Parker & Asher, 1987). These consequences highlight the important role of social development and the need to address these issues with children and youth in the school setting.

Group Theory and the Role of Peers

An important component of social interactions that often is overlooked is the role of peers. Children with low social status, for example, are likely to receive negative responses from peers, regardless of the appropriateness of their behaviors. When they use positive social skills, peers frequently perceive them as being negative or aggressive. In contrast, high status or popular children receive few negative responses. Everyone wants to be their friend, and even when these children use aggressive behaviors, others respond in a positive manner. Children also form social networks based on status, which means that rejected children are restricted to playing primarily with one another (Dodge, 1983; Ladd, 1983). Low status children are noted for using negative behaviors, and the social networks minimize their opportunities to interact with higher status children, who tend to use more positive social skills. These "missed opportunities" may hinder low status children's acquisition and practice of complex social skills. Thus, peers play a central role in a child's social environment, and the social network to which a child belongs largely determines the quality of that child's social world (Dodge, 1983; Hepler, 1990).

Hymel, Wagner, and Butler (1990) draw on group theory to explain this phenomenon and the difficulties that children encounter when they attempt to break through the network barriers. When individuals develop an attitude or assessment about another individual, this attitude is maintained, even in the face of contrary evidence, primarily because individuals dislike inconsistencies. In this way,

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earlier perceptions impact all subsequent observations, suggesting that social skills programs designed to improve the interactions of low status children may be ineffective. If the same networks remain in place, a low status child using appropriate social behaviors may be perceived as being rejected, and her or his behavior may be interpreted as being negative. This fact has often been overlooked in social skills programs, which frequently work with rejected children only and do little to modify the negative attitudes of higher status peers.

Children with Learning Disabilities and the Social Environment

In the social world of children, those with disabilities are at risk for social rejection. The more severe the disability, the greater the likelihood of rejection, and a group particularly at risk in the school setting is children with learning disabilities (LD). (Children with LD experience academic problems despite having average or higher intelligence and cognitive skills.) Considerable evidence suggests that approximately 75% of children with LD may experience problems in their interactions, including severe rejection by peers (Kavale & Fornes, 1996). Similar trends also are observed in the integrated classroom, as it appears that simply bringing children with LD and those with no disabilities (NLD) together does not change children with NLDs' predominantly negative attitudes toward peers with LD (Hepler, 1994b; Hepler, 1997; Brown. Hedinger, & Mieling, 1995).

A number of factors contribute to the problems that children with LD encounter. First, the disability itself impacts on verbal and nonverbal skills, so that the child may have difficulty with auditory processing, memory, attention, visual/spacial perception, and verbal/motor skills (Brown, Hedinger, & Mieling, 1995). It is easy to see how any of these could negatively affect social interactions. Short attention spans as well as a tendency to misread social situations could result in the use of inappropriate or aggressive behaviors (Vaughn, Hogan, Kouzekanani, & Shapiro, 1990). In addition, children with LD often overstate their social skills, indicating that they have the skills to join in ongoing activities with peers and effectively cope with negative interactions. They tend to assess their social status incorrectly, viewing themselves as accepted by peers when in reality they are not. At the same time, children with LD are aware of problem areas and describe themselves as having social skills deficits with cognitive problems in such areas as nonverbal communication. They tend to feel that they have little control over what occurs in social interactions or in the classroom (external locus of control) and thus assume little responsibility for outcomes (Kaval & Forness, 1996).

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Most attention has focused on the effect of the LD disability on childrens' academic performance. Less well understood is the negative impact of poor scholarship on social status, although, as previously mentioned, it is a risk factor for all children (Haager & Vaughn, 1995; Parker & Asher, 1987). With so much at stake, it is not surprising that children with LD feel more pressure to perform well in integrated classrooms and that this pressure does not subside over time but, rather, tends to increase (Renick & Harter, 1989). Although children with LD frequently perceive events as being beyond their control, those with very low self-concepts are more likely to attribute school failure to their own lack of ability (Bender & Wall, 1994).

Children with LD, then, face many difficult issues in the school setting. They experience academic difficulties and are at risk for peer rejection, negative self-concepts (which impact on academic and social performance), behavior problems related to aggression, loneliness, victimization, depression, suicide, low participation rate in activities, and social skills deficits (Sabornie, 1994; Bender & Wall, 1994; Hepler, 1994b, 1995; Vaughn & Haager, 1994; Vaughn & LaGreca, 1992). Based on their review of the available research, Bender and Wall (1994) describe children with LD as "having a less-than-satisfactory social life, more legal troubles, higher unemployment and underemployment, and some level of increased risk for suicide" (pp. 321-322).

Gender Issues

We have discussed the crucial role of social development in childhood and reviewed variables that impact on a child's acceptance by peers, e.g., social status, social networks, competency in social skills, intelligence, excelling in sports, disability status, and the ways in which early perceptions concerning a peer's social standing are maintained, regardless of later changes in behavior. Now we look at the role of gender, which has received less attention in the social skills literature. The question we examine is: Are there gender issues that school social workers and other helping professionals need to be sensitive to in their work with children and preadolescents? A review of several studies suggests that girls face special obstacles, especially in groups composed of boys and girls, which would include the school environment.

Gender stereotypes

All societies have some form of gender stereotypes, which may be defined as beliefs about the behaviors and characteristics of each sex (Martin, Wood, & Little, 1990). With regard to social

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interactions and play activities, girls are most often described as engaging in passive, nurturing social interactions, and boys are described as being more physical and action oriented in their activities. Children, themselves, begin to develop gender stereotypes at an early age (4–6 years old) and continue to assimilate such information into preadolescence. Over time, these notions about the characteristics of each sex become more fixed and impact children's perceptions and reactions to peers (Martin et al., 1990). Maccoby (1988) confirms the pervasiveness of stereotyping, pointing out that, even before they have developed verbalizations associated with sex roles, very young children respond to others based on the person's gender.

Same sex playmates

One cannot examine gender roles without being struck by the overwhelming tendency for children to prefer same sex peers both as friends and playmates, a preference that continues into adolescence, when both boys and girls become interested in members of the opposite sex. This early preference for same sex playmates appears to be universal across cultures. Adults probably encourage segregation, but it is more likely the result of a natural compatibility between same sex peers. For example, girls are less likely to engage in the rough and tumble play that is so characteristic of boy's interactions, and, in fact, they may even avoid associating with boys because of their loud, boisterous behaviors (Maccoby, 1988). It is also easy to see that the gender stereotypes and roles encourage this kind of segregation, e.g., girls like to play with dolls, and boys like to play with trucks (Hartup, 1983; Martin, et al., 1990; Maccoby, 1988).

Roles and behavior patterns of girls and boys

The compatibility of same sex peers is reflected in the different play activities and behavior patterns observed in girls' as opposed to boys' groups. One such example is the use of aggression. This behavior is typically exhibited when the intent is to hurt or harm others (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Boys most often express aggression through the use of physical and verbal behaviors – hitting, shoving, pushing, verbal threats (overt aggression). Girls, on the other hand, usually do not exhibit this kind of behavior, and studies often have overlooked their role or incorrectly determined that girls seldom use aggressive behaviors (Crick & Gropeter, 1995). But, girls do use aggressive behaviors; they just express them differently. In their interactions, girls focus on relationship issues and intimacy rather than dominance, so it is not surprising that aggression is expressed in behaviors designed to exclude or reject a peer (relational aggression).

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Efforts also may be made to encourage others to exclude the designated person (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). As the authors point out, these are conscious efforts to harm another person by negatively impacting their relationships via withdrawal of friendship or by spreading rumors that will result in rejection by others. When we include these behaviors in our definition of aggression, girls and boys exhibit approximately equal amounts of this behavior.

The reader will recall that the use of negative and aggressive behaviors puts an individual at risk for rejection, and this holds true when relational aggression is utilized. Rejection, depression, and loneliness are related to the use of this form of aggression. Unfortunately, most helping professionals are unaware of the behavior pattern exhibited by girls, and their efforts are concentrated on work with boys, whose aggressive behaviors are more disruptive in the classroom and appear to cause more harm. Sadly, the special problems that girls encounter are not as disruptive or observable and are often overlooked, although they most certainly have the same damaging and long-term negative consequences.

A similar theme emerges when we examine the manner in which young children attempt to influence one another or to gain dominance in social situations. Boys make demands, while girls use "polite" conversation. Both techniques are effective within their same sex groups; however, in mixed groups, boys ignore the requests of the girls, a pattern that increases with age. This means that the primary technique used by girls is ineffective in their interactions with boys, who become more demanding, if necessary, in order to gain dominance. As a result, boys have a stronger influence in mixed group discussions and decisions. Add to this a boy's preponderance for rough and tumble play, and it is easy to see that girls may prefer to avoid boys and play with other girls (Maccoby, 1988). In addition, the negative stereotypes that girls have about boys may be reinforced by these experiences in mixed groups. A note of caution, Maccoby (1988) points out that, although girls avoid physical aggression, they are not necessarily passive in their play activities. Indeed, they often engage in very physical activities; however, they differ from boys in that they seldom engage in "rough play," such as pushing, shoving, or wrestling, which is conducted in good humor by boys. This may provide a partial explanation for boy's avoidance of girls – boys like playmates who enjoy rough and tumble play.

Another difference in girls' and boys' groups is group size. Boys form larger groups, and they are more likely to accept new members than girls. They are inclined to play outside, be involved in team activities, try to remove themselves from supervision, and cover a

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wider territory - behaviors that seem related to issues of authority and dominance. Girls, meanwhile, form smaller intimate groups, with the development of friendships as a major goal (Hartup, 1983; Gottman, 1986). As Hartman (1983) points out, the activities of the two groups support gender stereotypes.

The linguistic styles of boys and girls reflect their different behavior patterns. Boys use threats, commands, tease, share information, tell stories and jokes, and resist or rebel against demands of other boys more so than girls. Girls work together to reach agreement, and they tend to be polite, avoiding negative techniques such as interruption, which would disrupt the development of friendships (Maccoby, 1988).

Cross sex interactions

While cross sex interactions decrease during childhood, there are a few boys and girls who continue their friendship, although they are unlikely to express it publicly, especially in the school setting. Gottman (1986) found that in the play activities of young children, the girls wanted to engage in such activities as the "pretend" family (mom, dad, baby) sitting down for tea. The boys were quite willing go along with this, provided they first were given the opportunity to perform an heroic act, such as rushing the baby to the emergency room, getting there just in time to save the baby. Gottman and colleagues (1986) also observed an element of excitement or glee in cross sex groups that was missing from same sex interactions. His recorded conversations of these cross sex interactions are both enlightening and entertaining, and the interested reader is referred to Gottman and Parker's book (1986).

Gender and social status in the school setting

Now we return to the issue of social status in the classroom. Gottman and Parker (1986) reported four levels of social status – accepted boys were at the top, followed by accepted girls, then unaccepted boys, and last unaccepted girls. Unaccepted boys had more freedom in their social activities and could interact with accepted girls, but the same was not true for unaccepted girls; they were more restricted, playing primarily with other low status girls. In several studies using sociometric rating scales, similar trends were observed in the author's work with over 200 fifth-grade children from primarily working and middle class neighborhoods.

Sociometric scales (See Asher & Hymel, 1981) ask children to indicate how much they like to play with each classmate using a scale of 1 to 5. A rating of 1 indicates that they do not like to play with that particular child, while a rating of 5 means they like to play with that

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classmate a lot. In these classrooms, boys, overall, receive higher ratings from classmates than the girls. This is the result of the more negative ratings that boys give girls. Most girls receive a rating of 1 or 2, although the popular girls receive a higher score. Girls are much kinder in their ratings of the boys; overall, they give ratings of 3 or higher. Within each classroom there are several very popular or high status boys and girls, but a boy receives the highest rating. Likewise, there are several rejected or low status boys and girls, but the child with the lowest score is a girl (See Hepler, 1994a, 1994b). These findings suggest that, overall, girls have lower social status than boys and that they are more restricted in their ability to interact with children of higher status. It is important for school staff to be aware of these status trends and to develop interventions that address gender issues.

Observations of Six Fifth-Grade Girls with Learning Disabilities

Several of the trends previously discussed were evident when I had the opportunity to observe 6 fifth-grade girls with learning disabilities (LD) at their school in a predominantly white, working class neighborhood. Integrated classrooms was a major focus of the school district; consequently, all 6 participated in "regular" education for academic studies whenever possible—physical education, recess, lunch, music, and art classes. This meant that they had ample opportunities to interact with their cohorts, who did not have a learning disability (NLD). Information was obtained on the social status of the 6 girls and 13 of their fifth-grade cohorts with NLD (3 girls and 10 boys) using a Sociometric Rating Scale (Asher & Hymel, 1981). The children were also observed during unorganized play periods, in which they freely selected games and playmates. Their interactions were recorded by trained observers using coding sheets that outlined the specific behaviors and particular students to be observed. (Additional information on the collection of data is available from the author.)

The results of the observational data support previous reports concerning low status children. The girls with LD spent less time engaged in some form of social activity (rate of interaction), had a lower rate of involvement in play activity with peers, and were more likely to be engaged in solitary play than their cohorts with NLD. They were less likely to play with high status boys and girls with NLD, spending most of their time with one another. It appeared that the girls with LD wanted to socialize with the children with NLD but were reluctant to approach these classmates for fear of rejection. Likewise, children with NLD seldom made positive overtures to the girls with LD (See Table I). Using ANOVA, the behavioral differences between

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children with LD and children with NLD were statistically significant, $p<.05$.

TABLE I

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations Indicating Percent of Time Children Engaged in Social Interaction, Play Activities, and Solitary Play and the Social, Gender, and Disability Status of Playmates

	Behaviors					
	Involved in Play Activity		Rate of Interaction		Involved in Solitary Activity	
	Score	SD	Score	SD	Score	SD
LD (n=6)	.607	.199	.668	.248	.165	.247
NLD (n=13)	.838	.114	.885	.094	.013	.032

	Status of Peers					
	Played with Low Status Girls		Played with High Status Boys		Played with NLD Children	
	Score	SD	Score	SD	Score	SD
LD (n=6)	.422	.222	.123	.076	.418	.209
NLD (n=13)	.163	.126	.357	.195	.786	.161

On Sociometric ratings, ANOVA tests indicated that, indeed, the girls with LD had low social status. Table II provides strong support for the vulnerability of the girls with LD, and, although boys with LD are at risk for rejection, the addition of the gender variables previously discussed, including the overall lower social status of girls, places girls with learning disabilities at special risk. They received extremely low scores from the children with NLD over the entire

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school year. At all three measuring points, the mean score for the girls with LD was less than 2.00, indicative of severe rejection by children with NLD. Unfortunately, the final rating in spring was the lowest, indicating that the social environment did not improve for them over the school year. With such strong rejection, it is hard to comprehend how these six girls get through their days in the school setting and maintain a positive self-concept, especially concerning their ability to interact and engage in social interactions with peers.

Despite their isolation, however, the girls with LD began the semester assigning high ratings to peers with NLD with a mean score of 3.64. As the school year progressed they, too, seemed to become more disillusioned, and their ratings of the children with NLD dropped below 3.00 in the winter and spring. Did the opportunity for the NLD and LD children to become better acquainted and play together during the school year actually result in more negative feelings?

Perhaps one way that children with LD survive their hostile environment is to develop strong positive relationships among themselves and, in fact, they reserved their highest ratings for one another. The mean score for the girls with LD (as rated by their peers with LD) exceeded 4.0 in the fall and winter. In the spring, there was a drop, but they still rated peers with LD very high with a mean score of 3.83. These ratings were higher than the ratings that the children with NLD gave themselves. Although children with LD may develop a close bond with one another, one wonders if these high scores may also be a reaction to their rejection; no matter how much they like one another, they are painfully aware that they cannot freely move into mainstream activities. They are, for the most part, confined to their group.

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TABLE II

Mean Scores and Standard Deviations on Sociometric Ratings by Disability Status

Mean Scores as Rated by Children With NLD (n=13)

	October		December		April	
	Score	SD	Score	SD	Score	SD
LD	1.598	.216	1.670	.205	1.322	.241
NLD	3.116	.624	3.212	.692	2.986	.766

Mean Scores as Rated by Children With LD (n=6)

	October		December		April	
	Score	SD	Score	SD	Score	SD
LD	4.533	.301	4.467	.484	3.833	.572
NLD	3.640	.263	2.679	.459	2.295	.476

Note: *Higher scores reflect higher social status and acceptance by peers.

As previously noted, gender plays a role in social status. Nine of the 10 boys with NLD received ratings exceeding 3.0, indicating acceptance from both peers with NLD and LD. One boy had a mean score of 2.17 from the children with NLD but a 4.17 from the girls with LD. The 3 girls with NLD received scores exceeding 3.0 from the girls with LD and between 2.25 and 2.33 from children with NLD, while 5 of the girls with LD had scores below 2.00 (ranging from 1.46 to 1.92) from children with NLD, and one girl with LD had a score of 2.25 from peers with NLD.

These observations, for an admittedly small sample, suggest that the 6 girls were isolated, and that bringing them together with peers

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with NLD did not result in the development of friendships or even minimum acceptance over the school year. The girls, and, in particular, the 6 girls with learning disabilities, had lower social standing than the boys and were more restricted in the availability of playmates. Obviously, we can make no definitive statement concerning gender because of the lack of boys with LD in our group; however, the extreme rejection experienced by the girls supports reviewed studies indicating that girls have lower social status and that a learning disability further increases this risk. (For detailed information on the analysis, questions should be directed to the author.)

SUMMARY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND RELATED GENDER ISSUES: IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

In this article, we have reviewed the literature related to social development and the critical role it plays in the emotional and mental health of children and adults. We have discussed risk factors, gender issues, and examined the social environment of 6 girls with learning disabilities. With regard to gender, the following behavior patterns were noted:

1. Girl's social behaviors and goals focus on intimacy, friendship, or nurturing qualities, while boy's social interactions are centered on issues of dominance, power, and authority. In cross sex situations, girl's friendship building skills are ineffective, while the use of more aggressive behaviors by boys allows them to dominate group decisions and activities.
2. Sociometric ratings suggest that, in the classroom, girls have lower social status than boys and that girls with learning disabilities are particularly isolated and rejected. Overall, boys give lower ratings to girls, while girls are inclined to give most boys average or higher ratings. Their lower status may make it difficult for girls to gain confidence in their social skills, especially in cross sex groups.
3. In groups that include both boys and girls, boys have more impact on group decisions and activities than girls, thus they are reinforced for their use of dominating and aggressive behaviors, whereas, girls receive little reinforcement for their use of nurturing behaviors.

These gender issues clearly create special problems for girls, problems that may continue into adulthood. Borman and Frankel

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(1984), for example, argue that early social behavior and interaction patterns play a role in women's future success in the work place. Girls' play activities, which primarily focus on relationships, make it difficult for them to acquire the skills necessary for successful careers in higher management positions, skills boys begin to develop in their play activities as young children. Borman and Frankel (1984) emphasize the importance of these early play patterns. Observing the school playground interactions of second and fifth graders, they found that boys were more likely to engage in complex team sports, including kickball, softball, and soccer, while girls engaged in less intricate games, such as tether ball or hopscotch, usually in pairs or smaller groups. Girls also spent more time engaged in conversation or walking. Team sports require a great deal of organizational and management type decisions (deciding on the rules, determining who would play what position) and the use of highly developed conversation skills. In contrast, deciding who will play first when a pair are playing hopscotch requires less time and skill. The authors point out that girls strive to reach agreement or consensus; meanwhile, boys seem to enjoy the process of negotiating for power and rights. The authors maintain that these skills prepare men for the managerial world, while the girls' emphasis on nurturing roles are viewed as negative traits in the work place, i.e., emotional, irrational.

Based on this information, should we begin to work with girls in elementary school to change their primary modes of interaction so that they, too, become more concerned about power and dominance? The author strongly agrees with Borman and Frankel (1984), who discount arguments that male social patterns are superior to female ones. It is true that society and the workplace have rewarded male characteristics, but in a culture that has become obsessed with material wealth, and where so many feel isolated, eliminating women's nurturing qualities does not seem to be the answer. In fact, one could argue that it is these female qualities that so sorely are needed both in society and the work place.

Arguing for a positive approach that focuses on the strengths of both boys and girls, the following recommendations are presented to assist school social workers in their efforts to address social development and related gender issues:

1. Schools need to conduct ongoing social skills programs that draw on research studies and teach the specific behavioral and cognitive skills associated with different age levels. (For more detailed discussion of the author's social skills program, see Hepler, 1997. Training Manuals are available from the author.) The programs should include both low and high status children, so that the social

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networks can be modified and the negative attitudes towards low status children can be addressed.

2. School social workers should consider the inclusion of both sexes in social skills programs, because the ability to function effectively in cross sex groups is critical for children and adults. For these groups to be effective, group leaders must be knowledgeable about gender issues, and, utilizing this knowledge, help boys become aware of their pattern of dismissing girls' opinions, while encouraging girls to learn assertive (not aggressive) skills. Leaders need to provide reinforcement for nurturing behaviors when appropriately used and avoid reinforcing aggressive behaviors. It may be necessary, however, to conduct same sex groups in order to help girls to become more assertive and boys to become more sensitive to their dismissal of girls' opinions.
3. School staff need to be aware of the issues related to gender and how they are played out in the school environment. School social workers should encourage the use of special workshops to address these social issues, especially for teachers, who are in an excellent position to reinforce new behaviors and discourage old patterns.
4. Finally, children with disabilities are at special risk for rejection. In this article we have focused on children with learning disabilities and described the isolation that girls with learning disabilities experience. Because integration does not result in acceptance for students with LD, schools need to include these children in social skills groups, along with peers, with NLD directing special attention to the very low status of girls with learning disabilities.

Admittedly, these suggestions will not bring about a miraculous change in the social world of children. What the author has outlined is an approach that attempts to address the deficiencies of previous social skills programs and is sensitive to the special issues of boys and girls and the organizational constraints of school systems. The purpose is not to make boys nurturing and girls aggressive, but, rather, to strengthen the positive aspects of both groups, encourage awareness of their behavior patterns and responses to peers, raise questions concerning their negative attitudes toward children with disabilities, challenge gender stereotypes, and encourage the acceptance of diversity. A big task, but a worthy one.

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BOOK REVIEW

CLASSROOMS AND COURTROOMS: FACING SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN K-12 SCHOOLS
Nan Stein. New York: Teachers College Press, 1999, 152 pages.

Reviewed by *Susan Fineran*

Nan Stein's book, "Classrooms and Courtrooms," came out just in time to guide us into the new millenium. As schools begin to deal with the consequences of the 1999 Supreme Court's decision regarding student to student sexual harassment (Davis v. Monroe County (GA) Board of Education (No.97-843)), the material covered in this book is most opportune. For school administrators, social workers, teachers, mental health counselors, and parents, this book provides a unique overview of sexual harassment in K-12 schools, including the misapplication of Title IX and abridgement of first amendment rights. Over the past 10 years there has been significant growth in a representative body of literature related to sexual harassment in schools (American Association of University Women, 1993; Sandler & Shoop,1997; Shoop & Edwards, 1994; O'Donohue, 1997; Stein, N. & Sjostrom, L., 1994; Stein, 1995).

Stein's book contributes to this growing literature. In the first chapter and appendix, Stein provides a concise overview of sexual harassment research conducted during the 1990's. Her 1993 Seventeen Magazine survey provides us with students' personal accounts of their harassment and subsequent reflections or reactions to these very negative experiences. The second chapter covers court decisions and litigation of sexual harassment cases in schools. Stein provides insightful discussion regarding sexual harassment cases that have been filed in state and federal courts, including complaints filed through the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. This review of the many contradictory circuit court decisions and the description of a litigation process that can take 5 to 7 years (or more) to conclude can only be described as eye-opening and appalling. This chapter clearly outlines why we, as advocates for children, should work towards creating school environments that at best eliminate sexual harassment, or at least deal efficiently with this issue.

Three chapters that school administrators and personnel may find most helpful cover the misapplication of sexual harassment, gender inequality, and ineffectual ways that schools have dealt with the

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problem. These chapters are "must reads" and add considerable depth to our understanding of the intersection of Title IX, First Amendment Rights and sex discrimination in our schools. Stein also includes a chapter on children's bullying behavior in elementary schools, which she believes to be the antecedent of peer to peer sexual harassment. The chapter provides an overview of the international research on bullying and discusses the question of whether schools should define behaviors exhibited by children as bullying or sexual harassment. There are legal implications connected to these definitions, in that sexual harassment is against the law and bullying is not.

For school personnel who are grappling with dating violence issues, the chapter on sexual violence in schools provides an overview of research in this area. Stein discusses the need to develop school-based versions of stay-away or temporary restraining orders as tools to support students and school administrators. This issue is particularly salient in light of the increasing number of interpersonal violence events experienced and reported by students. In addition to the dating violence surveys, seven different victimization studies relative to children and the school environment also are reviewed.

Stein concludes her book with recommendations that encourage the definition of sexual harassment as sexual violence. Schools should develop interactive training programs (as opposed to a lecture from the school attorney) that involve all school personnel and lead to "ombuds" teams to whom students can report sexual harassment. Stein felt that the development of specialized teams consisting of both male and female school personnel and identified as sexual harassment ombudsmen rather than grievance coordinators or complaint managers would be less of a "turn off" to students interested in making a complaint. Her personal hope is that teachers are able to create classroom discussions that normalize conversation about sexual harassment and gender violence and reduce the need for punitive measures that constrain or infringe student rights.

It is difficult to be critical about a book that is so short and contains so much relevant information. Perhaps, then, the main criticism is its length. Stein addresses a number of very controversial issues simplistically and from her very personal perspective. More in-depth analysis would provide the reader with a variety of perspectives on the application of first amendment rights, confidentiality, and sex discrimination. Whether controversial or not, her observations on first amendment rights and their abridgement expand the discourse on sex discrimination and the unequal treatment of girls in our schools. This issue is frequently ignored, and Stein's examples of girls' struggles to be heard cannot be disregarded. To this end the author has written a

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compelling text that not only highlights the problem of sexual harassment faced by school personnel and students but gives us a broader understanding of this pressing issue.

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ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Dr. Susan Fineran, Assistant Professor at the Boston University School of Social Work, received her MSW from The Catholic University of America and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her professional career includes extensive clinical experience, and her

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research interests and projects are diverse, including harassment, teen dating violence, etc., particularly relating to children with disabilities and minority children.

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LOST BOYS: WHY OUR SONS TURN VIOLENT AND HOW WE CAN SAVE THEM

James Garbarino. New York: Free Press, 1999, 274 pages.

Reviewed by *Charlotte Goodluck*

This book makes a good contribution to our understanding of young males in our culture today. The author, a white male, is the Co-Director of the Family Life Development Center and Professor of Human Development at Cornell University and has published numerous books (17), professional articles, and other scholar works on child development and other public health issues. The book has eight chapters divided into two major parts: part one is devoted to the question of how and why young males get lost in our society, and part two is about what Dr. Garbarino thinks they need to remedy their problems.

As a professional social worker myself, I found the first part of the book very interesting and illuminating. Garbarino states that his goal "is to understand why kids kill and to help other parents and professionals understand so they can do something to prevent it in the future" (p. 6). The first section discusses in broad strokes and generalizations his ideas about why these acts of violence are present in society. He uses his own professional experiences as a listener and interviewer to share stories from the boys' own experiences as being depressed, neglected, and often abandoned young people without much support. He shares the stories of 10 boys and then discusses and compares their stories with the existing research on the context of violence, increasing crime rates, and societal problems. He discusses the statistics and the decreasing age of the perpetrators in our society. Overall, the homicide rate has been constant over the last 30 years, but the youth homicide rate has increased (p.7). He discusses the links between depression, suicide, and homicide of the perpetrators. He has useful information and facts about the topic of youth violence, when it happens, where it happens, and discusses various risk factors (child abuse, gang membership, and use of substances) as to its occurrence. He uses the metaphor of a disease with the increasing rates of youth homicide similar to epidemics occurring in other parts of the world. He states, "Epidemics tend to start among the most vulnerable segments of the population and then work their way outward, like ripples in a pond.

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These vulnerable populations don't cause the epidemic. Rather, *their disadvantage position makes them a good host for the infection*" (p. 15). Garbarino uses a disease metaphor to discuss his ideas about how communities are in social decline and prepares youth for these later violent events.

The title of "lost boys" comes from Garbarino's belief that boys are "systematically led into a moral wilderness by their experiences at home and on the streets, where they are left to fend for themselves" (p. 23). He supports his ideas about boys' moral decline plus the structural occurrence of family and the community abandonment that has led youth to societal acting out in order to release their internal psychological problems. He takes the next logical step and discusses the boys' stories from these points of view: individual moral decline and family and community structural abandonment equals youth violence. Garbarino shares with the readers his belief that each "infant contains a divine spark" (p. 33). His premise is that each child begins their life as a spiritual individual, and then, due to the psychological hardships over childhood, chronic social, emotional, and psychological problems come forth. He uses many personal stories and professional stories to give the reader a deep understanding of what he is discussing. I found the stories very heart warming, frightening, and a bit chilling. He uses his professional psychology background to share his views about child development, growth and behavior, attachment and separation, human existence, and his views about the "human spirit" struggling to find self in a harsh world of poverty, crime ridden environments, and very sad and abusive families.

In the later part of the book, Garbarino argues that the lack of moral development in boys is linked to their eventual attractiveness to the "dark side" of life and their inability to shake off the thrill of being around and owning guns as an outlet for their emotional and psychological problems. Aggression becomes the tool to release these internal expressions, in addition to feelings of societal and personal alienation, loss of hope, and fear. He argues that boys are attracted to moral codes of *dis-honor* in order to find protection, a sense of identity, acceptance by others, and power to release their internal angst.

The last part of the book offers recommendations for parents and communities about how to help these "lost boys". Garbarino discusses the usefulness of Anger Replacement Training (ART), but he suggests that very violent boys need more than this cognitive-behavioral program to assist them with their emotional and moral problems. He suggests that what the boys need is a "complete rehabilitation program [which] should adopt a broad understanding of the origins of youth violence and build on a foundation that is spiritual

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as well as psychological and social in nature" (p. 217). He offers 10 principles on which to build these programs:

1. Child maltreatment leads to survival strategies that are often antisocial and/or self-destructive;
2. The experiences of early trauma leads boys to become hypersensitive to arousal in the face of threat and to respond to such threats by disconnecting emotionally or acting out aggressively;
3. Traumatized kids require a calming and smoothing environment to increase the level at which they are functioning;
4. Traumatized youth are likely to evidence an absence of future orientation;
5. Youth exposed to violence at home and in the community are likely to develop juvenile vigilantism, in which they do not trust an adult's capacity and motivation to ensure safety, and as a result believe they must take matters into their own hands;
6. Youth who have participated in the violent drug economy or chronic theft are likely to have distorted materialistic values;
7. Traumatized youth who have experiences abandonment are likely to feel life is meaningless;
8. Issues of shame are paramount among violent youth;
9. Youth violence is a boy's attempt to achieve justice as he perceives it;
10. Violent boys often seem to feel they cannot afford empathy. (Pp. 217-230)

These proposed 10 principles are from Garbarino's extensive professional experiences, but they are not supported in this book from research literature, which I find unfortunate. Many of the principles are based on the individual as the change agent and few, if any, are at the macro level. His principles are from his practice wisdom and give us insight into his belief system, but it would be helpful to add empirical data to support these principles for action. He offers an interesting idea of developing "the monastery model" vs. the boot camp approach for violent boys. He argues for a "peace" model for kids and "not declare war on them" approach. These ideas come from his own spiritual development and his knowledge of the practical application of Zen Buddhist philosophy to aggression and anger. The appendix has a listing of various prevention and intervention resources dealing with the prevention of violence in youth. There is a listing of references for each chapter, but unfortunately these are not directly linked to the exact page, so it is very difficult to use when one is reading the book.

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Overall, I found this book to be interesting but a bit under whelming. I think his experiences are valuable, but the translation of that knowledge into application is weak. It is one thing to have recommendations, but it is another to have tried these principles in the real world with the thousands of teens who are suffering today. At the one-to-one level it has some hope, but at the larger macro level there needs to be more work to prove his thesis.

The photograph on the front of the book is really a shocker. It seems to be from the depression era: Two white boys are standing next to each other; the younger one is hold a rifle at the other's head, the older one is looking downward, and they are both smiling. The picture represents a time period when youth were using guns for hunting, and it is obvious there is an adult taking the picture. They are connected to each other and the adult world and do not portray today's "lost boys". The picture does get one's attention and stimulates us, but the cover is not about this book, aside from the access to guns. The cover grabs our attention to look inside the book, and so it serves that purpose.

I think for school social workers Garbarino's book does not give readers much more than they already know themselves in working daily with the parents, siblings, and family members of the "lost boys" in schools and communities. Garbarino's recommendation of establishing a monastery in today's reality of declining resources for public urban school is not very practical or realistic. Teaching boys to become more self-aware and more in touch with their spiritual domains is helpful, but the "how" is really not part of this book. A couple of sentences about meditating are not really helpful, when schools can barely keep the youth in school anyway. Perhaps, offering the community and school systems ideas to structurally change their settings would be more useful in the long run, instead of leaving it up to the individual boy. What about the entire nation's moral and spiritual context? What about the conflict of "boys" being offered millions to play basketball in order to get out of their poverty? What about the movies with thousands of pictures of abuse toward women and children? What about our society offering violence as entertainment in movies, music, magazines? I hope the author will write another book based on ideas that have been proved to work in our communities and not just generalize about the moral decline of the individual and state.

I was lead to the water, but I was not quenched, when I was done reading this book.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Charlotte Goodluck, MSW, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor and Director of the Social Work Program in the Department of Sociology and Social Work at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, Arizona. She has extensive experience and many professional publications pertaining to Native American and relevant child welfare services and is an expert in the area of Native American child welfare. She is a member of the Dine (Navajo) Nation.

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BOOK REVIEW

SAD DAYS, GLAD DAYS: A STORY ABOUT DEPRESSION
DeWitt Hamilton. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman, 1995, 30 pages.

Reviewed by *Dea Ellen Epley Birtwistle*

DeWitt Hamilton's book is a poignant description of a parent suffering from severe depression. The book is intended to be read to latency-age children as a vehicle for explaining the nature of depression. The severe isolation for a family experiencing depression is depicted profoundly in this children's book.

With the assistance of thought-provoking illustrations by Gail Owens, the author stresses two key components of any illness. The first is that the illness is not the child's fault. The child in the story questions whether she caused her mother's depression and whether she continues to be loved. Both parents stress to the child that depression is an illness and that it is not the child's responsibility to make her mother feel happier.

The other key component of an illness is the impact that it has on the entire family. Hamilton uses developmentally-appropriate events, such as the child character pleading for a pet kitten and making breakfast pancakes with her mother, to illustrate the ripple effect of depression on the day-to-day lives and routine of all family members. The mood swings of the parent with depression alter parent-child interactions, neighbor support, and options for friendships with peers. The emotional drain on the other parenting figure is intensified by the unpredictable nature of depression.

The preface of the book provides the reader information about networking with the National Depressive and Manic Depressive Association. The author clearly conveys throughout the book that information can reduce feelings of helplessness and isolation. Twenty percent of the population experiences depression that is severe enough to require intervention. This book could be used frequently and would be an excellent addition to the library of a school social worker working with children impacted by depression.

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BOOK REVIEW

THE LION WHO HAD ASTHMA
Jonathan London. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Co., 1992, 25 pages.

Reviewed by *Dea Ellen Epley Birtwistle*

Jonathan London has written a storybook for preschool and young elementary-age children to assist them in understanding their asthma. In the preface, the author explains how this is indeed a personal story, as one of his own sons has been diagnosed with asthma. He adds that asthma is the most common chronic disease of childhood, impacting approximately 3 million children. This book depicts how relaxation strategies and breathing techniques are critical in assisting the child with asthma in developing control. School social workers could easily incorporate this book with progressive relaxation techniques and the introduction of other coping skills, when working individually or in groups with young children.

Storybooks are useful for highlighting to children that they are not alone and that others also are plagued by the same adversity or chronic illness. The author does describe a nebulizer treatment, and it is illustrated in the book. Although this reviewer's 6-year-old daughter with asthma did identify with the lion imagery, the book became a beneficial springboard to discussion about other images to relax and strategies for self-care. The story also assists in explaining the concept that asthma is not just a "bad cough" and in supporting children through the common denial phase of their condition. The educational benefit of this book is somewhat diminished, however, by the lack of an address for the American Lung Association or other provisions for obtaining additional information.

Teaching age-appropriate self-care to a child with a chronic condition, while protecting their safety and refraining from reinforcing helplessness, is a predicament for both parents and educators. The Loin Who Had Asthma is a tool that can be used during this tightrope process.

For the school social worker, this book could be used in the development of a 504 plan or a health plan for a child. It would be a beneficial resource during the problem-solving process and when discussing early interventions for preschoolers with health needs.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

Dea Ellen Epley Birtwistle, MSW, SSWS, LISW, is the Book Review Editor for the Journal and a School Social Worker, Northern Trails Area Education Agency, Clear Lake, IA.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

Journal of School Social Work

The Journal of School Social Work, established in 1986 as the Iowa Journal of School Social Work and sponsored by the Iowa School Social Workers' Association, has been changed to emphasize the Association's commitment to accepting and publishing papers that reflect the diversity of practice by school social workers in the United States.

The Journal of School Social Work is a refereed journal that is committed to the enhancement of children's education and well-being from early intervention and preschool programs through high school. Its primary emphasis is on educational programs in the United States. The Journal accepts papers in various categories, noted below, that would be of interest to social work practitioners in the schools and that inform practice, policy, legislation, and education for school social work practice.

The Journal is accepting manuscripts in the following categories:

Full-Length Articles (14-18 pages), which may include research studies (qualitative and quantitative), case studies, description of projects, program evaluation, public policy, legislative issues, history, literature reviews, biography of leaders in school social work, and practice techniques.

Practice Innovations (2-8 pages) with individuals, families, groups, and communities; innovative interdisciplinary approaches; needs assessments.

Interviews (6-16 pages) of long-time school social workers and leaders in school social work, whose insight and contribution to the field of practice is evident and should be recorded for posterity.

Reflections or Narratives (up to 18 pages) that describe personal experiences of helping others, effecting social change, resolving an ethical dilemma, and offering new insights to practice. Through success or failure, these experiences may illuminate practice in school settings.

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Point-Counterpoint Opinions (8-14 pages), which address current controversies or issues related to social work services in educational settings. Papers must be written by at least two different authors with each "side" providing the authors' positions and the final opportunity to write a rejoinder.

Poetry (1-2 pages) that illuminates aspects of the profession and the life or needs of students, parents, and others served by school social workers and their colleagues.

Additional features include **Book and Film Reviews, sketches of visiting teacher pioneers and school social work leaders**, reviews of **Internet Resources, Guest Editorials**, and **Letters** to the Editor.

The Editor also invites **Leaders in School Social Work** (state, regional, national, and/or international) to author a reflections paper on their careers.

INFORMATION FOR CONTRIBUTORS

Submissions: Mail an original, including an abstract of no more than 100 words, and three (3) high quality copies of the manuscript to Dr. James G. McCullagh, University of Northern Iowa, Department of Social Work, Sabin 36, Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0405. A disk is required after a manuscript has been accepted.

Queries: Dr. Jim McCullagh at 319/273-2399, 319/273-6006 (FAX), or by e-mail at james.mccullagh@uni.edu/

Format of Manuscript:

Include a **Cover Sheet**, which does not go out for review, the complete title of the submitted manuscript, authors' names, degrees, professional titles, institutional affiliations, and the designation of one author, if more than one, who is the corresponding author. The corresponding author is to include her or his address, phone number, e-mail address, and fax number.

Include an **Abstract** of between 75 and 100 words on a separate sheet.

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Length of the manuscript should conform to the suggested page length for the categories noted on the other side. Manuscripts are to be double-spaced with one inch margins on all sides.

Style: The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (4th ed.). See the Manual for References. Footnotes are discouraged.

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Home Page URL: *http://www.uni.edu/mccullag. The Home Page includes a collection of school social work resources, including a listing of journal articles, books and reports, bibliographies, and dissertations. The Page is constantly updated. See also "Jimmy's Web Page," which includes an extensive listing of web sites of interest to school social workers.*

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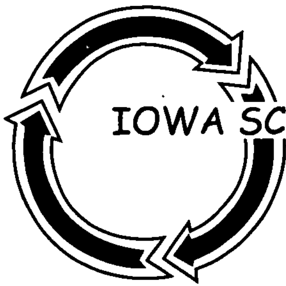

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JOURNAL OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

Volume 11, No. 2 Spring 2001

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EDITORIAL

Again, many thanks to the contributors for this journal issue. We are pleased to include articles by leaders in school social work, research, historical and intervention articles, and book reviews. Fineran's research on peer sexual harassment is excellent and paves the way for further work in this area of critical need, which is gaining increasing attention in our schools. The emphasis on harassment toward minorities is important. The book review by Bricker-Jenkins is a "must read" and a statement of advocacy that connects with this article. Frey's historical study on educational placement for children with emotional or behavioral disorders is significant and captures the issues of intervention and policy needs and the evolution that has brought us to the current state of affairs. Romano writes about a unique intervention experience that gives us insight as to how to "connect" with a child who is desperately in need.

Publishing is a "chore," but, as associate editor of this journal, I must say that it is personally very satisfying, not only to see the end result but to experience the inspiration, affirmation, reinforcement, and instruction that is inherent in closely reading the journal articles—and then rereading and rereading and rereading! The chore for me has great payoff, because I receive the inspiration of the authors over and over again as I reread. Armstrong, Davis, and Levine exemplify the strength, commitment, and wisdom of social work leaders in the schools as they chronicle their experiences. They portray the essence of what it means to be a social worker. I appreciate each of them so very much.

I believe that we as social workers impact the thinking patterns of individuals and groups. Subsequently and eventually, this impacts social policy. On a personal and collective basis, the change is generational.

> ...It has never taken a majority to create significant change. It's just taken a critical mass, a minority that has tipped the balance because their energies have consolidated in the form that I think we normally call a social movement.... What impresses me about how social movements create change is that they are often symbolized by one person who makes a deeply inward decision to "live divided no more." (Palmer, 1998, pp. 65-66)

Social workers strive for true community on many levels. School social workers are active in one of the most important communities that exist—our children's schools.

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Remember, the "hard copy" is a significant way to impact social policy at every level. "Put it in writing!" Publish!

Cheryl A. McCullagh, LISW, DCSW, BCD

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BECOMING A SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER: THE CONCEPT OF EQUI-FINALITY

Renee Shai Levine

ABSTRACT

In this paper the concept of equi-finality is used to frame the process by which the author became a school social worker. It describes the varied paths she took to balance the responsibilities of a wife and mother, while maintaining her professional activities. It is heartening to note that despite limited work hours and waiting to move into the academic setting until after her children were into their own school experiences, she was able to do research, publish, teach, become active in professional organizations, move into a school social work setting, and in other ways make a contribution to the field. She recently retired from the practice of school social work and continues to remain active.

In discussing the foundations, development, and applications of general system theory, Ludwig von Bertalanffy establishes the need to include those conditions and processes that exist in both closed and open systems (1968). He explains that what goes into a closed system determines the outcome. "If either the initial conditions or the process is altered, the final state will also be changed" (p.40). He points out that "This is not true in open systems. Here, the same final state may be reached from different initial conditions and in different ways. This is what is called equi-finality..." (p.40).

In looking back over the more than 4 decades since I received my master's degree in social work, one can see that my becoming a school social worker reflects the concept of equi-finality. I began as a social group worker with experiences in settlement houses and community centers responsible for direct practice. I moved to residential programs for children in a children's convalescent home and for school-aged adolescents with exceptionalities. My responsibilities in these settings included program supervision and staff training as well as direct practice. When I moved into the academic setting, I did field supervision of graduate students doing social group work in school settings as well as teaching, research, publishing, presenting, and

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consulting in the area of practice and policy in the educational/school setting. My focus in going forward was influenced by my interest in finding a balance to my responsibilities as a wife and mother, while retaining my connection with professional practice. It was in 1978, when I had to assess where I had been in my social work career and how I would define myself as I selected a topic for my doctoral dissertation, that I recognized I had become a school social worker.

Early Influences

My early experiences in social work were as an undergraduate, working with groups of Jewish children and teens in the settlement houses and community centers of the lower east side in Manhattan. These were agencies in which social work was the host. At that time the interest was to provide wholesome, supervised activities for the youths living in the crowded apartments and tenements in that area. The intent was to curb delinquency, while exposing these young people to the individual and group social experiences that would contribute to their becoming responsible citizens of their communities. The group process was to be the medium by which the members would learn to plan and work out differences in a democratic mode (Coyle, 1951). Another goal of the group work program in a culture specific agency was to create opportunities for the members to move out of their segregated communities and begin to experience and become comfortable in the larger horizon. The commitment to develop proactive programs and to promote experiences with cultural pluralism was definitely a part of the purpose and philosophy of the social workers in these settings (Coyle, 1951). The programs took place after school, in the evening, and during the summer in day camps. I learned what was involved in developing activities for children and youths in groups.

Becoming a Professional Social Worker

At the time that I was admitted to the New York School of Social Work, Columbia University (as it was known in the 1950s), the social work curriculum was organized by method. I was admitted as a group work student and spent my first year in an after school program

in the Bedford Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn, an African American community. The agency was a service of the New York City Youth Board, an agency known for its "detached workers," staff assigned to work with gangs in the streets to defuse their hostile activities and move them into buildings with supervised structured activities. I was part of a student unit in an agency whose administrators and program staff, as well as our field instructor, were African Americans. I mention this to point out that the professional preparation we had in New York City during the 1950s more than adequately prepared us for the issues that we would be facing in the urban communities during the remainder of the century and into the next century.

My assignment included work with a group of fifth graders and teen girls. This led to my first professional contact with teachers in a public school. I reached out to the different fifth grade classroom teachers to recruit members for a group, using the standards we had to offer support for students who were having problems interacting in the classroom. Once the group began, the teachers and I maintained contact, and I was able to offer feedback as to the ways in which the students from their class had been able to learn to work positively with other group members. These always had implications for strategies that could be used in the classroom. The experience exposed me to the reality of the problems that children bring with them into the classrooms, which the teachers are not prepared to handle. One of the fifth graders tried to commit suicide. No one was prepared for this, and it emphasized the need for attention to those who are withdrawn as well as those who are acting out.

Beginning the Balance Between Personal and Professional Commitments

I married a fellow group worker when I was in the second year of graduate school. He was drafted into the army after we graduated. I accepted a 1-year contract with the social group work agency in which I had my second year placement. During this time my husband was inducted, went through basic training, and was assigned to spend his tour of duty as a social worker in a neuropsychiatric clinic at Fort Belvoir, VA. When I joined my husband at the end of the program year, I was able to find a social work position as the Director of Recreation and Volunteers at the Children's Convalescent Home in Washington, D.C. My responsibilities included coordinating the assignments and activities of volunteers, both with the children as well

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as those who helped in the maintenance and repair of clothing, and providing staff development for nurse's aides in training. The preparation of the latter included the teaching and learning of age-appropriate activities to contribute to the individual healthy growth and development of the children even as they had to be aware of a child's grief in being separated from his/her family. The nurse's aides had daily contact with the children and were to choose a child for whom they would be "special." This guaranteed that each child would have a feeling, caring, and individual relationship with an adult while they were in the convalescent setting.

The setting exposed me to children from birth to 6 years of age with medical challenges. They came to the Convalescent Home to be prepared for surgery or to recover after surgery, before going home to family or a foster setting. Some were born with heart conditions, some were hydrocephalic, some had serious food allergies, and so on. I can still recall one 4 year old who had a diagnosis of post measles encephalitis. She had lost her speech, was incontinent, and unable to walk. She was wheeled into our playroom and within 15 minutes was out of the chair and interacting with the other children. A major prescription put on the medical charts for many of these children by the attending pediatricians was for TLC ("Tender Loving Care"). The doctors recognized that medicine only could do so much, and, after that, the social experiences and emotional well-being of the children were dependent on the interaction with the staff and other children in their environment. This is something that I have always remembered and carried with me to the other settings as I moved on in my social work career. The experience provided a valuable frame of reference for work that I would be doing more than 20 years later when I worked on my dissertation, and then, when I was a member of a multidisciplinary team in the 1980s.

As the years evolved, my work experiences revolved around my husband's employment and the arrival and care of our four children. When my husband completed his military service, I delivered our first child. We relocated to Kansas City, and I did not return to practice until we returned to the East with a 1-year-old son. At that time I remained home, but I found an opportunity to work 1 day a week in a residential school for students with exceptionalities. It was located in Pennsylvania. I was selected to demonstrate a program of group work with educable high school age students in an after school program. I worked under the supervision of the clinical administrator, who was a psychiatrist. This experience occurred in the late 1950s and early 1960s and pre-dated the Education For All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94-142). It proved to be another valuable frame of reference for work that I would be doing on my dissertation, and, later, when I

became a school social worker. Most of these students came from families who lived in other states and who could afford to send their children away from home. In some situations the children were placed in the residential program by child welfare agencies. They were in school in Pennsylvania, because they did not have appropriate public school programs in their home communities to meet their needs. One of the intents of P.L. 94-142 was to correct the problem of having to separate children with exceptionalities from their family, if the children were to receive an education.

Social group work was seen as an opportunity to provide structure and enrich the quality of life that the children were having after school. I was required to prepare process records of my work. In demonstrating group work, I provided material that the clinical administrator was able to use in both his work with individual students as well as for the quality of their lives in the residential setting. An interesting, unanticipated outcome of the group discussions was that the psychiatrist became aware of issues in the living situation of which he had no prior knowledge. The feedback from the group meetings identified the role that he had to play with house staff. I continued in this program for 3 years. My leaving coincided with the birth of my second child.

I was able to continue with my professional practice 4 months following the delivery, because the position I was offered as coordinator for a "Friendly Visitor Program" in a settlement house influenced by Quaker leadership, in the Germantown section of Philadelphia, allowed for flexible hours, the ability to do some of the work at home, and the inclusion of child care when I had to be at a group meeting. It was modeled after the Charity Organization Society (COS) of the 19th Century (Richmond, 1917). My role in this program was to meet with a group of African American low-income mothers with school-age children once a week and supervise volunteers assigned to visit with them on a "friendly" basis. The purpose of this program was to offer support to young mothers with limited resources. The weekly group meeting was a means of empowering them to identify their own resources and to use their skills to develop activities to enrich the lives of their children and themselves. The "friendly" visits allowed for relationships, wherein individual parents could receive in-depth help with particular problems that they were having: parenting, finding needed resources for their family and home, and learning to move out into the larger community. This program introduced me to the concerns that parents had about their child's school experience and what they could do to support school achievement. This was another valuable experience to have as a frame of reference when I became a school social worker.

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Moving into the Academic Setting

I was approached by a faculty member of the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work and was asked to teach a course in their "Employed Worker" program when I was in the second year of my work in the Germantown Settlement House. Today, this program would be referred to as continuing education. It was a program for people with undergraduate degrees, who were employed in social group work agencies and who did not have graduate degrees. This program brought these employed people back into the academic setting and exposed them to the language and the concepts used in professional services. It became a transition to the masters program for many who were enrolled. I was recommended for this position by the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work faculty person who had served as a consultant for the residential program in which I was demonstrating group work. She was Helen U. Phillips, a well-known authority in the area of social group work (1984). At the time that I was given this opportunity, I was pregnant, and, while pleased to be asked, I did not think I could accept this offer. My "due date" would have meant that I would miss the last two classes. I was told that I could rework the class schedule with the students, using one of a variety of options. If the schedule had not been revised, the arrival of my third child would have precluded my presence at the last two classes.

I taught one course per semester during the next 8 years and went on to teach group work students in the masters program. It proved to be a wonderful structure for me, as I tended to "dishes and diapers." I was able to use naptime to do readings and review papers. It allowed me to invest in my professional career, while I maintained what I felt were my responsibilities to my children. I was familiar with every reference on the bibliography in the courses that I taught. As the children grew older, I was asked to move into supervising students in a mental health setting, a Universities Related School Social Group Work Program in elementary public schools in West Philadelphia and one of the first "continuing education programs for school-age parents" in Wilmington, Delaware. We were now moving through the 1960s and early 1970s, and I had had my fourth child and was still only away from home one or one and a half days a week.

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Involvement in Schools as a Parent

Aside from my first year placement in graduate school, my first direct entry into the schools as a helping person was as a parent. At that time it was clear that the focus of many teachers was the curriculum. Children who came ready to learn did very well. The concept of equi-finality can be used to explain the complexity of the demands that the teacher faced in trying to teach a class of children who came from homes with a range of economic and educational backgrounds. The demand to motivate, interest, and challenge the diversity of abilities that the children had in order to participate in the educational program took away from the focus on curriculum and was not easily mastered by all teachers. It made me aware that much was needed to enrich the teaching and learning transactions that children were having in the classroom. I learned to accept that excellence in teaching was an exception and not a rule.

Personally, we lived in an integrated community, one in which some professional parents were home with their children and had a commitment to the public schools. The parents had backgrounds in early childhood development, the arts, teaching, and social work. We all were interested in the educational reforms being proposed by Sylvia Ashton-Warner (1958, 1963) and Herbert Kohl (1967). These teachers described their experiences in developing effective methods of teaching in working with students from different cultures. They emphasized the importance of framing education within the context of the emotional experiences of the child, taking into consideration the tensions and fears they brought with them from their communities into the classroom. They included within their reforms the designing of educational experiences to allow for the developmental stages of the children and their individual education needs. The parents in our community were ready for infant classrooms, learning centers, and open classrooms to be introduced in the schools that our children attended. The parents were ready to move more quickly than the teachers in introducing change. We parents took an active part in organizing experiences to supplement what the children were doing in the classroom. I became involved in developing activities after school, during lunchtime, and in class. It proved to be a good entrée to school social work.

I can recall participating in a project on reading in a second grade class. I used a typewriter to offer second grade students the opportunity to do "book reports." I used my social group work background to organize this activity and created a form that allowed

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the child to control his/her participation in this activity. In doing this, I learned that very bright children can discuss the concepts in a book, in context, without knowing what they were talking about, i.e., "taxation without representation." I also learned that a child can tell a good story while looking at the pictures, even if the words in the book tell a different story. One child could not read. I became aware of the diverse learning capabilities of children in the same classroom and the challenges this presents for a teacher. I came to understand that the best gift a teacher in the elementary grades can give a bright child is to teach that child to work to learn. The teacher in this classroom was a caring, committed, mature woman. It was important for me to work with her in such a way that I wouldn't be perceived as threatening. After all, I was one of those demanding, challenging parents. The teacher and I developed a relationship in which she could trust me and appreciated the insights that I was able to offer for the learning needs of particular children.

Lunchtime was another area that was rich for activity development. This sensitized me to the options that children need in unstructured and non-teaching parts of the school day. The children in this school had a one and a half hour lunch. I used this time to facilitate a weekly recorder group for third graders. We had good attendance, and the children used the time well to work on learning the instrument, where indicated, and/or in preparing material for their own enjoyment and to share with their class. It was a relaxed informal program with motivated bright participants, all of whom did not have interpersonal skills. Many of the mothers of the children in the group worked. Had this activity not been available, the children would have spent the entire lunch period in a monitored lunch room with some outdoor free play before they lined up to return for the afternoon. At the end of the school year, the parents let me know what the group had meant to their children. They told me that their children looked forward to school on the day that we had the recorder group, and the parents saw this as a creative activity in a school program that previously had not always challenged their child. I gained a sense of what a social worker could contribute to the school environment. This occurred in the classroom and during unstructured non-teaching parts of the school day. I learned that the concept of equi-finality could allow one to anticipate the ways in which a school social worker could be used in the school setting. My notion of school integrated what social work education had taught me about the needs of children for healthy growth and development, even as there are expectations for what students should be learning in the different curriculum areas.

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Doctoral Education: Integrating Knowledge and Practice

As my four children entered school, I was able to take on more professional work, and, in 1973, I began to teach social work practice, advise, and serve as liaison for students in their field placements in the masters program. My youngest child was 8 years of age, and I now worked 3 days a week. Being in the academic setting facilitated my taking courses in the doctoral program. Not surprisingly, I used this opportunity to integrate my knowledge of social work with how it could be used to influence what was happening in the schools. I chose as my focus "child welfare in the schools."

The 1960s was the time of the War on Poverty and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965), landmark legislation, in which the federal government provided funds for education that included social work services. The 1970s was a time in which the federal government moved to support the rights of children with special needs to be in their local schools. Readers are familiar with the Education For All Handicapped Children Act, popularly known at P.L. 94-142. As mentioned earlier, this legislation also was seen as a support for families. Children now could have a free and appropriate education in their local school community.

This also was the civil rights era and locally was a time of many school strikes. As an active and concerned parent, I became aware that parents had no voice in school contracts. It did not seem that the priority in negotiations concerned setting standards to meet the needs of the children in the schools. Parents were supposed to feel that the emphasis on class size, working conditions, and salaries and benefits in contract negotiations would ensure a quality education for their child. Nothing was negotiated about the culture of the school or the manner in which a teacher related to students in the classroom. No one questioned having a punitive corrective approach to behavior as compared to a proactive approach. Negotiations were conducted between representatives of the School Board and the teachers. There was no voice for parents.

I used the assignments in the doctoral program to develop the knowledge that was needed to articulate the issues and concerns needing to be addressed in serving the needs of children in the schools. I researched the teacher contracts, the role of the School Board, and the issues in funding for the schools (Levine, 1981). I became aware that advocacy for change at the beginning of the school year was an empty gesture, if the school budget is finalized in the spring. This was especially meaningful to parent groups, and, when I shared this with

them, they changed their action calendar. I learned that the American Federation of Teachers, AFT-CIO, in Philadelphia had undermined the presence of school social workers in Philadelphia schools when they negotiated contracts (Agreements Between the Board Of Education of the School District of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers, 1965, 1966,1968). They, at no time, included school social workers in the bargaining unit, even though they were mentioned in the Agreements as a support service for teachers having emotionally disturbed children in their classroom. School social workers were referred to as social caseworkers and included as a support service in the first and second Agreements, but they were not included in the third (Agreement 1965, Article V, p. 26; Agreement 1966, Article IV, p. 32; and Agreement 1968, Article IV, p. 31).

I learned that what was happening in Philadelphia, a city in a class by itself, did not reflect the structures and patterns of pupil services in school districts throughout the Commonwealth. I studied the literature and history of school social work throughout the nation and became familiar with the legislation influencing practice in the school setting. As I moved to define a dissertation topic, I assessed who I was professionally and how I wanted to be defined. The curriculum in graduate social work programs was now organized by field setting and not method. In reviewing my work, I realized that, although I had perceived myself as a social group worker, most of my work experience was in the school setting.

I accepted being defined as a school social worker and prepared to use the dissertation as an opportunity to gather more knowledge in that field. This was 1978. I chose as my focus for my dissertation to examine "What School Social Workers were Doing to Implement the Education For All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 in Pennsylvania." I felt this would make me current with what was happening with school social work in Pennsylvania as well as with this comprehensive piece of legislation effecting children, families, and the schools at that time. Gathering the data to answer this question brought me face to face with the status of school social work in Pennsylvania. It was not a title for a certified position in the schools. There was a Home and School Visitor certification title, which was rooted in social work services and an area in which social workers have given professional leadership.

These services were not universally included in the 501 school districts in the Commonwealth. Their level of organizational structure varied from county to county, from district to district, and even from building to building within a district (Khouri, 1964). It also is of interest to note that Pennsylvania has a tri-echelon system of school organization. This includes the state level, the intermediate level, and

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the local school district. The Intermediate Unit (IU) was the level of school organization through which funding for special needs students was dispersed from the federal to the local levels and which provided classes for students for special needs when the local districts did not qualify for funding for students in a particular category.

To explain more fully, a school district might not have the number of hearing impaired students needed to qualify for funding, but the IU, in coordinating services for the students in the school districts in their jurisdiction, would. The students would then attend an IU class in whatever school district it was housed. The IU was also able to hire MSWs to meet the standards of P.L. 94-142 for service providers, even as they did not have a certification title. My dissertation topic became "Implementation of Social Work Services in Schools at the Intermediate Unit Level in Pennsylvania Under the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142)" (1980). It proved to be a vehicle for me to become thoroughly familiar with the intent of the Act, the structure of the education system in Pennsylvania, and the status of school social workers in the Commonwealth.

As a result of the knowledge that I gained from completing the requirements for the doctoral degree, I initiated creating a Home and School Visitor/School Social Worker (HSV/SSW) approved certification program at the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Worker. It was apparent that if change were to occur, it had to come within the system. This was the third approved program in the Commonwealth. One was at the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work, in the southwestern part of the state, and another was at Widener University Graduate Education Program, in the southeastern part of the state. Adding another approved program for the HSV/SSW position in the eastern part of the state, and in a School of Social Work, was a strategy to increase the presence of social work standards and social workers in this field. The approved certification program was an integration of the social work curriculum with a practicum in the school setting (Levine, 1985a). My faculty assignment was in the Education Specialization, and it included coordinating the HSV/SSW approved certification program and developing a course on education policy to meet its requirements. At this time, there are HSV/SSW approved certification programs in 4 graduate schools of social work education in the eastern part of the state.

While in the academic setting, I did research, presented at national conferences of social workers, and started to publish. My work reflected my interest in reducing truancy (Levine, 1984a, 1985b, 1986), the findings from the research for my dissertation describing the barriers to the implementation of services to children and families under P.L. 94-142 (Levine, 1984b), and work with colleagues

discussing implications for the educational preparation of social work professionals interested in practice in the schools if they were to address prevention (Levine, Allen-Meares, & Easton, 1987). I became active in the School Social Work Network created by Molly Freeman and Isadora Hare in NASW and served as the liaison for school social work in Pennsylvania from 1980-1992. In the period from 1980-1988, I served on the Editorial Board of Social Work in Education, first as a Consulting Editor, then as a member of the Editorial Board, and as the Co-Editor of a special issue (Levine & Constable, 1988). These activities affirmed my identification as a school social worker.

Leadership in the Field

Other activities affirming my identification as a school social worker were added while I was in the doctoral program. In 1977, I became involved as a consultant for education programs at the city and state levels. I served as a consultant for a project funded by the Youth Services Coordinating Office of Philadelphia. This program was meant to reclaim dropouts and truants and assist them to complete the requirements for their high school diplomas or to prepare them to meet the requirements for the GED. The program placed students in work settings for 3 days a week and had them in the school setting for 2 days a week. The staff in this program were idealistic and committed, but they spoke of the degree of burnout that they experienced by the end of the year. More students than expected had come in with a pre-primer level of reading. Many could not begin to learn in a group but had to be taught on a one to one basis. Many had previously undiagnosed learning problems. These were significant findings and served me well when I became a member of a multidisciplinary team and was involved in finding an appropriate school placement for students with emotional and/or learning problems.

The University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work asked me to represent them on an Ad Hoc group of professional social workers who were brought together to serve as consultants to the Director of the Bureau of Instructional Support Services in the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) for the "Home and School Visitor" certification program. The standards for this position were very similar to those required for the MSW. Those of us in this group used this forum to work on changing the certification title, so that it would match those being used in other states for the same work. This is something yet to be accomplished in Pennsylvania. This group

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of consultants, made up of academics and school social work practitioners, remained in this role from 1977-1983. We became familiar with how the PDE worked, and, in 1984, I was asked to Chair the Task Force to Revise the Home and School Visitor Standards for the PDE. Although the standards are clearly those met by MSWs, the PDE will not authorize requiring a particular degree for certification in this area. Recognition was given to the need to organize those in the state who were working in this position, and the group went on to form the Pennsylvania Association of School Social Work Personnel (PASSWP) in 1978. I remained active at both a regional and state level. I served as the President of the southeast region from 1980-1984, and I chaired the state Conference Committee in 1980 and the regional Annual Conference Committees 1983-1985. By this time, all of my children had graduated from college.

I became President at the state level in 1988 and served for two terms. While serving as the Past President of PASSWP, I was asked to represent Pennsylvania at the meeting in Edwardsville, Illinois, convened in 1994, to explore whether or not a national organization of school social workers was warranted. The meeting resulted in those present becoming founders of the School Social Work Association of America (SSWAA). As a result of my participation in the events at Edwardsville, I was asked to represent the Northeast Region on the interim Executive Committee, whose function was to create the foundation for SSWAA. I then was elected to be the first Vice-President of SSWAA and was given the responsibility for organizing the Northeast Region of School Social Work Associations. While serving in this position, I participated in the founding of the Northeast Coalition of School Social Work Associations (NECSSWA) and was elected to be its first President. The mission statements of all these organizations includes the importance of promoting the professional development of school social workers and providing for services to enhance the education of students and their families.

My leadership in the field continued as I moved from the academic setting in 1987 to a position in the field as a school social worker. I saw this as an opportunity to test what I had been teaching. Now I realize how fortunate I was to have been asked to fill the position of someone who was retiring. These positions are not easy to access in Pennsylvania. Becoming a HSV/SSW meant that I became a member of the Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA). Pennsylvania may be the only Education Association in the country whose structure includes a Department of Pupil Services at the state level. In 1997, I was elected to serve as the President of the HSV/SSW Section of the Department of Pupil Services of PSEA and remained in this position for 2 years. It was an opportunity to meet with

representatives of the other pupil service professionals in the schools and to identify the issues that we all have in common.

One of these issues was the negligible attention that we were all accorded in the Teachers' Education Association and/or in its publications. The groups represented at the table were the school nurses, the school counselors, the school psychologists, and the dental hygienists, as well as the HSV/SSWs. They were a wonderfully supportive group of professionals and appreciated my willingness to bring information and issues to the table. When we raised the issue of wanting to be included in the PSEA publications, we were successful in being offered an opportunity for submitting a column. The group was aware of my interest in increasing the visibility, awareness, and appreciation of HSV/SSW services, and they offered the column to our group. This was during the summer. No one was available to recruit for this assignment. I found myself doing the research and completing an article on the part our professional group plays as part of the violence prevention team. This was published (Levine, 1998).

There was a good deal of response to this article from the field. Aside from questions from practitioners inquiring about the resources that I referred to, I heard from graduate students and practitioners who did not have MSWs. They asked me what they needed to do to qualify for the work I described. The article was reproduced in the NASW School Social Work Section Newsletter (Levine, 1999), and a newly appointed school social worker called to ask how one goes about offering the services described in the article. She was feeling overwhelmed, and I assured her that one person did not do all that was described. I found that being active at the national, regional, and state levels allowed me to learn and carry the issues and insights from one position to the other, and, instead of it being too heavy a load, allowed me the opportunity to make a contribution to the different levels of professional organizations.

Entering the School Social Work Setting

When I came to the field, I immediately was involved in providing school social work services at the elementary, junior, and senior high levels. My assignments carried me to 6 different buildings, and, when necessary, to students in approved private schools. In addition to the services to implement the laws for students with special needs and to prevent violence in the schools, I found that our district used the school social worker as a liaison between the family and

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school for students having a range of problems resulting in barriers to education. I also was able to offer group work services to classes for special education students and students in the mainstream. Some school administrators were willing to tap the skills that I brought with me from my previous experiences, and I was asked to prepare inservice programs for school staff at the district and county levels; to chair a district Task Force with a charge to develop a K-12 curriculum on Human Growth and Development; serve on committees to develop district policy and implement state legislation mandating requirements for continuing staff education; develop a Parent Training Program to meet the requirements of P.L. 94-142, that parents be involved in teaching other parents their rights and entitlements under the law; and was assigned to coordinate the Pregnant and Parenting Teen Program. This opened the door for rewarding experiences in resolving intergenerational and interagency problems. Using my past experience, I was also able to work with a community agency to mount a proactive after school structured program for preadolescent Latino girls from families in which parents worked, to provide both academic support and age-appropriate socialization activities. It became a model for programs for minority students in other districts.

I entered the school social work setting in September 1987, feeling that I would be able to test what I had been teaching. My years in the field served to affirm that the public school is the agency in the community, whose door is open to all children and families within its boundaries. It is the door that is used when families are told that their children can no longer attend parochial or private schools, because they have learning or behavior problems that those schools are not prepared to serve. I was reminded that the social work role in this setting requires representing the school (district) and its social mandate to assist parents in their responsibility to provide for the welfare of their child(ren) (Public Education and Child Labor Association of Pennsylvania, 1914). I found that this means that we are in touch with children and families at a difficult time in their lives and must be sensitive to the fact that whether or not these students can overcome their challenges is a measure of the quality of the life they will lead in the years to come. This has special significance for the school, when we realize that within the next decade, these same students will be returning to the district as the parents of children coming to kindergarten. The consideration they received when they were in need of help will impact the ways in which they interact with their child's educational setting.

Early in my first year in the field, I was asked to prepare an article on school social work practice for the 10th Anniversary Issue of <u>Social Work In Education</u>. I had the unique opportunity to use the

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records kept by my colleague in the district, Betty Mellor, of her more than 2 decades in this setting (Levine & Mellor, 1988). Her data underscored that the role of the school social worker evolves and is related to legislative mandates, funding streams, and the particular knowledge and skills that the professional can offer to address the demographic changes in the community. This was very helpful in preparing graduate students for work in the school setting. It emphasized the range and scope of the services a school social worker may be called upon to offer in a particular district at different times. It also demonstrated that, while the worker may carry a responsibility to identify needed services, the worker may not have to be the direct providers of those services. This is something we both impressed on the graduate social work students who came to our district for their school social work practicum. After Betty Mellor retired, I added my experiences to her chronology and described the continuing evolving school social work role in our district in over more than 3 decades. (Levine, 1996).

As I leave the field, I would like to address one area in which I found work that needs to be done. Working in the schools allowed me to become aware of situations that I hadn't seen discussed in the literature and for which I wasn't prepared. I came from an academic setting, in which the notion of preparation for the profession included having a clear understanding of the worker's role and function in providing an agency's services. When I went to an interagency meeting to discuss the problems a particular child and family were having, I saw myself there as a colleague and a representative of the school and the school district. It was, therefore, startling to experience workers from mental health or from children and youth choosing to represent what a parent should do when a question arose about a school situation. These workers justified their behavior by claiming to be advocates for the family. They were unaware of the procedures in the schools to implement the individualized education program of students with special needs, as required by law. They were unaware that school social workers also saw themselves as advocates for the student and their family. This began to change when I attended the staff meetings of these different agencies to discuss the questions that I had about how the professionals from different agencies, attending the same meetings, carried their role and function. My participation in the training sessions for workers coming into these agencies was another means of influencing the manner in which professionals and para-professionals regarded the school and the school professionals. My emphasis was on encouraging professionals in other agencies to empower parents to use the procedures that were in place to advocate for their child's

educational program, if they felt there was a need to question what was happening.

My entry to a school social work setting occurred in September 1987. I retired in June 2000. It was a very rich experience.

Summary

My interest in becoming a social worker was an outcome of the experiences that I had in working to enrich the quality of life of young people in the teeming streets of the lower east side of New York City. My field placement in a graduate program of social work exposed me to other settings through which I could fulfill this mission. Married and having children created commitments that I sought to balance with continuing to work as a professional. My activities as a volunteer parent in the schools influenced the focus that I chose for study when I entered a doctoral program in social work, child welfare in the schools. My research, publications, and conference presentations made me part of the school social work network, and I came to identify myself as a school social worker. This perception was reinforced by my participation in the leadership of state, regional, and national organizations of school social workers. It further was reinforced by my initiating the development of an approved certification program for Home and School Visitor/School Social Workers at a graduate school of social work as a means of influencing the preparation and standards for education professionals in that role.

Ending my work life in the field, I was able to test what I had been teaching and to affirm the many ways in which a school social worker can contribute to the educational environment and to serving as a liaison between home and school, and home, school, and community agencies. I continue to remain active as the co-chair of the 2001 National School Social Work Conference and as a member of the Editorial Board of the Journal of School Social Work. My process in becoming a school social worker illustrates the concept of equi-finality: people coming from different backgrounds, using different paths, and opening different doors can become a school social worker and make a contribution to the field.

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INTERVENTION TO PREVENTION: AN EVOLUTIONARY PROCESS

I. Lorraine Davis

ABSTRACT

Most people's lives follow an evolutionary process, whether or not they recognize it as it is occurring. I would wager that we do not, per se, consciously know all the turns in the road and where they are leading. We set our goals, and these may change as we experiment with our inherent talents. At some fork in the road, there is a "knowing" that it is time for evaluation of our situation. Either we forge ahead on the course we're following, or we make adjustments. Listening clearly to that inner voice, following our instincts, and engaging in some thoughtful planning, we may just reach the galaxy for which we are aiming.

Unbeknownst to me, my social work career began in high school. I was very involved in community issues. These included ecumenical and interracial groups, camps where I studied international issues, essay contests about race issues, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People activities, volunteerism, and sit-ins (by our ecumenical group) at the Blossom Dairy in Charleston, West Virginia (an ice cream parlor where Blacks [Negroes then] could enter and purchase but could not sit down and eat). I didn't have a clue that I was headed toward a social work career; more than likely, my unconscious knew it. Between the time I was born and the time that I graduated from high school in 1947, I never heard anyone mention the field of social work. One of my cousins worked as a county home demonstration agent - I suppose you might call that social work of sorts. A brief look back through my yearbooks revealed that we had such a thing as an attendance officer, but no social workers and no counselors. And, if you didn't know what you wanted to study in college, you were instructed to go into the sciences, because you'd never make a living in the arts! So, I graduated from college with a

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B.S. in education, majoring in math and biology. It's a long way to Tipperary[1], don't you know.

During the intervening years, I did graduate work in zoology, got married, continued my community service work (Equal Opportunity Commission, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Election Official, League of Women Voters, Girl Scouts, Minority Housing), and engaged heavily in my hobby of photography. When the children were smaller and we needed extra cash, I went to work at Madison General Hospital as a nurse's aide (graveyard shift). It was at this juncture that my husband and mother hinted that it was time that I did something "significant" with my life - in terms of a career that is! I loved working with patients at the hospital. I knew that I really wanted to be in the people business instead of peering down a microscope at dead tissue. When the nurses at the hospital discovered that I was going back to school, they all but guaranteed school monies and a job in administrative nursing when I graduated. That sounded good, but I had met a few social workers by that time. Both professions were put on the balance scale (social work and nursing), and you know the rest of the story.

Fools Rush in Where Angels Fear to Tread

As luck would have it, I learned that there was a job opening at the Wisconsin School for Girls (a training school for delinquent girls). I walked into the superintendent's office and applied for that job. Unfortunately, it was a job that I was not qualified for; it was the Supervisor for Social Work Services for the entire institution. I was encouraged by the superintendent to take a tour through one of the cottages in hopes that I might be interested in a cottage counselor's job. WHAT? I had a college degree; I wasn't going to work for peanuts anymore. Reluctantly, I trudged over to the cottage to take a look, and I liked what I saw. The carrot dangling in front of me was that if I liked this kind of environment, I could become eligible to do a social work internship and eventually go back to school on a work-study program to become a bona fide social worker. The road to Tipperary was getting shorter! Thus began the intervention stage of my social work career. I was out to save delinquent girls from the verities (slings and arrows) of the cruel old world. This was the time that I seized

[1] An Irish marching song written by Harry Williams [1874-1924] and Jack Judge [1878-1938].

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upon the idea that we could save everyone by upgrading communities, providing parent training for families, and changing bureaucratic policies that were inhumane, outmoded, and mean-spirited. While we at the Wisconsin School for Girls were working individually and in groups with the girls, the probation and parole agents would do intensive work with the families and communities. Together, we believed that we would change the very fabric of these children's lives. Bright-eyed, bushy-tailed, and totally naive! During my sojourn at the Wisconsin School for Girls, there are two highlights that I wish to emphasize. One was the sad experience of having one of the girls in our security cottage transferred to Taycheedah (the adult women's prison) as a result of successive runaways. The other was the excellent training I received in group dynamics.

The group dynamics experience came about as a result of the institution upgrading its treatment efforts to help bring about marked changes in the cottage living situation. We hoped to head off potentially volatile situations by allowing the girls to give vent to their feelings and frustrations through daily cottage meetings. Cottage counselors on duty and the social worker assigned to the cottage conducted these group meetings in the living room of the cottage. Let me clarify here that there were 10 cottages and all were **self-contained** units. The cottage housed 20 girls with their own separate rooms. All activities (psychiatric staffings, nursing staff rounds, recreation, and daily cottage councils composed of the social worker, home-room teacher, and cottage personnel) were centered **in the cottage**. As a result of monthly idea exchanges among cottage counselors and social workers from other cottages, many of us were able to develop alternative ways of handling difficult interactions within our groups. The most difficult issue for me to face was "stone" silence in the group. Having gone through this experience, one learns that the human spirit can go only so long without coming forth with the issue that is slowly burning in the chest. The group leader must **listen** and **wait**.

One of my favorite strategies was to utilize the individual one-on-one sessions to precipitate some group interaction for the following morning. Manipulation? In a certain sense, yes. But this, if smoothly done, can and has, in real life, headed off potentially explosive situations within a cottage. Sometimes, the girls will beat the leader to the draw by attempting a little manipulation of their own. A good group leader will do more **listening** than talking, more **echoing ideas** back to the group from individual group members than inserting the leader's ideas, and more **follow-up** and **clarifying** than misinterpretation. First and foremost, one can't learn group dynamics by merely reading a book. One must be immersed in that group, taking hard knocks, and learning more from mistakes than from successes.

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Playing in the Big Leagues

And now, on to the next highlight of the Wisconsin School for Girls experience - that of the Administrative Transfer of Delinquent Girls from Training Schools to Adult Correctional Institutions. It truly broke my heart to witness the transfer of juveniles to adult prisons without their ever having committed any act that could even be remotely considered a crime on the "outside." I also knew that, somehow, I was a player in some of this activity. I vowed that my master's thesis would be devoted to this topic. So, when I was accepted in the School of Social Work at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, I began work and research on that very topic.

The first thing to be done was to get permission from the Division of Corrections Department of Public Welfare to do the study. Next, we needed to secure permission from the two institutions involved, in order to visit and personally administer the questionnaires. One must garner all of the personal support resources within the bureaucracy to support the research. We had to ensure that the subtle and not so subtle roadblocks along the way would have an influential person helping to knock them down. Maybe the Administrative Transfer was an issue whose time had come. Maybe it was all dumb luck. Things seemed to be going swimmingly.

So, we began constructing three different questionnaires - one for parole board members, one for those girls affected by the transfer, and one for social workers (probation and parole agents and institution workers). Of course, all these had to meet the requirements of the institution, the Division of Corrections, the School of Social Work, and others. When there are so many people involved, and they all have so many different expectations and philosophies, one little bump in the road can produce the fatal flaw, which can bring a research project to a crashing halt. It is akin to juggling bowling pins, square blocks, balls, and a few pens and needles thrown in together. And, of course, very strong feelings always surround touchy issues such as people's rights.

The 1960s had not yet become the hotbed of individual rights as we experience the issue today. Why go to the trouble of attempting to juggle the rights of a few troublesome individuals, when there are hundreds and hundreds of other individuals within a system that calls for systemic controls? On the other hand, how, in good conscience, can we justify sending someone to prison without benefit of a fair hearing in court? How can we justify a transfer, when no felony has been committed? What alternatives can be put in place? Up until this point,

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the Administrative Transfer had been accepted as a given. The old cliché was "that's the way it has always been done." And this is where the strong advocacy of our jobs as social workers comes into play.

Social work is a **gutsy** job if it's done in keeping with the traditional philosophies that we espouse. Unlike some of the stereotypes painted about social work, this is no job for a mealy-mouthed, shrinking violet, unskilled, do-gooder type person. There comes a time when we must say "once more unto the breach . . . ."[2] And once set on a course, which we believe is to the betterment of our clients in the long haul, we must say, "Damn the torpedoes . . ., full speed ahead."[3]

Lingering in the back of our minds during our professional careers, there always should be the thought that "any given issue is important enough to lose our jobs over" and that "issues are felt so intensely that we absolutely cannot wait for all the bean-counters, all the bureaucrats, all the naysayers and all the doubting Thomases to move aside." We must, through some fanciful flight of imaginative activity, do "whatever it takes" to accomplish our task. Being visionaries, we must stage our activities (whether they be "playing crazy," going through someone's wastebasket to get information, manipulating the system, threatening to make a federal case out of the matter, or working around the clock to finish off the job)!

All Roads Are Not Paved in Gold

Well, everything went fairly well, until the second semester of the second year of our master's degree work and research thesis. It was about a three-quarter inch thick document that had been "typed" on a regular typewriter (if anyone in this day and time even remembers what that is). There was no "Xerox" to run off things. The typist placed extremely thin carbon paper between several sheets of onionskin paper and the original paper. The thesis was submitted to all parties concerned, the main office for the Division of Corrections, institutions etc., etc., etc.

When the editing came back, there **appeared** to be no quarrel with the general philosophy. There were glaring changes, however, in the terminology used to describe a variety of institutional and

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[2] Shakespeare, King Henry V, Act III, Sc. 1, Line 1.
[3] Admiral David Glasgow Farragut to his captains at Mobile Bay [August 5, 1864].

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correctional concepts. For brevity, the most glaring and bothersome one was a change in wording from "adult prison" to read "adult correctional institutions in Wisconsin." Needless to say, this sort of stringing out from two short words to four long words played logistical havoc with the thesis.

When there is a deadline to meet, and it is a critical time of year when all typists are busy readying theses for final submission, it was crying time! The entire thesis had to be completely retyped! Much of the wording changes were much too long to do insertions - to say nothing of the fact that footnoting would have to be moved as well. Someone employed their flights of imaginative activity to make sure that there would be no graduation for us. Retyping and binding could mean the university's deadline could not be met. Also, a delay in publishing would mean that all the data would then be considered out-of-date!

"Someone" in the Division of Corrections had taken great issue with the concept of changing the Administrative Transfer rule, but was not ready, politically, to take formal action to quash it. Instead, they had used a diabolically ingenious method of putting a damper on the whole thing. The onus would fall on the researchers for not being sharp and up-to-date enough to get the job finished. Needless to say, we were left with the activity of last resort - working around the clock (literally) to make all the changes. This was not as much fun as throwing a tantrum, going through secret documents, or playing the race card. But it was submitted on time; we did graduate, and the thesis was voted "top thesis" of the year for 1965 (Davis & Kaminski, 1965). The thesis was quoted in the Wisconsin Law Review (Dix, 1966). Five years later in a 1970 court proceeding, the thesis was used as the basis for striking down the rule allowing administrative transfer of juveniles from the training school to adult correctional institutions. Sometimes a gnat can be used to kill you instead of a boa constrictor. Case closed!

After earning the MSSW, I stayed on in probation and parole, which was my work-study field placement during the time that I was in school. I requested and was granted the opportunity to work primarily with a juvenile caseload, comprised of the most difficult cases around the state. Again, my main focus was to turn somebody's life around completely. I began developing foster group homes in two counties (Dane and Columbia). I ended up with four group homes comprised of six girls each. I thought I had a foolproof system of placement. First, we would review records and develop a complete profile on a girl to be placed in the group home. This would be matched with the foster mother's profile and the existing residents' profiles to determine compatibility. Then, we would provide a week's trial visit for the girl who was to be placed in the home. Following this, we would have

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structured meetings to determine whether or not this could develop into a successful placement. Once the juvenile got her bearings and was functioning well, we would determine whether or not she could be out on her own.

The Best Laid Plans . . .

Well, well, well, it was naive time again! Sometimes, about 3 or 4 months after placement, things would begin to fall apart, tempers would fly, relationships would break down, etc., etc., etc. Girls would want to go back to the families from whence they had come, thus starting the whole cycle of maladjustment all over again. Yes, they appreciated the opportunity to start anew--they were not forced into group homes, but they were part of the choice. However, old habits die slowly, if not at all. People want to return to the comfort of situations they know best, even if those situations are chaotic and unproductive. The mother bond is the mother bond, even if it is a wrenching puzzle that cannot be put back together again. Somehow, the child feels that she can mend the broken pieces, that she can, through her newfound skills, put the ghosts to rest. And we (with our enthusiastic mode at full throttle) had forgotten that people are an amalgamation of all the experiences they have had; we learned anew that we could not isolate a person, clean them up (physically, spiritually, mentally), set them back on the shelf, and expect them **not to dance to the same old music.**

To say the least, this was grueling work for me. I had to visit group homes at least twice a week, help integrate foster families with group residents, do all the paper work and all the interviewing and placement procedures, travel back and forth across counties, do supportive and relief activities with foster parents or parent, solve problems of a logistical, emotional, and recreational nature, and try to keep myself together in the meantime. I was on call 24 hours a day! One of my foster group home mothers was taken to the hospital with an aneurysm and subsequently died several days later. The trauma and confusion for everyone was unimaginable. I was trying to deal with keeping all parties from going to pieces completely. I was helping the family make funeral arrangements. I was transporting girls back to the institution from which they were paroled - a holding pattern, as it were, until they could be resituated "on the outs." Above all, I was trying to keep my own composure. It was at this juncture that I began to reassess what my next career move would be. Wide-eyed and bushy-tailed as I was, I could not keep up this pace for too much longer.

Serious Thoughts About Prevention

The evolutionary process was not finished. Shortly after all of this, I took a field instructor position with the University of Wisconsin School of Social Work and was assigned to the Wisconsin School for Girls. I supervised four social work graduate students for a year. Having started my social work career in corrections and having seen the farthest end of the spectrum as it applies to destructive behavior patterns, my thoughts turned to avenues that could be taken before children's lives had gone in such a negative direction. I became more interested in the prevention than in the cure. How could we intervene early to stem the tide of a downward spiral, which would take children through every conceivable community agency and finally land them in a school for delinquent girls? What were we **not** doing that we could be doing?

Thirty years later, these questions still have not been answered to everyone's satisfaction. Twenty years ago the word "prevention" was not even a working concept in the people business, politically nor practice-wise. Diseases were prevented. One did not prevent destructive behavior, because how could we prove that we had prevented it? Prevention was just somebody's modus operandi to get more funds for the social issues of the day. During the last 15 years, more and more legislators, directors of social agencies, and those who are involved in making people's lives better from a social point of view have come to believe that **prevention works.** In the meantime, we have sent men to the moon, we have built space platforms, we have found water on Mars, and we have explored the human genome. As of yet, we have not developed effective strategies and activities designed to help human beings stop engaging in destructive behaviors unless we talk about jail or corporal punishment.

Full Circle

For a long time, I have believed that we **are** capable of engaging in prevention activities that will sharply enhance the lives of those who run upon troubled times and circumstances. No, I do not believe that we can save everyone--I am still bright-eyed and bushy-tailed but not naive! In 1967, I came full circle back to education, but I

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was armed with a masters in social work and a bellyful of experiences. Working without the sanctions, controls, and the authority so evident in the area of corrections, I found the job of turning lives around (before they got too far out of hand) to be a very **challenging** task. I had to engage in some seriously deep thinking to come up with "flights of imaginative activities." During the corrections years, the seeds for prevention were planted, and my sojourn in the educational system was the embryonic soil in which the seeds began to grow and flourish.

I became involved actively in a wide range of projects–human relations training for all middle school staff, including parents, students, custodians, secretarial staff, and lunch personnel–that was to culminate in the overall improvement of the school climate and the promise of a new grading system for the middle school; development of an apprenticeship program that paired middle school students with retired persons in a variety of fields, thus giving many students a sense of purpose and confidence; school-community coalitions; gifted programs that included talented students (not just those who tested at the 99th percentile); a weekly human relations group for students; school within a school concept; and new approaches to student dropouts.

After 8 years with the Madison Public Schools, I accepted the position of State Consultant for School Social Work Services at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. It was here that I was able to focus on prevention. In 1978, I submitted a proposal for a grant entitled "Wisconsin Child Abuse and Neglect Training for Educators." Funding was from the U.S. Office of Child Development. This was a demonstration grant from the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (now Department of Health and Human Services) and was designed to train trainers in developing an identification, referral, and reporting procedure to be utilized by five pilot school districts statewide.

My decision to apply for the grant was based on several factors. First of all, a number of professional disciplines, by law, were required to work with people adversely affected by child abuse. However, all of the entities acted as though they were the sole provider of such services and would not share information or even talk to each other about mutual cases! Everybody was hiding behind the confidentiality door. Secondly, educators themselves felt that this was not their bailiwick. They believed that agencies should handle the problem and that teachers should stay out of the mix. Yet, children were coming to school every day, bringing the internal hurts of abuse with them; children were showing up at school with unexplained bruises; children, who were good students, were falling behind; children, who had exhibited exemplary behavior, were becoming surly and belligerent, all for no apparent reason. School staff were paying

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attention, but they were at a loss as to what to do about the presenting problem, nor were they aware of what the underlying causes might be.

The planning process took into account all the foregoing. The project involved training a cadre of 10 trainers/planners from five regions in the state. Invitations for participation were sent to several school districts within each region, and follow-up calls were made to superintendents and principals to determine their interest in and commitment to such a project. Given the reasoning behind writing the proposal, it was imperative that this group be multidisciplinary. And this was made very clear to the five school districts that agreed to participate.

Once districts had applied for participation, the actual selection process took into account district size (large, small), location (rural, urban), and the diversity of school population. Dividing the state into regions assured that the entire state would be covered by the trainers/planners when they began helping other districts within their regions to develop prevention programs. Once all logistical planning was in place, the group of people selected was given in-depth training and experiences that covered child abuse and neglect.

A core curriculum (developed by Health, Education and Welfare) was utilized, along with special modules on social work, law enforcement, medicine, health nursing, and education. This was done through a series of four 3 1/2 day sessions. It was done in this manner so as to immerse the participants in the subject as totally as possible, to have them "gel" as a group, and to have them working as teams when they returned to the districts to do their work. There were 2-week intervals between the training sessions to allow the participants time to assimilate the mounds of material and information that we were pouring into them. Because school district staff time was so precious and release time so costly, we planned sessions to begin Thursday afternoon and run all day Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Fortunately, participants were committed enough to give up some of their weekends.

Top notch presenters, facilitators, and workshop presenters in the areas of child abuse and neglect were brought in from all over the country and from within the state. People from all the disciplines dealing with child abuse, people from all the agencies dealing with child abuse, and victims of child abuse were brought in to deliver the training. Needless to say, the trainers/planners had become a close-knit group as a whole and certainly had bonded and blossomed as individual teams, ready to go back to their respective districts and do battle. Two follow-up sessions were planned; that is, we brought the group back together in Madison to iron out any bugs and to hear of their problems and successes. Every school district that participated was visited at least once during the first year of the project. Several teams staged 1- and 2-

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day workshops for all personnel in the district in order to introduce the concept of preventing and dealing with child abuse and neglect.

Fruits of the Labor

As a result of all the work done, Child Abuse and Neglect: A School-Community Resource Book was published (Davis, Eckerman, & Jarvey, 1977). Other publications, which emanated from this experience, were as follows: Child Abuse and Neglect: The Role of the School (Davis, 1977); Child Sexual Assault and Abuse: Guidelines for Schools (Davis, 1984); Dealing with Child Sexual Assault and Abuse: A Resource and Planning Guide (Davis, 1986), and numerous radio and TV programs. For my work in the area of child abuse prevention, in 1985, I received from the state of Wisconsin the first The Donna J. Stone Memorial Award (this award memorializes the efforts of Donna J. Stone, founder of the National Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse). In the same year, I received the Commissioner's Award (Department of Health and Human Services) for outstanding leadership and service in the prevention of child abuse and neglect. It has been said that these efforts solidified the efforts of the state as a whole in more adequately addressing child abuse prevention issues. All schools now have child abuse policies and procedures with regard to identification, referral, and reporting of child abuse and neglect. There is in place a mechanism for greater cooperation between school and community.

All of this does not imply that we as school social workers should give up programs based on intervention. It does mean that we are in a strategic position to provide services on a continuum basis, i.e. intervention - early intervention - prevention, with a **focus on prevention**. The workload will not be any less, and the frustrations will not be any less, but, over the long haul, the benefits to school children and those in the educational system will be greater.

The road to Tipperary can be long, arduous, and lonely. The desire to help people can often produce a 24-hour, 7-day a week insanity. I am happy for having endured such insanity and to have emerged with my own marbles in tact and my passion for service just as strong!

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

I. Lorraine Davis retired in 1990 from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction having served 16 years as State Consultant for School Social Work Services. Her career has spanned 30 years of advocacy for children, with emphasis in the areas of juvenile delinquency, education, child abuse and neglect, and teenage pregnancy. She has served with the following groups: Midwest School Social Work Council, National Center on Child Abuse/Neglect, NASW Provisional Council on Social Work Education, National Council of State Consultants in School Social Work, and the University of Wisconsin, School of Social Work. Lorraine is currently engaged in some community service and building her nature photography business.

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REFLECTIONS ON TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AS A SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER: JOYS AND LESSONS FROM THE LONG HAUL

Ronda Parks Armstrong

ABSTRACT

Each person brings a unique story and approach to the school social work role. This narrative highlights what I have learned in my 25 years as a school social worker with a varied career: pioneer, author, state consultant, professional organization leader, practicum student instructor, mentor, interagency collaborator, and local district team member. Joys and lessons are organized among four main themes: relationships, responsibility, resilience, and resourcefulness, which are interwoven with the perspective of my personal journey with special needs, life-threatening medical conditions, resilience, and empowerment.

In mid-January 1999, a new leg in my life journey began. My mind, still groggy from the grueling surgery the day before, was being soothed by slow waltz melodies dancing in my head. These changed to energetic Latin rhythms as my Mayo surgeon strode confidently into the room. With a beaming smile, he said, "Mrs. Armstrong - you're going to be here for the long haul!" As the meaning of the news sunk in, I could almost hear the collective sighs of relief among my family, friends, and colleagues. "You did it!" You're a winner!"; "Your mission isn't over yet!"; "It wasn't your time!"; and "The Dance of Life goes on!" Already experienced in confronting life's adversities and unexpected challenges in my personal life and in my career as a school social worker, I knew what came next. My job was to put my energies into healing, understand and integrate the current experience into my life story, and empower myself to move forward. There would be time enough during days of recuperation ahead to review and renew my life's mission.

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Why School Social Work?

I didn't start out to be a school social worker, but, then, I don't suppose many of us really did. There were glimmers of such a calling, however, early on. My older sister has often told the story of how, as early as age 3, I would gather my playmates in the yard. I was careful to include everyone, made sure that all were having a good time, and acted as mediator when concerns arose. Recently, I thought of this childhood story when a new colleague remarked to another after a complicated staffing, "Ronda always makes everyone feel comfortable and included, listens to their thoughts, channels them productively, and checks for consensus....she should write a book!"

Another childhood story reflective of a calling to a helping profession was when I was 13 years old. I had just had lifesaving throat surgery, which resulted in damaged vocal cords and impaired oral-motor function. My friends and I lounged about on my bed, and I listened to their many problems and concerns. Since I already had a mild to moderate congenital hearing loss in both ears, I had to listen carefully, plus, at the time, I could talk barely above a whisper. They said that my few well-chosen comments or questions were: "What has worked before?" "What have you thought about doing?" "Is there something you could do different?" Such questions, along with the idea that I listened to them, got them headed in a productive direction. They all agreed, "You should be a counselor!" I didn't disagree, but I wondered how such a course would play out with both my hearing loss and voice impairment. At any rate, the roots of strengths-based, resiliency, and solution-focused approaches were already present.

During my middle and high school years, I was fortunate to have experiences through my church youth group, which put me in positions of leadership and gave me practice and confidence regarding public speaking and group facilitation. I learned to structure situations so that I could hear more readily and make the best use of my voice. These were lessons that have served me well to the present day, since being a school social worker involves a high level of interacting with others. These youth experiences also gave me varied exposure regarding services to others, also valuable in my future career. When I finished high school, I was surprised to receive the Danforth "I DARE YOU" award for qualities of leadership after nomination by my teachers. This was an award that traditionally was given to one male and one female senior student. The award was inspired by the book, I Dare You, by William H. Danforth, which he wrote to motivate others to be their best. Receiving the award was an inspiring vote of confidence from my high school that I had a notable future ahead.

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While going to college, I worked in a hospital, which provided insights about how others coped with medical concerns. I obtained an undergraduate degree in psychology and settled on social work as a way to look at the whole perspective of what affects people and their life choices and experiences. I went to the University of Kansas for my M.S.W., where I received a strong foundation for strengths-based practices. Throughout my career, this foundation and subsequent experiences have helped me provide opportunities for others to become empowered. At the time, I thought that I would be a medical social worker and had developed an interest in families who had children with special medical needs.

I was glad that I had learned to keep my options open, because, when my graduate school friend, Mary, insisted I look for a job in Iowa, the opportunity to work for Heartland Area Education Agency, as a school social worker, appeared. She had checked out the job herself and found that the opening was too far away from Des Moines. She emphasized that I could be a model of how persons with special needs can make positive contributions to society. She also thought I could use my knowledge about children with special needs and the reactions and concerns of families. "It is a perfect match for you!" As it turned out, she was accurate in her prediction, and the few years that I thought I would spend in Iowa have turned out to be many years .... the long haul on a school social work journey.

I left my comfort zone of family and friends in Kansas and moved to Carroll, Iowa, in August 1975, to become a school social work pioneer along with 4 others in the 11 counties Heartland served. I was hired just as the school year began, so I missed orientation. Jean Purdy, my beloved first supervisor and mentor, recalled that I phoned her and said, "I'm here and settled. Now, what would you like me to do?" Indeed, we were blazing trails and truly on the cutting edge. The role of school social work was being created not only in our area, but across Iowa and other parts of the country where social work in schools had not been a service prior to the Education of All Handicapped Children Act. I served 3 counties and 12 school districts with multiple buildings (usually in different towns). Those were the days that our territories were so big that just finding all the schools was an accomplishment! We were a close-knit social work staff in the beginning. Although this was necessity due to the newness of our situations, it was also rewarding, because our interactions were meaningful, and longtime friendships developed. I found that I liked creating a role for social work in the educational arena and that there was a vital place for school social work on the educational team. School social workers helped link the school, home, and community to ensure that every child could receive full benefit from education by

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developing his or her unique potential and by becoming a capable, productive person.

I laughingly have said that being a school social worker must have been my true destiny, because 6 weeks into my new job a life-threatening health crisis suddenly surfaced. After two major surgeries and becoming Mayo Clinic's index patient in a newfound syndrome of tumors (Carney Triad), I returned to my new career. It would have been easy to return to my home state, but I had experienced enough of school social work to know that it held a special attraction for me. I knew that I could fulfill my life mission of using my strengths, skills, and experiences to help provide empowering opportunities for others. I had received outstanding support from my agency and my support group of colleagues as well as from the community in which I lived. Now you know the story about how my career began. School social work's great appeal and the sense of personal fulfillment are still with me full force 25 years later. Of course, I have learned many lessons and some of them many times! These lessons and the resulting joys are organized among four broad themes.

Relationships

I have been reminded frequently about the powerful return on a genuine investment in relationships. The caring, collaborative relationships based on respect and trust are the foundation on which change occurs. This is true, whether relating to a student, family member, teacher, administrator, community professional, or team member. Through the years, I have found that, regardless of the current trends, methods of accountability, or approaches used for assessment and intervention, it was the relationship factor that has made a difference in whether productive change occurred. There is a great element of truth in a statement often referred to: "People don't care what you know until they know you care."

Establishing caring relationships, using active listening, and encouraging others to use their strengths in new ways pave the way for others to become empowered to address the current need and make lasting change. Energy for shared work and problem solving is produced by frequently affirming others' strengths, talents, and efforts, along with expressions of gratitude. Relationships are also the way in which we learn from others. My job has been greatly enriched by what I have learned from the many families with whom I have worked, as well as from school personnel. I have believed that I can learn

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something new from others that will help me refine my practice and/or reconsider ways to approach situations. Working closely with team members has also provided a wonderful source of support, and, when carefully nurtured, has enhanced creativity and resourcefulness. I have been glad to work with new staff or team members, because I know my own effectiveness and horizons will be broadened if I remain open and available for what they will teach me.

I have found that many more doors were opened when I learned to focus less on the concerns of accountability, intervention and evaluation process, and other procedures and started tuning more into improving relationships and modeling a positive context for effective collaboration to occur. With the stage set for collaboration, my ability to effect change through interventions, classroom programming, and cooperative efforts with parents and community resources increased. So, I can say first hand that I agree with Helen Harris Perlman (1979) that relationship is the heart of helping people. It is the thread that remains when trends and procedures change. It is also what underlies the great joy of social work! School social work offers an abundance of opportunities to learn and effect lasting change through the context of relationship. In fact, a focus on relationship-based approaches is currently emerging as described by Sally Atkins-Burnett and Paula Allen-Meares (2000). My focus on caring and affirming relationships in my practice has been balanced with my being well versed and competent in procedural matters. Such a focus enhances my usefulness and flexibility in improving outcomes for students.

Responsibility

Change and I have not always been good friends. Over the years, I have grown to welcome change and see it as an opportunity, whether it is one that is presented to me, or one self- created. Sometimes, change means using insight and courage to make tough decisions, as it was when I was asked in 1978 if I would be interested in moving to the Des Moines area to work on a newly established community project of which Heartland was a part (see Armstrong, 1982). I was starting to feel comfortable after living in Carroll for 3 years and working in rural areas. I knew that the interagency project was an opportunity too good to miss, because, in those early years, I was focused on experiencing many opportunities in order to build my skills and my own personal style. It was a chance to use my medical background, my educational experience, and my newfound desire to

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create programs and facilitate collaborative efforts. This began an era of a high profile of leadership, which resulted in dramatic professional and personal growth.

During this time, I gained valuable knowledge and skills regarding interagency and interdisciplinary collaboration, as well as medical and therapeutic assessments and interventions. It was also during these years that I formed my belief that part of being a professional was contributing to the development of the profession. Each person has a responsibility to facilitate his/her personal and career growth. Job satisfaction is fueled by taking responsibility for one's own happiness.

My experiences took me across several paths. I had been encouraged previously by my supervisor to use my writing skills and had become a published author (Parks, 1977). This led to numerous efforts, along with some trusted colleagues, to promote writing as a worthy way of contributing to the wisdom and best practices of school social work. This is one cause to which I have remained loyal over the years, because writing is one of my great passions, although I recognize it is not everyone's interest, and it requires concerted effort during an already demanding schedule. I was a co-editor of the Iowa Journal of School Social Work for several years and have remained as a reviewer of submitted manuscripts. I co-authored a workbook on writing for publication with Marlys Parcell Jordan and Jim Clark (Armstrong, Clark, & Jordan, 1995). At the very least, every practitioner has the option and the responsibility to keep up on the trends, research, and best practices affecting the profession and the arena in which we work.

Along with the nontraditional school social work role at Area Comprehensive Evaluation Services (ACES), I served as part-time school social work consultant for 3 years in the early 1980s for what was then called the Iowa Department of Public Instruction. This greatly expanded my world, as I began to connect with supervisors, practitioners, and leaders across Iowa, the Midwest, and nationally. I was already a leader in the Iowa School Social Workers' Association and soon became highly active on the Midwest School Social Work Council and visible in national networks as well. It was an enlightening opportunity to learn about the varied ways in which school social work was provided across the country as well as to participate first hand in addressing the issues and trends of the time. As an officer and a leader in state, Midwest, and national organizations, I was at the forefront of educating others and being an advocate regarding issues affecting school social work services and those we served, as well as policy setting and implementation. My writing and editorial skills were well used, and I developed more skills as a

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spokesperson and conference planner, learned to ask lots of questions. I also became more self-reflective personally and in thinking about the role of the school social work specialty. Deciding to leave the consultant position after 3 years was one of the tough decisions I have made. I felt the time was right for the position to grow toward a full-time position, and I wanted to continue with my innovative work at ACES.

In addition to ACES, I participated in several other interagency experiences, which provided many opportunities for interagency collaboration and teaming. For example, I served on the multidisciplinary Child Abuse and Neglect Consultation Team, was a board member for the Child Abuse and Neglect Council for a number of years, and was appointed to serve on the state Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council. All of these experiences, and others, refined my view and skills in interagency teaming, policy development, and systems thinking.

I also have been a practicum instructor for MSW students, a mentor for new staff, and currently serve as a senior social worker. Modeling best practices and guiding others in developing their own style and integrity as a school social worker has been a rewarding contribution. I am occasionally asked why I have not applied for supervisor or other administrative/leadership positions when they have been available. Such a question is best answered by saying that the time never seemed right for me personally. I have preferred to be a leader in the ways described. I had already had some unique positions, and I wanted to stay at the front line of school social work. We each have a responsibility to make choices that reflect what is in our best interest, rather than what we think others expect us to do.

In 1980, The Iowa School Social Workers' Association began recognizing a school social worker of the year. I was surprised and honored when I was chosen to be the initial recipient. I thought my efforts to design and provide caring, effective, and high quality services in innovative school social work realms were making a positive impact and being noticed. Being recognized also underlined the responsibility that I felt for modeling exemplary practice and for owning and using my unique gifts and experiences.

Resilience

I don't remember when I first heard the term resilience, but I remember when it first stuck with me. I was in graduate school at the

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University of Kansas, and we were doing an exercise where we described others, using words that started with the first letter of the person's name. So I was R for Resilient, which, in thinking about my life until then, seemed appropriate. Little did I know that times ahead would provide many more personal experiences in learning about the factors that make up resilience. This concept - the idea of being able to bounce back after confronting adversity, change, or other life demands - has been a lifelong interest of mine. I also believe strongly that to do empowering work, such as school social work, we must give focused attention to our own self- care and resiliency. Too often such care is not a priority, and we are not as satisfied and as effective in our work as we could be. For me, nurturing a resilient spirit has been life-saving and life-changing. It has also become one of my major emphases in working with others.

There are many factors to being resilient. Learning to use humor is one of the ways that I have grown in my ability to incorporate behaviors that promote resiliency. I think I always have appreciated humor, but now I comfortably can use it more. Through more use of humor, I have experienced how it can change an attitude or move a way of thinking in a positive direction. Life has a way of presenting us with people who help us learn the lessons we need. Jean Purdy, my former supervisor, was one of these people. I still chuckle at her unique wit and sense of humor. My husband is known for his humor, which has complemented my serious nature and brought out my spontaneous, lighthearted side.

Working from the inside out is another way to feed the resilient spirit. Personal and professional success and enjoyment of life are enhanced by learning that how we think - how we talk to ourselves - is a prime influence in our ability to think clearly, to reframe situations positively, and to let go of what is not in our control. We are the masters of how we respond in our work and personal lives.

Refueling and rejuvenating often are necessary in staying at our best in our work. One quickly becomes overwhelmed when not rested and renewed. Having strong interests is a powerful way to take a break and detach ourselves from our work. Learning the skill of detachment is a big job in itself.

While I have always cultivated my interests and hobbies, my great passion became ballroom dancing in the early 1990s, when my husband and I started to pursue this interest. Beginning to dance was a turning point in enjoying my life and my work even more. Dancing has been an activity with many personal wellness benefits. The regular classes, practice sessions, and dance outings have provided a way to separate myself from a demanding and intense work life. In fact, I have often found that following a dance workout, I would have some

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thoughts about how to address a particular concern that earlier had me stymied. I have a much greater appreciation for the role of creative movement and why dance is often viewed as a metaphor for life. In a way, dance is similar to the holistic and systemic perspective of social work, because dance incorporates the many aspects of mind, body, and spirit. I have been fortunate to have an experienced, insightful dance teacher, whose guidance has increased my understanding of change, partnership, balance, creativity, and excellence, which have been useful in my work life as well.

Resourcefulness

Resourcefulness is closely related to creativity, problem solving, and networking. It is the ability to call upon one's inner and outer resources to use strengths in different ways, develop new ones, and identify possibilities and options to meet the situation at hand. School social work brings many opportunities for the school social worker to draw upon personal resourcefulness, while helping others to be resourceful. I have found that it is one of the key contributions that school social workers can make.

While growing up, I had positive models for learning to be resourceful. My mother's arthritis greatly affected her mobility, which meant that she often found creative ways to achieve daily tasks and participate in the activities that she wanted to do. Her personal motto seemed to echo The Little Engine That Could (Piper, 1961/1930). She would often say, "I think I can, I think I can..." and then proceed to prove herself correct. My father would say, "I know I can" and figure out how. One of many examples was when he wanted to give his uncle, who had a vision impairment, some meaningful work. My father personally identified, tried, and taught the tasks to be completed around the shop of his sand and gravel contracting business. My older sister also modeled creativity and resourcefulness. She learned about computer technology and data base management, became an expert in the field long before the current high interest and knowledge about this area, and developed her own successful consulting company.

After 13 years in nontraditional school social work positions, I returned to the front line of school social work in 1991. My agency wanted to help school districts use their own strengths and resources to address concerns, rather than seek as much outside consultation from other community agencies. So, my time with the interagency collaborative team came to an end. This was another one of those

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tough decisions. Since I had not been practicing as most school social workers practice for a long while, it would have been a prime time for me to seek a different position rather than go through the major readjustment and learning needed to return to daily school practice. I knew deep inside that I wanted to continue to be a school social worker, as through the years I had become committed to the function of school social work. So once again, I learned that personal resourcefulness is a major factor in embracing change and growing from the challenges that come our way.

It was a good time to return to the mainstream of school social work, as it was a time of great change in education. I learned, along with everyone else, about the renewed service delivery systems, more sophisticated methods of accountability, and greater latitude to intervene early prior to consideration of special education. More emphasis was placed on problem analysis, intervention design, progress monitoring, and decision-making.

I delved into my new assignment in Urbandale, Iowa, a suburban Des Moines school district, accompanied by my desire to grow professionally, obtain new knowledge, and use my strengths and resources to adjust to yet another part of my school social work journey. I quickly found that my ability to demonstrate and promote a positive and optimistic attitude, my view of the change as a challenge and learning endeavor, my experience with interagency collaborations and consultative approaches, and my expertise in early intervention, family-based practices, and use of strengths to solve problems (i.e., Dunst, Trivette, & Deal, 1994a; Saleebey, 1997; The Search Institute, 1997; Strength-based interventions, 1995) would serve me well in the years ahead.

The 1990s brought numerous opportunities for me to further my leadership in using client strengths for solving problems in child care centers, schools, families, and agency collaborations. The increased emphasis on services for children birth to 3 years provided an extraordinary chance to model family-centered practices, which resulted in empowerment of families to take an active role in the care, education, and advocacy for their child with special needs (Armstrong, 1991). I became much more aware of the idea of resource-based services (using a broad range of informal and formal supports) versus service-based services (reliance on professionals and formal services) (Dunst, Trivette, & Deal, 1994b) as my team and I helped families identify and expand their informal networks to meet their priorities and promoted participation in typical community settings and experiences. One of the greatest joys was the initiation and continued implementation of "Family Night" in Urbandale and surrounding suburban districts. Family Night is "a collaborative effort of the Area

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Education Agency, Local Education Agencies, parents, area businesses, and community resources for families who have children with special needs ages birth to six years. A family supper is provided followed by parent, sibling, and childcare groups for support, information, and activities. Events are held at a local school several times a year" (Heartland Area Education Agency 11, 1999-2000, p. 52). This project successfully has connected, informed, and empowered parents to act on behalf of themselves and their children.

This was the decade when I definitely learned that often doing less results in more. I scaled down the number of activities in which I was involved work wise, as well as related professional leadership duties and community responsibilities. I devoted my leisure time to personal and family priorities, immersed myself in ballroom dancing as an enjoyable pastime and spirit lifter, and made time for solitude and reflective moments. I found that this balanced approach improved my ability to be creative and resourceful. Many times after dance class, the timely coffee break, or a leisurely weekend, a new perspective or idea has come to mind, or I have felt a renewed sense of fortitude in approaching the concern. I also have found that I am more able to view the interruptions to my daily schedule as being an important part of my work. When viewed in this way, interruptions are not stressful and often result in opportunities to provide productive assistance or to generate ideas that are needed for problem solving. A committed focus on the task at hand - not encumbered by worry over the number of work or personal demands - provides great opportunity to give clarity, provide sound guidance, and use resources creatively. Being more reflective about my work has increased my ability to join successfully with families and educators to create opportunities and participatory experiences that support the family and student's empowerment.

On Twenty-Five Years

Eighteen months have passed since my last surgery. I have made an excellent recovery, I have a positive prognosis, and I have made the required adjustments. As I pause for the necessary frequent small meals, I often am reminded of the metaphor of the long haul. Frequent refueling and a wise pace of work are indeed necessary for the energy, wisdom, and joy of the long haul's adventures of helping others grow and change. As I have returned to the heart of my work, I have found a renewed sense of commitment and find myself in a time of creativity and flowing ideas. I am finding new ways to promote

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positive student and family outcomes through those areas about which I have felt strongly, i.e., strengths and solution-focused approaches, empowerment of students and families, interagency and community collaborations, relationship and resource-based approaches. I know that there are frontiers where school social workers can continue to blaze trails. For example, the current emphasis and concern about student and family mental health issues; school violence prevention; social emotional learning; inclusive neighborhood school communities; school, family, and community collaborative efforts to build responsive communities with the assets needed for positive student development; early brain development; and helping families to provide the environment for every child to be school ready and a successful learner all provide arenas for school social workers to make relevant and effective contributions.

Since becoming a school social worker, I know that I have made remarkable changes in what I do and how I view my work, many of which have been noted in this reflection. I have learned from the lessons presented along the way, and I have used this knowledge to improve my practice. It has been very gratifying to have a career that has blended harmoniously with my personal life mission. I have drawn upon my wealth of experiences in life challenges, which has given me a unique and relevant perspective. I have used my strengths and skills in numerous ways, which has always provided variety. I am grateful for the many expressions of support, which I have received through my agency, district, and community, and for, without such support, I would not have experienced as much joy and satisfaction.

I read a quote by Thomas Crum from The Magic of Conflict, which said, "We do not have to see the rug being pulled out from under us, but rather we can learn to dance on a shifting carpet" (quoted in Jeffers, 1996, p.184). I believe that my experiences on the long haul have helped me learn to embrace change, reframe circumstances, and to dance skillfully and joyfully on a shifting carpet. In essence, that is what school social workers do - they help schools, students, families, and communities draw upon their resources and skills, so they can learn to dance successfully on the shifting carpet - whatever challenge the shifting carpet represents at the time.

While I have composed this reflection, my social work intern for the past year has been preparing to begin her own career in school social work. She is the same age I was when I started out. I wondered what words of wisdom to give her after our school year together. What I told her is really the same that I would say to any of us.

Enjoy the journey - especially the detours and interruptions. Welcome change - better yet, create change. Along the way, empower yourself, and create opportunities for others to do so. Discover your

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strengths, and use them frequently and joyfully. Do your best. Refuel often. Stay well. Be happy. Think and feel that you make a difference...and you will.

The new school year is coming. The carpets are rolling out, shifting as they come, with all the current needs, concerns, challenges, and joys that I will experience as a school social worker this year. I have on my dancing shoes, and I'm ready.... after all, I'm here for the long haul.

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PEER SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN HIGH SCHOOL

Susan Fineran

ABSTRACT

This study inquired about sexual harassment that students experienced during their school day and explores the roles of sexual orientation, gender, peer relationship, and peer sexual harassment victimization for 712 suburban high school students ages 14 to 19. Sexual minority students experienced sexual harassment more frequently than heterosexual students, and sexual minority students and heterosexual girls reported being significantly more upset and threatened by peer sexual harassment victimization. In addition, sexual minority students identified unfamiliar male schoolmates as primary perpetrators and were physically assaulted more frequently than heterosexual students.

Since 1992, the issue of peer sexual harassment has gained visibility due to litigation by students against their peers and school districts (Stein, 1995). The problem of students sexually harassing other students has been documented in a number of studies (American Association of University Women Educational Foundation (AAUW), 1993; Fineran & Bennett, 1999; Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW), 1995; Shakeshaft et al. 1995; Stein, Marshall & Tropp, 1993; Stratton & Backes, 1997; Strouse, Goodwin & Roscoe, 1994; Trigg & Wittenstrom, 1996). Although most research has addressed sexual harassment from either adult to student or peer to peer, no studies have inquired about peer to peer sexual harassment that involves gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender students.

Studies on sexual harassment conducted in schools confirm that peer sexual harassment is widespread. The American Association of University Women Educational Foundation study, Hostile Hallways (1993), found that 79% of students in U.S. schools report experiencing sexual harassment from their peers (86% female, 71% male). For thousands of students, the simple, daily act of attending school puts them at risk for experiencing peer sexual harassment. Students may encounter a range of sexually harassing behaviors that come from opposite sex peers or peers who are the same sex, and these sexually harassing behaviors may include, but are not limited to the following:

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sexual comments; jokes; gestures or looks; sexual messages or graffiti on bathroom walls or locker rooms; sexual rumors; being shown sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations, messages or notes; being called gay or lesbian and using derogatory terms like "fag" or "lezzie;" spied on while dressing or showering at school; "flashed" or "mooned;" touched, grabbed, or pinched in a sexual way; having clothing pulled in a sexual way or clothing pulled off or down; being brushed up against in a sexual way; being blocked or cornered in a sexual way; and, being forced to kiss or being forced to engage in other unwelcome sexual behavior other than kissing (AAUW, 1993; PCSW, 1995, Stein, 1999). Other forms of sexual harassment include "spiking" (i.e. pulling down someone's pants) or "snuggies" (i.e. pulling underwear up at the waist) and being listed in "slam books," in which students are named and derogatory sexual comments are written about them by other students (Strauss & Espeland, 1992).

Cases of sexual harassment have been litigated and reflect the extent of sexual violence that too often is not associated with sexual harassment. Case examples are documented below. These are not in any way "fringe cases" but are representative of sexual harassment that occurs in our schools.

In Utah, a football player was taped naked to a towel rack by four of his teammates, who then brought in a girl (involuntarily) to view him. This student filed a sexual harassment lawsuit against his male teammates. The suit, however, was dismissed when he failed to prove that he had been a victim of any concerted discriminatory effort (Seamons v. Snow, 1994). The school called this behavior hazing and did not feel this was abnormal behavior for boys.

Another case involved a third grade boy's complaint that he was sexually harassed by other boys in his class over a period of several months. The student was sexually taunted. The child also was sexually assaulted when he had his pants and underwear pulled down below his knees by a dozen of his male classmates (Sauk Rapids-Rice (MN) School District #47, 1993).

In 1997, a Wisconsin school district agreed to pay a former student $900,000 to settle claims that he had been harassed and assaulted based on his sexual orientation. This male student had been verbally berated for being gay and had experienced numerous assaults on school grounds between 7th and 11th grade. In one incident he was held to the ground in a "mock rape," while male students taunted that he should enjoy it. He was also pushed into a urinal and urinated on by a male schoolmate in a school bathroom. The school repeatedly had been notified about the harassment and assaults and yet had not intervened and labeled the behavior as "boys will be boys" (Nabozny v. Podlesny, 1996).

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The landmark case defining peer sexual harassment as actionable, Davis v. Monroe County Board of Education (1999), was heard by the United States Supreme Court in 1998 and involved a fifth-grade male student's harassment of a female student. The male schoolmate repeatedly had tried to touch the girl's breasts, rubbed his body against hers, and used vulgar language. The girl and her mother repeatedly complained to the school over a period of 6 months, and the school took no action to change the girl's seat or class. During the student's experience of harassment, she became depressed and suicidal, and her mother eventually placed her in another school.

As evidenced by the above examples, the experience of sexual harassment may affect a student's mental health. Prior research surveys using student self reports have identified the following symptoms that have resulted from sexual harassment by peers: loss of appetite, loss of interest in usual activities, nightmares or disturbed sleep, feelings of isolation from friends and family, and feeling sad, upset, or angry (AAUW, 1993; Fineran & Bennett, 1999; PCSW, 1995; Stein, Marshall & Tropp, 1993; Trigg & Wittenstrom, 1996). Students also may experience difficulties with school, including absenteeism, decreased quality of schoolwork, skipping or dropping classes, lower grades, loss of friends, tardiness, and truancy (AAUW, 1993; PCSW, 1995; Stein, Marshall & Tropp, 1993; Trigg & Wittenstrom, 1996). Twenty-three percent of the students in the AAUW (1993) study reported that they did not want to attend school because of their experience of sexual harassment. These negative mental health and school performance experiences can lead to a loss of college opportunities, including scholarships, and fewer career opportunities, culminating in economic loss or job failure and ultimately affecting a student's successful transition to adult life.

The majority of the research on sexual harassment and elementary or secondary school students has focused on gender differences. The AAUW (1993) and PCSW (1995) studies did inquire about students being called gay or lesbian but did not inquire about a student's sexual orientation. Their findings show that heterosexual students are upset by harassment from peers who may identify them as being lesbian or gay. This common type of harassment reinforces a message that attaches a negative value to people who have sexual minority status, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. Harassment by calling people slang words that allude to sexual orientation may be an outgrowth of two phenomena - homophobia and heterosexism. These two concepts are central to this paper.

In their writings about lesbian healthcare, Saulnier and Wheeler (2000) reference Neisen (1990) to clarify these two important concepts:

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> ...Homophobia is a clinically phobic reaction to non-heterosexual people; it designates a mental illness. Heterosexism is the reinforcement of the marginalized sociopolitical position of lesbians and other non-heterosexual people. Like other "isms" such as classism or sexism, the term points out a cultural devaluation of people, based on a group characteristic, in this case the lesbian sexual orientation, combined with the power ascribed to heterosexuals to define a hierarchy of sexual orientations that sanctions lesbian, gay and other non-heterosexual people. (Saulnier & Wheeler, 2000, p. 410)

An example of heterosexism documented by Trigg and Wittenstrom in their 1996 study of peer sexual harassment indicates that "...boys were most disturbed by behaviors that threatened their masculinity, such as being called homosexual or being sexually harassed by other boys" (1996, p. 59). They found that the only harassing behavior that boys experienced at a higher rate than girls was being called gay. The AAUW (1993) reported similar findings, where boys experienced being called gay in a derogatory manner twice as often as girls, and 86% of all students stated they would be very upset if they were identified by peers as being gay or lesbian.

In a study of Midwest high school students, Fineran and Bennett (1998a) found that boys and girls who were harassed by same-sex peers were more threatened and upset by the experience of sexual harassment than those sexually harassed by opposite-sex peers. Shakeshaft et al. (1995) conducted research on peer harassment and found that adolescent girls and boys are harassed in different ways, but conformity to gender stereotypes is central to both. Their findings, along with the same-sex sexual harassment cases that have been litigated (Seamons v. Snow, 1994; Sauk Rapids-Rice (MN) School District #47, 1993; Nabozny v. Podlesny, 1996), lend credence to the idea that the emphasis on heterosexuality contributes to a sexist and heterosexist atmosphere in our society. This poses a mental health risk to both girls and sexual minority (gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender) youths in schools.

In addition to a heterosexist atmosphere created by heterosexual students, another issue of concern is the specific sexual harassment of gay and lesbian students who are singled out by both male and female peers. The Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Massachusetts Department of Education, 1998) found that when gay, lesbian, and bisexual students were compared to their peers, they were five times more likely to have missed school because of feeling unsafe. The Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (1997) issued a national report card on the protection of gay and

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lesbian students by their schools. They gave the nation's schools a C and reported that 19% of gay and lesbian students suffer physical attacks associated with sexual orientation, 13% skip school at least once a month, and 26% drop out of school altogether.

Current research supports that girls experience more sexual harassment than boys, and boys perpetrate more sexual harassment than girls, including more sexual harassment of boys by boys (AAUW, 1993; Fineran & Bennett, 1999; PCSW, 1995; Trigg & Wittenstrom, 1996). In general, gender and sexism have been the organizing points for research on sexual harassment rather than heterosexism and homophobia. Currently, no research exists that determines whether sexual harassment is a function of a heterosexist or homophobic culture, and most of our understanding of sexual harassment has been from a female victim and male perpetrator perspective. The lack of research and information regarding sexual harassment victimization and the experience of sexual minority students make it difficult for school social workers to identify interventions to decrease a hostile environment and help students with this complex problem.

This investigation of sexual minority teens is part of a larger study on peer sexual harassment that occurs between high school students during the school day. The data for the study was collected in 1999. This research explores peer sexual harassment from the viewpoint of sexual minority students and compares their sexual harassment experiences with their heterosexual peers. The present study describes the roles of sexual orientation, degree of threat, and type of peer relationship in the experience of sexual harassment. Research questions include the following: 1) Is the prevalence of reported sexual harassment of sexual minority students different from heterosexual students? 2) Is the degree of threat or upset from peer sexual harassment victimization different for sexual minority and heterosexual students? and (3) Is there a difference by peer relationship (schoolmates known to the victim, schoolmates who are unfamiliar, or schoolmates who have been or are currently dating partners) in the experience of sexual harassment. The information obtained from this smaller sub-sample of sexual minority teens will furnish a preliminary description of their experience with peer sexual harassment and provide direction for future inquiry.

Methods

The school population in this study consists of 1532 students (718 boys, 814 girls) from a suburban, western Massachusetts area.

Similar to the local community, the high school demographics reflect a predominantly White population with little ethnic diversity (0.8% African Americans, 0.9% Asians/Pacific Islanders, and 6.7% Latinos). A nonprobability sample of 712 students (408 females, 304 males) completed a 20-minute questionnaire on peer sexual harassment that occurs over the school day. The survey was administered during a required health class. Chi-square demonstrated that the sample differs from the total school population by class year ($X^2 = 95.9$, $p<.01$) and race ($X^2 = 27.3$, $p<.01$) but does not differ by gender. The sophomore class was over sampled, and the junior and senior classes were under sampled. Racial minority students were under represented in the student sample.

Measures

Twelve questions were constructed from prior surveys of peer sexual harassment (Strauss & Espeland, 1992; AAUW, 1993; Stein et al., 1993; PCSW, 1995). The questionnaire inquired about frequency of victimization, perpetration, and how upset or threatened students were by sexual harassment. Students estimated the frequency with which they experienced each of the 12 sexually harassing behaviors on a 5-point scale (never, once or twice, a few times per month, every few days, and daily) during the 1999 school year. An Experience of Sexual Harassment index is created by summing the item scores. The internal consistency for this sexual harassment index is adequate (alpha = 0.78).

To more fully describe the experience of sexual harassment, students indicated the following for each of the 12 sexual harassment behaviors: 1) the gender and the peer relationship of the person who engaged in this form of harassment; and 2) how threatened or upset they felt. These items are summed to create an emotional reaction scale. The reaction variable was rated on a 4-point ordinal scale (not at all, very little, somewhat, very upsetting, or threatening). Cronbach's alpha for the 12 reaction items is 0.79.

Peer Relationship. The relationship between victim and perpetrator may be an important contextual factor. Students were asked to identify whether their harasser was a schoolmate whom they knew casually, a schoolmate whom they knew went to their school but who was unfamiliar to them, or a schoolmate they had dated or were currently dating.

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Demographic Variables. Students indicated their own gender, and those who experienced sexual harassment indicated the gender of the perpetrator for each of the 12 items of the Experience of Sexual Harassment index. Variables of interest include the following: age, gender, sexual orientation, parent's level of education, frequency of experience of sexual harassment, the degree of threat or upset a student felt by the harassment, and the peer relationship between victim and harasser.

Results

Sixty-two of the 712 students (9%) classified themselves as sexual minority students (homosexual, 12.9%; bisexual, 27.4%; questioning, 59.7). The student sexual minority population did not differ from the heterosexual population by age, parent education, or grade point average, nor did they differ by grade, race, or gender. The 8 gay/lesbian students ranged in age from 14 to 16, and the 17 bisexual and 37 questioning students were distributed fairly evenly across ages 14 to 19. Characteristics of the heterosexual population and the sexual minority population are presented in Table I.

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TABLE 1

Student Demographic Information

Heterosexual Students		Sexual Minority Students	
Number in Sample	629	Number in Sample	62
Mean Age	15.9	Mean Age	15.8
Grade Point Average	2.95	Grade Point Average	3.23
Grade		Grade	
Freshman	27 %	Freshman	44 %
Sophomore	48	Sophomore	32
Junior	13	Junior	15
Senior	13	Senior	10
Race / Culture		Race / Culture	
African American	.2 %	African American	1.6 %
Latino	5.2	Latino	3.2
White	91.8	White	86.0
Asian/Pacific Island	1.0	Asian/Pacific sland	4.8
Biracial	1.9	Biracial	4.8
Sex		Sex	
Female	57 %	Female	58 %
Male	43	Male	42
Parent Education		Parent Education	
Less than high school	5.5 %	Less than high school	3.2 %
High School/GED	27.7	High School/GED	34.1
Some College	22.6	Some College	25.8
College Graduate	31.5	College Graduate	20.6
Post College Degree	12.5	Post College Degree	15.5

Overall, 82.6% of the heterosexual high school students experienced sexual harassment (84.5 percent girls, 80.2 percent boys), and 76 % of the sexual minority students reported experiencing sexual harassment. The frequency of student victimization of the 12 behaviors by sexual orientation and gender is presented in Table 2. When examining the frequency of experience of sexual harassment, t-test results indicate that sexual minority students experienced sexual harassment significantly more frequently than heterosexual students ($t = -6.0$, $df = 572$, $p < .001$). Analysis by gender also indicates that sexual minority girls and boys experience sexual harassment more frequently than heterosexual girls ($t = -5.7$, $df = 332$, $p < .001$) and boys ($t = -3.0$, $df = 236$ $p < .05$). The mean victimization based on the Experience of Sexual Harassment scale of the 8 students who identified as gay or lesbian was the highest at 16.14; the 14 students identifying as bisexual had a mean victimization of 15.07; the 26 questioning students were

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next with a mean score of 12.58; and the heterosexual student population had the lowest mean of 7.79.

TABLE 2

PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT EXPERIENCE AND MEAN DIFFERENCE BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER FOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

	Sexual Minority (SM) PREVALENCE: EXPERIENCE [1]		Heterosexual (HS) PREVALENCE: EXPERIENCE [1]		TOTAL MEAN[3] DIFFERENCE	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Sexual Minority	Hetero Sexual
Called sexually offensive names	54 %	72%	49 %	63%***	1.44*	.98
Made negative comments about my body/weight/ clothing	50	56	53	55***	1.01	.83
Called gay or lesbian	58	64	49***	25	1.27***	.59
Told sexually offensive jokes to me or about me	46	60	53***	37	1.21	1.03
Spread false sexual rumors about me	28	53	30	37	.75*	.42
Showed, gave or left me sexually offensive pictures,photos, messages	42	42	35**	24	.79**	.42
Wrote sexually offensive graffiti about me at school	15	14	7**	7	.31	.09
Pressured me for a date	27	49	44	33*	.85	.53
Touched, brushed up against me or cornered me in a sexual way	52	63	49	52***	1.47***	.92
Grabbed me or pulled at my clothing in a sexual way	48	50	49***	44	1.25*	.83
Pressured me to do something sexual I did not want to do	23	39	14	27***	.51	.30
Attempted to hurt me in a sexual way (attempted rape or rape)	20	23	4	6	.42***	.07

1 For percentages the level of significance between gender corresponds to chi square.

2 Note: * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

3 The level of significance corresponds to t-tests.

4 Sexual Minority (SM) students who experienced sexual harassment N = 47.

5 Heterosexual (HS) students who experienced sexual harassment N = 588.

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Sexual minority students experienced significantly more sexual harassment for 7 of the 12 behaviors than heterosexual students (See Table 2). Results show that sexual minority students were called sexually offensive names, including being called gay or lesbian in a derogatory way, received sexually offensive pictures or messages, or had sexually offensive graffiti written about them. They also reported being touched or grabbed in a sexual way or sexually assaulted significantly more often than heterosexual students. All reported data were significant at $p<.05$ or less.

When the 12 behaviors are examined by gender and sexual orientation, gender differences for the heterosexual population are revealed. T-tests showed that girls experienced significantly more sexual harassment on being called sexually offensive names and being touched in a sexual way than did boys. In addition, girls also experienced significantly more sexual harassment regarding being pressured for a date, pressured to do something sexual, and having negative comments made about their body, weight, or clothing. Similar to other studies, results showed that boys were called gay in a derogatory way significantly more often than girls. Boys also experienced having sexually offensive messages, pictures, graffiti, or jokes showed to or told about them, and they also reported being grabbed or having their clothing pulled in a sexual way more than girls. T-test results reflected no gender differences in the experience of the 12 behaviors for the sexual minority students.

Another comparison was conducted comparing sexual minority boys with heterosexual boys and sexual minority girls with heterosexual girls (See Table 3). No significant differences were found between sexual minority boys and heterosexual boys. When comparing girls, however, t-tests showed sexual minority girls experienced significantly more sexual harassment than heterosexual girls for the following 8 out of 12 behaviors: being called sexually offensive names, having rumors told about them, being called gay or lesbian in a derogatory way, receiving sexually offensive photos or messages, being touched or grabbed in a sexual way, being pressured for a date, and being sexually assaulted.

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TABLE 3
PREVALENCE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT EXPERIENCE BY SAME GENDER AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION FOR SUBURBAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO EXPERIENCE SEXUAL HARASSMENT

	PREVALENCE: [1]		PREVALENCE:	
	HS Girls	SM Girls	HS Boys	SM Boys
Called sexually offensive names	63 %	72*%	49 %	54 %
Made negative comments about my body/weight/clothing	55	56	53	50
Called gay or lesbian	25	64***	49	58
Told sexually offensive jokes to me or about me	37	60	53	46
Spread false sexual rumors about me	37	53*	30	28
Showed, gave or left me sexually offensive pictures, photos, messages	24	42	35	42
Wrote sexually offensive graffiti about me at school	7	14*	7	15
Pressured me for a date	33	49	44	27
Touched, brushed up against me or cornered me in a sexual way	52	63*	49	52
Grabbed me or pulled at my clothing in a sexual way	44	50*	49	48
Pressured me to do something sexual I did not want to do	27	39*	14	23
Attempted to hurt me in a sexual way (attempted rape or rape)	6	23*	4	20

1 The level of significance corresponds to t-tests.

2 Note: * p< .05. ** p< .01. ***p< .001.

3 Sexual Minority (SM) students who experienced sexual harassment N = 47.

4 Heterosexual (HS) students who experienced sexual harassment N = 588.

The study also examined the degree of threat or upset from peer sexual harassment victimization. The mean reactions to the 12 sexual harassment behaviors based on sexual orientation and gender are arrayed in Table 4. T-tests show a variety of differences between the sexual minority and heterosexual students and their emotional reaction to each of the 12 sexual harassment behaviors. An emotional reaction scale created by summing the reaction of students to the 12 sexual harassment behavior variables did not show a significant difference between students based on sexual orientation; however, within the heterosexual population, girls were significantly more threatened than boys were by these behaviors ($t=4.6$, $df = 268$, $p< .001$).

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TABLE 4
REACTION TO SEXUAL HARASSMENT VICTIMIZATION BY SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER, FOR SUBURBAN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED SEXUAL HARASSMENT

	Sexual Minority (SM) MEAN REACTION[1]		Heterosexual (HS) MEAN REACTION		MEAN REACTION	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	SM Total	HS
Total						
Called sexually offensive names	.58	.73	.29	.90***	.67	.62
Made negative comments about my body/weight/ clothing	.57	.76	.20	1.02***	.67	.79
Called gay or lesbian	.82	.80	.34	.43	.81***	.38
Told sexually offensive jokes to me or about me	.41	.39	.17***	.41***	.40	.30
Spread false sexual rumors about me	.63	.87	.51	1.10***	.75	.42
Showed, gave or left me sexually offensive pictures, photos, messages	.40	.15	.16	.73	.26	.46
Wrote sexually offensive graffiti about me at school	.42	.38	.22	.79	.40	.51
Pressured me for a date	.68	.39	.24	.46***	.51	.36
Touched, brushed up against me or cornered me in a sexual way	.48	.46	.20	.99*	.47	.63
Grabbed me or pulled at my clothing in a sexual way	.40	.39	.16	.55***	.40	.37
Pressured me to do something sexual I did not want to do	.55	.55	.18	.87***	.55	.56
Attempted to hurt me in a sexual way (attempted rape or rape)	.37	.60	.24	.57***	.50	.41

1 The level of significance corresponds to t-tests.

2 Note: * p< .05. ** p< .01. ***p< .001.

Sexual minority students were significantly more upset or threatened by 2 of the 12 behaviors than their heterosexual peers. Not surprisingly, sexual minority students reported that being called gay or lesbian in a derogatory way was more upsetting or threatening to them than to the heterosexual students. Similar to girls' reaction in the heterosexual population, sexual minority students also were more upset by the threat of sexual assault. Although there were significant gender differences found in the heterosexual population, t-tests did not reveal

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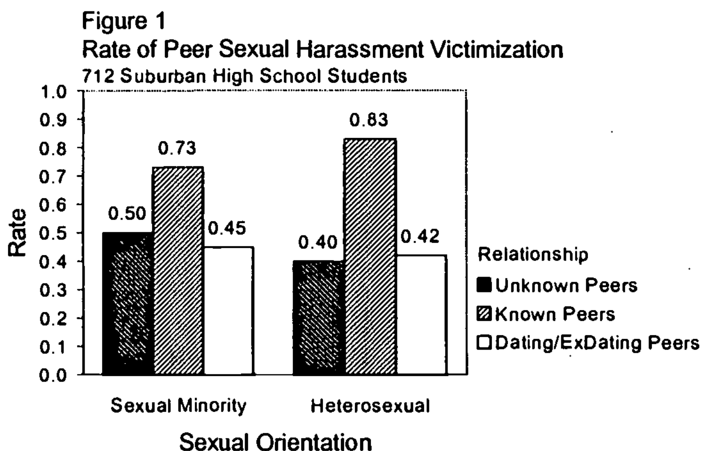
gender differences in the reaction to sexual harassment for sexual minority students. Similarly, t-tests between sexual minority girls and heterosexual girls, and sexual minority boys and heterosexual boys identified no significant differences between same-sex students regarding reaction to sexual harassment.

Students were asked about their relationship to the person who harassed them and whether it was a student that they knew casually as a schoolmate, a schoolmate they did not know, or a schoolmate they had dated or were currently dating. Heterosexual and sexual minority students reported harassment by students that they knew casually as the highest, 83% and 73% respectively (See Figure 1 for a comparison of peer relationships).

Figure 1
Rate of Peer Sexual Harassment Victimization



It would appear that students who have some knowledge of one another socially engage in the most harassing behavior. Sexual minority students reported that sexual harassment from dating or ex-dating partners was the lowest at 45%, which is similar to 42% for heterosexual students; harassment from unfamiliar students was 50% for sexual minority students and 40% for heterosexual students. T- tests results examining relationship differences between sexual minority and heterosexual students showed that sexual minority students experienced significantly more sexual harassment from unfamiliar male schoolmates ($t = -2.8$, $df = 66$, $p < .01$) than their heterosexual peers. No other differences for peer relationships by sexual orientation or gender were found for sexual minority or heterosexual students.

Students were asked about being physically hurt during school, and sexual minority students reported being physically assaulted (kicked, beaten or punched) more than heterosexual students

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(t= -3.24, df = 685, p< .01). When examining the differences by same gender, sexual minority girls experienced significantly more physical abuse than heterosexual girls (t= -2.11, df = 39, p< .05). There were no significant differences for physical abuse between sexual minority boys and heterosexual boys. Sexual minority girls' and sexual minority boys' rates of physical violence were very similar, although boys' means were slightly higher than girls' means across all the behaviors. Heterosexual boys experienced significantly more physical violence than heterosexual girls (t= -3.10, df = 509, p< .05), but, again, the amount of physical violence experienced by the heterosexual students was significantly lower than the physical violence experienced by the sexual minority students. Sexual minority students also reported being more upset and threatened by the physical violence than their heterosexual peers (t = 2.30, df = 503, p< .05).

Discussion

This preliminary study explores peer sexual harassment victimization that occurs in high school and compares the experiences of sexual minority students to that of heterosexual students. The rates of sexual harassment in the current study are consistent with frequencies from the AAUW (1993) and other studies on school sexual harassment (PCSW, 1995; Fineran & Bennett, 1999; Stratton & Backes, 1997; Trigg & Wittenstrom, 1996). These data support a concern that sexual harassment between high school peers is widespread and that sexual minority students and heterosexual girls in particular are at risk.

Prior research on sexual harassment in schools has shown that girls experience sexual harassment from peers more frequently than boys, thus supporting the idea of school environments as sexist atmospheres that contribute to the devaluation of women or girls. Similarly, based on the notably high frequency of sexual harassment experienced by sexual minority students, this study supports a heterosexist understanding of school environments that devalue gay, lesbian, bisexual, and questioning students. It would appear that sexual minority girls are dually affected by sexism and heterosexism.

The fact that sexual minority students in this study experience a significantly higher frequency of sexual harassment than their heterosexual peers raises the question of increased mental health risks to sexual minority youths in schools. The Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Massachusetts Department of Education, 1998)

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documented that gay, lesbian, and bisexual students were five times more likely to have missed school because of feeling unsafe. This study helps to explain why sexual minority students indeed might feel unsafe in a school, where they are experiencing more sexually harassing behaviors than their straight peers, including the experience of physical violence. Dovetailing with the unsafe climate are results indicating that sexual minority students are more threatened and upset by the sexual harassment that they experience on 8 of the 12 behaviors as compared to the larger school population. The data, however, continue to suggest that girls are most threatened by these behaviors and that more attention should be directed at the overall hostile environments of schools for both of these at risk populations - sexual minority students and heterosexual girls.

Prior studies of sexual harassment inquired about students' relationship to the harasser and whether students knew the harasser casually as a schoolmate or more intimately as a dating partner, or did they know the harasser as an unfamiliar student from their school. Although both sexual minority and heterosexual students identified casual peers as schoolmates who harassed them the most, results for dating/ex-dating and unfamiliar peers from whom students experienced harassment were somewhat different. Similar to previous findings (Fineran & Bennett, 1999; PCSW, 1995), heterosexual students reported receiving harassment from more intimate peers second to casual peers, and harassment from unfamiliar peers was lowest. In this study, however, the reverse was true for sexual minority students for whom the harasser was more likely to be an unfamiliar peer than dating/ex-dating partners. The fact that sexual minority students identified unfamiliar male students as harassers supports the notion that schools need to address the homophobic atmosphere that heterosexual students are capable of creating and that both sexism and heterosexism need to be focal points of education within the school.

Implications for School Policy

A necessary first step to addressing peer sexual harassment in schools includes defining peer sexual harassment as a serious mental health problem that contributes to a hostile learning environment for all students. Included in this definition, sexual harassment also should be identified as posing a particular mental health risk for sexual minority students and heterosexual girls. School social workers need to identify peer sexual harassment as sexist and heterosexist behavior that not only

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interferes with students' academic achievement but also impacts their growth and development into successful adults.

In the PCSW (1995) study, students reported that sexual harassment occurred most often in public, and frequently teachers and other adults were present but did not intervene. The normalization of sexual harassment behaviors by adult school personnel may be problematic. If adults view sexual harassment as normal adolescent behavior, then opportunities for improving the school environment are missed. All schools should develop a sexual harassment policy that clearly identifies sexual harassment as illegal. The policy also should include a definition of sexual harassment, examples of sexually harassing behaviors, and consequences for student and adult harassers (Straus & Espeland, 1992; Fineran & Bennett, 1998b). All students and school staff should be informed regularly of the sexual harassment policy and receive training regarding its use. Sexual harassment training should include the following: the use of the grievance procedure; sanctions against retaliation from students (or adults) after reporting; a description of the investigative process; and a student code of conduct (Shoop & Edwards, 1994; Sandler & Shoop, 1997). Schools clearly must identify sexual harassment as a problem, so that students and school personnel can recognize it and report it.

It is important for schools to provide education and training on combating racism, sexism, heterosexism, homophobia, and other areas of social injustice in order to improve school climate. Conceptualizing peer sexual harassment as sexual violence, with mental health and developmental implications, may help school administrators to organize resources already available through the state or federal government. For example, Massachusetts organized a commission on gay and lesbian youth that developed policies to protect sexual minority students from harassment and discrimination. Gay Straight Alliance programs now have been established in many Massachusetts schools and provide a supportive place for all students to meet and discuss activities that challenge homophobia within their schools. Similarly, in California, the Los Angeles and San Francisco school systems have developed programs (Project 10 and Project 21, respectively) that support sexual minority students in school (Gustavsson & MacEachron, 1998).

Need for Future Research

Future research on peer sexual harassment needs to be focused on contextual issues of victimization and perpetration, including emotional reactions affecting the mental and physical health of students who experience sexual harassment. Most studies to date are victim focused and do not address adequately the issue of perpetration and retaliation among students (Fineran, in press). Also, there is a clear need for information on sexual harassment targeted at gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth. Major limitations of this study include non-random sampling and lack of ethnic diversity within the population. Future study recommendations include involving ethnically diverse, randomly selected populations, where gender roles, sexism, heterosexism, and homophobia and their relationships to sexual harassment in the school environment can be investigated.

Conclusion

The type of threat that is inherent in peer sexual harassment by students takes on new dimensions when studies indicate that heterosexual students are upset by sexual harassment that implies that they are gay. These behaviors create a homophobic atmosphere for gay and lesbian students. Whether sexual minority students are individually targeted or they observe these behaviors inflicted on the general student population at large makes little difference. Sexual harassment can be used to create and maintain a sexist, heterosexist, and homophobic atmosphere in school environments, where gay or straight, male or female students are affected directly, either through participant observation or actual experience. School personnel, social workers, and guidance counselors are in positions to advocate for change in the educational environment. The reframing of peer sexual harassment as a public issue, rather than a private trouble experienced by few, is a sorely needed paradigm change in this new millennium.

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EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT FOR CHILDREN WITH EMOTIONAL OR BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

Andy Frey

ABSTRACT

This article provides a context for current placement decisions by briefly outlining historical paradigms that have formed the debate regarding what are the appropriate settings for children with emotional or behavioral disorders. The connection between federal policy and services for children with emotional or behavioral disorders is also described. Next, the major policy initiatives influencing placement decisions are discussed. The paper concludes by outlining several recommendations for policy concerning educational placement for children with emotional or behavioral disorders.

Voluminous literature has addressed the educational placement of children with emotional or behavioral disorders (EBD) in school settings. Nationally, about 80% of children identified with EBD participate in regular school settings (Stephens & Lakin, 1995). These students, however, attend segregated settings within neighborhood schools more frequently than other special education students (Stephens & Lakin, 1995). The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (EHCA) included the least restrictive environment (LRE) provision, which states that all children should be educated in the least restrictive environment possible. The EHCA was reauthorized and renamed The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 1990). IDEA still includes the LRE provision. Despite 25 years of federal policy mandating that children be served in the least restrictive environment, the majority (53%) of children identified as EBD are educated in separate classrooms or schools (U.S. Department of Education, 1991).

There are many classification systems for children with emotional or behavioral problems. This article uses the words "emotional or behavioral problems" when discussing children with a wide range of emotional or behavioral problems. These children have historically been referred to as "insane," "maladjusted," "morally

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disordered," and "psychotic." The term EBD is used in this article when referring specifically to children who qualify as eligible for special education under the federal category of Serious Emotional Disturbance (specific labels vary according to state and district guidelines).

A placement controversy exists, because some educators advocate for children identified as EBD to be fully included in the regular education classroom (least restrictive setting), while others advocate for some children to receive educational support exclusively in special classes, their home, or a hospital-based setting (most restrictive settings). The position of the two opposing factions regarding the least restrictive environment concept has evolved over the years. Some educational reformists interpret least restrictive environment to mean inclusion for all needs in the neighborhood school and regular classroom (Lipsky & Gartner, 1996; Stainback & Stainback, 1996). Some reformists concede that more restrictive settings may be appropriate for students who are depressed, suicidal, or violent towards others. They are, however, cautious of restrictive environments, believing that when they exist, they are used whether they are needed or not (Brantlinger, 1997). Additionally, reformists frequently cite efficacy research indicating that special class placement is ineffective (e.g., Biklen & Zollers, 1986; Gartner & Lipsky, 1989; Reynolds, 1989).

The other faction are traditionalists, who are educators advocating a continuum of placement options. Traditionalists suggest that the reformist interpretation of least restrictive environment does not meet the needs of children, because serving students with significant special needs in a regular classroom setting prevents them from receiving the additional services they require (Colvin, Sugai, & Patching, 1993; Cyprus Group, 1996; Walker, Colvin, & Ramey, 1995). These educators prefer the integration of children with EBD in their neighborhood school when possible, but they recognize that integration is not always feasible or desirable. Traditionalists claim that inclusion does not meet the needs of *all* students with disabilities. As a result, traditionalists contend that a continuum of placement options provides children with appropriate education under the law and must be available to all students with disabilities (Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995).

Educational placement decisions for children with EBD are particularly relevant to school social workers. As members of the special education team, school social workers play an active role deciding which children are educated in restrictive settings. Unlike many school staff, school social workers are trained in systems theory,

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prepared to combat discrimination, and encouraged to advocate for disadvantaged populations; as a result of their emphasis on social justice, social workers may have different recommendations concerning placement than other educators do.

Today's ideological perspectives concerning placement are influenced by the treatment of children with emotional or behavioral problems since the 17th Century. This article provides a context for current placement decisions by briefly outlining historical paradigms that have formed the debate regarding what are the appropriate settings for children with EBD. The connection between federal policy and services for children with EBD is also described. Next, the major policy initiatives influencing placement decisions are discussed. The paper concludes by outlining several recommendations for policy concerning educational placement for children with EBD.

Historical Paradigms

Children with emotional or behavioral problems existed in ancient Greek and Roman societies. These children were perceived as a source of economic burden and were typically abandoned or killed (Mash & Dozois, 1996). The Stubborn Child Act of 1654 made it illegal for a parent to put a child to death for noncompliance. The alternative to death, accepted until the middle of the 19th Century, was to house "insane children" in cages or cellars (Donohue, Hersen, & Ammerman, 2000). The belief that children with emotional or behavioral problems were treatable was not entertained before the 18th Century (Kanner, 1962). Frantz Anton Mesmer and his disciples, one of the first groups to address emotional problems that plague children, described and treated emotional and behavioral problems in children as early as the 1780s (Kanner). Mesmer and his colleagues, consistent with the philosophies of Locke and Rousseau, believed that children needed moral guidance and support from adults (Mash & Dozois, 1996). While a few professionals supported treatment for emotional or behavioral problems, most attributed irregularities in children's thinking, feeling, and acting to inherent evil until the 1870s (Stone, 1974).

The differential treatment of children versus adults, as well as typical versus atypical development, progressed as juvenile courts were established in Denver and Chicago, and the public schools began to implement special programming for children with visual, auditory, and

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intellectual handicaps (Kanner, 1962). Youth placed in juvenile institutions were identified as "morally disordered." The first institutional setting for children was the House of Refuge, a placement exclusively for youth criminals (Richardson, 1989). The establishment of separate facilities for delinquent youth and specialized programming for students with disabilities represented the 19th Century approach to segregating children from adults and atypical children from their peers. As the 19th Century progressed, a variety of other public institutions were developed exclusively for children, such as asylums, workhouses, almshouses, prisons, and special schools (Richardson, 1989). During the late 1880s, the superintendents of the asylums suggested that the trajectory of development depended on a child's age and advised that young children "whose impressionable brains were being molded for the first time by their upbringing and education" should be the focus of preventative intervention (Caplan, 1969, pp. 14-15). In the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, educational services for children with emotional or behavioral problems evolved out of two related movements–the mental hygiene movement and the child guidance movement. These movements initiated social work services in education and laid the groundwork for the current placement controversy existing in the public schools.

Mental Hygiene Movement (1908-1960)

Clifford Beers' book, A Mind That Found Itself, was among the factors that initiated the Mental Hygiene Movement in 1908. The focus of this movement was to reform the conditions for the mentally ill and alter the service delivery model from intervention to prevention (Beers, 1908). The belief that medical research was the path through which adult "pathology" would be eliminated was termed "hygiene," defined as "state medicine, public health or preventive medicine" (Flexner & Flexner, 1941). The mental hygiene movement focused on the prevention of adult dysfunction through the scientific promotion of children's well being (Richardson, 1989). A primary characteristic of this movement, multidisciplinary services, provided many opportunities for social workers. The movement concentrated on public education and welfare policies concerning children, transforming the service philosophy for those with mental illnesses. It attacked the assumption that people with mental illnesses are best served in segregated

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institutions and moved psychiatry from asylums to the community and schools (Spaulding & Balch, 1983).

In 1908, the first mental hygiene society was established in Connecticut, and, in 1909, the National Committee for Mental Hygiene was created (Reisman, 1976). Thomas W. Salmon, referred to as the first mental hygienist, operationalized Beers' conceptual framework (Richardson, 1989). Salmon embraced Beers' vision of sharing responsibility of children with emotional or behavioral problems among juvenile courts, schools, and families rather than relying on institutions to house troubled youth.

World War I played a significant role in the advancement of the mental hygiene movement as it highlighted the need for psychiatric screening and clinical work in the military (Richardson, 1989). Salmon, because of his vision for the screening and treatment of children, developed extensive plans for the psychiatric services of military personnel. In addition, Salmon conceptualized plans for comprehensive children's services. His vision included outpatient services for school children and inpatient children's units in hospitals. Following World War I, the first psychiatric inpatient unit for children was established in Bellevue Hospital in New York in 1923 (American Psychiatric Association, 1957).

Dr. Max Ferrand, the medical director of the Commonwealth Fund, in 1920, requested that Salmon outline the ideal program to prevent juvenile delinquency (Richardson, 1989). Salmon, maintaining that a variety of community organizations must collaborate to address the problem of delinquency, proposed a plan focusing on schools rather than courts. This proposal paved the way for school social workers, by suggesting that educators extend beyond administrators and teachers to include social casework, visiting teachers, and various school specialists. Salmon's proposed educational reform included a variety of school settings to meet the diverse needs of students with unique learning, conduct, and personality differences. Salmon recommended that psychiatric social workers and public health nurses fill the role of visiting teachers. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Commonwealth Fund continued to fund the mental hygiene movement. This movement inspired the Child Guidance Movement, which led to the classification of juvenile delinquency as an emotional problem (Richardson, 1989).

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Child Guidance Movement (1920-1955)

The concept of delinquency prevention extended to the home, community, and school through a three-tiered approach called the Child Guidance Movement. In 1921, the Commonwealth Fund initiated the Child Guidance Movement, based on Salmon's recommendations (Hobbs, 1962). The multidisciplinary nature of the treatment distinctively characterized the child guidance clinics.

> Child guidance employed teams made up of a psychiatrist, psychologist and social worker to study and treat the so-called "maladjusted child," children of normal intelligence with a range of mild emotional and behavioral problems. (Horn, 1984, p. 25)

The "medicalization" of social work, as well as other related mental health disciplines, contributed to the advancement of school social work, school psychology, and other service providers. The three-tiered approach to the prevention of delinquency included the following: (a) a Bureau of Child Guidance, (b) a visiting teacher program, and (c) a series of demonstration clinics (Richardson, 1989).

The Bureau of Child Guidance. The Bureau of Child Guidance increased the training of related service providers to support psychiatrists in educating the public and identifying and treating children. While the leadership of the child guidance movement was psychiatric, the training was primarily through social work. The Bureau of Child Guidance, established through the New York School of Social Work, trained social workers in psychiatry and prepared them to fulfill the mission of the mental hygiene movement by serving children in schools and courts. Once trained, these social workers became visiting teachers.

Visiting teachers. The purpose of visiting teachers was "educating teaching staff into a different attitude toward children" (Richardson, 1989, p. 89). For the first time, the public school was viewed as the ideal location to identify children at risk of delinquency. Educators assumed that the acquisition of knowledge held little value if society produced delinquent youth; classrooms were compared to clinics, and "the ideology of progressive schooling took on an extended meaning directed away from formal learning and toward socialization" (Richardson, 1989, p. 89). Thus, this vision altered substantially the primary objective of schooling.

Demonstration Clinics. The goal of the demonstration clinics, the most influential of the three-tiered approach, was to demonstrate

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how psychiatric intervention during childhood could impact delinquency–a symptom of mental disease (Richardson, 1989). The basic model of the guidance clinic included a psychiatrist, a social worker, and a psychologist. Once referred for an assessment, the multidisciplinary team collected a descriptive life history, physical examination with psychological testing, and a psychiatric interview (Richardson, 1989). Accepting referrals from schools, parents, and community agencies, the demonstration clinics modeled a prevention framework suggesting intervention must occur prior to court involvement.

At the end of the 5-year demonstration period, the Institute for Child Guidance was created, and guidance clinics surfaced nationally. As the programs gained popularity, two models emerged. The traditional model relied on the psychiatrist for leadership and guidance. However, due to the disproportionate ratio of clinics to psychiatrists, services directed primarily towards the school no longer required a psychiatrist or a psychiatric social worker (Richardson, 1989). This trend, led by psychologist Norman Fenton, established child guidance clinics in school districts (Richardson, 1989).

During the 1950s, residential treatment centers managed delinquent boys. In 1953, the first day treatment school was established in New York, which foreshadowed the establishment of special classes for children with emotional or behavioral problems in the 1960s (Fenichel, 1966). Following the work of Aichorn (1935) with troubled adolescents, Bettelheim (1950) and Redl and Wineman (1957) began therapeutic residential treatment centers in the U.S. in the 1950s, which managed delinquent boys. In 1953, the first day treatment school was established in New York. In the U.S., residential treatment centers were preferable to public school placements through the 1970s and 1980s; the number of treatment centers doubled between 1969 and 1981 (Taube & Barrett, 1985). While residential treatment centers appeared as a reasonable option for children with severe emotional or behavioral problems, a gap existed for those who were not receiving reasonable benefit in the public schools and not "disturbed enough" to warrant the expensive residential alternative (Kauffman & Smucker, 1995).

As can be seen from the above information, public sentiment concerning the segregation or integration of children with emotional or behavioral problems in community settings has fluctuated. This is likely the result of frustration with this very difficult population and the hope that a change of location will produce better outcomes for youth.

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Children's Mental Health and the Federal Government

The federal government first actively became involved in the prevention of emotional or behavioral problems in 1930, when the Narcotics Division of the Treasury Department became the Division of Mental Hygiene (Spaulding & Balch, 1983). The 1909 White House Conference on Children linked the health of the nation to the health of its children for the first time. However, it was not until the 1930 White House Conference on Child Health and Protection that children's mental health issues received substantial governmental attention (Richardson, 1989). According to Katz (1986), the conference solidified the relationship between the democratic state and the child.

The 1940 White House Conference on Children identified children's mental health as entitlement rather than a moral obligation. During World War II, the National Committees for Mental Hygiene and the Civilian Public Service implemented a public awareness campaign highlighting the inadequacy of mental institutions. As a result of the changing governmental sentiment and the increased public awareness of insufficient conditions for children with emotional or behavioral problems, the U.S. Mental Health Act in 1946 and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) were established in 1949. The National Mental Health Act established training grants for institutions to encourage professional training in mental health related fields, and NIMH funded research and mental health care services (Felix, 1967). By 1963, the NIMH budget had exploded from $8 million to $144 million. The Community Mental Health Centers Act, which cited the formal end of the reliance on institutional care as the primary mode of mental health intervention, was signed in 1963. A pivotal point in the service delivery of children with emotional or behavioral problems, this act suggested servicing children in the "least restrictive environment."

Since the mid-1960s, there has been general agreement among mental health professionals and educators that children should be served in the least restrictive environment possible. However, "How restrictive is necessary?" and "Who is best able to provide services?" These are questions that plagued mental health professionals for the next half century.

Once the least restrictive environment philosophy was adopted, the role of the public schools changed drastically regarding the service delivery of children with emotional or behavioral problems (Richardson, 1989). Not only did public schools serve children with

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mild to moderate emotional or behavioral problems, they also absorbed the overflow of institutions and asylums, because they were deemed too restrictive. Since the middle of the 20th Century, few new options have been proposed, but much discussion has concentrated on educational placement of children with emotional or behavioral problems.

Policy Initiatives Influencing Present Placement Decisions

From the inception of formal education until 1954, racial segregation pervaded the public schools. Racial segregation in public schools was declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka (1954). The ruling stated that the segregation of students in public school, based on race, unjustly deprives minority students of equal educational opportunities. The language of Chief Justice Warren's opinion foreshadowed political sentiment regarding student placement in education:

> [Segregation] generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone...We conclude that in the field of public education the doctrine of "separate but equal" has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal. (Cited in Kauffman & Lloyd, 1995, p. 10)

The disconcerting history of separate educational facilities for children of color justifiably has provoked suspicion of any facility, or classroom, comprising a homogeneous group of students based on a special education category (e.g., EBD, learning disabled, or cognitively impaired). Kauffman and Lloyd (1995) state that many interpreted the Brown decision as meaning that separate education programs based on any differences is inherently unequal (i.e., ability, needs, disability category, etc.). As a result, educational placement of students became the central issue to obtain equal opportunity in schooling.

Full inclusion proponents advocated for a common "place" scheme for all children with disabilities during the 1950s and 1960s, particularly for states to provide publicly funded education (Reynolds, 1989; Dunn, 1968; Deno, 1970). In 1962, Reynolds (1989) drafted the first policy statement supporting integration of the special and regular education initiatives. This proposal suggested that children with unmet needs in the regular education classroom participate in settings closely

resembling typical settings and return to the regular education classroom promptly. Despite this policy recommendation, most states provided services through public or private agencies distinct from public schools (McNulty, Connolly, Wilson, & Brewer, 1996).

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, both scholars and parents articulated the rationale for including students with disabilities in regular education classrooms (Reynolds, Wang, & Walberg, 1987). In 1968, Lloyd Dunn proposed that the benefits of special education may not exceed the damages. Additionally, Dunn (1968) highlighted the bias in labeling and segregating high numbers of minority students. Dunn and Deno (1970) pleaded for policy changes based on ethics and morality. Dunn stated, "The conscience of special educators needs to rub up against morality" (p.20). Deno proposed that the special needs of children could be met without "abandoning children whose needs are different to overwhelming concern for the dominant majority" (p. 229). The conditions of poverty in the U.S. and the number of poor students placed in special education mortified Dunn. Dunn and Deno also encouraged regular educators to claim more responsibility for children with "mild handicaps."

During the early 1970s, special education reform increased, as the legal system became involved and supported the position of scholars and parent advocates. Specifically, the Pennsylvania Association of Retarded Children v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, stated that "placement in a regular public school class is preferable to placement in a special public school class, and placement in a special public school class is preferable to placement in any other type of program of education and training" (1972, p. 307). During the 1970s, the Regular Education Initiative (REI) signified the first large-scale movement to reform special education to a fully integrated system (Reynolds, Wang, & Walberg, 1987). The REI suggested that students with mild disabilities receive special education services in regular education classrooms. The movement was based on several factors: (a) the perceived failure of special education services, (b) unreliable methods for classifying and placing students in special programs, (c) the high cost of diagnostic procedures, (d) the stigma associated with the classification and labeling system, (e) the belief that putting more money into regular education would reduce the number of special education referrals, (f) evidence that programs were not tailored to the needs of individual students, and (g) the increasing interest in restructuring schools (Reynolds, 1989). The REI soon was renamed *inclusion*. Soon after the outset of REI, proponents of integrating mildly impacted students into the regular education system shifted to

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include children with moderate and severe needs (Lipsky & Gartner, 1996).

In the United States, the demand for publicly funded education for all children, including those with the most severe needs, culminated in 1975 with the passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHCA). The EHCA mandated that children with disabilities receive a free and appropriate education in the public school system and shifted the responsibility for servicing children with EBD from the mental health sector to the educational. The EHCA incorporated language into the statute similar to that provided by the courts and inclusion advocates:

> To the maximum extent appropriate, handicapped children, ...are educated with children who are not handicapped, and special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of handicapped children from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability of a child is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. (20 U.S.C. 1412 [5])

Additional statements addressing equal access to educational opportunities supported this section of the law, referred to as the least restrictive environment or LRE provision. The EHCA was reauthorized and renamed The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA, 1990). As previously stated, IDEA still includes the LRE provision.

History teaches us that children with emotional or behavioral problems have existed in every society. The treatment of these children has ranged from killing them to having them experience full participation within neighborhood schools and regular education classrooms. Since the mid-20th Century, few new options have been proposed, but much discussion has concentrated on the educational placement of children with emotional or behavioral problems. Once recognized and integrated into service delivery for children with emotional disturbances, community resources and psychiatric consultation are no longer accessible to all children, burdening the school system with the seemingly unmanageable task of providing children with emotional disturbances an adequate education.

While some of the challenges in educating children with EBD are similar to those faced in the early 20th Century, school social workers are confronted with additional challenges in the 21st Century. For example, psychiatric services are now considered for only short-

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term assessment. Most community mental health centers are not accessible to many families and culturally unacceptable to others. As a result, schools often manage and treat children with EBD without community or medical guidance. Additionally, educators often assist these children without training or assistance from mental health professionals. Schools also face increased public demands for accountability and state standards. School social workers and other related service providers often prove ineffective, because these children require assistance from teachers, families, and communities as well as social workers. The frustration of educators and mental health professionals is understandable, given the disparity between children's needs and the resources available in educational and community settings. Rather than a philosophical discussion concerning whether children should be educated in integrated or restrictive settings, school social workers are well advised to mobilize community resources (i.e., physicians, community mental health agencies, support groups for parents, church support, etc.), which seem to have been more easily accessible during the mental hygiene and child guidance movements.

The LRE provision and special education policy embrace a rich history, marked by two factions of educators who are pointedly divided. While the policy has changed little since its inception in 1975, vague language subjects it to multiple interpretations. The true meaning of the policy only can be fully understood and implemented if lawmakers explicitly state the intention of the policy and provide more guidance to educators. As IDEA is modified, it is imperative that social workers influence a number of key issues. First, policy must mandate minimal levels of mental health services in the schools. Additional mental health support will build the capacity of regular education teachers and improve educational experiences for children with EBD in inclusive and restrictive settings. Second, policy must clearly state that although location of a child's school is important, the needs of the child must supercede philosophical or moral beliefs concerning educational placement. Third, IDEA must provide guidelines stating when children should be relocated to a more restrictive placement. While our ability to support children with EBD and their families is discouraging, this historical portrait of services highlights the progress that has been made and at the same time points to the future needs required to adequately support this oppressed population.

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PUPPETS AND PEERS IN SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

Michelle A. Romano

ABSTRACT

A school social worker describes an innovative counseling experience using puppets and a peer in an inner-city junior high school setting with an eighth grade student. The student is in the special education program and has difficulty articulating feelings through verbal expression. The school social worker uses creativity, patience, and persistence to work with the student, involving the student's parents and a good friend. The use of puppets and peers enhances the counseling goals with the student.

I am a school social worker in an urban junior high school. A mother requested that I see her son, Matt[1], a special education student in our school. Matt's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) stated that his language skills were below peer level and that he had difficulty responding to and initiating conversations. Matt's mother requested that I visit with him, because she was concerned that Matt did not know how to advocate for himself, especially by verbally expressing his feelings.

Prior to my visits with Matt, he was generally a quiet student who communicated very little verbally. For example, in groups, when asked, "How are you doing," Matt either shrugged his shoulders or copied what the person prior to him said in response to a question. Therefore, one broad goal of our sessions together was to improve his communication skills with peers and adults. Initially, my goals were to help Matt to identify feelings and verbalize them. I also wanted to provide Matt with a supportive relationship where he could freely verbalize and discuss his feelings. To accomplish these goals, I met with Matt weekly in my school office and facilitated discussions about his feelings, reinforcing new verbal behaviors, especially when he expressed feelings. I offered supportive statements and encouragement throughout our sessions.

[1] Names and personal characteristics were changed to protect the confidentiality of students in this article.

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The first day that I met with Matt, he did not say a word. To make him feel more comfortable, I asked him whether he would like to have a friend join our meetings. He nodded, "Yes." From then on, the three of us met for approximately 30 minutes each week. However, it still was extremely difficult to get Matt to talk. He used appropriate affect and nodded "yes" and "no," but, most of the time, he did the nonverbal expression for "I don't know" by throwing his hands up in the air and shrugging his shoulders. I tried everything, including telling him that he could talk when he felt comfortable. I also asked his friend (Joe) for help in getting him to talk. I took turns interacting with the boys, thinking that maybe Matt would feel more comfortable talking after me. I tried to play games with them, but with little success. However, I was very patient.

Finally, after about three sessions, during which Matt did not say one word, I called his mother, who told me that he loves Barney, the imaginative, purple dinosaur on the popular children's' TV show. She said that Barney, among other puppets, could be found in his backpack. I was grasping for anything at this point. I felt a little hesitant and slightly embarrassed about using a puppet to communicate with a 14-year-old boy, but I felt it was worth a try. During our next meeting, I told Matt that I had a conversation with his mom, who told me that he liked Barney. Immediately, he nodded, and his face lit up with a huge smile. I asked him if he would like to get Barney from his bag, and he did.

So I said, "Today we are going to have Barney join our group." I placed Barney on my desk. Immediately, as if a live character, Matt waved at Barney. Progress.

In a squeaky voice and pretending to be Barney, I asked, "I don't seem to remember why they call me Barney; do you know, Matt?" Like a miracle, Matt said, proudly, "Because you are a purple dinosaur, and that's why they call you Barney." More progress. Excitement began to boil within me. I tried to remain calm.

"Oh, I see." I, as Barney, continued. I brought out my feelings chart to see how much Matt knew about feelings. "Today we are going to talk about different feelings. Can you tell me how you feel today, Matt?" "Happy," he said. More progress.

"I am feeling happy too," I replied, as Barney. "Now, I am going to point and name some feelings, and can the both of you (Matt and Joe) show me what your face would look like when you are feeling these ways?" I held my breath.

"Sad¼, happy¼, nervous¼, scared¼," I said, and with each feeling, both Matt and Joe displayed an expression simultaneously to match the feeling. I reinforced their expressions verbally with "Good job!" And then, I asked, "What are some things you can do when you

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are sad?" Matt said, "Cry." Again, Barney and I complimented him for verbalizing that.

Wow! I was very impressed! After a while, it looked as though Matt was getting frustrated with the feeling chart, so I stopped talking about feelings. At that point, I repeatedly tried to sit Barney on the desk, but Barney fell over each time. Without a prompt from me, Matt said, "Come on, Barney, sit up." It was pretty amazing.

Kids feel comfortable with TV characters and puppets. Matt must have felt entirely safe with Barney. The puppet worked.

For a few sessions following that initial meeting with Barney, we used Barney and some other puppets. However, I got the best conversation from Matt when I used his favorite character, Barney. Slowly, I tried to wean off the use of puppets. I knew that Matt liked a popular card game, so we played that, and he volunteered to read the questions, even without being prompted by Barney. When I got the answer right, Matt said, "Good for you!" I was in complete awe. We kept working on the feeling chart, as I still wanted Matt to work on verbalizing how he was feeling. I learned that we needed to use Barney more when talking about feelings and less when playing games.

As part of my work with Matt, I called his home after each session. I talked to Matt prior to doing so, to get his permission to call home. He said it would be alright. I let his mother know what we did in the session. I hoped that she would reinforce his behavior at home, quite possibly making it a bit easier for Matt to communicate with me comfortably, with or without the use of the puppets while at school.

As the school year continued, there were some weeks when I was unable to meet with Matt and Joe. When I met with Matt again, following a couple weeks of not seeing him, he seemed to have regressed to his earlier stages of not talking. I learned that one really needs to be consistent when working with students who have similar characteristics to Matt. In this way, they get used to you and feel more comfortable with the setting and situation. They need support. If a school social worker uses and needs to use puppets or other aids to help students feel more safe and comfortable, then use them.

Matt has progressed to another grade and school. Informal and anecdotal reports from school staff during the year have suggested that Matt was able to transfer some of the communication skills learned in our sessions to other school staff and his peers. In this age of technology, school social workers should not overlook simple and readily available aids in supporting students and teaching them new skills.

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ABOUT THE REVIEWER

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BOOK REVIEW

101 FAVORITE PLAY THERAPY TECHNIQUES

Heidi Kaduson & Charles Schafer, Editors. Norvale, N.J.: Jason Arenson, 1997, 401 pages.

Reviewed by *Dea Ellen Epley Birtwistle*

This book is designed to share play therapy techniques. It could be of interest to school social workers working individually or in groups in the school setting. The editors' criteria for selecting techniques for this book were that they be practical and relatively inexpensive.

The book is organized into eight sections, including pretend games, storytelling techniques, expressive art techniques, puppet play techniques, play toys and objects techniques, group play techniques, and miscellaneous techniques. The contributions are distinct enough that they can be read in a cookbook style format, or they can be read in their entirety, depending on the reader's purpose. Each contributing author includes a description and application of the technique. Many of the authors also include a rationale section. This section can be a valuable source of information for deciding how to adapt techniques to the school setting and student-specific Individual Education Programs (IEP). Cross referencing the techniques by presenting problems (i.e., anger control, withdrawal, loss, family change) would be an improvement that could assist in reinforcing the practical nature of this book.

School social workers typically confront numerous challenges while working in a host setting, including inadequate space, limited financial resources for supplies, and lack of access to confidential storage of supplies and student products. Due to these limitations, some of the techniques in this book are more conducive to direct school social work practice than others. This reviewer has used the Computer Storytelling Technique discussed in the storytelling section with oppositional students and found it to facilitate the development of relationships with students. The Worry Can Technique allows children to have self-control over their anxieties and fears. This can be a suggested strategy when consulting with educators on students with Autism Spectrum Disorders. A variety of applications for the technique of making a self-made book to prepare a child for a

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predictable trauma could be implemented in the school setting. The school social worker frequently is in the position of collaborating with guidance counselors. Many of the techniques discussed in this book could serve as a bridge for co-facilitation of groups or when working in a building on class or school goals.

Overall, 101 Favorite Play Therapy Techniques is an easily read book that provides novel strategies for working with students and collaborating with other educators. For the school social worker, this book can be an impetus to integrate new techniques into day-to-day practice. It can challenge one's creativity to apply therapeutic strategies into the school setting.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER

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BOOK REVIEW

SOCIAL WORK WITH LESBIANS, GAYS, AND BISEXUALS: A STRENGTHS PERSPECTIVE

Katherine van Wormer, Joel Wells, & Mary Boes. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2000, 184 pages.

Reviewed by *Mary Bricker-Jenkins*

Kids know when their teachers are talking about them. If they are feeling shame, confusion, or have "secrets," they *really* know. They see their teachers' averted eyes, the glances at other teachers, counselors, and even other kids; they hear the sudden silence when they walk by school administrators or the coach. Fear and self-degradation are likely consequences. Or bravado, risk-taking, and defiance. Or all of these and more, but seldom anything positive.

I am speaking from experience here. I was one of those kids who "knew they knew" and did everything I could to please them. But nothing worked, because they *knew*. When I was denied admission into the "gold leaf" club despite my stellar academic performance, when I did not make the team despite my athleticism, when I was not invited to return to the boarding school I loved, I knew exactly why. The hurt was magnified to suffering and despair when there was nobody to talk with about what was really going on in my life. Sometimes, when nobody was around to see which stacks I was exploring, I skulked around the library looking for a name for my "condition." I didn't find anything good.

I was "circling the drain," sometimes contemplating suicide, when a teacher took me aside and showed me some kindness. She talked to me about the life of the mind, about the theater and music and poetry, about my friendships, about my wild ideas about a just world. She made me her assistant director for the annual school play. She saved my life.

That's why I want every person who works in or near a school to read this book. Kids *know* you know, and you need to let *them* know that they are OK – that they are safe with you, respected by you; that they can talk with you, tell their secrets, ask their questions; that they can develop their pride and some confidence that they can survive and be happy in a hostile world; that you, in whatever way you can, will change that world with them.

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It's been half a century since a teacher saved my life, and the world has indeed changed a bit. But "different" kids are still getting ridiculed, beat up, and sometimes murdered. We've got a great "lesbigay" culture, but it's still inaccessible to most youth. There are tons of affirming books out there, but, if a kid can find them, it's usually best not to get caught reading them. The health care system is a minefield: What "questioning" kid wants to talk with a doctor that winks and asks about interest in the opposite sex? And the mental health system, where "lesbigays" are highly likely to end up, is even worse: True, "homosexuality" is no longer a psychiatric diagnosis, but the girl who hates Barbie dolls and the boys who don't like guns are still likely to be labeled as having a "gender identity disorder." Much better.

We cannot afford to lose or maim our "lesbigay" brothers and sisters of any age – and the youth are, of course, particularly vulnerable. But we also cannot afford to allow hatred and fear of them to grow among others. What's sick is not one's sexual orientation, but the desire to shun or harm another human being. If, as social workers and school personnel, we are to meet our obligations to *all* the children -- the hated and the haters, all those confused by and caught up in a world of labels and judgments -- then we need to understand the experience of the "lesbigay" population and the nature of prejudice against us.

This book takes the reader into much of the experience of lesbians, gays, and (somewhat less so) bisexuals, and most especially into areas that school personnel need to know about: heterosexism and homophobia; developmental issues across the life span; encounters in the workplace, in health and mental health, in counseling, in the family. What distinguishes it from similar books is its exploration of the strengths of the "lesbigay" population, both at the individual and collective levels. It also goes well beyond painting the picture to giving many concrete ideas on how we can create new ones; it guides us in working not only with the "lesbigay" population, but also with families (both "chosen" and "of origin"), and in the many systems that affect all our lives. In this way the book contains seeds of empowerment not only for the "population of concern," but for the worker as well.

In fact, the book leads off with three chapters that place us on common ground: an exploration of social work mission and policies is followed by a chapter on the heterosexist society, which gives working definitions as well as an interesting historical overview. The section closes with a chapter on the strengths of gay/lesbian culture. Although I found this chapter somewhat narrow and superficial, the appended glossary and resource list extend the information in all these chapters

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and are worth the price of the book.

The next section of the book takes us across the life span, not only providing rich material on growing up in a heterosexist -- and erotophobic -- society, but also dealing effectively with the "realization" of one's sexual orientation that can occur at any point in life. This section also includes a sensitive treatment of the difficulties faced by teachers who attempt to educate children about heterosexism, homophobia, and erotophobia. Useful suggestions are made throughout the book that, taken together, can help teachers, counselors, and social workers see themselves and function as a team to build a more caring and healthy school environment.

The third and final section focuses on practice techniques and setting-specific issues. Wisely, the authors have separate chapters on health care for lesbians and for gay men. Too often books in this genre subsume the lesbian experience under that of the gay male; by contrast, this is a strengths-based book, feminist in its framework. That orientation is most clear in the chapter on lesbians in health care settings. (Disclaimer: The authors quote this reviewer extensively in that chapter, but it would be a strong chapter without that material!) The final, lengthy chapter on families and family issues is a treasure trove, addressing every dimension from spiritual to societal in its guide to practice for transformation of "lesbigay" lives through family-based work.

There is much to quibble about in this book. It is uneven, showing the marks of multiple authors. In addition to the authors having different practice orientations and writing styles, there are a few contradictory conceptual formulations in the book. Some chapters provide a wealth of scholarly references, others make undocumented assertions about what "the research indicates." A few chapters do attempt to lump together lesbians, gays, and bisexuals. Fortunately, the team decided not to try to include the experiences and issues of transgender people, although a respectful mention is given in several places.

Despite these quibbles, this book is a "must read." As a highly accessible book, it is an excellent text for students and for practitioners who want an introduction to this genre that is neither turgidly academic nor confined to gloom and doom. This book renders hope. It will help you talk *with* "those kids."

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JOURNAL OF SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK INTERNATIONAL ISSUE

CALL FOR PAPERS

The ***Journal of School Social Work***, sponsored by the Iowa School Social Workers' Association, is seeking papers for an ***International Issue*** that will exemplify school social work on every continent. The issue will be published in April 2002. School social workers, researchers, and social work educators are invited to submit manuscripts that inform practice, policy, or professional training in school social work.

You are encouraged to present your work together with enough background information to enable readers from all countries to understand the context of school social work in your country. Manuscripts must be in English and from 10 to 14 double-spaced pages (3000 to 4500 words). We will provide editorial help with the language if the paper is accepted.

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