



### Editor's Introduction

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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 Work Research.

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Seymour J. Rosenthal, MSSW

The social and economic climate of our world communities represents a barometer of rapidly changing responses to conditions which are clearly beyond the capacity of the helping professions to control. Each of the prior issues of Professional Development has been developed in a time of rapid changes through out the world. In the United States the resignation and the appointment of a Supreme Court justice has captured the attention of most of us with all of their uncertainties. The bombing of the London underground is a stark reminder of the imminent presence of terrorism and its cost. The exact nature of the cost of these climatic conditions is uncertain at the moment, but what seems inevitable is that Social programs will be hit in the future, and will require alternative ways of conducting the business of human services. But for now let us look at the articles reflected in this issue.

The initial article is a thoughtful presentation about a complex issue. The friendships and other social supports of people who have a dual diagnosis of developmental disabilities and mental illness are very important to the quality of their lives. Yet, little is known about these friendships.

Dr. James Dudley presents a study in his article "*The Importance of Friendships: The Case of People with a Dual Diagnosis*" that compares four general types of best friends and results that put forward different issues and strategies for friendship building.

Drs. Vicki Murdock, Wand Priddy, Marja McChesney, Glenda Short and Jim Ward, MSW, bring to our attention a continuing dilemma about challenges faced by field instructors and classroom faculty in their article "*Toward Synthesis: Practical Techniques to Integrate Theory and Practice*." The authors shed light on the approaches to the long term challenge to faculty to integrate the often amorphous relationship between theory and practice.

"*Transfer of Child Welfare Research Findings to*

*the Field: An Internet-Based Training Series*" is an article by Drs. Sandra Owens-Kane, Laurie Smith and Ramona Brinson. Yet another continuing challenge about transferring empirically based research findings via an on-line curriculum that offers an opportunity to enhance and develop child welfare worker competencies and practice, the main objective of the federal Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Program. This article describes and evaluates the development, deployment, utilization and effectiveness of an innovative, web-based child welfare training series based on findings from several Title IV-E sponsored research projects.

An important comparison study by Dr. Janet Dickinson "*Attitudes of Members in One NASW Chapter about Social Action: A 1972 and 2003 Comparison Study*." presents a survey of NASW members in one state of attitudes about social action replicates a 1972 survey. The 1972 and 2003 findings are compared and implications of these findings for continuing education are discussed.

Concern with the utilization of Technology in human services is expertly presented in the article by Christine B. Kleinpeter, Agathi Glezakos, and Marilyn K. Potts. In the study of Distance Education students who participated in a three-year, part-time MSW program taught utilizing 75 percent ITV and 25 percent face-to-face methods. Increasingly, social work education is utilizing web-based teaching approaches. This highly informative article advances the information necessary to connect social work education and technology.

We are delighted to inform our readers that the next publication will be a special double issue, combining the summer and fall issues on the topic of "*University, Community and Continuing Education*." A Call for Paper will be distributed in the near future. For more information contact Tracy Soska or Seymour Rosenthal at [Seymour.Rosenthal@temple.edu](mailto:Seymour.Rosenthal@temple.edu).

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