Reflections from the Editors

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It is has been a cold winter. The wonderful cover art for this Winter issue, by Art Director Robin Richesson, Professor of Art at California State University Long Beach, reflects that coldness.

For many of us, this was been one of the coldest and most frightening winters in recent memory. The period beginning with Tuesday, November 8, 2016 was a time when much went into hibernation, including this journal, which didn't publish an issue from November 1, 2016 until the present issue, published in February 2017.

The Aftermath

Perhaps the editor was at a loss for what to say. However, soon people began to act. It became clear that something was happening. What it was wasn't exactly clear. Everybody looked around. Battle lines were being drawn. Everybody couldn't be wrong. Young people were starting to speak their minds. Within days, thousands were in the street, singing songs and, yes, carrying signs. It was beginning to feel familiar, like the above combination of adapted and verbatim Buffalo Springfield lyrics (Stills, 1966).

It was women, including social work women, who brought the nation to its senses and gave us hope. Even before the election, at the 2016 APM of the Council on Social Work Education in Atlanta, Ann Alvarez and her daughter Antonia Alvarez (of the University of Denver) facilitated a sing-along on Saturday November 5 (Alvarez, A. R., 2016). Michel Coconis drove from Ohio prepared, bringing drums, bells and so forth. I remember sitting there, singing along, but hoping. Hoping we would end with We Shall Overcome. Sure enough, that was the plan. We ended singing We Shall Overcome arm in arm together: "We are not afraid, we are not afraid, we are not afraid, today." However, at one point we shifted into a revised lyric: "Oh deep in my heart, I do believe, we are not afraid, Tuesday."

Perhaps I was hoping we would sing this because I remembered the impact which one somber rendition of We Shall Overcome song had on me after the Charleston Church Massacre at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Zion church on June 17, 2015. The shootings took place right down the block from the Spoleto Music Festival, although the festival had just ended days earlier that year. Giselle Dover and I had visited the festival in 2014 to hear our son, clarinetist Mark Dover perform. The AME Zion choir regularly collaborates with the festival. The shooting prompted many musicians to become active in response, including our son. Later that month, Mark recorded a somber rendition of We Shall Overcome along with his now wife Lotte Fay and pianist Jeremy Jordan. Mark commented (Dover, M. J., 2015): "With every tragedy, we will overcome. And with every step forward as a society, let us not forget we have a long road ahead towards a just world. As musicians, we have the ability to try to move us forward with the power of song. Here's a humble attempt. Spread the love and record your own Social Justice Song! WE SHALL OVERCOME SOMEDAY." As may become apparent in these reflections, a new generation is taking the lead in movements for social justice.

As soon as the election results were clear, several calls for the Women's March on Washington were issued and soon consolidated. In Bloomington, Indiana, two social workers – Kathy Byers and Jean Capler – began a secret Facebook page which issued a Call for Action that attracted hundreds to participation in local and national marches (Byers, 2017). Kathy also began journaling (personal communication, used with permission). Narratives arising out of journaling, activism, practice and self-care are very welcome here at Reflections.

Here on the Cleveland State University campus, later in November, word spread among veterans: join in solidarity by coming to Standing Rock (Veterans Standing for Standing Rock, 2016). It soon because apparent that the response had been so massive, veterans were asked to find ways to express solidarity locally.

Finally, after an outpouring of activism and planning, on January 21, 2017, 3.3 million women, children and adult male supporters poured into the streets in the U.S. alone (Frostenson, 2017; Pressman & Chenoweth, 2017). In one place after another, mobilizations for the Women's March and marches and rallies for refugees and sanctuary were initiated by a new generation of emerging activists and by a solid contingent of re-activists (those who are returning to activism with their accumulated wisdom).

This activism began to bring people together. We learned that social worker and Cleveland State University alumna Bridget Crist is a leader of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ, 2017), a local chapter of the national organization of the same name. On the Cleveland State University faculty, Patricia Stoddard-Dare returned from the Women's March on Washington, which she attended with her entire family, with a message that social workers needed to be in solidarity with this and other movements for social justice.

These emerging activists, longstanding activists, and re-activists are what the late social work activist Verne Weed used to call *live wires*. They are showing their ability to follow Verne's advice to be *political* rather than *politicized,* an occasional bad habit of many activists (perhaps the editor included). When one is in doubt about how to proceed, it behooves one to follow the initiatives of others.

From Letter to Reflections

By now you may have realized that this is the narrative voice of the editor, the first author of these reflections. I am speaking in my personal voice and in my professional capacity as editor of this journal of narratives, not in any other capacity. Each of the previous editors would also comment upon the issues of the day when the times demanded it. Sonia Leib Abels was the founding editor and served from 1995 to 1999 Volume 5(2). Her successor Jillian Jimenez at first called her editorial introductions Reflections from the Editors, a practice restored with the present volume. Tragically, her last issue as editor was 2009 Volume 15(3). Following her death from a sudden and aggressive form of cancer in October 2009, the institutional strength of the journal's following asserted itself. Rebecca Lopez, Associate Editor, stepped in to oversee 15(4), which contained several of the final manuscripts overseen by Jillian, including my first submission (Dover, 2009). Three special issues followed, with the last of the three being a Special Issue on Social Justice in the 2010 Volume 16(3). That issue honored Jillian. Paul and Sonia Abels discussed her many contributions. The legacy of Sonia and the untimely death of Jillian were also discussed in the Letter from the Editor from Eileen Mayers Pasztor, Jillian's successor beginning with 2010 Volume 16(4). Yours truly succeeded Eileen as editor in 2012 Volume 18(2).

These are not times to remain silent, neither for the editor nor for our readers, reviewers and authors. A dated introduction from the editor – especially in an online journal – has the capacity to address in a timely manner those issues that are urgent in the world around us. These are the very same issues that surely influence the nature of the work we are doing with clients and in communities. Thus, they are relevant for a journal of reflections on practice.

Call for Narratives

Accordingly, after consulting with the Editorial Team (please see About, Editorial Team at www.rnoph.org), the journal is calling for general submissions which are narratives about the personal, professional and political impact the election of President Donald Trump has had on our personal, professional and political lives and has begun to have on our clients and communities. In particular, narratives are sought about participation in the growing social and political action of social workers and other helping professionals, in our capacities either with our employing organizations or as private persons.

We are also open to proposals for a special section along these lines. Please see the Call for Narratives for Special Themed Sections on our home page. A similar call from this editor in 2014 – following the advent of the Black Lives Matter movement – lead to the

publication of the Special Issue on Dismantling Social and Racial Injustice, edited by Sadye Logan and Priscilla Gibson and published in June 2016. That issue is must reading as we head into the coming period. Please see Archives at the website.

News from Reflections

In this issue, the manuscripts were all written earlier, much earlier in many cases, as this journal and its staff have gradually learned the art of editing and the details of publishing this wonderful journal. As the editor has learned since May 2012, serving as one of the editors of this journal or as one of our over 100 reviewers requires a great of emotional labor.

The manuscripts are often moving or even disturbing. They require an open heart and mind for the readers as well. However, the publishing tasks of the journal (from fund raising to website maintenance to copy editing and proofreaders) are also very demanding. Ideally, two different persons should oversee these roles. Plans are now underway to ensure this is the case, while ensuring the next editor full editorial independence.

This is the first dated editorial introduction, as Reflections from the Editors. This practice will continued until the Journal is fully up to date in its publishing schedule, as is planned for Summer 2017. Significantly, the publishing of the journal is now supported by several schools of social work, who have formally agreed to or pledged to become Publishing Partners and provide annual financial or in-kind support to the journal. Publishing Partner schools of social work typically have an established base of *Reflections* authors and/or reviewers. A representative of each of these schools will serve on an Executive Committee, chaired by Cathleen Lewandowski, Director of the Cleveland State University School of Social Work.

Announcements about this will be made in the months to come. But what can be announced now, one year since the journal announced in January 2016 that it was taking the risk of ending individual and library subscriptions and becoming open access, is that over 330,00 views of our abstracts have taken place in one year. Also, there have been 180,000 downloads of PDFs of our articles or full issues. These aren't just clicks. They as they require the actual opening of a PDF file.

This is good news for the long-term survival of the journal and its goal of remaining a high quality, double-blind two-peer review open-access journal for many years to come. However, the journal also needs the support of Friends of Reflections, over 60 of whom have donated nearly $10,000 to the journal. Please see information on the website and consider supporting this journal. We don't charge authors. We don't charge readers. We don't charge libraries. But we need your support.

The Narratives in this Issue

This Letter from the Editors is co-authored by our 2nd year MSW student Graduate Assistant Maureen O'Connor, who has ably summarized each of the following manuscripts. She has provided valuable feedback since she arrived in August 2015. Maureen has also played an important role working together with Kailie Johnson, BSW-Candidate, now in her third year with the journal as Editorial Associate, and Elisabeth Weems, BA-Candidate, Journalism and Promotional Communications, Cleveland State University, our Copy Editor.

In this issue, in a submission to the Field Education Section, edited by Beth Lewis of Bryn Mawr College, Wendy Ashley, Sandra Santracruz-Cervantes and Tina Karnsomprot Castro collaborate in a narrative that shares their experience encountering professional conflict in a social work academic and field setting. The main writers are a seasoned field supervisor and faculty member, and a graduate social work student. They are part of a transdisciplinary team that is providing treatment to a family that is raising a child with Autism. As the only women of color on the transdisciplinary team, they cite research about how female social workers who are persons of color continue to experience prejudice and racism in the work place. They explore finding their competency questioned in much the same way that the literature outlines. While white men disproportionally advance in the hierarchies that exist in even the social work fields, women of color, including those in academia, continue to struggle to be perceived as competent by their white counterparts. These authors are candid with the racism they encounter. They remind us of the work that is still required of us in eradicating systemic racism and hierarchy, even in higher education and

social work.

In the first of two submissions to the Research Reflections Section, edited by Julie Altman of California State University Monterrey, Jennifer C. Hughes, in "Care by the Caregiver" addresses the need for self care for caregivers, specifically those who care for a person diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. Inspired by her experience as a caregiver to her husband, she decides to conduct a qualitative research study on how MS affects people in a caregiver/care recipient relationship. Hughes carries out interviews with 20 participants, each either a caregiver or recipient diagnosed with MS. She finds that disclosing her own experience caring for her husband allows her participants to open to her in ways that might not have, without knowing her family had also been affected by MS. These interviews are often in depth. They provide great detail to the profound ways MS affects the lives of each couple. Hughes finds that she has her own emotional reaction after hearing her participants stories. She uses journaling to process her own feeling. From her interviews as well as her own journaling process, Hughes extracts common themes that run throughout every caregiver's story. Hughes notes that treatment is most often focused on the patient with MS rather than the caregivers but emphasizes the importance of caregivers to receive care and attention for their own social and emotional needs. Of the many themes she finds from her interviews, an important one is that caregivers often struggle with acknowledging their own needs and receiving help, since they are usually so focused on the need of their loved one. Hughes' narrative offers a compelling rationale for continued research and resources to foster the emotional and physical wellbeing of our caregivers, so that they can continue to provide important care to their loved one, or client.

In the next Research Reflections narrative, Christopher Cotten, in "My Cisgender Comeuppance," writes about the continued practice of social workers, and society in general, to remain aware of one's privilege. As a white gay male, Cotten acknowledges he is both a member of a marginalized group as well as a traditionally privileged one. He is hired to work on curriculum for an HIV-prevention program with two other authors, one white trans woman, and one African American transgender woman. Aware of his privilege as a white male, Cotten works hard to establish trust and positive rapport with these women and the three are successful in creating effective curriculum for an HIV-prevention program. Despite his efforts not to use his privilege to monopolize his agenda over the other two writers, he finds that he commits a faux pas with his colleagues. Cotten's story is a reminder that as allies, we will still make mistakes when working with our colleagues who are also members of traditionally oppressed and marginalized groups. However, it is in our willingness to face our flaws, acknowledge our privilege, and try again, that perhaps, over time, will weaken the structures that reinforce these oppressive patterns.

In a submission to Teaching and Learning Reflections, edited by Arlene Reilly-Sandoval and Carol L. Langer, of Colorado State University Pueblo, Larry Owens write about working as a social worker before entering the world of academia, Owens finds that although he is highly knowledgeable after years of clinical work and then working as a director and administrator, he finds striking differences between the practice of social work, and in academia. In "Reflections of a Pracademic: A Journey from Social Work Practitioner to Academic," Owens, now a full time professor of social work, notes that this change brought a period of transition for him, as he adapted to the differences between the two settings. Owens describes his process of learning the unwritten and written rules of navigating within an academic setting, and how he worked to adapt to this new setting. Owens offers guidance and encouragement to others thinking of transitioning from the "practice" of social work to an "pracademic," noting that this risk he took, although uncomfortable at first, ultimately allowed his skills to shine and enabled him to bring unique perspectives to his university. Transferrable skills to the classroom allowed him to give his students a unique perspective

In a general submission, Dana Davis and Patricia Park collaborate in "That's What a Social Worker Does" to describe a challenge that many adults will in their life time, that of caring for a sick and aging parent. However, they offer important information as they experience on the other end of the social work they usually give in the hospital. Davis and Park, both social workers, write of the struggles they faced in attempting to solicit social work support for their own loved one, in a medical setting. They write: "Social

workers are the one group that should rise above the system and provide empathy, caring and supports". However, they find in their respective experiences that this was often not the case as they interacted with hospital staff. Certainly the medical model poses challenges for upholding the tenets of social work, and both Davis and Park offer an important reflection of this dynamic as recipients of social work in a hospital setting.

In a general submission, Raymie Harvard Wayne, Christine Limone and Stephen A Karp collaborate to detail their accomplishment of changing hiring requirements for social work positions. As members of the NASW, their charge was to improve the hiring practices of state agencies, such as child welfare agencies, so that the clients of these agencies would be served by professionally degreed social workers. Drawing on research that shows a social work degree improves retention and service delivery to clients, they began the steps to reach out to local and state officials, to bring this issue to awareness. Encountering some resistance however, they discover that many of these same officials do not view the role of a social worker as serious enough to require a social work degree. They persevere through various levels of bureaucracy until the Lieutenant Governor agrees to mandate that state agencies show preference to degreed social workers over applicants with degrees in other disciplines. Their fight to have the social work degree considered a real and serious degree draws on many macro skills as they engage with multiple governmental bodies, collaborate with unions, strategize, and recruit letters of support from other agencies. They share how each of their strengths gave them important roles in working collectively and also collaborating with legislators.

In a general submission, Carol Weissmann Mauck addresses the highly relevant issue of a large aging population. She draws on her extensive experience as a owner and founder of an adult day care for the geriatric population. Although Mauck opens this center to provide a much needed resource for aging adults and their families, she finds unexpected challenges and dynamics with interacting with the care giving relatives of her "clients," as well as in caring for the actual "clients," such as an aging adult with dementia. Some challenges include caring for clients whose native language is not English, leaving them often confused and frustrated in adapting to a day care program. She explores the decision making processes of caregivers, in deciding to use a day care program for their aging parent, often so that they could get rest and exercise in order to continue caring for their loved one. Mauck notes this can difficult for adult children, who often feel guilty in leaving their loved one in a day program. At times they have to adopt a "tough love" approach to sending their family member to the day program, so that they can get some rest. Mauck identifies the need for more research into how a day care program can assist older adults with aging in place, as well as how they adjust in such programs, and how day activities can enhance their experience.

In another general submission, Gayle Mallinger and Molly Kerby discuss the growth of locally produced organic food in the United States, and the role of farmers markets, community and school-based gardens, as well as campaigns to promote the consumption of vegetables by children and adolescents. As they both show and tell, local communities are increasingly recognizing that disparities exist in poor neighborhoods, with respect to access to fresh produce, education, and food programs. Their article portrays the role of a community garden project at a Boys & Girls Club in Kentucky, over a three year period.

The final narrative contributes to the Historical Reflections section. John Tropman and Emily Nicklett collaborate on discussion of a project involving noted sociologist Talcott Parsons. Talcott Parsons, a notable sociologist of the twentieth century was a scholar who utilized the theoretical perspective known as structural functionalism. Parsons' work focused on social action, the structure of values and how they impact one another, as well as shape society. His work also studied the relationship between health systems and society, visualizing the healthcare system as one that works to supply society with an efficient and healthy workforce. These authors, with backgrounds in management and leadership, and aging and health, found that Parson's work, specifically his Adaptation, Goal Attainment, Integration and Latency (AGIL) Theory was very applicable to their fields. They note how Parson's emphasis on the need for an external "disruptive force" is necessary to initiate change within a system. Both writers lament the passing of Parsons, and speculate to how he might have

influenced students today. As social workers, we can learn a lot about the oppressions we are working to influence by looking at how a larger system perpetuates the imbalances we work to correct.

Theorizing in Reflections?

The article by Tropman and Nicklett is consistent with the intent of the Historical Reflections section, which often has autobiographical or third-person accounts of important historical developments in the helping professions. But theirs is also a narrative about the process of theoretical debate and development itself. Narratives submitted to our Research Reflections section, edited by Julie Altman, can also include accounts of the process of theorizing that accompanies the process of the research portrayed.

Nevertheless, it has not been often that narratives in this journal reflect upon theory and theorizing, although our Call for Narratives, including general submissions, certainly encourages this. True, *Reflections* narratives probably shouldn't stray into long theoretical discussions, in a way that promotes the cognitive over the affective. But isn't theory the outcome of a process of theorizing? Isn't theory about asking questions? Isn't theory about solving conceptual and empirical problems? And isn't this something which comes out of our interactions with other people in the process of doing our research, working with our clients, talking with students, and debating with colleagues about the conceptual problems we face?

The notion that theorizing is a process – even a craft – is one that has recently been stressed by Richard Swedberg, starting with a 2010 call for papers on the craft of theorizing (Swedberg, 2010, 2012, 2014a, 2014b). Narratives reflecting on the process of theorizing about our practice are particularly important for the present era. They are certainly welcome in this journal. In reflecting on our practice, it is important for us to re-think the theories which undergird our practice. Those theories are often mainly implicit. Often, they reflect tacit knowledge and practice wisdom, and that is important. But arguably our theory base is overly eclectic.

As David Tucker (1996) has pointed out, eclecticism is not a free good. Perhaps we don't fully recognize the opportunity costs of our not prioritizing our theoretical perspectives, whether they be the empowerment tradition in social work practice, the ecosystems perspective, or theories of oppression and social injustice. One important conceptual step towards a re-examination of the theoretical foundation of social work was recently made by Mimi Abramovitz and Margaret Sherraden (2016).

One contribution to this discourse, rooted in the narrative style of this journal, will be seen with the publication of the Special Issue on The Interconnections of Micro and Macro Practice, to appear in summer 2017, edited by Darlyne Bailey and Melissa Emerson of Bryn Mawr College Graduate School of Social Work and Social Research. Another contribution has been made by two Reflections contributors, Michael Reisch and Charles Garvin, authors of the new book *Social Work and Social Justice: Concepts, Challenges and Strategies* (Reisch and Garvin, 2016).

The need to clarify the nature of social justice and injustice is reinforced by the observation that it is undeniable that Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch, holder of a Ph.D. in Law (Legal Philosophy) from Oxford, has his own developed conceptualization of social justice. We should not assume that those who think differently than most helping professionals do not have a plausible or even legitimate outlook on social justice.

We can, however, seek to ensure that our own view of social justice is even better conceptualized. On what conceptualization should our theory of justice rest? In this journal, David Gil argued that any theory of justice requires a conceptualization of human need (2004, p. 32-33):

> Many advocates of social justice tend not to specify their understanding of this concept. They act as if its meaning was self-evident and, therefore, did not require interpretation. When challenged to specify the meaning of the concept, they tend to hesitate. Leaving the meaning of social justice unspecified may actually be quite useful, for the vagueness of the concept enables people to avoid facing the implications of a clear definition for their accustomed ways of life.....On the level of social institutions and values, social justice means

> socially established living conditions and ways of life that are conducive to the fulfillment of everyone's intrinsic needs and to the realization of everyone's innate potential, from local to global levels. Innate human capacities tend to unfold spontaneously when people have opportunities to fulfill their intrinsic needs in their natural and social-cultural environments.

In his comments upon receiving the Noam Chomsky Award from the Justice Studies Association, Gil (2008) further contended that we must focus our attention on addressing human needs, as we go about pursuing global social justice. The needs-based ethicist Gillian Brock has make exactly that point (Brock, 2009). Also within philosophy, David Wiggins (1998), clarified the distinction between wants and needs, differentiated absolute and instrumental needs, and contended that there are identifiable, objective, non-circumstantial conditions which are required in order to avoid serious harm. Wiggins explicitly criticized theories of justice that don't draw upon a clear conception of need (2005).

Since Gil and Wiggins wrote, the Council on Social Work Education's 2015 standards (CSWE, 2015) now require that our schools teach about "knowledge of theories of human need and social justice." In this political environment, we need to better anchor our advocacy for social justice and our intersectional resistance against injustice in our articulation of human rights and human needs.

Human needs have been a marginalized component of social work discourse since the destruction of the plates of Charlotte Towle's *Common Human Needs* by the federal government, at the height of the McCarthy period (Posner, 1995). Although the book was later reprinted by NASW (Towle, 1957), only recently have overviews and critiques of theory of human been published in the field of social work (Dover & Joseph, 2008; Dover, 2016a; Jani & Reisch, 2011). However, the concept of human needs is increasingly being found in the demands placed by emerging social movements. This has been the case since the Occupy movement, when "Human Needs Not Corporate Greed" emerged as one of the most frequent slogans. This is portrayed in the following photograph taken by the editor in downtown Cleveland in October 2011:

Addressing Human Needs

In the present environment, helping professionals are well positioned to point to the reality of the unmet needs of our clients and communities. A good example of taking seriously the content on addressing human needs in the NASW Code of Ethics is the recent document prepared by the National Association of Social Workers for President Trump's administration (NASW, 1996, 2017). On February 23, 2017, that document was used to inform an effort by a group of macro social work activists including Kristin Battista-Frazee; Laurel Hitchcock; Stephen Cummings; Sunya Folayan; Pat Shelly; Rachel L. West; Vilissa Thompson, and Karen Zgoda, and the Association for Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA). They issued a Open Invitation to the Trump Administration to Engage the Social Work Community via a #MacroSW twitter chat, and have made available the archive (#MacroSW, 2017).

Just last week, local social worker Molly Brudnick was one of those who spoke out at a Town Hall meeting held by Congresswoman Marsha Fudge. According to Molly (personal communication, February 25, 2017):

> The turn-out was HUGE! Many people of color, all ages. Probably over one thousand people. More than one line – up the full length of the hall – to

> speak! Moving statements – one man crying about his neighbor's health care issues and needs. There were staff people from Congresswoman Fudge's office with whom the Congresswoman connected speakers to help them with their issues....A nurse from Metro Health spoke to the help Medicaid provides for adolescents. An immigrant got such great support with everyone standing with him, who could stand, and another person with a question telling the man we are all immigrants.....I stepped up and said that we all know what the problems are – including hate, anti-Semitism, anti-ObamaCare – but what actions will Congresswoman Fudge and her Congressional colleagues take together? She said that they stand together against President Trump's unqualified appointments. She also said that we should look to see their action when next the President speaks.

Also last week, social worker Bridget Crist spoke on behalf of Standing up for Racial Justice (SURJ, 2017) at the City Club of Cleveland, prior to the presentation of Eddie S. Glaude, Jr, Ph.D. of Princeton University (Glaude, 2017). Glaude shouted out to Bridget several times as part of making one of his key points. This point concerned one important lesson of the civil rights movement: namely the need to organize in our own backyards. Bridget is organizing white folk to fight racism. Others are organizing in the social work backyard.

For instance, on March 16, 2017, here in Cleveland, the 7th Annual Cuyahoga County Conference on Social Welfare – coordinated by Lori Longs-Painter of the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University – will be meeting on the theme *What Happens When Everything Changes* (CCCOSW, 2017). The planning of a morning plenary and workshop at the conference on the topic *In Solidarity: Building Intersectional Resistance* has been inspired by the very emerging activists, consistent activists, and re-activists discussed above, as well as by the dedicated Ohio NASW chapter staff, including Danielle Smith, Dorothy Martindale, and Colleen Dempsey. Bridget will be among the speakers at the plenary session, and the workshop will be moderated by CSU faculty member and field instructor Joann Hall and by CSU alumna Katy Carpenter. As we prepare for this event, a CSU MSW student made a valuable comment discussed in class and valuable to share here (Artie Bruce, BSW, MSW-Candidate, used with permission): "As social workers we should not be satisfied with the status quo. As social workers we can make a difference if we make our voices known. I have always been told, 'A closed mouth can't get fed.' We must speak and speak loudly. Change can begin with us." This made me think: why can't helping professionals take the lead in initiating social struggles? We have the diversity and lived experience and moral authority to initiate new coalitions and formations, as was the case during the Progressive Era.

Praxis of Sorts

As these examples show, social workers along with our allies are in action advocating for social justice. As social workers and helping professionals, we have an ethical commitment not to discriminate on the basis of political beliefs with our clients and colleagues. We have many varying views. However, by strengthening our theorization of human need and applying that theory to a re-conceptualization of social justice and social injustice, we can strengthen our common understanding. Perhaps by linking empowerment theory, ecosystems theory, theories of oppression and social injustice, and theory of human need (Brock, 2009; Miller, 2012; Gough, 2015; Ryan and Deci, 2017), we can be more effective as helping professionals and more persuasive in our social and political action.

We can enhance our effectiveness if we understand what it is that happens at the intersection of the individual and the social environment. It is at the moment of that intersection that people experience either opportunities or barriers to addressing our human needs (Dover, 2016b). Injustice, in other words, is produced by the manner in which oppression, dehumanization and exploitation produce social mechanisms that can create systematic inequality in our opportunities to address our needs, leading to unmet needs and serious harm. Our activism is addressed to removing the causes of systematic inequality, dismantling the barriers to addressing needs, and addressing the cumulative historical consequences of these unjust barriers. Our activism seeks to establish and enforce human rights of the kind necessary for achieving social justice.

It is one thing for us to repeat these lyrics to those who aren't listening (Dylan, 1965): "Because something is happening here, but you don't know what it is, do you, Mister Jones?" It is another thing for us to speak real truth to power: truth about the reality of the unmet needs of our clients, of our communities, and of people the world over. Something is in fact happening here. We can be an important part of it if we act, speak out, and write narratives of our experiences than encourage others to act as well.

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