



From the Editor

Journal:	Professional Development: The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education
Article Title:	From the Editor
Author(s):	Michael Lauderdale
Volume and Issue Number:	<i>Vol.18 No.2</i>
Manuscript ID:	<i>182004</i>
Page Number:	<i>4</i>
Year:	<i>2015</i>

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

Professional Development: The International Journal of Continuing Social Work Education is published two times a year (Spring and Winter) by the Center for Social and Behavioral Research at 1923 San Jacinto, D3500 Austin, TX 78712. Our website at www.profdevjournal.org contains additional information regarding submission of publications and subscriptions.

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

ISSN: 1097-4911

URL: www.profdevjournal.org

Email: www.profdevjournal.org/contact

From the Editor - Cycles and Social Challenges

Michael Lauderdale

The content in our current edition ranges broadly across the profession of social work with an emphasis on specific applications in teaching and practice settings.

However, as this issue appears in 2016, it seems timely to reflect on broad patterns and challenges that will surely influence the profession in coming years. The Obama Administration is in its final year with some achievements and some failures. Among the achievements are clear steps toward national health care and a reduced military engagement in the Middle East. The two previous administrations Bush (2000-2008) and Clinton (1992-2000) were marked with a rising economy reaching an unemployment low of 4% in 2000 but two economic busts, the dot com that started in from 1999 to 2000 and the mortgage collapse in 2008. Unemployment peaked in 2011 at 9.2%

Much of the attention during the Obama Administration has been on efforts to recover from these economic problems including restoring the balance sheets of financial companies and urging economic growth to increase employment and prosperity. The primary tool of the government has been to hold interest rates at nearly zero and that has benefited the wealthy through a boom in the stock market but not a commensurate boom in jobs and middle incomes. Levels of full-time employment and inflation-corrected earnings indicate no progress since.

The lack of middle-income jobs is most striking in the historic centers of manufacturing such as Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, St. Louis, Philadelphia, Newark, etc. Detroit is the most pronounced having lost with much auto manufacturing an entire generation of people, and a collapse of city government with high levels of crime, gangs and other disorder as well as reduced services including police, medical care and

even water. In many of these cities there is a tense relationship with groups caught in the urban core and more prosperous suburbs that have economic bases other than manufacturing. Some of that tension began to explode in August of 2014 in Ferguson, a suburb of St. Louis. Perhaps other manifestations can be seen in Cleveland in November with the shooting of a 12 year old boy, in Staten Island with the officers choking a man selling cigarettes, the planned killing of two NYC police officers in December, the police custody death of a young man in Baltimore, the shooting of a black man by police in North Charlotte in April and the murders of 9 people in a church in Charlotte in June. Contextually some of these acts of violence can be examined from the perspective of overall crime rates in a recent year (2012) and likely the low of a 20 year pattern of declining crime rates.

State	City	Population	Crime Rate
Michigan	Detroit	707,096	2,122.90
California	Oakland	399,487	1,993.30
Missouri	St. Louis	318,667	1,776.50
Tennessee	Memphis	657,436	1,750.30
California	Stockton	299,105	1,548.00
Maryland	Baltimore	625,474	1,405.20
Ohio	Cleveland	393,781	1,383.80
Georgia	Atlanta	437,041	1,379.00
New York	Buffalo	262,434	1,288.70
Missouri	Kansas City	464,073	1,263.20

The decade of the 80's saw rising crime rates with a peak in 1990 and a decline for most areas until 2012 when rates began to rise.

This violence, at what appears to be a rising rate since about 2012, are forces that go beyond the individual and represent a cycle of declining prosperity in the American economy and anger in the society. Such violence may not be effectively addressed at the individual or neighborhood level,

Michael Lauderdale, Ph.D., is a professor in The School of Social Work at The University of Texas at Austin.

but only understood as a consequence of an economy and society in decline. To support such a statement one must see if there is evidence in cycles of progression and decline in an economy, and thus in society. Then one must establish that experience of economic disruption and poverty leads to aggression. We will look at this literature and think over the next 2 editions of the Journal to determine if there are actual rate increases in violence in the United States and if that increased violence can be explained by economic disruptions.

Economic cycles and social violence were noted as early as the 1920's by social scientists in the relationship between the price of cotton and the rate of lynching of Blacks in the South.

We look this time at recent reports of violence in many areas of America and attempt to determine if a decade long decline in crime is ending. It is assumed that crime in America is partially a function of poverty, education level and ethnic integration. In subsequent issues we will examine changing levels of each of these three variables and conclude with specific challenges developing for social work. In that effort we will examine research that seeks to detect generational changes (Howe and Strauss, 1997; Giancola, 2006), long term economic waves (Kondratieff, 1984; Rostow, 1978; Thompson, 2008) and iconic studies that sought to establish economic relationships with racial violence (Raper, 1933; Beck and Tolnay, 1990; Hepworth and West, 1988; Hovland and Sears, 1940).

References

- Beck, E. M. and Tolnay, Stewart E. The Killing Fields of the Deep South: The Market for Cotton and the Lynching of Blacks, 1882-1930 American Sociological Review. Vol. 55, No. 4 (Aug., 1990), pp. 526-539
- Cantril, Hadley. The Psychology of Social Movements. 1941. New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Giancola, Frank 2006. "The Generation Gap: More Myth than Reality". Human Resource Planning 29 (4): 32-37.
- Hepworth, Joseph T.; West, Stephen G. 1988. Lynchings and the economy: A time-series reanalysis of Hovland and Sears (1940). Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol 55(2), Aug 1988, 239-247.
- Hovland, Carl Iver & Sears, Robert R. 1940 Minor Studies of Aggression: VI. Correlation of Lynchings with Economic Indices The Journal of Psychology: Interdisciplinary and Applied Volume 9, Issue 2, 1940.
- Howe, Neil and Strauss, William. 1997. The Fourth Turning: What the Cycles of History Tell Us About America's Next Rendezvous with Destiny. New York: Broadway Books. ISBN 978-0-7679-0046-1.
- Kondratieff N. D. 1984. The Long Wave Cycle / Tr. by Guy Daniels. New York: Richardson and Snyder.
- Modelski, G. (2012). Kondratieff (K-) waves in the modern world.
- Kondratieff waves: Dimensions and prospects at the dawn of the 21st century system.* Retrieved at: http://www.sociostudies.org/almanac/articles/kondratieff_k_waves_in_the_modern_world_system/
- Raper, Arthur. 1933. The Tragedy of Lynching. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Rostow W. W. 1978. The World Economy: History and Prospect. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Thompson, William R. 2008. Globalization as Evolutionary Process: Modeling Global Change. London: 6 Routledge, edited with George Modelski and Tossaleno Devezas.