REFLECTIONS:

NARRATIVES of PROFESSIONAL HELPING

CalSWEC SPECIAL ISSUE MAY, 2000

A Journal for the Helping Professions

REFLECTIONS:
NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL HELPING

REFLECTIONS: NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL HELPING (015-2950)
is a refereed journal published quarterly by the Department of Social Work,
California State University Long Beach, 1250 Bellflower Boulevard; Long Beach, California, 90804-0902

REFLECTIONS:
NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL HELPING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PRINTED QUARTERLY BY **THE CSULB UNIVERSITY PRESS**

Letter from the Associate Editor

by Rebecca A. Lopez, Ph.D

Reflections is pleased to give voice to some of the many people involved in creating the successes of CalSWEC. This special issue is dedicated to all those students, social workers and policymakers whose collaboration has made a difference in the lives of so many. From seasoned macro practitioners to fledgling social workers, all share the belief that families in need have the right to expect services that are provided by well-trained social service professionals.

In reviewing the articles in preparation for publication, I was struck by the remarkable fact that a small core group of "co-conspirators" as Grossman puts it, initially sustained the momentum in making the program a reality. The commitment of a handful of individuals who dared to challenge the status quo truly serves as inspiration to all of us We applaud the many accomplishments of CalSWEC participants on the occasion of its tenth anniversary.

Reflections welcomes letters to the Editor. Letters should be sent with the writer's name, address and daytime phone number to Editor, Reflections, Department of Social Work, CSULB, 1250 Bellflower, Long Beach, CA 90840. They can also be faxed (562-985-5514) or sent via E-mail to reflect@csulb.edu. Letters may be edited for length and clarity and may be published in the journal.

SPECIAL ISSUE
CALL FOR NARRATIVES

THE LATINO EXPERIENCE

REFLECTIONS, a refereed journal published by the Department of Social Work at California State University, Long Beach, is seeking narratives of your experiences and growth as a Latino professional:

- The unique Latino Experience in mainstream practive.
- Professional challenges, strengths, accomplishments.
- Experiences in teaching and learning.
- Signal events that have transformed your professional thinking or life.

Manuscripts due by August 30, 2000

Mail manuscripts to: Dr. Rebecca A. Lopez, Associate Editor
REFLECTIONS: Department of Social Work,
California State University, Long Beach,
Long Beach, CA 90840-0902

Letter From the Guest Editor

by Sherrill J. Clark, Ph.D

The California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) is a coalition of the fourteen graduate deans/directors of social work, the fifty-eight welfare directors, and representatives of mental health, the National Association of Social Workers, and private foundations. The chief purpose of this project is to provide a statewide program of financial aid for graduate social work students who will commit to employment in California County Child Welfare Services. It has established a forum that allows the practice and university communities to discuss mutual concerns: the provision of the best services to vulnerable persons who rely on public social services.

CalSWEC celebrates its 10-year anniversary this year. In observance of this milestone, the Department of Social Work at CSU, Long Beach, and Director John Oliver have graciously offered to devote a special issue of this journal to tell the stories of CalSWEC and its influence on social work education. I am honored to have been chosen as guest editor for this special issue.

Reflections is devoted to personal narratives. In her Letter from the Editor (Summer 1999), Editor Mary Ann Jimenez described the importance of narratives and observed, "The best narratives convey what we have been, what we are, and what we might become.... As an historian, as well as a social work educator, I have always believed that the narrative was one of the most provocative means of rousing thought, dispelling intellectual torpor, and inspiring action."

In this issue Ed Nathan describes how he and Harry Specht teamed up to draft the concept of a social work center devoted to public social services during their breakfasts at the Berkeley Faculty Club. To a large extent, it was Harry's desire to redirect social work students to work in the publicly supported social services combined with Ed's foundation and county connections that launched CalSWEC.

CalSWEC former executive directors, Bart Grossman and Nancy Dickinson, provide narratives on how CalSWEC enabled them to be catalysts for change in social work education and public social services during the sometimes frustrating process of incremental change. Bart's narrative focuses on bringing two cultures—university and agency—together to form the partnership.

Janet Black and Barbara Cohen, respectively the former and present field directors at CSULB, discuss their involvement in a distance education program. In addition to the challenge of using technology to deliver a graduate social work curriculum, the distance education program deals with the teaching implications for nontraditional, part time students, i.e., students who are already employed by the agencies.

The students and alumni have contributed the most personal and poignant reflections. Kelly J. Thompson speaks eloquently about the events in her life that have given her a compassionate, yet realistic, view of her work. She does not pull any punches about how hard this work is. Particularly when you have to set your own boundaries. Laurel Adam and Ruth Supranovich talk about breaking the qualitative-quantitative research barrier, and in doing so, they demonstrate the common elements shared by research and practice. Several short pieces offer additional insight into diverse aspects of training, education, and practice.

Finally, Karen Ringuette, our Media Specialist, has composed a timeline of CalSWEC's history.

My personal note:

My family is precious to me. I was fortunate to be raised

by five aunts and a grandmother who used to sing to me in Russian. My youngest aunt was 14 when I was born. My father was away in the Navy. My mom, the in-law, felt overwhelmed by this busy, noisy bunch who fought over who would take care of me, the first-born granddaughter. I was never allowed to cry because the landlord who lived downstairs didn't like children. Now, I have only two aunts left and my mom. I can imagine how painful it would have been not to have known them as I was growing up. As a mother myself, I tried to give my two kids the same special feeling, but it's impossible to be seven people at once, and trying was a mistake.

Facing the fact that our son and daughter are multi-substance abusers and alcoholics was the most difficult thing my husband and I have ever done in our lives. It blind-sided us. Both my husband and I have siblings who "use or drink too much." My grandfather did not live with the family because he was an alcoholic. Three of my aunts married alcoholics; one married at least two different alcoholics. Alcohol has caused all kinds of medical and family problems in my husband's family. Nobody ever talks about it. We are not alcoholics; so we thought we had escaped this legacy. To make matters worse, in our community so many adults have this problem that the threshold of alarm (which would be indicated by what I know now as recognizing alcoholic behavior) is very high and came too late for my family to avoid a painful separation from our daughter.

Because of alcohol, our daughter was in residential treatment and foster care for nearly three years and for 2 1/2 years we were forbidden to see her, not legally, but by guilt manipulation. The probation officer in charge of her case rarely called us and, in fact, never once interviewed us in person during the entire three years. He wouldn't come to Individual Educational Plan meetings because he didn't have time for "meetings where they serve little doughnuts." He told me the reason he didn't call me was because when he did we always had long conversations and he didn't have time for that either. In spite of the fact that reunification was always the plan, we were not included. After our daughter ran away for the second time from the treatment center, they told us she needed some time off from her family problems—six months. After that they made us invisible. Things got so bad I had to call my county supervisor who called the head of the agency who got staff to take my daughter to the dentist.

So, I really do know a little about what it's like to be crushed by the system. I really do know what it's like to be viewed as the enemy, to have your telephone calls go unanswered for weeks on end, to have workers make plans without you and try to second-guess you. We were almost never heard.

During this time, through my job, I would go to the same conferences as the juvenile court judges and feel like a spy. Here I was, the bad mother, sitting in the same audience and hearing the same incantations—family-centered, strengths-based, reunification. We would nod our heads and acknowledge how important these concepts were, but when it came to getting the reunification services our family needed, no one was there. On the contrary, the probation officer delegated reunification planning to the residential treatment staff who encouraged our daughter to seek foster care instead of returning home.

Now maybe I am fooling myself, but I have something to say to you CalSWEC grads who say you can't stand working in the public agency system one more minute and want to quit because the system doesn't support your kind of social work. It's true; you have been educated to make a difference and often the system doesn't support that. We knew that going into this endeavor. That's why we have the stipend program. Agencies and schools, like families, tend to want to stay the same. Change is difficult. Nonetheless, you know how to obtain sensitive information by helping families to trust and cooperate with you. Not only are you knowledgeable about where resources are in your community, but you can show clients how to use them. You know how to do a thorough assessment of risk and to present the facts to an interdisciplinary team. You are able to evaluate your own practice and to switch if you are going the wrong way. You have empathy and self-awareness. We encouraged you to be articulate in writing as well as verbally in order to be straightforward with parents who have to change to get their kids back. We encouraged you to be the voice for families who

don't have any power because they are poor or the wrong color. Without you, more children will be lost, more families wounded. Please stay.
□

CalSWEC:
A Decade of Collaboration on the Public Social Services

The California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) is unique in the annals of both social work education and the public social services in the state. Never before had the entire social work academic community and the public social services joined forces to improve the education and training of social workers for all the publicly supported social services. When CalSWEC was created ten years ago, this pioneering partnership was recognized across the country for its innovation and foresight. Today, CalSWEC continues to serve as a national leadership model in school/agency partnership. Universities throughout the nation use the California Child Welfare Competencies, developed by CalSWEC, as a starting point for curriculum development.

Compiled by
Karen Ringuette,
CalSWEC Media Specialist

Here are highlights from CalSWEC's history:

1980
The teaching staff at the School of Social Welfare at the University of California at Berkeley revises the school's mission to produce

professionals for careers in the publicly supported social services and to serve disadvantaged populations. With this assertion, the school directs its resources toward carrying out the new mission.

1981–1984
In line with its new mission, the school works on building bridges to connect with area public social service agencies.

1984
The UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare and the local public service agencies form the Bay Area Social Services Consortium (BASSC). Initially composed of seven county departments of social services, the school's Dean, Dr. Harry Specht, and the Executive Director of the Zellerbach Family Fund, Edward Nathan, BASSC within a year expands to include nine county departments and two additional Bay Area Deans of social work: San Francisco State Dean, Michael Reich, and San Jose State Dean, Ismael Dieppa. It provides a forum for the exchange and discussion of common and pressing policy and practice issues. This collaboration and other efforts in the state create a link between the deans and directors of the schools and county social service managers.

1989
With BASSC's success, its member deans and the California Chapter of the National Association of Social Work (NASW), directed by Ellen Dunbar, involve the deans of the state's seven other graduate schools of social work in a discussion with the California Welfare Directors Association (CWDA), directed by Lee Kemper. Directors of the schools unanimously approve an MSW mission statement to "reprofessionalize public social services." A partnership is proposed among the 10 graduate schools of social work and the CWDA to redirect MSW education in California toward preparing graduates for work in the publicly supported social services. CWDA identifies Title IV-E of the Social Security Act as a possible source of stipend funding for the project.

1989–1990
To reflect the common priorities of schools and agencies in curriculum development while allowing a suitable degree of autonomy, CalSWEC's Curriculum Committee, chaired by Dr. Ben

Cuellar of Fresno State University and staffed by Sherrill Clark, assembles an array of common practice competencies for which each school will prepare its child welfare students. An advisory committee of school and agency child welfare educators refines this to create a draft of core curriculum competencies.

1990

The Ford Foundation and the local foundation community provide the base of startup funding for the proposed partnership. The Ford Foundation offers to provide three years of support for the project with the possibility of an additional two-year extension. Eight California foundations agree to match the Ford Foundation grant. They are the Elise Haas Fund, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, the Louis R. Lurie Foundation, the Community Foundation of Santa Clara, the San Francisco Foundation, the Stuart Foundation, the Von Löben Sels Foundation, and the Zellerbach Family Fund.

With the commitment of the 10 graduate schools of social work and CWDA, the help of the California Chapter of NASW, and funding from The Ford Foundation, the California Center for Graduate Social Work Education for the Public and Non-Profit Social Services is created. Dr. Specht, Dean of UC Berkeley's School of Social Welfare, becomes principal investigator. Soon after the center's birth, it is renamed the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC).

Dr. Bart Grossman, field director at UC Berkeley's School of Social Welfare, is named CalSWEC's executive director. The CalSWEC Acting Board of Directors (original members listed below) meet for the first time in San Diego.

The deans of the three Los Angeles area schools of social work, Leonard Schneiderman of UCLA, Rino Patti of USC, and Jim Kelly of California State University, Long Beach, establish a partnership with the L.A. County Department of Child and Family Services directed by Peter Digre to provide pre-service and in-service training for L.A. county employees. This partnership, opens the door for Title IV-E funding of university-based child welfare training in California.

1991

CalSWEC receives a five-year Interdisciplinary Child Welfare Education Grant from the Administration for Children, Families, and Youth, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the largest of eleven capacity-building grants funded that year to help reprofessionalize child welfare services in the states.

At the CalSWEC state conference in December, the draft of the core curriculum competencies is presented to a group of about 80 agency directors, deans, faculty, and staff. The group provides input for the creation of a final list of competencies and identifies regional priorities for implementation.

At the conference, the California Child Welfare Education Partnership Agreement is signed by Dr. Anita Harbert, president of the CalSWEC Board of Directors and director of the social work program at San Diego State University; Marsena Buck, president of the California Chapter of NASW and CWDA; Loren Suter, deputy director for Children and Families of the California Department of Social Services (CDSS); and Dr. Grossman. The agreement promotes a partnership among the CDSS, NASW, CalSWEC, CWDA, and Office of State Programs of the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to professionalize California's child welfare services by creating a state financial aid program for social work education based on Title IV-E of the Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act (P.L. 96-272) and incorporating the competency-based child welfare curriculum. The collaborative partners begin to talk about how practice-based research can inform social work education and improve curriculum development.

1992

CalSWEC and the state of California sign the first Title IV-E contract with the active involvement and support of Region IX of the Administration for Children and Families under the leadership of Dr. Sharon Fujii.

At the request of the California County Mental Health Directors Association, CalSWEC helps create a program in public mental health to parallel CalSWEC's child welfare project. Funding from the San Francisco Foundation and the Kaiser Foun-

dation supports a curriculum competency development process led by Dr. Norita Vlach of California State University, San Jose.

1993

Beginning in January, each of the 10 California MSW programs provides up to 16 stipends a year, with students receiving two years of support in exchange for a two-year work commitment. Priority for stipends is given to current county employees on educational leave and applicants who reflect the diverse client populations currently served by child welfare.

The state Department of Mental Health sponsors a Social Work Mental Health Education Conference, which CalSWEC helps design with the Western Interstate Consortium for Higher Education.

1994

A part-time program (three or four years) for employees of child welfare agencies is developed at eight CalSWEC schools. Under the program, for three years of support the employees who complete the MSW agree to serve the county for one additional year.

The state Mental Health Directors Association signs a partnership with CalSWEC based on the core Mental Health Competencies.

The first Title IV-E MSW program stipend recipients—a total of 98 students—graduate.

CalSWEC establishes a unique program of empirical research directed toward improvement of education and practice with priorities established by the agencies.

The CalSWEC grant becomes the single largest sponsored project at the University of California at Berkeley.

Loma Linda University and Stanislaus State become the 11th and 12th graduate schools of social work to participate in the Title IV-E MSW program.

The first empirically based curriculum is completed.

CalSWEC coordinates the Region IX conference on implementing the federal Family Support Act, hosting the gathering of over 300 participants at the Cathedral Hill Hotel in San Francisco.

1995

Distance education programs, coordinated by California State University at Long Beach, (CSULB), are initiated at California State University campuses at Humboldt and Chico to accommodate counties that are beyond the reach of existing MSW programs.

The CalSWEC-funded Child Welfare Resource Library is established at CSULB under the leadership of Janet Black.

In partnership with UC Berkeley's School of Social Welfare and the federal Children's Bureau, CalSWEC receives funding for a three-year Child Welfare Fellows Project to provide faculty development awards to two groups of tenured faculty across the county. The fellows conduct research in public child welfare agencies and improve their curriculum instruction

With the support of the federal Children's Bureau, CalSWEC hosts a national invitational conference on Title IV-E child welfare partnerships.

Dr. Nancy Dickinson of the Northern Child Welfare Training Academy of the UC Davis Extension succeeds Dr. Grossman as executive director of CalSWEC.

The Partnership Newsletter, a Children's Bureau funded publication, is contracted to CalSWEC.

1996

CalSWEC contracts with CDSS to help develop, implement, and support five regional child welfare training academies throughout the state to provide inservice training and education for public child welfare agency staff, as well as to support and increase staff retention in California's 58 counties. The first regional academy that CalSWEC subcontracts with, the Public Child Welfare Training Academy, Southern Region, begins operation. It is a joint venture of San Diego State University, CSU San Bernardino, and Imperial, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego Counties.

CalSWEC hosts the first faculty development institute in partnership with the UC Berkeley School of Social Welfare and the federal Children's Bureau. The three-year Child Welfare Fellows Project provides faculty development awards to tenured faculty across the country so they can conduct research at their local public social services agencies and use this to improve their schools' curriculum and instruction. The first cohort involves 10 fellows.

1997

The Central California Public Social Services Training Academy begins operation. With its main office at California State University, Fresno, the academy serves Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Stanislaus, Tulare, and Ventura Counties.

CalSWEC hosts the second faculty development institute involving 14 Child Welfare Fellows.

With funding from the federal Children's Bureau, CalSWEC begins a three-year project to develop and evaluate curriculum to train professionals in domestic violence, substance abuse, foster care, mental health programs, and the legal system to develop collaborative skills in concurrent planning (a California legislative mandate to improve the stability and legal permanence of children) for children and families in the child welfare system.

1998

The first cohort of the distance education students graduates.

CSU, Los Angeles, becomes the 13th graduate school of social work during academic year 1998–1999.

Under the leadership of CSU, Long Beach, new distance education programs are implemented to serve the Bakersfield and mid-Southern coastal (California State University-Channel Islands) areas.

The Bay Area Academy begins operation. It serves Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, and Sonoma Counties.

The First National Human Services Training Evaluation Symposium is held to discuss issues related to training evaluation in the human services. It is co-sponsored by CalSWEC, the National Staff Development and Training Association of American Public Human Services Association, and the American Humane Association.

CalSWEC hosts the third faculty development institute involving all 24 Child Welfare Fellows.

Dr. Sherrill Clark succeeds Dr. Dickinson as executive director of CalSWEC.

1999

CalSWEC receives a grant from the CDSS to develop a plan for the implementation of a standardized curriculum that all child welfare workers would have to complete successfully before assuming an independent caseload.

New space is allocated for CalSWEC, allowing for expansion of its quarters at UC Berkeley's School of Social Welfare.

The American Indian Graduate Recruitment Project for Title IV-E students moves to CSU, Stanislaus.

CalSWEC co-sponsors the Second National Human Services Training Evaluation Symposium.

CalSWEC's Board of Directors meets to revise its mission statement so it reflects a reaffirmation of the organization's original commitment to education for the public human services in California.

2000

CalSWEC celebrates its 10-year anniversary.

CSU Bakersfield becomes the 14th graduate school of social work during academic year 1998–1999.

CalSWEC's Acting Board of Directors, 1990

Dr. Ronald P. Boltz, Director
Division of Social Work
California State University, Sacramento

Ms. Marsena Buck, President
National Association of Social Workers, California Chapter

Dr. Benjamin Cuellar, Director
Department of Social Work Education
California State University, Fresno

Mr. John Cullen (Alternate), Director
Merced City Human Services Agency

Ms. Fritzie Davis, Director
El Nido Family Services

Dr. Ismael Dieppa, Dean
School of Social Work
San Jose State University

Dr. Anita Harbert, Director
School of Social Work
San Diego State University

Mr. Dennis Hart, Director
Sacramento County Social Welfare Department

Dr. Melvin Hawkins, Interim Director
Department of Social Work
California State University, San Bernardino

Dr. Jim Kelly, Director
Department of Social Work
California State University, Long Beach

Ms. Ruth Massinga, President
Casey Family Fund
American Public Welfare Association

Ms. Linda McMahon, Director
California Department of Social Services

Mr. Edward Nathan. Executive Director
Zellerbach Family Fund

Mr. Richard O'Neil, Director
Santa Clara County Social Services Agency

Dr. Rino Patti, Dean
School of Social Work
University of Southern California

Dr. Michael Reisch, Director
Department of Social Work Education
San Francisco State University

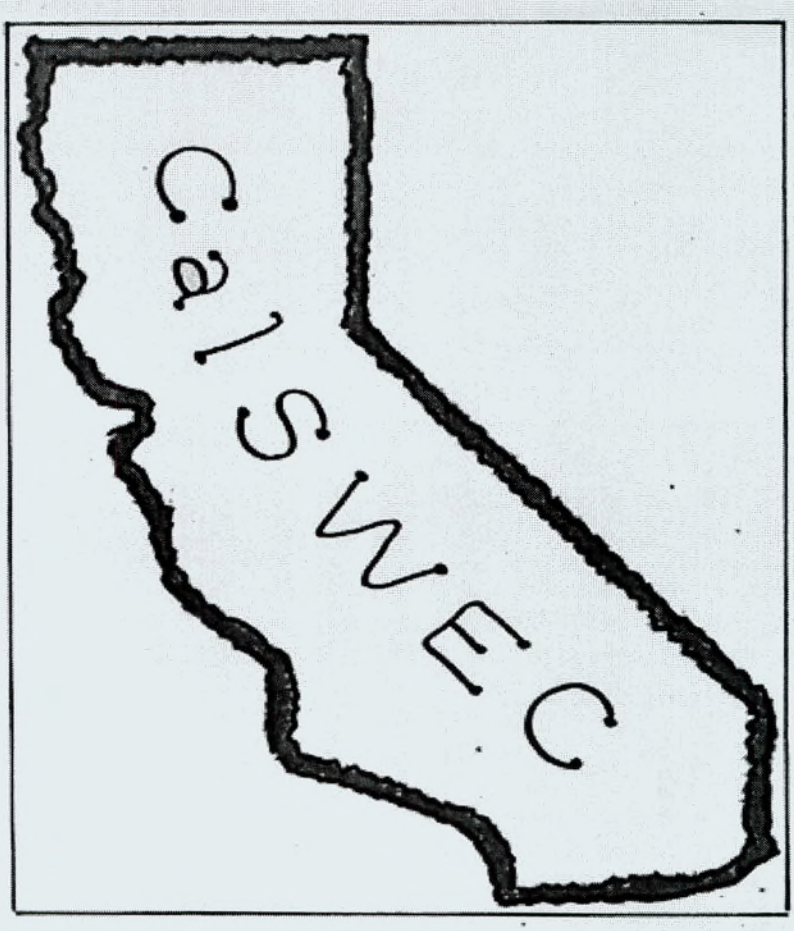
Ms. Yolanda Rinaldo, Director
Sonoma County Social Services Department

Ms. Cheryl Rutherford-Kelly, Director
Lassen County Department of Health and Human Services

Mr. Jim Rydingsword, Director
Contra Costa County Social Services Department

Dr. Leonard Schneiderman, Dean
School of Social Welfare
University of California, Los Angeles

Dr. Harry Specht, Dean
School of Social Welfare
University of California, Berkeley

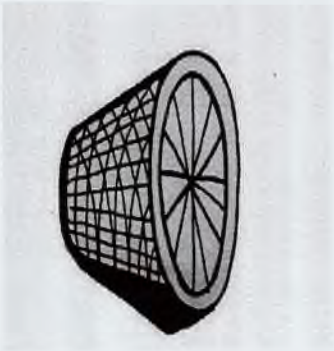


Two Paths To Title IV-E: The Road of Qualitative Research

Ruth Supranovich and Laurie Adam graduated from the San Diego State University MSW program in 1995 and 1996 respectively. They were both Title IV-E recipients and are currently employed by San Diego County Childrens' Services. During the course of their studies, they both completed qualitative research into different aspects of public child welfare at the agency where they are now employed. Prior to their graduate studies, Ms. Supranovich and Ms. Adam were colleagues in public child welfare. Their professional relationship developed in graduate school where they shared a common interest in research and an affinity for the qualitative approach as the most compatible research methodology for studying social work practice. They provided mutual support and encouragement as they worked on their theses. This narrative piece combines their reflections on their choice to work in Public Child Welfare, their involvement in the Title IV-E program, and the research experience and its relationship to social casework.

by
Ruth Supranovich, MSW
and
Laurel Adam, MSW

San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency
Childrens' Services.



IN THE BEGINNING

Ruth: When I reflect upon my choice of social work as a profession, public child welfare as a specialty, and my attraction to the qualitative approach to research, I can go back to my childhood. This would greatly please the psychoanalytic theorists among us. It was certainly not a conscious evolution, but one that, when reviewed, falls into place like a picture emerging from the turn of a kaleidoscope.

I was born in England, the daughter of two social workers. (Interestingly, I have an older sister who has absolutely no interest in social work – her narrative is another story.) My early childhood was spent in a group home setting where my parents were the "house-parents." This arrangement afforded both of them the opportunity to achieve their credentials while raising young children. I can recall from an early age trying to imagine what it would be like to have no parents, or parents who could not or would not care for me. I wept inside with pity and guilt when I left for Christmas and vacations with "my parents," while many stayed "at home" with the staff. I knew how important even the most minimal contact with the most distant of relatives was to some of my friends. And all these kids were my friends – my peers that I learned to play with, fight with, negotiate with, and laugh with. I knew back then, "There but for the grace of God go I."

When I was older, we moved into our own home, and my parents began to work more regular hours. The group home experience became a memory to be tapped into only at a much later date.

The next milestone in my professional development came in my teen years. In a moment of teenage boredom, I selected a book to read from my parents' bookshelf called Scream Quietly or the Neighbors Will Hear by Erin

Pizzey (1974). In England in the early 1970's Pizzey spearheaded the Battered Women's movement that resulted in the opening of safe houses for battered women and their children. This book contains the stories of these women and children in their own words – essays, letters, pictures, and poems. No textbook has since come close to evoking the emotions generated by this narrative work. I admit I was perhaps an emotional adolescent, but nonetheless, the impact of this book was significant. To this day, I have used my understanding of the battered women's experience gleaned from those pages when counseling women and children exposed to violence. Here began my allegiance to the personal narrative as a tool to understand and help others.

Laurie: Today I supervise a unit of adoption social workers for San Diego County. I never suspected I would have a career in social work, much less child welfare. I didn't know the field existed.

I grew up in a middle class neighborhood in the suburbs of Washington, D. C. My father was a federal government civil servant; he produced training films for the U. S. Navy. My mother was a housewife who desperately wanted to work. She compromised by working part time, often for the federal government.

We were active in our church. I participated in civil rights demonstrations, and, when I was in high school, I mentored a young boy through a settlement house in southeast Washington. One of the high points of my high school years was Martin Luther King Jr.'s, "March on Washington," which our church supported with members from local and distant congregations. Our church was integrated and diverse, but around us society struggled with the issue. When I saw my friends change loyalties from the civil rights movement to the anti-war movement, I became disillusioned with activism.

THE UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

Ruth: My undergraduate degree is in psychology at Leeds University in Northern England. In English universities, undergraduates must complete a thesis as part of their studies. This time the photographs in Kempe & Kempe's, The Battered Child (1980) inspired my research topic. I attached myself to a professor studying child abuse and neglect and we developed a study of maternal attributions. I was to compare the attributional statements of mothers who were on the Child Abuse Registry (a listing of families where child abuse or neglect was strongly suspected) with a comparison group of mothers who lived in the same neighborhood and attended the same pre-school or health clinic. It was a quantitative study in that we made a statistical analysis of the data. The mothers completed a Beck depression questionnaire and their attributional statements were coded from transcripts of interviews and interactions with their children. The children were videotaped playing with a toy house with a "disappearing ball." The hypothesis was that children learn attributions from their parents, and thus the control group children would look for the ball longer, believing they had some control over their environment.

My first experience with experimental psychology in action was both enlightening and disappointing. The toy house data was soon rejected because the house kept breaking and the ball wouldn't disappear when it was supposed to or disappeared too soon. The way the children responded to this was, in my mind, still very interesting but could not be measured. Many of the mothers in both groups were illiterate, so I read the Beck questionnaire to them. If you have ever orally completed a pen and paper questionnaire with a subject, you will know that the written responses alone lack much rich and informative data; everything from misunderstanding the words and grammar to lengthy explanations of exactly when and why they had felt a certain way in the past. The interaction segment was very significant, qualitatively, but again had to be rejected quantitatively. Many of the parents, especially those in the experimental group, failed to interact with their children at all, providing no attributional statements to code and count!

But the most significant part of the study for me was the interviews. For example, one of the control subjects very quickly asked me if the interview was confidential. She understood it was to be taped but wanted assurance that the content would not be shared with the clinic staff. This was an easy assurance to make (I thought). The mother proceeded to remove her scarf from her head to reveal fresh bloody wounds.

staff. This was an easy assurance to make (I thought). The mother proceeded to remove her scarf from her head to reveal fresh bloody wounds. She described in detail, with little emotion, how her husband had beaten her over the head with a hammer the previous night. Her story took at least an hour, as she described how she had tried to leave him repeatedly but had been thwarted by threats of death to family and pets. She described the process of complete social and financial isolation. She fantasized every night that the car pulling in the driveway was the police coming to inform her that her husband had been killed in a car crash. This story did not make it into the study, but it did make it into my head.

Laurie: In the mid-sixties I went to college in New Orleans, Louisiana. In spite of the fact that Tulane University, where I lived on campus, has a School of Social Work, I still didn't give the field much thought.

My undergraduate major was sociology with a minor in social psychology. My exposures to experimental psychology were decidedly unpleasant. Once I experienced claustrophobia in a lab filled with pigeons in cages and too many fellow students. Another time, a rather large ape threw a handful of urine at a group of which I was a part. Social psychology interested me, and I participated as an interviewer in a survey for a professor. I have no recollection of the subject of the survey, but I do recall the professor telling me I now had a skill I could put on my resume!

THE MIDDLE YEARS

Ruth: The next ten years I lived a life devoid of social work and child maltreatment. I traveled in many countries and tried many different jobs. Then I settled down in Southern California and found myself talking about the need for a career and "a meaningful job." I called the United Way to become involved with some volunteer work. I cited no area of specific interest, so they gave me contact numbers for three social service agencies. The first I called was the YWCA. I didn't even know what that stood for – it was just at the top of the list. They needed help in their Battered Women's Shelter. Fate? Coincidence? The power of the unconscious?

I far preferred my volunteer work to my day job and began to peruse the help wanted ads. With an undergraduate degree, I was qualified for a number of low-paying jobs at group homes, child abuse prevention agencies, nursing homes or working with the developmentally disabled. I naturally gravitated to the group homes, and was interviewed for two positions by one agency. To my surprise, they turned me down for the group home but offered me a job in their home-based parenting program. I was to go into the homes of families identified by Child Protective Services as needing help with parenting. I had no kids, knew nothing about parenting, and had a barely operational car. I took the job.

I did read some books and got some minimal training. The rest I learned from the families. I listened to their stories. From them, I learned about addiction and recovery, labor and childbirth, depression and mental illness, generational abuse, family dynamics, domestic violence, the impact of sexual abuse, learning disabilities, poverty, and racism. I took each client's story with me, and when talking to another mother, father or child, they might say, "It sounds like you know so much about this." I would tell them that I had heard similar stories in the past and then perhaps tell them some ways a person had told me that they had dealt with the experience. Although I didn't know it then, this was a type of qualitative research and its application in action.

Of course, it was undisciplined, unpublished, underpaid, and "paraprofessional" work. But after three years I knew, (1) My passion was working with abused and neglected children and their families, and (2) I needed a professional qualification that had a multi-dimensional approach to understanding this population.

This job brought me into close contact with Child Protective Services. I heard both the good and bad stories from clients and had some stories of my own to tell from working interactions. I was astounded to find that many CPS workers had no Master's- level education and that some openly espoused little regard for the families they served. And yet, I was aware how incredibly important these social workers were to families—how far a kind word would go and how wounded someone could be by an offhand remark or a missed visit. The Title IV-E program beckoned me.

Laurie: After college, I married and had children. We moved to San Diego. As a full time housewife and mother, I stagnated. My salvation was the Navy Relief Society. I volun-

teered, and in no time I was an "interviewer," educated by a traveling trainer from the Navy Relief Headquarters. Little did I know that I had entered the world of "welfare," Navy Relief being the Navy's own welfare system. I remember telling another volunteer that I would probably want to get an MSW eventually.

From there I got a paying job with the American Red Cross. By now it was the mid-eighties. My job title was caseworker. I took to casework immediately. It was not so different from "interviewing" Navy Relief clients. I was still working with the military and still on a Navy base. I had a feeling of accomplishment as I followed a case from the intake phone call, to the client contact, to the final disposition, which might have included financial assistance with a repayment plan. I was quickly promoted to supervisor, and I enjoyed training staff and volunteers and developing supervisory skills under the mentorship of my boss, who was a long time employee of the National Red Cross. But the local chapter was reorganizing, and my boss eventually returned to the National organization, leaving San Diego.

By now, I needed a job to support my three children and myself. A former Red Cross colleague had gone to work for the state of California. She sent job postings, which led me to believe I might qualify as a social worker for the County of San Diego. I applied, took the test, and did well. At my interview, I was asked whether I was interested in a position in Childrens' Services or in Adult and Employment Services. Since I was a mother, I figured Childrens' Services sounded good. I had no information to base a decision on; it was a roll of the dice.

I proudly told my parents about my new job. My mother had little reaction, but my father's reaction floored me: "I'm sorry some little kid has to get beat up so you can have a job!" We eventually worked out that little kids were getting "beat up" independent of my job status, and that I might actually be able to help some of them. In hindsight, I realized that my father had been an abused child. It was a different world at the beginning of the last century—he was born in 1908. He told me about an incident when he was about ten years old. The postmistress in the town where they lived asked him where he got the marks on his legs. He innocently told her that his father had beaten him with the razor strop. She commented, "Well, we'll see about that!" and my father was never beaten again. Not that the abuse stopped, but that is another story.

The County sent me to six weeks of initial training, beginning in January 1988. I absorbed the information. It was all new and totally outside my frame of reference, especially the information about incest. My bachelor's degree in sociology and classes in social psychology gave me some background, but I felt challenged and excited to be entering this field.

So I began casework again. I was one of the bachelor's level social workers with whom Ruth came in contact. Probably my biggest deficit was risk assessment; I had no concept. Fortunately, another worker took me aside and explained the basic concepts. About the same time, the Agency implemented a standardized risk assessment format.

Visits to the homes of poor people opened my eyes. I related to my clients as individuals. I was appalled by the circumstances some lived in. "Minimum standards" my supervisor said, "Alternate lifestyles." People need not live up to middle class standards; people need not provide maximum environments for their children. "Minimum health and safety standards" was the mantra.

I was radicalized by my work experiences. I identified my values. I became an activist again. I found kindred spirits in the social workers' union. I spent my work hours trying to help people build support systems. I saw the union as a support system for social workers. It is a vehicle to accomplish goals for the workers, for the clients, and for society. In conservative San Diego,this is a radical idea.

THE MSW, TITLE IV-E, AND QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Ruth: It was 1992 and the era of family preservation. This philosophy fit well with my experiences – the group home kids who desperately wanted a family, the families I had worked to keep together for the past three years, and, perhaps on a personal level, my emerging desire to have my own family. This soon became my topic for papers in graduate school. I voraciously read all the literature, and when it was time to design a research study, I began to try to isolate the variables I wanted to measure. I was never

satisfied with the simple yet doable research design. There were just too many variables to consider and I wasn't willing to eliminate any of them. I wasn't sure which ones would be important ones.

Meanwhile, in other classes we discussed the ecological approach and the "person-in-situation." This seemed more than a little incongruent with the isolation of one or two measurable variables. Here we were discussing how an individual's behavior was influenced by a myriad of factors from the intra-psychic to cultural/societal norms, while I was trying to determine which one or two factors determined a family's "success" in an Intensive Family Preservation Program (IFPP). Then, of course, I had to determine what "success" meant. "Success," in the literature, appeared to mean something in dollars; i.e., keeping kids out of foster care. What about the client's meaning of success?

An open-minded professor affiliated with the IV-E Program introduced me to qualitative literature. He also introduced me to a retired professor who was considered to be way out of the mainstream but who shared an affinity for this research approach. At this point I had a gut feeling that qualitative research was the way to go, but my grasp of the evidence to support this feeling was pretty poor. I can liken it to a CPS investigation. You interview the child whom you feel certain has been abused, but there are no visible physical injuries and the child hasn't disclosed anything. You can choose to close the case and move on, or dig around a little, contact collaterals, interview family, build rapport with the child, and maybe go back for a second or third interview. The literature and the retired professor were the beginnings of my digging and provided the proof I needed that this was a real and valid approach to research. But, I also encountered the familiar obstacles of the investigation—denial (this approach is useless and devoid of merit); minimization (this has minimal value; quantitative research is the only true scientific methodology); and circling the wagons (don't bring that type of research in here and ruin our family).

The more subtle form of resistance was that found among some faculty who generally thought qualitative research to be "cute" but not "real research." One professor in particular was a mixture of support for my project but general distrust of the methodology. In retrospect, he was challenging me intellectually in advance of my capabilities at that time. I can now appreciate the time and thought he gave to our many debates and conversations about research, the scientific method, and the study and measurement of social work practice. However, at the time I felt outgunned. He was, after all, a researcher with many years of experience with quantitative measures. I was a novice and intellectually out of my league. I could not keep up with the philosophical challenge of understanding and then debating the relative merits of the two approaches to research. But, these debates helped when it came time to face the thesis committee. By then, I was much more confident in my research and stood my ground.

Laurie: I had long dreamed of returning to college. Even prior to going to work for the County, I had taken psychology graduate-level classes in night school, but my goal was to attend school full time. Another goal, to do research, grew out of my casework experiences. It is debilitating to work forty hours a week with dysfunctional families. I set myself a goal of researching "functional" families and writing a book to tell us all how to avoid the problems and pathology I saw every day.

I wasn't sure how to return to school and still support my children. By now I had remarried, this time to a social worker who shared my values. The Title IV-E program was the answer. With my husband's salary, and my children's health insurance provided by their father, the financial assistance made it possible for my return to school. I had no health insurance for each of the four semesters of my MSW program, only the university provided health clinic. A serious accident or catastrophic illness would have been devastating. It was a chance I was willing to take.

When I returned to graduate school, I was determined that this was a first step toward a Ph.D. My decision to put together a research project and write a thesis was a result of this determination. From the day I set foot on campus for the orientation, I was looking for a research project.

I had taken statistics classes both as an undergraduate and in the part-time psychology program. I was exposed to

many research studies in both programs. I firmly believed that quantitative research had limited value in the social arena. In the field of social work, I saw a profession in search of credibility, trying to quantify the unquantifiable. I believe my attitude came from a conversation about breast-feeding I had with my mother. She had chosen to bottle feed me because assembling a bottle of formula was "so scientific." I came to believe that quantitative research was "so scientific" that something vitally important was lost in the process.

Ruth was one year ahead of me. She was performing her research, and writing and defending her thesis, while I was in my first year of the graduate program. I had worked in IFPP immediately prior to graduate school. Her project interested me because of my practical knowledge of the program, and I became fascinated by her methodology.

The history of child welfare was all the more meaningful to me, having already worked in the field. My fellow students groaned under the volume of reading required by our classes; I read compulsively, every opportunity I had. Gradually my research topic began to coalesce: African American children are over-represented in the foster care population. Why? Many more scholarly than I had already examined this topic. How could I break it down into a manageable project?

Together with a fellow student who shared my curiosity, we developed a project with two parts. I was to examine the social workers who made the decision to file petitions that removed children from their families, while she looked at the families from whom the children had been removed.

THE DETRACTORS AND THE SUPPORTERS

Ruth: While some faculty were suspicious of my chosen research methodology, nothing could prepare me for the next obstacle: the CPS researcher trapped in an unfulfilling job and eager to squash the aspirations of any young upstarts who think they can do her job. Well, this is a little mean-spirited on my behalf, but after five years, my emotional reaction to this next experience still lies not far beneath the surface.

The County Administrator in charge of the IFPP in San Diego welcomed me. This program is housed within CPS and is staffed by protective service workers. This administrator willingly shared her relative ignorance of research methodology, but asked us to work with her assistant, a Ph.D. who appeared to have some kind of research/evaluation function within the program. This assistant was quick to jump on my proposal. She saw no value in my approach to research and quickly demanded that my proposal include some quantitative measurements. I boldly tried to argue the philosophy behind my approach, while trying carefully not to malign her favored research method (it is too easy to get into the "my way is better than your way debate," and I was still a quick loser in this battle). But it was pretty pathetic – I tripped over my words, I made weak arguments, my hands were sweaty, and my voice began to tremble. This may sound like an extreme reaction, but I felt like my research proposal was facing make or break time, and it needed a better advocate than I. The conversation ended with the following interchange:

County Researcher: "What you are proposing is nothing more than journalistic pap and to call this research brings shame on those of us who consider ourselves real researchers."

Me: "Well, thank you for your time in this matter."

That was it—the end of my research; the relegation of my chosen methodology to the ranks of the National Enquirer. I was ready to abandon my thesis and begin preparing for the comprehensive exams.

Salvation came from three people. I telephoned an old college friend in England, who was a Ph.D., commanding academic respect and making a fine living as a qualitative researcher. She cast some perspective onto the interchange. After several years of qualitative research, she had heard all the insults and was ready to fire back on any attack to her research. I could hear her salivating at the chance to face off with this opponent. But calmly, she pointed out that this particular person showed little respect for a novice researcher and social worker in training. Her use of demeaning name calling was out of place in the mentor-student relationship and was "totally inappropriate." I liked this reframe and felt a little less pathetic.

Then entered the professor described above. After months of espousing the merits

of quantitative research, he was distraught that I was so readily giving up my quest. He may not have agreed with my approach, but I think that he recognized the overarching role he played as a professor in supporting my ambitions and professional development. He wanted me to follow the project through to its conclusion, rather than focussing on winning or losing the debate. He went to "talk to people."

Thirdly, I had a connection. A fellow student and friend was completing her administrative internship in the IFPP, working under the Administrator. They had developed a close working relationship, and my friend, upon hearing my plight, took it upon herself to talk with the Administrator personally about the experience I was having with her staff member.

Through some combination of the above, I was called into the Administrator's office, told not to deal with her assistant any longer, and sent out to begin my interviews.

Laurie: Perhaps my lack of detractors had to do with Ruth's experiences; I think she led the way for my project. Certainly my co-researcher and I benefited from her experiences, both on campus and in the agency.

There is a procedure in the agency for approval of research. Neither Ruth nor I were aware of this procedure. Neither were the staff members we talked to. Because I didn't know the procedure, and because no one I asked knew either, my co-researcher and I made an appointment with the Deputy Director of Childrens Services. We explained our project to her and received permission to proceed. She didn't know the actual procedure, either, but after our meeting with her, the people with the procedure contacted me. By then, approval was a formality because the boss had already approved.

CONDUCTING THE RESEARCH

Ruth: This was where the fun began. Finding willing subjects was a piece of cake after dealing with professors, administrators, and my own demons of self-doubt. Only one subject objected to being taped, but she allowed me to scribble copious notes throughout our interview. All but one invited me into their homes and into their worlds. For people with little reason to trust, they exhibited a candor and thoughtfulness that astounded me. The subjects seemed to really value that some researcher, even a student, cared enough about their opinion to ask them for it.

Meanwhile, I worked on my interview style. I was repeatedly challenged to stay in my role as researcher and not social worker. I felt the urge to turn the subject into a client and to begin some problem solving with them. My usual social work approach is fairly active, and I had to force my lips together to stop myself from leading the subject down one path or another, or filling in a silence while a thought was brewing. The rewards of this self-discipline, of becoming a qualitative researcher, were soon obvious. I didn't choose the variables. I didn't decide what was important to measure. I shut up and let the subject determine the outcome—the ultimate in client empowerment.

An intellectual grasp of my research came during data analysis. I employed the grounded theory method of data analysis. I didn't use a computer program but instead relied on the old-fashioned method of cutting up the narrative transcripts and sorting them into piles. The objective is to identify themes and patterns from the subject's responses to help answer the research question. My research question was fairly broad. I wanted to know how the clients perceived the services and outcome of their involvement with the IFPP. To answer this question, I had piles of small cuttings of paper strewn across my living room floor. I would title and retitle these piles, as new themes and patterns emerged. This process is both extremely tedious and exciting at the same time.

The kaleidoscope image comes to mind again. Day by day, the piles would alter with the emergence of a new concept or theme. Stepping back from the process was very important. Some of the greatest "ah-ha" moments came when I was walking the dogs or lying in the bath. I got used to carrying a paper and pen with me everywhere, in case I got a flash of brilliance that I had to bring back to the data to check out. I had to constantly encourage myself to look at the bigger picture and free myself of my own notions and categories of thoughts—to allow the subjects' voices to take control.

Laurie: My co-researcher and I had two subject populations to interview: social workers were

my subjects and clients were hers. Problems developed immediately. My assumption was that Monday mornings would be the best time to observe my subjects. My original plan was to observe social workers who had just received a new case, to watch them review the referral, and to accompany them into the field to observe their interviews with the child and with the parents. Popular wisdom in the agency is that Monday mornings are when there are many cases to be assigned. My experience didn't bear that out. Quickly, my project evolved into interviews with the social workers, rather than observations. We also realized the difficulty of matching the social workers and the specific families they were working with for research purposes, so my co-researcher developed a different way to identify families for her project.

Gathering the data was fascinating. Typing the interviews was grueling. Finding the meaning was a wonderful experience. We invited Ruth to assist us with the evaluation of the data. We created a committee of subject matter experts: It included social workers, supervisors, and an administrator from the agency. Members of the committee were an African American, a Vietnamese immigrant, and a European immigrant (Ruth). My co-researcher is an African immigrant, and I am a European American.

By the time I was writing the thesis, I discovered there were computer programs that exist to synthesize qualitative data. Our committee functioned as a computer program, helping us evaluate the meaning in our data. It also became a safe place to discuss race and racism in our lives.

THE AUDIT

Ruth: As much as I strove to be neutral and hear the subject, I was acutely aware that the major criticism of qualitative research is its lack of objectivity. I employed an informal audit by discussing my data and the data analysis process with fellow students. Laurie was among those I called upon as an expert in the IFPP and child welfare, and for her burgeoning interest in my research methodology. I also asked the retired professor to review some complete narratives to provide feedback as to my interview technique and attempts at objectivity. His feedback was positive, although the room for improvement was duly noted. The comment I most remember was his observation that during interviews I began to employ the subject's own speech patterns and vocabulary. While I was concerned that I was speaking too much or might appear phony, he felt that I maintained the narrative as the client's, sharing their words and story rather than imposing my own. With this reassurance I was ready to face the committee.

Laurie: Again, Ruth assisted me in this aspect of my research. She helped me get in touch with the retired professor who was a supporter of qualitative research. I contacted him and he met with me twice to review my research. He reviewed my final draft and pronounced it fine.

THE DEFENSE

Ruth: I was surprised to find that I was less nervous when facing the thesis committee to present my defense than I was with the county researcher many months before. This was to be, for the time being, the last defense. I had been challenged throughout the process, and experience had built confidence. I can liken it to my first child abuse investigation. Investigating social workers may recall how nervous they felt the first time they knocked on the door of an unknown family to inform them of abuse allegations. After a few months, you don't even hesitate as you walk up the driveway, clipboard in hand, and pound on another unsuspecting family's door. I had confidence in my skills as well as some familiarity with what I would face that made for a bearable and at times enjoyable experience. I now had the skills to deal with the family dynamics of the thesis committee. Neither denial nor hostility could provoke panic or withdrawal. I could calmly present my case, align with committee members as needed without losing ground, and leave the room knowing that I had made my mark.

Laurie: Two of the three members of my faculty thesis committee were also on Ruth's committee. I hadn't realized that when I assembled the committee, but it was fortunate for me. The committee was receptive to the methodology. I prepared a presentation for them, complete with overheads. Perhaps because I had returned to school in my mid-forties and in mid-career, I was not intimidated by my committee.

I considered them peers and recognized that I was the subject matter expert as far as the agency was concerned. This is not to say that the defense was not an emotional experience; I was very nervous. But I was confident as well, and no challenges were issued that I could not meet.

BACK TO THE WORKPLACE

Ruth: Within a month or so, I was knocking on the door of a family to investigate child abuse for the first time. Before many months, I was doing this for the hundredth time. I spent a year and a half doing investigations and court intervention. From there I went to family reunification services for a couple of years. For the past year or more, I have been assigned to the Office of the Ombudsman. This current assignment suits my appreciation of the client's perspective. I frequently need to employ a mixture of social work and researcher skills. I am not the case manager and initially had to fight this urge in myself—a battle I had fought before. I have to strive for neutrality, even when I feel aligned to the social worker or feel horrified by the client's allegations. I have to remember not to dismiss a client's concerns because I am soon aware of a debilitating mental health condition or personality disorder. The saying that "Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean they're not talking about you," comes to mind – it is very often the disturbed clients who are the most difficult to serve, press the most buttons, and are the neediest. A neutral source to check out their perceptions of the situation versus reality is essential. And even when reality clashes diametrically with their perception, I try never to lose respect for their perception and challenge it only in the gentlest manner.

Laurie: Because I was a full time employee when I started school, I worked in the agency during semester breaks and summer vacation. I'm not sure the agency realized that my return at graduation was a permanent one. Title IV-E was still relatively new, and not all the administrators seemed to be aware of it. However, I received a call and discussed options with one of the section chiefs. Given the options, I chose placement in an intake unit. This was an area of the agency in which I had never worked. In addition, the unit was a specialty unit; cases assigned were reports of child abuse and neglect of medically fragile children. As things developed, many of the cases were of mentally ill teens who were classified as "medically fragile" according to agency criteria, and I did have experience managing cases of children in group home settings.

I had felt from the first semester break that my casework practice had been enhanced by my experiences in graduate school. My first semester practice class taught me to listen to clients at various levels, and that new skill was very helpful. The policy classes gave me a broader perspective of the context within which I practiced casework. However, the research experience may have influenced me most when I returned to work full time. I was now performing the same tasks as the social workers who were the subjects of my research. Because I had spent so much time and energy devoted to the issues of race, culture, and ethnicity, I was very aware of these issues as they unfolded in my cases.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, THE ROLE OF TITLE IV-E, AND THE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Ruth: Looking back on our beginnings, a combination of life experiences and a dose of serendipity, led Laurie and me to social work in public child welfare. My early childhood equipped me with the humility to know that, had life circumstances been different for me, I could easily be the one in need of help. I remember this with every client I meet. I tap into this when I deal with the most horrendous abuse in order to relate to the child and the parent. That parent could have been my playmate – could have been me. But compassion and empathy, while essential, are not enough. My graduate education provided the discipline, tools, and skill to use this emotion more effectively to help clients.

I don't want to present the MSW or Title IV-E program as the savior of public child welfare. There are many non-graduates who provide excellent service with

passion, sincerity, and great technique. They are the "naturals." And there continue to be those in the field motivated by their own need for power and authority, who seem to care little for the families they are assigned to serve. These folks are in most need of the discipline, but are least likely to avail themselves of the opportunity. And there are those, like Laurie and me, who found an educational experience that enabled us to hone our skills, increase our understanding of social work practice and public child welfare, and stimulate our intellect.

Specifically, from the Title IV-E program, I was introduced to the historical perspective and the societal values that have shaped public child welfare today. This perspective also helps me understand better the changes that continue to occur – for example the swing from Family Preservation only seven years ago, to the emphasis on permanency planning and adoption of today.

The graduate school emphasis on advanced clinical skills was extremely relevant. At times, it was difficult to fit the instructor's experiences in private practice with the work of a CPS social worker. Much of this came later for me, as I pursued my LCSW and supervised student interns. One lecturer, who also has a private practice, was able to make the connection for me when she stated, "Every time you interact with your client it is a clinical interaction." This is so true. The meaning clients attached to the interaction is extremely clinical – they shared this much with me during the research. The investigating interview, the brief exchange in the Juvenile Court hallway, transporting a mother to an NA meeting or a child to a sibling visit, a phone call to schedule an appointment – all are opportunities for clinical intervention and all such interactions should be treated as clinical interactions. Once I grasped this, I was able to better appreciate the value of the clinical practice classes.

A particular clinical phenomenon that is too frequently overlooked in this field is that of transference and countertransference. As a graduate intern, I remember struggling with the identification of this process. After only a year or two in the field, the issue was extremely apparent. The relegation of this clinical phenomena to the therapist's office is absurd – those of us going into people's homes and environments every day are much more exposed to both the pitfalls and the therapeutic opportunities that transference and countertransference can pose. I will credit my involvement with Title IV-E students, both as a field instructor and as an occasional presenter of seminars, with my continued focus on the refinement and understanding of the role of clinical social work in the public child welfare arena.

I remain interested in research and hope one day to become more involved in the research and evaluation of child welfare services. My attraction to qualitative research is not exclusive, and I greatly value the role of quantitative studies in the field. I would like to see more proactive research directing policy and practice, rather than the common scenario of implementing legislation first and studying the issue later. The Multi-Ethnic Placement Act is a prime example – the research as it stands can be read either way depending on one's position on the issue. I would personally feel much better about this legislation if some more solid research were the foundation for the reform.

I would strongly urge any graduate student to consider a research thesis over the comprehensive exams. He or she will have ample opportunity to make time-limited case analyses, but few opportunities to become familiar with the research process. A more research savvy student body may lead to a more research savvy child welfare community. And maybe, just maybe, a Title IV-E program for the doctoral student?

Laurie: It was less than a year after I received my MSW that I was promoted to supervisor. I had sought out the promotion, but I left casework with some regrets. In fact, as a supervisor, I occasionally assign myself a case to keep aware of the challenges facing the staff I supervise.

I did not pursue licensure, and since my promotion I have taken an interest in management. This is quite a surprise for a union activist! I feel quite comfortable in the role of supervisor, and my style of supervision has been well received by the staff I have supervised, as well as my chiefs.

At first opportunity, I became a field instructor for SDSU. I feel a responsibility to the profession and to the agency. I no longer feel a burning desire to pursue a doctorate; my niche may

be in management.

My research experience has retreated to the background, along with my goal of writing a book. I sometimes pull out a copy of my thesis when supervising students and encourage them to pursue a research project if they are interested. I now know whom to contact to get a project in the agency approved.

I might have been promoted to supervisor without the return to graduate school, and I might have climbed the bureaucratic ladder without an MSW. The experience of returning to school, devoting my full attention to my education, and the research project and thesis writing vitally enriched my understanding of child welfare and social work practice.

I join with Ruth in recommending that Title IV-E be expanded to include doctoral students. We are in need of an organized evaluation of child welfare practice to guide policy and procedures at the local, state, and national levels.

□

References

Adam, L. (1996). African-Americans' entry into foster care: social workers' decision-making process. Unpublished master's thesis, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA.

Kempe, R.S., & Kempe, C.H. (1980). The battered child. London:Open Books.

Pizzey, E. (1974). Scream quietly or the neighbours will hear. Middlesex:Penguin Books.

Stratton, P. & Swaffer, R. (1988). Maternal causal beliefs for abused and handicapped children. Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology 6, 201-216.

Supranovich, R. (1995). A qualitative analysis of an intensive family preservation-program: client perception of services and outcome. Unpublished master's thesis, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA.

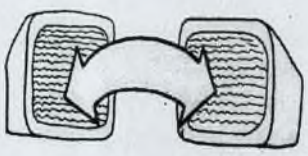
A Journey Into the Future: MSW Distance Education in California

The authors reflect on many of the monumental tasks which went into the collaborative creation of a successful MSW Distance Education Program involving California State University Campuses.

by
Janet Black, MSW
and
Barbara Cohen, MSW

Janet Black, Professor Emeritus, Department of Social Work, California State University, Long Beach.

Barbara Cohen, Associate Professor, Director of Field Education, Department of Social Work, California State University, Long Beach.



Prologue

The plane is just touching down at Los Angeles International Airport, ending a journey of three years, many thousands of miles, innumerable moments of anguish, uncertainty and excitement, and culminating in two graduation ceremonies in the northern part of our state in the last three days. Our minds are a bit frazzled.....we can only ask ourselves, "How did we ever manage to get ourselves involved in this monumental effort and was it worth it?"

We began our journey into distance education with some fear and trepidation, and with more uncertainty than should be allowed in any activity. We represent faculty members in a large and very diverse Department of Social Work, housed in a public university in Southern California, and have each played an active role in the development and implementation of the Distance Education Program at CSULB. Let us take you on some of the most exciting and exasperating days of the journey so you too can think about taking the quantum leap into what will most likely be a common (rather than out of the ordinary) educational arena in the future.

The Journey Begins

Why did we start this Distance Education Program anyway?

Thinking back, it's hard to remember exactly at what point all of this distance education discussion really began and at what point it took shape. We went through a variety of strategy planning sessions, meetings with many different groups of people, many disagreements about form and substance, and ultimately, agreement and the start-up of the program itself. The main thrust and direction for undertaking the project was the result of a very dynamic and visionary leader of the Department of Social Work at the time, someone who knew about social work education efforts in distance education projects throughout the country and strongly believed that the faculty at CSU LB was the right group to bring the effort to the West Coast. California State University, Long Beach, is part of a statewide network of 21 educational institutions attempting to serve a geographically large state. The major population centers throughout the state have a state university in their communities, but only half of them offer the MSW degree. Many rural communities in the central and northern part of the state have no MSW degree program in reasonable

geographic proximity, and social services in these communities are sorely in need of a professionally trained workforce.

An additional impetus for the development and implementation of a distance education MSW program came primarily from concerns that the public and private social service agencies throughout California were increasingly unable to recruit and retain masters-level social workers to work with disadvantaged populations, especially children, minorities, and those on public assistance. The California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC) indicated that the lack of professionals in many human services departments in California "precludes" many agencies from meeting accepted standards for working with seriously abused and mentally ill clients. In their 1994 study of California's smallest county child welfare departments, which are primarily located in northern California, these findings were underscored, with employee statistics indicating that out of 800 social work classified positions identified by the survey, only 11 MSW's were currently employed by the counties, with 8 of these assigned to child welfare services.

Faculty at CSULB had for a number of years been equally concerned with the poor retention of MSW trained social workers in the local county offices, and we saw the plight of Northern California counties as similar to our own. The CalSWEC program, which began the Title IV-E Program throughout the state in 1990, had creatively acted upon their concerns in this area. Their mission was to "increase the numbers and improve the preparation of social workers for working in the public social services." The Title IV-E Program had made a significant difference in the local county hiring and retention practices—perhaps they could provide the same impetus to our northern county partners.

The two university sites that became a part of the Distance Education program were equally concerned about the training and development of social workers, particularly at the MSW level. Both sites had high quality, CSWE-accredited BASW programs but were keenly interested in the MSW level educational opportunities becoming available to their student population. Both sites indicated that many non-traditional students were interested in completing an MSW degree, but heavy work and family responsibilities made it impossible for them to complete a traditional, full-time, two-year program. Geographical distance also precluded these students from the extensive travel necessary to attend any of the existing MSW programs in the state.

All of these factors made a strong argument for a part-time distance education program as the best vehicle to provide the educational training and experiences that would help meet both documented community social service agency need and demonstrated student interest.

CalSWEC was a willing and very innovative partner in the effort from the first proposal of the program, and in fact, was a primary stabilizer in the planning and implementation efforts. Their mission was firmly incorporated into the program itself and, as a primary funder of the program, provided invaluable financial and personnel resources that made the program come to life.

How many proposal reports do we have to write, and to how many different constituency groups?

Every day it seemed as if we were preparing another set of statistics, rationale statements, funding proposals, and program drafts. We thought we knew a great deal about collaboration, but this effort brought that word to the very essence of its meaning. Collaboration always involves struggles with turf, control, and power and requires expertise in relationship building and development. Even though all of the partners shared the same ultimate goal for the program, many perspectives were identified, and there was a great deal of jockeying for position, re-writing of documents, and fine-tuning the final product to meet everyone's wants and needs. CalSWEC, the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE), CSULB University College and Extension Services, University administration at CSULB, CSU Humboldt and CSU Chico, Department of Social Work Faculty at CSU Humboldt, CSU Chico and of course, CSU Long Beach, Child Welfare agencies of Butte, Humboldt, Del Norte, Siskiyou and Glenn counties, were just a few of the players in this situation. After we wrote multiple documents and sent out copies for review by the collaborators, every reviewer had suggestions to add and re-write, and it seemed to go

on and on.

Completing the commitment for funding support was all important. Discussions with CalSWEC moved forward in a positive and productive manner. Their frequent interaction with child welfare administrators throughout the state, and particularly with The Association of Small Counties that would specifically be impacted by this proposal, had cemented the groundwork for great support and enthusiasm. The submitted budget was approved and we had a funding commitment in hand. Next, we waited for CSWE and the approval of our Proposal for an Alternative Program.

Finally, we were approved to move forward with the program, and in fact we would begin the first courses in the Fall, just a few short months away from our receipt of the approval letter.

So.....how do we do this thing called Distance Education?

Within a few days of receiving the approval, we were off and running. Preparations began in earnest for the recruitment and admission of appropriate students at both of the distance sites. That task of course, fell to the Director of Admissions at CSULB who was already in the midst of admitting the entire MSW and BASW class at Long Beach. This included reviewing initial applicant folders and assigning them to faculty for paper review and ranking, tabulating faculty reviews, interviewing approximately 400 applicants in person or by phone, and admitting the students to the various full-time and part-time models at Long Beach. This individual took on the additional challenge (I think the idea of having to do this process only one time for the three-year cohort was a help in taking on the added work), and was soon assigning the distance applicant folders to faculty for review. She creatively utilized the technology for "over the television set" admission interviews, and had a class in place ready to begin the academic year.

Preparation of the technology at each of the sites was in full force. Media Technologists at each of the sites worked together to fine-tune the systems and to work out as many of the glitches as possible before the first class session. Of course they were not always successful, and some technical difficulties presented themselves throughout many of the class sessions during the first year. By years two and three, necessary upgrades and refinements had been made and the system worked much more consistently. An additional necessity was having a contingency plan in place for each class session in case the technology did not work correctly. Imagine your shock and surprise as you move through your lecture, showing overheads and giving important information, only to find out that one of the sites had lost its video or audio capability somewhere during the class period.

Efforts were also underway to hire a Site Coordinator at each of the distance sites. The Assistant Director for Graduate and Undergraduate Coordination at CSULB took on Distance Education Program Coordination as another responsibility in her job description. She really pulled things together and kept the glue on all the edges throughout the three years. Site Coordinators at Humboldt and Chico came on board and numerous telephone conversations ensued as last minute preparations were completed for opening day.

The first day of the first class was an amazing experience. An hour before the class was to begin, people began gathering. Students were anxiously awaiting the "real beginning" to their MSW experience, both at the two distance sites and at the home classroom in Long Beach. The Site Coordinators were ready to coordinate activities and assist with in-class teaching exercises as needed, and the faculty were ready to face the television sets. There were, of course, several people to offer congratulations and welcome—actually there was little teaching time that first morning class session as so much time was taken to recognize all of the involved participants and supporters and to be sure that everyone felt acknowledged and appreciated.

The curriculum for the MSW program is a solid series of foundation and specialization courses, building upon one another in a logical sequence. The easiest thing about developing the distance education model probably was the curriculum; it was already well established, course outlines were on file, texts for the fall semester at CSULB had already been ordered. We asked, "couldn't we just transform everything as is for our distance classes? If so, it will be very little extra work."

Our approved proposal outlined the courses which had

been selected to be taught over the technology and which would be taught by in-person faculty at the local sites. The task was to identify prospective faculty that were willing to teach over the technology, were willing to invest extra time and energy to adapt their normal teaching style to technological requirements, had taught the class before so were familiar with the content (we felt they would be more at ease were this the case), and for on-site faculty, to make this identification in the local communities. Talk about a challenge!

The Field Education department was also exceptionally well organized and established. We strongly supported the notion that it was critical to maintain all aspects of the existing field work model, regardless of the location in which the program was offered. This philosophy assured that the integrity of the field education sequence was maintained, and that decisions were not made based on individual student situations that would compromise the overall integrity of educational design. For the most part, our experience with distance education was that our field work model was able to be transported in its entirety and that exactly the same expectations, guidelines, policies, and procedures were followed at all three sites. Despite student statements that we needed to design a field work program particular to their individual and community needs, and that these needs were radically different from the more urban communities and students at CSULB, we found that our existing program was able to meet the needs equally well regardless of the urban or rural environment. Scarcity of qualified field instructors and agencies was a more significant issue in the smaller, rural areas; but the basic experiences to which students would be exposed, the basic concepts and skills that students needed to learn about and develop competency in, and common difficulties encountered by students in field work placements remained astonishingly similar in all three locations (Cohen & Black, 1998).

With our 20 years of combined experience in field education and our work with thousands of BASW-and-MSW level students, we thought we had heard almost all of the possible scenarios about field education. Some interesting new situations quickly presented themselves which had us calling on all of our problem-solving and strategy building skills to deal with them efficiently and effectively. We found that many of the MSW professionals worked for multiple agencies, or had worked for many of the agencies in the community over past years. Additionally, since 75% of the students in the distance education cohorts were employed by social service agencies they knew both personally and professionally most of the potential field instructors.

Boundary issues and assuring that each student had two different and educationally focused field work placements presented quite a challenge. In the two summers of the three-year program, students completed their field work placements. The preparation for this task was more time consuming than we had ever imagined. We both can recall sitting at the computers in our offices, frantically writing letters to the various agencies we would be using, making out the letters for student placement assignments in the first year, confirming with the agencies that the placements had been made, and then doing an even more complex process for the second summer when students had the opportunity to interview at two agencies for their placement. While we used the same forms and procedures, we tried to tailor all of the paperwork to specifically identify each of the sites and to personalize the process as much as possible. The Site Coordinators were working hand in hand with us, but were new to the arena of administering and coordinating a field education program, so they were learning along with the students.

Together we struggled with all the additional programs that field coordinators provide both field instructors and students. This included orientations for students about the placement process; orientations for both groups to prepare them for their first field experience; ongoing field instructor training; and ultimately an appreciation day. Being our first distance field experience, the two of us came to the conclusion that our programs would need to be conducted face to face. Field instructors needed to know who we were, and students needed to meet us. This, therefore, would not be done via the technology. Thus, plans were made for us to travel to the sites, incurring considerable expense and enormous blocks of time. It required multiple visits as we

scheduled each of these events.

The trips were very successful as we were able to recreate what we traditionally did at the host program in Long Beach. One adaptation we made was possible as there was clearly a much smaller group at each site. Instead of holding separate functions for students and field instructors, we combined the two and while one of us prepared the field instructors, the other provided the students with the material we consider essential before entering the field. At lunch we had them meet, begin the process of developing a relationship, and spend time working together on some appropriate issues facing both of them. Our field instructor training was limited to the orientation and one session during the year, again requiring a visit to each site. As a result, we were kept very busy all year handling questions and concerns on the phone.

While planning for the second cohort three years later, we were asked, "What does it say about distance technology if it is good enough for classes but not for preparing students for field!" This was an eye-opener. We quickly realized that having been intimidated by cameras and lights, we had convinced ourselves to do programs live to avoid using the technology.

An amazing amount of time was spent handling administrative details. We had done all of the work to identify and hire the local faculty at the two sites, but who imagined it would take so many steps to get them signed up with the university. As the first summer period, which would involve a field work placement and faculty field seminar instructors, approached, we began hearing from the newly hired "faculty" that they had not received their contracts. Calls to the university presented us with the response that the new employees had not come to campus to check in, show their personal identification, and be processed with faculty contracts and pay arrangements so, of course, they could not expect to be paid. Imagine their surprise when we reminded them that these individual did not live just down the road, but 600 miles away. With some fancy footwork, we were able to get things arranged, and contracts and paychecks did finally arrive.

Trying to coordinate library access for all three sites was another challenge. All of the classes offered under the distance program were scheduled on Saturday. This allowed the students do be involved in their on-going employment experiences during the week, with their Saturdays reserved for two classes (three classes during the summer months when Field Work and Field Work Seminar were also offered). These distant campuses had limited library hours on the weekend, which included some Saturday hours, but usually only from 8 AM - 5 PM, exactly the same hours the students were in class. Lots of discussion and consultation with library specialists at each site resulted in adjustment of library hours to offer some access to students.

What have we learned from our first experience?

The first and most important lesson of the experience was the necessity of planning ahead. How many times do you find faculty who prepare their lecture two to three weeks in advance of the presentation date and have all of the handouts, overheads, and discussion questions ready for duplication and distribution? Add to this formula the importance of having a contingency plan (i.e. a video tape or in-class discussion topics) ready for each class session in case of technical failure. Our experience helped us learn the importance of not only having all of these tasks completed well in advance of the scheduled class meeting time, but sending forward by mail (at least one to two weeks ahead of time) copies of all of the handouts, in-class exercises, etc. so that the Site Coordinator could review them, consult with the faculty member as necessary, and feel prepared to assist in the distribution and explanation of materials to the distant site students. The panic phone call from the Site Coordinator indicating none of the class materials had arrived by the scheduled Saturday morning class struck terror in the heart of us all.

A second critical lesson learned had to do with the necessity of frequent and regular communication! The Site Coordinators needed to know everything that was happening with the programs' logistics, plans and administrative issues. How quickly we became aware of the convenience of proximity as we moved forward in this effort. Since the

Site Coordinators also worked at other jobs during the week, they were available only on weekday evenings, and they were only at the distance site on Saturday (class day), so we couldn't leave them a phone message or fax something to them there. Evening phone calls and a busy fax line to their homes became the main method of communication. The CSULB Coordinator instituted a weekly information and support session. Everyone found it immensely helpful to use the scheduled time to update each other on current issues and upcoming events or deadlines.

A purposeful and planned orientation for Site Coordinators was implemented for the next distance education cohort. All of the Site Coordinators came together for a two-day conference at CSULB as the new three-year program began, providing information about our curriculum, sequenced offerings for the students, policies and procedures guiding the administration of the MSW program, and most importantly, an opportunity to brainstorm about potential problem issues and learn from our first years of experience. Administrative Faculty at the host university have honed their assessment skills to be able to ask the right questions when a situation arises and to be able to provide consultation, intervention strategies, and helpful feedback to the Site Coordinators when an action plan is necessary.

Preparation and orientation of faculty teaching over the technology was an important consideration, and something that we did not do as well as we might have liked during the first experience. We essentially expected faculty to be able to teach their content area over the technology just as they did in an on-site classroom. We didn't provide enough support to faculty to begin to deal with the nuances of teaching in this manner, the special challenges to developing cohesion between sites and engaging students at a distance, or the administrative demands and coordination activities that seemed to fall to the classroom instructor. These issues have most certainly been looked at, and orientation and training to faculty teaching in the program have been much improved in the new cohort.

Orientation and on-going training for Field Instructors and additional student information about field work are critical to the success of a distance education program. This year, we took the very bold step of providing these activities via the technology. Finding a room that could hold the 150 students starting field in Long Beach and being linked up to four sites simultaneously was a monumental undertaking. After weeks of meetings, discussions, and communications between the sites, the technology experts, and our field faculty, we were almost successful! We were able to hook up with three sites and video the event which was then sent to the fourth site as they were unable to access the technology on that particular date. Seeing oneself on the screen was indeed a daunting experience, but we quickly got used to it and were able to focus on the critical information we were presenting.

Following this, two of the field faculty were brave enough to volunteer to provide the field instructor training via the technology during the year. After discussion as to what was the best color to wear, they have become accustomed to the cameras and screen and it has been a less stressful year as the field instructors are clearly better prepared.

One of our really wise decisions in the first cohort was to travel to the two sites to provide a field instructors' luncheon to acknowledge their efforts with our students. It was very evident that the field instructors as well as the site coordinators were appreciative of the effort made to recognize the field instructors. An opportunity was made available to allow each of them to share their perceptions of the program. This elicited some very valuable ideas, many of which we were able to incorporate into our second cohort.

Of all the trips we made, and there were many, this is the one we will repeat this year. Saying thank you to the field instructors' and the site coordinators really does need to be face to face. Plane reservations will be made and lunches scheduled for this next round.

Developing and maintaining a presence in the communities involved in our distance education programming is a gradual process that will continue into the future years. We have interacted with the educational community, the social service community, and the professional community on a number of levels. This process is a true collaboration, in which it is important to involve all of the participants in active planning and

evaluation and to be able to be open to change and different perspectives. The host university is a visitor and guest in the distant communities, and we must continue to provide a program that is responsive to the needs of the individual communities, as well as to social work education as a whole.

A final lesson learned is the importance of maintaining integrity in highly publicized circumstances. This distance education program was highly visible, at both the home institution and the distance sites, as well as throughout the social work education community. This high visibility, while of great benefit, also put the program, the students themselves, and the evaluation component in an interesting position. Under such close scrutiny, it is easy for boundaries to become blurred and decision-making structures to become dysfunctional if there is too much interference, second guessing or contradiction of decisions and policies. This level of visibility also increases the pressure for total success and makes it exceedingly difficult to identify and work toward a resolution of a difficult performance situation. Adherence to departmental policies, procedures, and guidelines consistently at each of the sites is critical to the effective development and administration of the program.

We strongly believe that our distance education program and CalSWEC support have had a positive impact on the public child welfare sector within all of the counties involved in the project. It has validated our early assumption that graduate social workers would prove to be a valued and sought after addition to health and human service agencies. In both of the counties where the university sites are located, the County Department of Social Services is the largest employer of human services personnel. A number of the students were hired to work in Child Welfare services even prior to their MSW graduation. Clearly, the goal of increasing the pool of professionally trained, MSW-level child welfare workers was achieved in the central and northern areas of the state. Equally important, we have had a tremendous impact on the social work education community, providing a model for part-time MSW education utilizing distance technology. Rigorous and extensive research activities throughout the project as reported by Potts & Hagan (2000) yielded outcomes similar to those observed in CSULB's on-campus program in terms of grades, course evaluations, field instructor ratings, and five of nine aspects of overall program quality. Potts & Hagan provide important recommendations for social work educators to address, as future distance education efforts are made across the country.

The Journey's End or The Continuous Loop to Begin the Journey Again?

At CSULB, many things have changed since the implementation and completion of the first cohort of students in our Distance Education Program. One of the authors has retired from the university, and the other has moved into the Director of Field Education position in the department. The department has undertaken another three-year commitment of Distance Education offerings—this time to four campuses throughout the state. This new effort has been able to build upon the lessons learned from the past and from some of the changes that were made in the administration and implementation of the Distance Education program this round. Perhaps the answers to some of the questions we have posed for you helped us come to the decision to again move forward—from a distance—and attempt to make a further difference in professional social services and child welfare programs.

Some things have remained the same. The amount of time and energy it takes to nurture and maintain a Distance Education program is phenomenal. The current director of field is now feeling as if she has a telephone attached to her ear at all times; not only does she administer the Field Education program at CSULB with 500 BASW and MSW students, but she also has an additional 80 students at site locations in Bakersfield, Ventura, Chico, and Humboldt to keep her awake at nights. The faculty who are teaching in the program don't have a live audience of students at CSULB while they are teaching over the technology, but still do have to build cohesion and effective learning strategies with students at two sites, plan well in advance of every lecture, and visit sites several times each semester. The four Site Coordinators are filling multiple roles during

their interactions with their students, their local university faculty and administrators, CSULB Department of Social Work faculty and administrators; completing CalSWEC Program tasks and responsibilities; participating in team teaching and site interactive teaching situations; as well as developing and monitoring field education experiences. Program administrators are probably pulling their hair out on many days, attempting to juggle multiple constituency groups and financial demands and to collaborate with a variety of communities, interests, and personalities.

Was it (and is it) worth it?

Absolutely—at least in our opinion. The exhaustion and never-ending work takes its toll on faculty and administrators, and students feel over burdened as well. But the outcome brings such joy and a sense of pride, in terms of improved services to children and families, a more positive view of child welfare services and the social workers who provide them, and the look in the eyes of parents and significant others who see loved ones at graduation having fulfilled a lifelong dream that previously was beyond their grasp

Each of us has special memories of our efforts during the first three years. Some of those memories are ones we keep with us, and others are those we try not to remember! Since we made many trips back and forth to the sites during these three years, we have lots of memories of sitting in very small airports waiting for the fog to lift, for the pouring rain to stop, and for the scheduled flight to actually take off. Our most vivid memory of a flight was one of our first experiences flying back to Los Angeles from Humboldt. We had spent two days there providing an in-person orientation to students about field work and one day of intensive work with the Site Coordinator identifying prospective placement sites for the upcoming field work assignments. We sat upstairs in the airport—the rain was coming down so hard it seemed to shake the entire building. We waited for several hours and then, miraculously, they announced that the plane would be leaving. It was the scariest plane ride either of us had ever been on; the small plane (I believe only 15 seats) bounced around as if being tossed from cloud bank to cloud bank. We ended up circling some extra minutes (it seemed like several hours) waiting for the fog to lift and allow us to land in San Francisco. Even the stewardess said it was the roughest flight she had even been on—and we had to make this flight four more times each year for the next three years?

The most special memory

the two of us have of the three years was the "Graduation Weekend." Looking back, it was like a traveling graduation wagon. Five faculty from CSULB flew to Humboldt, where we were met by the two Site Coordinators from CSU Chico and CSU Humboldt, making us a group of seven. Graduation at Humboldt was held outside on the football field, on a very rainy and cold day. The graduation ceremonies included all of the university students and faculty, and we joined and marched with faculty from CSU Humboldt Department of Social Work. Our MSW students were announced and hooded as they crossed the stage to a roar of support from family, friends, and many of the community-based field instructors who had worked with the students in field placements. The students had planned a reception for their friends and significant others, and we all enjoyed sharing the day with one another. We left the Humboldt Site Coordinator and the six remaining faculty members piled into a van and drove to Chico (about a five hour drive) through winding mountain roads and a pouring rainstorm. Graduation at Chico was a small ceremony of just our MSW students. (The main CSU Chico graduation was a week later and we were not able to be included in that ceremony.) Our intimate ceremony was in a campus auditorium, filled to capacity with friends and significant others, who watched the new MSW's receive their hoods and change their tassels. We had an outside reception planned by the students, on a beautiful sunny day. We left the Chico Site Coordinator, and the five of us from CSULB piled onto the plane to fly

from Chico to San Francisco and, finally, back to Los Angeles. Quite a journey and one that will be remembered with fondness for many years to come. Yes, the experience was definitely worth it.

Epilogue

The plane has finally stopped rolling— the mad dash to gather up hand luggage, de-plane, and claim large baggage items is complete. Tomorrow morning we each teach a class starting at 9:00 AM....Wonder if we've prepared that lecture yet? In just five days, we will have another graduation for our main campus students— 300 of them. It will be a wonderful ceremony and reception for families and friends; graduates will shed tears of joy and happiness and family members will meet faculty who had a significant impact on their sons and daughters.

Faculty who have been involved in this first distance education effort may shed some tears as well, some relief at having successfully completed the task and a great deal of pride and sense of accomplishment for the work and the results. Perhaps, the most important memories of the whole experience are the faces of those graduates miles away, who were truly appreciative of the efforts, and who will be able to enrich their communities' social service delivery systems and positively impact the lives of children, families, and adults because of this work. CalSWEC deserves a special thank you for their innovative and visionary work as a steering partner and supporting force for this innovative effort in our state. We know they share our sense of pride and accomplishment.

About The Authors

Jan Black is Professor Emeritus at California State University, Long Beach. She was the Director of the Department of Social Work from 1997-1998. During her 13-year tenure at CSULB, she taught social work practice, social work administration, and field work seminar and served as Director of Field Education. Professor Black was instrumental in the development of the field education curriculum at CSULB, which has received national recognition for excellence and has been an active partner in numerous collaborative efforts throughout the Los Angeles area as well as throughout California and the United States. She served as a member of the National Commission on Field Education for the Council on Social Work Education, as well as on numerous university, College of Health and Human Services, and Departmental committees. She retired from the University in August 1998.

Barbara Cohen is Associate Professor and Director of Field Education at California State University, Long Beach. She teaches in the area of social work practice, field education, and human behavior and the social environment at both the BASW and MSW level and is active on numerous committees in the Department of Social Work. Additionally, Professor Cohen is the Coordinator for the Pupil Personnel Services Credential/School Social Work Program at CSULB. She is a member of the newly formed Committee for Field Education for Baccalaureate Programs established in 2000 by the Council on Social Work Education. Her involvement with CalSWEC and innovative collaboration with the 13 Schools/Departments of Social Work in California in the area of field education have been invaluable to the advancement of social work education.

Acknowledgment

The authors would like to acknowledge the outstanding efforts of CalSWEC, Jim Kelly, Ginger Wilson, Marilyn Potts, Christine Hagan, Donna Wheeler, Gary Bess, and the faculty and administration of CSULB, CSU Chico, and CSU Humboldt Departments of Social Work, who made this Distance Education Program a resounding success.

References

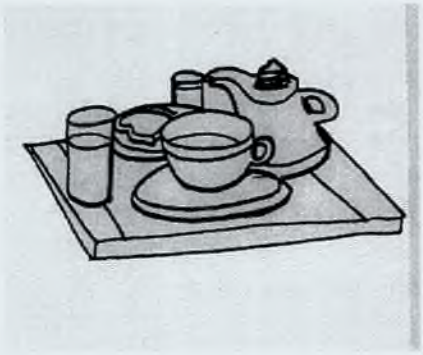
Cohen, B. & Black, J. (1998) From a distance: The partnership between field education and distance education MSW program offerings. In L. Ginsberg & J. Coe (Eds.). Information Technologies for Social Work Education and Practice. South Carolina: College of Social Work, University of South Carolina. Pp. 99-108

Potts, M.K. & Hagan, C.B. (2000) Going the distance: Using systems theory to design, implement and evaluate a distance education program. Journal of Social Work Education,36(1),

The Birth and Early Years of CalSWEC

The author earned his MSW in 1952 from the University of California at Berkeley's School of Social Welfare. He served as Executive Director of the Zellerbach Family Fund from 1972-1995. Prior to that, he was Coordinator of Mental Health Services for Contra Costa County and Field Director at UC Berkeley's School of Social Welfare.

by
Edward A. Nathan, MSW
Trustee of Zellerbach Family Fund and the Von Löben Sels Foundation and a board member of the Immigration Refugee Service of America.



It's a treat for me to write about Harry Specht and the early days of CalSWEC, the California Social Work Education Center. I often think of Harry and the fun we had plotting programs and initiating projects. He was the Dean of the School of Social Welfare at the University of California, Berkeley. He was determined to put the social conscience back into social work. He was learned, eclectic, and electric, as well as clear and to the point. He could have been an excellent therapist if his first allegiance had not drawn him to community organization.

With a social work degree from Berkeley, I became a combination of clinician, consultant, and program developer for the Zellerbach Family Fund in San Francisco. There the board gave me a relatively free hand in initiating, funding, developing, and implementing new ideas.

Harry and I had known each other from a distance for about 20 years before we became much closer in the last 10 years. He joined the faculty at Berkeley around the time I was leaving it to work in the foundation in the early 70's. Although he was based in Berkeley and I was working in San Francisco, our mutual interests drew us together for weekly Faculty Club breakfasts and hilarious dinners as he, my wife, and I pursued the gourmet experience. Along with enjoying the pleasure of his company, we developed a deeper bond as each family lost a member to death, and we became a small support group until Harry died in 1995.

It was during our breakfast meetings that Harry said he had a hankering to be a foundation director and to control all that money. As for me, I enjoyed consulting on the personnel problems of the graduate school and proposed ways to bring the skills of the faculty to the community. We were not thinking of CalSWEC then, but of ways to bring Bay Area social welfare directors, deans of Northern California schools of social welfare, and foundations into a working relationship. This effort created the Bay Area Social Services Consortium (BASSC) which preceded CalSWEC.

The directors of county social welfare departments had a certain reverence for the intellectual and theoretical knowledge of the deans, but there was a distance, as though they lived in different worlds. Many years ago, Edwin Sarsfield, former general manager of San Francisco City and County Social Services, had some creative ideas for bridging the gap. As nearly as I can recollect, Ed and I had met with a group of Bay Area county social

service directors in 1984 to discuss the idea of regional services and collaborative county efforts.

Harry and I formed a team to revive and improve on some of Ed's ideas. At the time the ideas were first presented, the directors listened politely but didn't see themselves as ready to follow Ed Sarsfield's visionary leadership. They suspected that the whole idea was a way to increase San Francisco's influence in the welfare decision–making process of all counties.

AGE OF COLLABORATION

In many areas, the mid-1980s might be called the awakening age of collaboration. Public-private endeavors were being promoted, and collaboration was becoming the in-word. Integration of services in one-stop service centers sounded good; neighborhood empowerment projects were receiving serious support. It was a time of anticipation; counting your blessings and assets seemed to bring more hope than inventory of community deficits.

County welfare directors, always experiencing super-stress, began to see the value in joining with the deans to find ways to improve social service departments, administration, department managers, and supervisors. Harry saw potential in this development. Along with me, he began to seek out the Bay Area deans and directors of county social welfare agencies to work together for the benefit of all.

Ernest Hirose of San Mateo County and Michael Reisch of San Francisco State University were committed to promoting this joint venture. After a year of struggling to develop an organization, Harry and I paid a visit to Dick O'Neil, director of Social Welfare in Santa Clara County. Dick was skeptical and said that he would assign a staff member to attend meetings and to represent the County. Harry and I were disappointed not to have Dick on board after we had driven to San Jose just to meet with him. We persuaded him that the consortium must see his personal participation as important; he finally agreed. Dick brought added knowledge of legislation and new ways to draw on federal and state funds. He gave a tremendous boost to the organization through his participation and leadership. Further professional leadership came from Bart Grossman, coordinator of Field Work at UC Berkeley, who also staffed BASSC during its development.

Now, what does this impressionistic history of BASSC have to do with the origins of CalSWEC? It connects with the relatively small world of philanthropic foundations and the reputation of Harry Specht. Another element was a relationship with Patricia K. Biggers, an outstanding program officer at the Ford Foundation. She had won the Scrivener Award for being one of the most creative persons involved in philanthropy for a given year.

Patricia and I had worked together from 1975 through 1990 on the resettlement of Southeast Asian refugees. She had met Harry and knew about our collaboration with BASSC. One of her Ford colleagues, John Lanigan, a program officer with a background in social welfare education, saw the need to educate students to appreciate the diverse cultural backgrounds of persons served by social service departments.

He considered California, with its changing demography, as the best state for educating minority students and developing relevant curricula for them. He knew about the increasing stipend programs that drew on federal and state funds for social work education. Pat suggested that I urge Harry to phone John and to begin discussions about California as the base for the new organization. Harry called John, who now recalls the conversation going something like this:

"Hi. I'm Harry Specht, Dean of the School of Social Welfare at Berkeley. I don't suppose you know who I am. Could we meet to discuss cooperation among California schools of social welfare and county welfare departments in educating students to pursue careers in child welfare and other public services?" Harry was just getting into high gear on his book, Unfaithful Angels, which dealt with social workers whom he saw as abandoning public service jobs for private therapy opportunities. It so happened that John was a social worker who idolized Harry and had read all of Harry's publications—a true fan. Harry

and John talked about the concept of CalSWEC; Harry was invited to the Ford Foundation for further discussion and was encouraged to submit a concept paper.

GAINING FOUNDATION SUPPORT

John's superiors at Ford liked the concept of a statewide social welfare education organization that involved all the deans, representatives of social service, and foundations. What John had not anticipated was the insistence of his boss that, as a measure of commitment to the project, local foundations match Ford's grant by 10 to 1 or 6 to 1 for each dollar of Ford's contribution.

Some years earlier I had organized a Matching Grants Committee of the Northern California Grantmakers. Our purpose was to discourage large national foundations that, following an agenda of their own, would start programs in local communities with a matching grant provision. The nationals would establish the programs and then move to other interests after two or three years, and leaving the locals with continuing funding responsibility. I was eager to meet with John to discuss the whole proposal.

We met at a National Council of Foundations gathering. I remember telling him that local foundations could not match Ford at 10 to 1, 6 to 1, or even 1 to 1. Only a few would give a high priority to improving social welfare education. I did think that with great effort we could probably collect about $50,000. John and I hit it off. He liked the straight talk and really wanted to see the project succeed.

As I remember, Ford made a grant of $83,000 per year for two years to cover direct costs and some indirect costs, and continued to give support for five years. In addition, the following local foundations each contributed $5,000 per year for three years to cover direct costs and some indirect costs: the Walter and Elise Haas Fund, the Walter S. Johnson Foundation, the Louis R. Lurie Foundation, the Community Foundation of Santa Clara County, the Stuart Foundation, the Van Loben Sels Foundation, and the Zellerbach Family Fund. It worked out that Ford gave two dollars for every one local-dollar contribution.

The first year of CalSWEC was not an easy one. The deans had pledged to submit a single scholarship funding request to the federal government and to the state on behalf of all California schools of social welfare and social work. The organization planned to divide and allocate the scholarship funds in an equitable way. For some reason, the Southern California social work schools submitted a request on their own without consulting with Northern CalSWEC members. It felt like an end run around established principles. Harry was outraged as only Harry could be. There were all kinds of explanations and apologies. Harry remained indignant (enjoying his righteousness) while everyone from Southern California was uncomfortable. I think that the deans renewed the pledge to work for the good of the whole in the future, and the crisis was resolved.

After attending a few CalSWEC meetings I decided to spend my meeting attendance time with the Bay Area Social Services Consortium, since I was more of a streetworker than an educator.

A SUCCESS STORY

The turnover in deans and county directors of social service in CalSWEC has been high over these past ten years, and it is remarkable that the organization continues and remains vital. Of course, the millions of dollars in child welfare stipends that are administered by CalSWEC help to keep everyone at the same table. CalSWEC is clearly a success story. Its membership has expanded to include the County Mental Health Directors Association and the California Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.

The Zellerbach Family Fund, which provided initial funding and encouraged other foundations to participate, remains an active member of the group. A 1999 grant of $20,000 from the fund will be used to enable CalSWEC to take leadership in promoting interdepartmental training and services on behalf of needy families and, further, to put more efforts into developing social workers equipped to work in a variety of roles in public human services. County Welfare Departments also contributed funds toward this exploration.

Harry would be pleased that CalSWEC has strengthened the commitment of educators to public social services and has attracted hundreds of minority students to public social service careers.

Aknowledgment

Ellen Walker represents Zellerbach on the board of CalSWEC and provided information for this report.

Reflections on CalSWEC as a Catalyst for Change

The author summarizes a twenty-year career inspired, to an extent, by early contributors to CalSWEC.

by
Nancy S. Dickinson, M.S.S.W, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Jordan Institute for Families, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

I am looking at the letter on CalSWEC stationery soliciting papers for this special issue of Reflections, and the words "focusing on public social services" and "a partnership for change" leap out at me. These phrases represent, for me, the vision of Harry Specht and the intent of those of us fortunate enough to be associated with CalSWEC at some time during the last 10 years.

I live in North Carolina now, about 20 miles from the Durham County Department of Social Services, where I first began my public child welfare career more than 20 years ago. That first work experience left me with a lasting commitment to public social services that has framed my social work career. Visiting with my first client on an unpaved street within the city limits, I realized that I had the privilege and the responsibility of working with the city's most troubled and vulnerable people who were virtually unknown to other citizens living on the paved streets around the corner. I do not romanticize the experience. Working in public social services has been one of the most difficult professional challenges I have ever experienced. And yet that environment, which demanded my best practice skills, also rewarded me with moments of success and a strong connection to the history and values of social work.

And so I resonated with Harry's vision to develop an educational program that would introduce to students the passion and challenge of public social services and provide to agencies, families, and children the best educated and most skilled social work practitioners that they deserved.

As the second CalSWEC Director, I was fortunate to reap the benefits of Bart Grossman's hard work implementing the program and ironing out all the rough start-up edges. I was able to focus, instead, on moving CalSWEC forward as "a partnership for change." The list of partners in this change effort is impressive—universities, county and state agencies, associations and foundations. I realize now that the partnership should also include families. We ask families to change and yet fail to include them among the change agents.

Because of our commitment to change, CalSWEC was more than a stipend program. California graduate schools of social work were among the first in the country to add and adapt curriculum to support public child welfare practice. Social work deans and directors struggled with the challenges of making graduate social work education accessible to distant corners of the state and through new technologies, while protecting the

character and unique contributions of each of their programs. I remember vividly my first CalSWEC Board meeting and the lively discussion that ensued there, touching on issues of territoriality, educational philosophy, and funding practicalities.

Directors of state and county agencies struggled with their own challenges to change. Agencies welcomed research on child welfare issues and problems but winced when the research results pointed to needed changes in services. Agency managers competed for specially trained social work interns but had difficulty providing agency field supervisors with the job flexibility necessary for them to adequately supervise the interns. Child welfare graduates found that county personnel practices often worked against their smooth transitions into jobs. Also discouraging were the poor working conditions, high caseload pressures, and bureaucratic layers that blunted the eagerness of these highly skilled and trained graduate social workers.

As more and more CalSWEC graduates find and keep public child welfare positions, however, the climate for change grows more and more encouraging throughout California agencies. And those of us starting similar programs in other states are heartened by your continued success.

I am proud to have benefited from Harry Specht's vision and the hard work of all the partners for change at CalSWEC. Because of my good fortune to have worked with you all, I have returned to the place where I began and I know it for the first time. Thank you. □

About the Author

Nancy S. Dickinson, M.S.S.W., Ph.D., is Executive Director of the Jordan Institute for Families at the School of Social Work, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The Institute focuses on strengthening families through research and educational and technical assistance projects. Prior to assuming this role in August 1998, Dickinson was Executive Director of the California Social Work Education Center located at the University of California at Berkeley School of Social Welfare, which is the largest university-agency partnership in the nation, focusing on reprofessionalizing public child welfare. Dr. Dickinson has had extensive experience in social services practice, administration, research, education, and training in North Carolina, Tennessee, California, and Washington State. She received her MSSW at the University of Tennessee and her Ph.D. at the University of Washington.

A Tapestry of Social Work Experiences Reinforces a Commitment To Ensuring the Safety and Welfare of Children

The author recounts her successful search for an occupational niche in social work.

by
Stacie Buchanan, MSW

CalSWEC Training Specialist

In order to discuss the path which led me to seek a career in Child Welfare, I must first talk about what led me to the social work field as a whole. After completing my BA degree in Psychology at Hampton University, I returned home to California. Not really knowing how to approach the job search situation, I started working where my older brother had made a good name, a bank. This job, working as a credit analyst, was a far cry from what I had envisioned I would be doing with my degree. After a year of the meticulous work involved in approving or denying individuals credit, I was ready for a change. My sister had just finished her BA degree and was offered a position in New York. I jumped at the chance of being free from credit reports and I moved with her.

I was working as a temporary employee doing general office work and making very little money. Out of habit, I would look in the classified ads daily during my lunch hour for more gainful and enjoyable employment. One day I saw a position for a social worker in a residential treatment center. The job description was working with pre-teen and teenage girls who had been in trouble with the law and were removed from their homes as PINS, persons in need of supervision. The particular opening entailed working with girls who had been out of their home for some time and were preparing to be returned to their families. I thought it was a perfect match.

After my first week on the job, I was convinced I had found my niche, social work. Even though the position paid nearly the same as the temping, I had eight weeks of vacation and more benefits than I'd ever imagined. I was charged with providing services to fourteen girls, ages 11-14, and their families. The girls all lived in the transition cottage and my office, (yes office, fully equipped with a couch) was located in the back of the cottage.

I conducted group sessions with the girls, arranged counseling for the girls, planned and supervised visits with parents, and, my personal favorite, conducted home visits. The girls came from all over New York City and the home visits gave me the chance to see places I would have never ventured. I tried new ethnic cuisine. I rode urine-filled elevators; went sightseeing, mostly while lost; and even heard gunshots and saw a man running from them during a visit with a parent. Not many professions expose you to such varied adventures in a single day!

I also enjoyed the freedom this position afforded me. I was young and could enjoy the NYC nightlife, while maintaining my

responsibilities at work. My work hours were flexible and although I would many times work above and beyond traditional work hours, there were times when I could come in at 10 am, 11am, or not at all. I enjoyed forming relationships with the girls and seeing how families can use all of their resources in order to reunite the family. The idea of protecting children and preserving families was new and exciting for me. The job was demanding, challenging, and I loved it.

My supervisor was a certified social worker and wonderful mentor. Since I had no formal education in social work, she was the first person to show me the child welfare system. She provided excellent clinical supervision for not only my work with the children and families, but she also worked with me in dealing with the deprived situations, drug abuse, and violence I was seeing on the job. I remained on this job just over one year. During my last days, my supervisor encouraged me to seek a master's degree and continue in social work. I am not sure if she realizes the impact she had on me and how this, my first experience in social work, set a course in my life and has shaped my career path over the last next ten years.

As mentioned before, the money in my first social work position was not very good. And since the cost of living in New York is fairly high, I needed some way of supporting myself, which also left room for a social life. For a while I tried to work a second job, but I could not sustain the two positions for long. It was time to find a new and higher paying job.

In my work at the residential treatment center, I would work hand-in-hand with the girls' county social workers. I had applied for two county positions at about the same time as I had accepted the previous job. The few county case managers I knew suggested I follow up on the applications I had submitted a year earlier. I was qualified to work as an eligibility worker or a child welfare worker. At the time I applied, I did not really understand the differences between the two positions.

I was called for the eligibility position first. I believed the eligibility work would be similar to the social work in the residential treatment center. I envisioned working with families, doing information and referral while helping them with their financial situation. I was wrong. The position reminded me more of the credit analyst position I had been anxious to leave. I did enjoy working with the families, but it was a punitive system. There was very little room for interpretation and the stakes were high; if you didn't follow the rules, you received no assistance.

What I enjoyed most was the county structure and work environment. The camaraderie between co-workers in the county system had not been matched in any other position I held. There were people from varied backgrounds coming together to work, and I ended up forming relationships and support systems that continued far beyond the boundaries of the workday. There was a clear delineation of authority in the county and always somewhere to turn if I needed help. I worked as an eligibility worker and subsequently a fraud investigator for the next three years.

All the while I was working as an eligibility worker, I had plans of returning to school for a master's degree. I researched many programs in social work, public administration and psychology and applied to schools in each of these areas. I was accepted at the University of California at Berkeley. Berkeley's social work program was one of the best in the country, the move would bring me closer to my family, and Berkeley had a program that tied together my past experiences in social services. The Title IV-E program was exactly what I was looking for. I had no previous knowledge that it existed, but I was glad to see it come my way. It was the glue that connected my previous work history with a new direction and more focused child welfare work and, in addition, provided money for tuition and living. The choice to move was easy.

Upon graduating in 1997, I began working for Contra Costa County's Employment and Human Services Department to repay my two-year commitment. At times it felt the two years would never end and I even threatened to look for other employment once my repayment period was complete. Despite the rough times and the amount of work, the rewards in the position far outweigh the headaches and heartaches. The child welfare system can have a monumental impact on families. I have seen

women reunite with children after their children were adopted through the system. I have also seen youngsters who were raised in the foster care system graduate from college, very proud of who they are and where they come from. Unfortunately, I have also witnessed the opposite.

In September 1999, I was given the opportunity to take a leave of absence from Contra Costa County and work for CalSWEC as a training specialist. I am coordinating California's effort to standardize core training for child welfare workers throughout the state. While my main responsibilities lie in the development of the core curriculum, this position has also given me the chance to see behind the scenes, learning how the Title IV-E program came about and how it is continuing to evolve. I am seeing how social work professionals, like myself, are working to improve the child welfare system through the training of workers. I am seeing dedicated social workers that have spent many years on the front line working with families tackle flaws that are inherent in the child welfare system.

This time away from direct services has given me a chance to challenge and enhance skills I have not had the opportunity to use. It has also let me know just how much I enjoy hands-on work with families and children. I am thankful for this opportunity and would not trade it for anything, but I am also looking forward to returning to Contra Costa County in my former capacity. I miss interacting with children and parents. I even miss trips to Court and the thousands of phone calls and thwarted "emergencies" child welfare workers deal with on a daily basis. There is something about working in the foster care system that is addictive. The high intensity of the work, the fast pace, and the thinking quickly on your feet is what I enjoy most.

From my first social work position to my current employment, each new experience in social work has built upon the last. I see career options in child welfare broadening. I have become more firm in my own convictions about the protection of children and the preservation of families. No matter the course I choose to take in the future, ensuring the safety and welfare of children will continue to be the theme throughout my career. □

About the Author

Stacie Buchanan is a 1997 graduate of the Title IV-E MSW Program at the University of California at Berkeley School of Social Welfare. She has five years of experience in public social services, two of which were with Contra Costa County Child Welfare Services, where she conducted dependency investigations. She is a training specialist at CalSWEC and project leader of the Standardized Core Curriculum Program.

How CalSWEC has influenced Training and Education for Public Child Welfare Practice at California State University, Sacramento

The author has been closely associated with the IV-E program since its inception at California State University, Sacramento.

by
Robin Carter, Ph.D.

Graduate Coordinator, Division of Social Work, California State University, Sacramento.

Our commitment and interest in child welfare practice preceded the introduction of a Title IV-E training program in the Division of Social Work. In the mid 1980's The faculty in this program recognized the need for specialized training in working with children and families. The curriculum committee was then charged with developing a Child and Families concentration. Specific to this concentration was a specialized course on policy related to children and families, and two advanced practice courses.

More recently, the faculty of the division engaged in a three-year process aimed at overhauling the curriculum for the Master's degree program. The need for the change was fueled by input from field instructors, students, faculty, and advisory committee members, many of whom are currently employed in providing child welfare services. The decision to move away from concentrations and adopt a model using the Advanced Generalist theory base has been the result of this process of discovery.

Course work in the redesigned curriculum supports and enhances the core competencies required for the Child Welfare training in several ways. First, as opposed to having only those students who choose the Child and Family concentration exposed to child welfare competencies—as was the case for the most part in the old model--all students will get exposure to areas of practice most crucial to delivering of effective child welfare services. The new curriculum has as its focus service delivery to vulnerable populations with specific interest in children and their families. Second, students in the Title IV-E Program get exposed to a broader range of competencies which meet and exceed the standards set by the CalSWEC competencies for Title IV-E Programs.

The greatest impact of the change is reflected in the advanced practice courses. The required practice courses are in the Multilevel Practice with Vulnerable Life Conditions concentration. They are taken sequentially in the final year of the program and are required of all students. Students are simultaneously placed in field settings which complement and enhance the integration of the competencies for the course. The Multilevel

Practice with Vulnerable Life Conditions curriculum focuses on developing the students' capacity to think critically and systematically so they can select from a range of appropriate intervention strategies and combine interventive tasks. These tasks include, but are not limited to, direct practice, advocacy, program planning and development, evaluation, community practice, and supervision. They enable students to integrate advanced practice approaches using the values and ethics of the profession and the commitment to social justice.

The advanced practice courses are organized into four modules delivered over the course of two semesters. The modules provide a framework for reinforcing the focus on vulnerable life conditions by segmenting the two semesters into four specific social conditions. The first eight weeks focus on "Violence and Trauma," and the second eight weeks on "Children and Families in Poverty." The modules for the spring semester are "Community Mental Health,"and "Chronic Illness and Disability."

The first of the two advanced practice courses introduces and defines for students a conceptual framework that will enable them to understand the needs of excluded and underserved populations and to respond in a collaborative manner to promote empowerment and social justice. Theories related to violence and trauma build on the core frameworks utilized in generalist social work practice: ecosystems, feminist and strengths models, empowerment, childhood and lifespan development, diversity, social status, and oppression theories. The course also introduces advanced practice principles for operationalizing the social justice perspective with children and communities in poverty.

The second of the two required advanced practice courses is the Multilevel Practice with Vulnerable Life Conditions concentration. It builds on and develops the themes introduced in the first course helping students to see beyond the boundaries of a series of independent cases. Using the social agencies in which they work as a base, the course helps students identify how different sized systems affect each other and how they can intervene in a way that is sensitive to multiple constituents.

In the second advanced practice course, students develop skills in psychodiagnosis and treatment as they learn how to challenge institutional inequities and injustices in the provision of mental health care. They also develop the capacity to understand and thus intervene when chronic illness or disability leaves their clients vulnerable in many significant ways. Finally, Title IV-E students focus their culminating experience in child welfare-related research projects.

In addition to the influence CalSWEC has had on the development of the new curriculum, the very presence of a Title IV-E Child Welfare training program has influenced training and education in our program. The high visibility of the program draws in students not initially considering careers in child welfare. Interest in child welfare course content by undergraduates prompted the undergraduate program committee to adopt an elective course entitled "Child Welfare Practice."

The division has also had a quite radical turnover in faculty as many of the senior faculty reach retirement age and move on. Search committees charged with recruiting and hiring new faculty have shown special interest in candidates who bring a child welfare background because of the needs of our Title IV-E program and curriculum.

□

The Truth: From the Trenches

The author received his MSW from the School of Social Welfare at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1997. He is an emergency response child welfare worker in the City and County of San Francisco.

by
Rolan Reichel, MSW

Department of Human Services, San Fancisco, CA.

I have this quirky habit (and annoying one my friends say) of picking up on a line or phrase and then delightfully repeating it over and over. And then, a few weeks later, I find a new phrase and so on and so on. Well, remember that movie a few years ago with Tom Cruise and Jack Nicholson, A Few Good Men? For a few weeks after that movie the line "You want the truth, well you can't handle the truth" was on my lips constantly. The waiter at my favorite restaurant: "How do you want your eggs?" Me: "You want the truth, you can't handle the truth!" My partner asks, "Do you want Italian or Chinese tonight?" Me: "You want the truth? Well you can't handle the truth!" I guess you get the idea.

And now, again, I ask the question, "You want the truth?" Well, you CAN handle the truth. You can, because you have to, because you are a social worker. So let me share my truth with you. But before I do I absolutely must address my own pet peeve. You see, pet peeves are just like truths. We all have one, and it is a little different from everyone else's. And, like a good social worker, before I can get to the issue at hand, I need to vent a little. Social workers are so good at venting. We love it because we are so articulate and, hey, our clients get to do it all the time, so we want our chance too.

My pet peeve is simply put in the form of a question: What is up with the term "social worker"? What I do is not very social; I mean, it is no tea and crumpets; and San Francisco Police Department taking the kids to the child protection center. Come on. And worker? That is about as bland and generic as it gets and just another example of white washing what is a difficult and emotional job. So let me quickly propose a few other options for the title of our grand profession (I really will get to writing the article, I promise).

- Bad parent receptor inhibitor (biopsych perspective)
- Anti-abuse, family destructor/repairer device (a little pentagonish I admit)
- Conus wrapus aroundus protectus childus (this title for a social worker was borrowed from the ancient Greeks)
- The new sheriff in town (social workers in the Wild West)
- The best all around, you make 'em, we take

'em, slapdash, drive through, hustle and bustle, on your feet therapists/helpers/healers that you can find just about anywhere. (This title is my personal favorite but difficult to get on business cards.)

Let me contextualize my truth vis-à-vis my curriculum vitae. I worked as a counselor and a volunteer and had other social work jobs from 1992 – 1995. In 1995 I began study at the School of Social Welfare, Haviland Hall, UC Berkeley. I applied to Berkeley because of the philosophy of the school and the writings of the late Dean Harry Specht. The commitment to the public sector and civil service was firmly in my mind. And then along came a single sheet of colored paper with my acceptance materials – the Title IV-E application. But it was not the title that got my attention. No, it was the five numerals at the bottom of the page. Honestly, I had no idea what the IV-E program was all about or that this single sheet of paper would plot my professional course for years to come.

After graduation in 1997 on a blistering hot Berkeley day, I began working for Alameda County Child Protective Services to repay my two-year commitment. I began my illustrious career as a paper shuffler, data entry technician, meeting attendee, and occasional social worker. O.K. Just kidding. I worked in the "front end" in the court unit. After approximately one year, I transferred to San Francisco County, where I completed my IV-E requirement in the summer of 1999.

It is now spring 2000 and here I am, working as an emergency response child welfare worker. If a report of suspected child abuse made to the child abuse hotline is assessed to be serious enough to warrant investigation, it is my job to meet with the family and assess the situation. Always, I am the first one and often the only one on the scene. This job requires bravado, guts, insight, and the ability to keep your ego out of it. As I like to live by, just the facts ma'am. If I sound like a B grade, noir film, well, I feel like that sometimes. My 1950's two-ton metal desk, puke green carpets and generic water color paintings in the "take a number" waiting room contribute to the atmosphere.

So here goes that truth I was talking about. The truth is that Child Protective Services is only a reflection of the society we live in. In other words, we live in a bureaucratic, mass democracy. Just go to the Department of Motor Vehicles to get your license renewed and you get a quick lesson in alienation. Child welfare is no different. As a society, we solve our problems through litigation and the court system. Child welfare is no different. Our "system" is a reflection of our selves. The child welfare system is not an oasis, a wonderful, hidden refuge from the problems of society. America has the highest rates of incarceration in the industrialized world, the highest rates of gun violence. Our caseloads reflect it. We, as a society, generally punish criminals instead of rehabilitating them. Child welfare is no different. So, before one criticizes or blames the child welfare system, one must consider society as a whole. One must understand the historical development of child welfare and place it in societal context.

But what are different are the social workers. We work in a structure that is dictated to us. But what we do choose are our own ethics and professional point of view. Our job is to implement the community standards dictated by political process (state and local laws) and the judicial process (the courts). We negotiate and educate. We look, listen, and learn. We engage the families in a dialogue about values, childrearing, culture, and viewpoint. We protect, we heal, and, sometimes, we create hurt and anger. But we are no worse, or no better, than the larger organism that we live in. And in the body that we call society, I often feel that the child welfare system is the white blood cells. Our job is to keep the body healthy and ready for the future by protecting our children. But we are created as well by our collective hearts and minds.

Thank you for listening to my truths and this viewpoint from the trenches.

□

Ongoing Learning: From Title IV-E Student to Public Child Welfare Worker

The author is a 1997 graduate of San Francisco State University. She worked in an intake unit as a screener for a month; then she was in a combined unit of court/FR/FM for two years. For almost a year she has been in the emergency response unit. Currently she is part of a best practices pilot project to change the risk assessment used by the Emergency Response workers to reflect a strengths-based approach, among other things.

by
Katherine Kellum, MSW

Child Welfare Worker II, Child Protective Services, Marin County, CA.

When I think of the Title IV-E Program, four main ideas come to mind: how the program was useful; areas for improvement; my internship experience; and my reflections on county differences in the delivery of public social services and nature of the social worker's job. I will discuss my personal experiences and what is true for me.

I can sincerely say that the Title IV-E Program prepared me for my career in public social services. I learned the overall structures of the department and the regulations that govern the system. The program helped me to realize that I had a false perception of public social work. I thought I could be an advocate just for children and "save" them. It became clear to me that the goal was to focus services on the parents so those children could remain or return to the home. This is an extremely important reality because I found out that I burned out much faster when I tried to focus only on the children.

My program at San Francisco State University did an excellent job of teaching me how to develop mutually respectful relationships with the clients. It provided me with a framework on how to work with families. I was taught how to focus on family strengths and remain conscious that the family are the experts of their own life and I can learn from them. It is important to me that I remember to focus on their needs and strengths, not their deficits and weaknesses

Although the overall program was useful, there is room for improvement. In retrospect, I could have used more training in sex abuse assessment and mental health diagnosis. I feel like IV-E did not train me in these areas, yet I was expected to know about them. Gaining a better understanding of mental health issues has helped me assess my clients more accurately and connect them to appropriate resources. A sex abuse interview is usually traumatic and can be even more traumatic to a social worker that does not know how to effectively conduct the interview. I had to learn how to do a forensically correct interview so that I did not traumatize the client any further.

Even though I attended some excellent trainings, it was sometimes difficult to translate the information into practical skills. For example, after the training on how the court system is structured, it would have been helpful to have a follow up training on how to write court reports. In general, I think a lot more emphasis should

be spent on risk assessment, court report writing, and developing case plans, since these seem to be the essential skills necessary to the job. I would have liked training sessions where I did assessments using actual tools, was given a case to write a court report on, and then had to write the case plan.

Since my internship offered me an opportunity to put my trainings into practice, I think it was the most valuable aspect of the IV-E training. Thus, I think students should be required to do two years at child protective services, but in different counties and units.

There are so many skills to learn and they are different for each unit. For example, it requires different skills to work long term on a family reunification case, compared to investigating referrals within ten days. When you are primarily investigating referrals, you do not spend as much time developing and maintaining respectful relationships with the families. I have also learned how important it is that the investigating social worker be aware of his or her own biases when deciding which children should be removed. I think the IV-E program should be clear about how roles vary depending on the unit and the type of services you are required to offer.

Without my internship, I think my transition into public social service would have been much more difficult. It helped me prepare for my hiring interview and begin my work assignment immediately. Therefore, I believe that it is crucial that future students spend an ample amount of time finding the best internship and volunteer positions in a unit that will be challenging. Also they should be sure to find a supervisor who is supportive of the IV-E program and is committed to preparing them for employment with CPS.

After working in two different health and human services departments, it was very interesting to see how different they can actually be. When I was an intern in Alameda County, almost all of my clients were African-American, poor, lived in Oakland and had substance abuse as a major obstacle in their life. They seemed used to working with service providers from various agencies and were used to seeing diverse staff. Their expectations of me were based on my working for the "government" not on cultural factors.

As an employee in Marin County, the majority of the referrals I receive are on Caucasian families. Even though I have some clients who are poor, I have others who live in million-dollar homes. Confidentiality becomes very important to the clients who are judges, police officers, therapists, doctors, and other professional members of the community. I have witnessed first hand how money and prestige can change the disposition of a case.

It is also interesting to see how differently African-American families in Marin respond to me, compared to my clients in Oakland. When I was in the ongoing unit, most of my clients were African American and primarily lived in the same community. Clients seem to be pleasantly surprised to see an African American social worker and I was able to develop a working relationship relatively quickly. However, when the family did not comply with the case plan and I had to enforce a consequence, it presented a problem. The family felt betrayed and often told me I should be more sympathetic to their struggles of being poor, African-American, and residents of Marin. Their expectations seemed to be based on my being African American, not a government employee, and it often required an intensive dialogue.

Overall, it is clear to me that abuse and neglect transcends across all racial and economic lines. The IV-E Program, along with a good internship, helped prepare me for life in public social services. There are so many skills that need to be learned that I could not imagine trying to do this job without the training and opportunities offered to me by the program. The lessons I learned from the IV-E staff, my clients, and classmates were all invaluable experiences and I would do it all over again. I encourage perspective MSW students to take the challenge and become a social worker in public social service.

□

The Truth: To Value Oneself

In applying for the CalSWEC Title IV-E child welfare stipend, a social work student was asked why she wanted to work in child welfare as well as what personal strengths and weaknesses she brought to the table. The following is her exploration and discovery of the positive use of self in working with clients, as well as a reflection on her growth as a student and a professional entering the field. Her personal narrative explores her experience with a family reunification case in her second-year child welfare internship as a CalSWEC student.

by
Kelly J. Thompson

Kelly J. Thompson, MSW, 2000, Loma Linda University

Victoria was thin and nervous, walked and talked fast, had a big grin and sad, liquid eyes, the whites of which had a slightly yellow cast. She chewed gum incessantly, and her eyes darted constantly about, never settling long in one place. I noticed right away a prominent scar thickly splitting her upper lip. I later learned she had received it compliments of her common law husband during a fight. I introduced myself as her new social worker and suggested we go over her service plan.

"I never seen it," she said matter of factly. Since I had read the case before seeing her, I knew that the service plan had been sent to her in jail via certified mail by the previous worker.

"Well," I said, calmly, "I'd like to go over it with you so we're both on the same page." The service plan generally required Victoria to attend parenting classes, receive drug treatment, achieve six months sobriety, maintain appropriate visitation with her children while demonstrating good parenting skills during supervised and unsupervised visits, agree to drug testing if requested, maintain appropriate accommodation for her and the children, and provide means by which to support them. Both Victoria and I looked at the plan in silence after I read it. I could see in Victoria's eyes that she knew she'd never meet the terms of that plan in time for the 21(f), or twelve-month court hearing, a scant two months away.

I acknowledged that Victoria had been in jail the majority of the time since the plan had been implemented and suggested we start by determining priorities. I saw that she had been released from the Inroads jail program a month ago, placed at a homeless shelter, and admitted to the four-day-a-week outpatient drug treatment program, which she had attended for only one day before disappearing. Victoria's excuses for this were vague and, frankly, I wasn't really interested in hearing them. Although I did not tell her so, I also was not surprised she had been unable to succeed. When I first reviewed the case on paper and saw that she had been referred to a homeless shelter and an outpatient treatment program—knowing what I know about crack addiction and seeing her extensive history with it—I knew that, precluding divine intervention consisting of at least one genuine miracle, she could not possibly

achieve recovery under those circumstances. What I was interested in, I told her, was helping her from where we were at that moment in time, and there was not a minute to spare.

We agreed that her first priority was sobriety, weekly phone calls and visitation with her children, and obtaining a current MediCal card and food stamps for herself. Sobriety meant attending the outpatient treatment program, the perinatal program for addicted mothers in which she had been enrolled in January after being released from jail, and submitting to drug testing. The visits with the children could be arranged by calling her cousin. I assured Victoria I would also call the cousin to help arrange the visits. Together we did some research and found out how Victoria could re-apply for MediCal and food stamps and I provided bus vouchers so she could do so. In addition, Victoria agreed to call me from the treatment program on Mondays at 10 a.m., as she did not have a phone where I could call her.

Although Victoria's face was bright and her voice chirpy as our visit concluded, her eyes settled on the wall, the floor, the ceiling, on me, and then away again, and there was a vacancy there that I could not miss. I knew I was not talking to what could have been: a 32-year-old mother of four children, a thin, animated, beautiful, dark. and striking woman with a bright mind and hopes for the future for herself and children. I was talking to an addict. I was talking to a drug. The drug had her in its grips and was not going to give her up easily, if at all. While Victoria said all the right things, her main focus was to get bus vouchers. She also wanted me to fund a prescription for Prozac, which she had been taking while in jail. I suspect she hoped for a cash voucher. Instead, I helped her by providing the address to the MediCal office, where she could apply for an emergency medical card.

Victoria had a history of crack addiction dating back to the birth of 9-year-old Cindy. She herself had been placed in foster care as a child and was raised off and on by an alcoholic mother. Victoria's twin sister, it turned out, had five children, all of whom had been placed in the system some time ago. Victoria's sister, her cousin informed me, was homeless, also a crack addict, living in people's garages. When Cindy was born, CPS got involved. Victoria went into residential treatment with Cindy and managed to remain clean and sober, according to self-report, for several years thereafter.

My attempts to pinpoint the date of her relapse back into addiction were met with vague and evasive answers, as well as change of topic. I was talking to an addict who was desperately scheming for the avenue and way to her next fix. The mother of her children was looking out at me only for the briefest moments from the deep pools of her dark eyes. I could only guess at what might be left of her human spirit and will to live. I knew, from my own experiences, that I was powerless to gauge that. My role, as I saw it, was to show her the door, to point the way, to provide the opening into which only she might choose to step. But I felt passionately—at the same time I knew it unrealistic to hope for success—that she should have the opportunity, a real chance, to step through to the other side, both for the sake of herself and her children. Four children aged 4 to 14 could not easily be placed in the long term without being separated and further traumatized. I saw Victoria's family cycle repeat. Someday her children would sit in her chair, unable to save their own children from a similar fate.

When I next met with my supervisor,we discussed Victoria's case. I told her that I felt Victoria really did not have a chance to meet the terms of her service plan, both with having been in jail a large part of the past year and with the nature and severity of her addiction. She needed—rather than a homeless shelter and four-day-a-week outpatient program—intensive long-term residential treatment. This was a lady who was locked up for possession of drugs and petty theft, with a history of a severe crack addiction, whose only support system, inadequate as we may judge it to be, had been her common-law husband. He had provided the only stability she had known the past ten years of her life and was now locked up and facing a possible 32 years in prison for molesting their daughters. Her mother, who had lived with them, had fallen very ill and was now incapacitated in a convalescent home. Victoria came out of jail and into a homeless shelter having lost her only support system, as well as custody of her children. I did not feel that the homeless shelter and outpatient program had been sufficient in light of her situation. It was my

impression that we needed to refer Victoria for long-term residential treatment as soon as possible. I advocated for Victoria. I was looking for a way to open a door wide enough that Victoria might actually get to walk through. My supervisor agreed with my assessment and I began to investigate what was available for possible referral. In addition, I spoke with the director at the outpatient program Victoria was enrolled in who, although skeptical about Victoria's level of motivation, agreed with my assessment for the need for residential treatment.

However, Victoria disappeared before the referral could take place, and the director and I agreed that if she showed up, we would work together to make the referral happen. In working on Victoria's case, with the exception of my supervisor, I sometimes got the impression that people thought me naïve. Seasoned workers smiled knowingly. A fellow student seemed to misunderstand my desire to help Victoria to be at the expense of her children's best interests. But in my heart, I knew it was not. As I had written upon applying to the CalSWEC program for acceptance:

I see the neglected, abused, and exploited children and their families that child welfare serves as I see myself for much of my life. I know the pain of not knowing. I know what it is to be victimized. I learned what it is to get beyond victimization and claim responsibility for the present. I know what it is to be unable to trust. I know what it is to not know and to think I do know. I know the shame of ignorance. I can help. And for those who aren't ready for help, I will still help. Because I understand not being ready. I understand intrusion. I understand shame and anger and despair. I will help by carefully balancing and respecting the rights of my clients. I've been on all sides of those rights. As a child. As a parent. And now, as a contributing member of society.

The application for the California Social Work Education Center Title IV-E Child Welfare Stipend had instructed, "Discuss your motivations for wanting to work in child welfare." I responded:

For many years of my life, from childhood, I struggled to grow in an environment of limited options and guidance. Until grace visited me and I found a way out of the abyss of ignorance and despair, I did not understand that other ways to live might be available to me, personally. I lived as best I could with the information I had. It was limited, and inaccurate. I was not a bad person. I was a survivor, struggling to find my way. When I truly despaired of ever changing, my life changed. Hands reached out. A new way was provided and I chose to take the outstretched hands that offered me a step up, a step up and out and into a whole new way of life.

The call to first meet Victoria had come on a Wednesday. Wednesday is the day I work at the Social Services Administration building completing the policy portion of my combined clinical/policy field placement. The combination is a new option in the exploratory stage at Loma Linda University, where I am a CalSWEC Title IV-E Child Welfare stipend recipient completing my MSW with an emphasis in child welfare.

I requested the combination because, along with the clinical emphasis that is part of the required child welfare competencies, I wanted an experience that would give me more exposure to child welfare at the macro level. I felt that, given a better grasp of how policy effects direct service in child welfare, with exposure to administration and program planning, I might later be better equipped to impact the child welfare field as well as personally and professionally operate more effectively in my role as line worker upon employment. Mondays are officially my day at the Department of Children's Services, the clinical portion of my field placement, but it is understood between my supervisors, field instructor, and myself, that my cases come first. Thus, when the call came that my client, who had been missing the past three weeks, had surfaced at the drug and alcohol outpatient clinic she was supposed to be attending, I had immediately put aside my policy project to go meet her.

Victoria, a 32-year-old female African American crack addict, was the mother of four of the five children involved in the family reunification case I was given. The fifth was her stepchild and the original intervention by the Department of Children's Services, had been made due to reports that Victoria

had been physically abusing him, reports that were substantiated by the bruising found on his chest, arms, back, and buttocks. The additional children were removed because both parents were absent when the police arrived to investigate and there was no water in the house. A nearby cousin of Victoria's agreed to take her four children, but said she was unable to take Mario, the stepchild, who was placed in a home for special needs children as he is developmentally delayed and reportedly has had severe emotional problems. Once the four siblings were placed and safe at the cousin's house, further information came out that the two girls, 7-year-old Angel and 9-year-old Cindy, as well as a neighbor girl, 10-year-old Jessica, had been sexually abused by their father, Victoria's common-law husband and the alleged father of all five children. He had subsequently been arrested, tried, and convicted of the sexual molestation charges and was now in a detention center awaiting sentencing.

Human rights are for those who have value. Victoria, like her children, and her mother before her, didn't know her value and, therefore, had no concept of how to claim her human rights. Entitlement, yes. Having been victimized, Victoria had that feeling so common to many victims—of being owed something by somebody. What she didn't know, I sensed, is that she had the right to not only survive, but the right to get well, the right to, well, what better word than redemption? Shame, laid on early and woven like a thread through so many family histories, is a heavy, dark burden for a child to walk under. Victoria was once a child, as her mother must have been, as her children are now, who didn't get a fighting chance at life. I wanted to help her see, to catch even a glimpse that she could get beyond her history, this legacy of pain. I knew, in my heart, then, as I do now, that Victoria, of course, will make the final choice. If only I could be instrumental in helping her see that there was one.

The phone rang on Friday. It was Victoria's probation officer. Victoria was in jail again. When did she go in? I look at the dates. She was picked up days after I met with her to go over her service plan. The charges? She failed to show up for a court date regarding a traffic ticket, which violated her probation. Further, she had failed to meet the terms of her probation, which had included completing the outpatient treatment program. Her P.O. wants to know what my recommendation is. She had plenty of chances already. He's ready to give up, send her to prison for violation of probation. I take a deep breath. "What has she done?" Possession of drugs. Failure to appear. Petty theft. Not exactly an ax murderer, more of a nuisance than a menace to society.

I explained to the P.O. that I don't think the homeless shelter and outpatient program Victoria was initially referred to out of jail a month and a half ago were sufficient given the nature and seriousness of her addiction. It's my assessment that she should be at least offered the opportunity for residential long-term treatment. The P.O. sounds almost incredulous, but patient. "She talks a good talk," he says. "She had the previous social worker convinced," he says. "Frankly, I don't see her doing a thing," he says. "She sounds good," he continues, but..."

"No." I reply. "She does not really sound good. She sounds like an addict. I think she deserves a real shot at recovery. Coming out of jail and into a homeless shelter and being provided outpatient treatment when she's lost the only support system she had in its entirety, as well as her children, with a history of an addiction as severe as hers, Victoria needs long term residential treatment at a minimum to even begin to have a chance."

"You can do that," he says. "But it's not going to do any good."

"You're most likely right," I respond. "She probably won't stay. Within ten minutes of getting into treatment out of jail, she may be out the door. That's her choice. Mine is to give her the opportunity."

"Ok," he says. "Drug court is Monday at 8 a.m. Can you be here?"

I can and I am. My hope is to talk with Victoria privately, but I find out I have to whisper to her in the courtroom at the jury box where she and the other prisoners sit. She looks surprised to see me, then happy. She's dressed in a bright orange jumpsuit. I almost see the addict in her start scamming the minute she sees me. "Maybe the social worker will get me out of this jam!" I don't blame her. After

all, she's just trying to survive.

I tell her why I'm there. The court wants my recommendation regarding her case. I tell her I saw her kids the other day. The first thing they asked me was when they could see her. Genuine tears spring quickly to her eyes, then just as quickly, she looks away, and they're gone. I tell her what I think. That she needs long term residential treatment for her drug addiction. What does she think? I'm not at all surprised that she assures me she wants it too. Anything's preferable to prison. "I promise. I promise," she says.

I want to cry. I know what an addict's promises are worth and I'm not asking her for any. I just want her to have a fighting chance. How can I let her know I'm on to her? That this is one addict talking to another? That I've been there, done that? I don't need to, though. She never needs to know where I came from or that I know just a little bit about where she is. How can I let her know I can't give up on her "in the best interests of her kids." If Victoria had just one child under five, or four kids under five, we could probably find adoptive homes for each of them, and they'd have to be split up. Right now, her kids, if Victoria gets it together, have a chance. They're intact and stable at a relative caretaker's home. They're thriving and doing well there.

What Victoria doesn't really get is that the cousin has said she can't keep them past June. That means if Victoria doesn't get it together, her kids, ages four to fourteen, will have to go into long-term foster care in different homes; maybe, just maybe, someone might adopt the four year old. Everyone knows the scenario. Foster care is the least good option for the kids. Victoria is their best chance. If only she could grasp how much her well being translates into hope for her children. It is clear to me, although I have been warned, been prepared by class discussion of this reality; there is no really ideal solution for Victoria's children. Their best hope is their mother's cousin, but she says she cannot keep them much longer. I hope to convince her otherwise, but it is not something I can force. This is a hard reality for me to begin to accept. Rather than accept it, I fight fiercely for Victoria, for myself twenty years ago, for my daughter who lost her children due to drug addiction, for all the Victorias' and their children.

I look into her eyes. This time she looks back. "Don't let them throw me away." She says clearly, "Don't give up on me."

I don't know if it's the addict talking, trying to get by one more time, or if it's the children's mother talking to me. I say, "Victoria." She looks at me, expectantly. "Victoria, " I say, "You are the one who is throwing yourself away. You are the one who will decide whether or not you will be thrown away, as you put it." But I can't help but remember; Victoria is a former foster child herself. For all intents and purposes, she was "thrown away" a long time ago.

There is a long moment where we look at each other. "I'm recommending long-term residential treatment," I tell her. "What you do with it is up to you."

Victoria throws her arms around me in the middle of the courtroom. "Thank you!" I pull her arms from around my neck, embarrassed. She still doesn't get it. I can't save her. Victoria learned a long time ago to manipulate everything and everyone around her for what she perceived to be her own survival. "Victoria," I say, "This is up to you. I may have just enabled you to stay on the streets and use your drug of choice a little longer before they lock you up, maybe next time for good. I don't know. But I hope, instead, that you take this opportunity, that you make this moment the turning point for you and your family."

And I walk away. The P.O. says to me later, shrugging his shoulders, "Well, it's not like she's an ax-murderer." He agrees to and gives the judge my recommendation and Victoria is ordered kept in jail until a residential treatment facility is found. I start looking. Being new to the system I have to start at the beginning. There are lots of places, but most have long waiting lists and only a few county beds. Those beds, I'm told, should go only to the most motivated. As promised, I call the P.O. the next week to let him know I don't have a place yet, but a few things in the works.

In my coursework at Loma Linda, we talk about positive use of the self. Is that what I'm engaged in here? I know there's some countertransference going on, and I also know it's not always necessarily negative. The important thing, I've been taught, is to be aware of it. I make a mental note to process some of this with my supervisor at the first opportunity. I wonder if I have a hidden agenda in this case. Because I am a recovering addict myself, am I over

invested in making sure Victoria gets a chance at recovery? Is this survivor's guilt I feel? Am I over-identifying? In my work in the field as a second- year intern, I have sensed a rising passion within. The passion tells me something good is happening here. I have come full circle. I am now in a position to give back some of what has been given to me in my own struggle to know my own value and thus, others, and to learn to live it. My heart says to Victoria and others I meet so like her, "If only you knew...if only you knew how precious your life is, how valuable you are." I have learned that if one doesn't know her value, she cannot know how to value others. This, I think, is the crux of the work we face in child welfare.

Friday is Cindy's birthday. I have a few things I keep around; stuff donors who choose to remain anonymous give me for just such occasions. I pick out a soft, fuzzy pink and purple bear for Cindy and a game that will help her learn her multiplication tables, which she's been struggling with at school. The bear, I tell her, is a special bear that she can talk to when she misses her Mom. The four of us plan for next month's visit. We'll pack a little picnic and go to a nearby park. I look at them. Reggie is 14 and neatly dressed in blue jeans, tennis shoes, and a polo shirt. He sits on a large trunk in the garage where we're talking, dangling his legs. Cindy is animated and excited about her recent birthday and the party Anne threw for her. Seven-year-old Angel shadows her older sister's excited dance, tugging at my hand. Little Douglas is quiet as usual, seems to be in his own world. But they look safe. They're clean, well-fed. Though their lives have been disrupted they are still in a familiar world, down the street from where they used to live, in their mother's cousins home. Their faces look so bright today.

Their mother's cousin has just reminded me that there is no way she can keep them after June. She just had to put her mother, who has Alzheimers, in a convalescent home and it's all becoming too much for her to handle. This seems to have tipped her over the edge. She works full time and though her husband supports her, he's not much help with the kids. She's tried to get other members of the family to help out, but none of them do. She becomes tearful, torn with guilt. "I don't want to see them split up," she tells me. "I've become attached to them. But I've got to take care of myself. I've got high blood pressure myself, and with my mom in the nursing home now..." Her voice trails off. I make a mental note to ask my supervisor if we can provide some respite care in the hope of maintaining the placement.

Victoria's court date is coming up in April, the twelve-month or 21(f) hearing. According to the Welfare and Institutions Code, unless there is a substantial probability that the family can be reunified, I have to recommend reunification services be terminated. And Victoria has given me nothing in the scant month and a half I've had the case, to show a substantial probability. My supervisor assures me she won't sign off on any other recommendation. This is a learning experience for me. I realize it's not fair to the kids to leave them in limbo while we wait for Victoria either. This is where balancing all the pieces of the case is imperative. While I fight for Victoria to provide her with options, concurrent planning means I continue to look, given the failure of their mother to reunite with them, for reasonable options for the children. Unfortunately, I don't find the options available, unless the cousin decides to commit. I resolve to work very hard toward maintaining the placement with the cousin. At the same time, I know it's not fair to expect her to shoulder the burden.

When I talk with Victoria's P.O. the next week and still don't have a treatment facility for Victoria, he tells me about the drug court social worker and says she can help me with finding treatment for Victoria and facilitating Victoria getting in intake while in jail. In a few days, she calls and lets me know Victoria has been accepted for treatment at a long-term residential facility, where she can receive treatment for up to six months. She puts Victoria on the phone and I explain, "It's totally up to you. Reunification services will most likely be ended at your next court date and I have to recommend they be terminated. That gives you six months until the 26, or 18 month hearing, the hearing where parental rights are terminated if an adoptive home or guardianship is available for the children, and where permanent

plans for the children's care are made. If you stay in treatment from now until then, you can ask that reunification services be reinstated." I tell her about her cousin's plans not to keep the kids after June, and tell her if she stays in treatment and does well from now until then, we will probably be able to convince the cousin to hang in there a while longer. I remind her, "You are your kids' best chance."

Victoria promises me she's going to make it this time. That she realizes she has to get it together and adds, "I'm sick and tired of ending up in jail. Will you visit me at the treatment center?"

"Absolutely," I say. And silently I ask, "Are you just sick of jail? Or are you ready to get well? Is this just another escape hatch for your addictive path?"

The CalSWEC application wanted me to discuss what personal strengths and weaknesses I might bring to the field of public welfare. I addressed my weaknesses by writing:

Some would consider the following weaknesses:

A mother and father, who were also abused, abused me as a child. I abused drugs and alcohol beginning in my teen years. I am now fifteen years drug and alcohol free and eleven years nicotine free. I was a teenage unwed mother at seventeen. I was a battered wife. I was a single parent, at one time on welfare. My daughters both abused drugs and alcohol. My eldest now has five years recovery. We are breaking the cycle. I dropped out of high school. Today I am a successful high school English teacher working toward a master's degree in social work. I struggled with depression as a result of the trauma in my life and learned to live with and treat it successfully. When his eighteen-year-old mother agreed she could not care for him with her crack addiction, I carried my two-year-old grandson in my arms on a plane and into the waiting arms of his adoptive family. My little brother, his wife, and their two children accepted him gladly. Today he is a thriving, happy ten-year-old who knows both his birth and adoptive-birth family love him. I subsequently walked through the relinquishment of his two little brothers, both born with crack in their system, to friends of the family who agreed to an open adoption. I have walked though a lot of healing, with and without my family, with therapy and sometimes with the involvement of child welfare, as in the case of my grandchildren.

Most of these things I at one time considered weaknesses. Today I know they are my strength.

If and when Victoria is ready, and it may or may not be her time for reasons I can never guess at, she may come to understand that her darkest night may be the light she can someday hold out to another.

Back at my policy placement, I review the current alcohol and drug policies that, in part, determine the nature of many of the direct services to our clients. I make a mental note to discuss with my supervisor the need for more intensive treatment with available beds for our clients, to ask for her viewpoint given her years of experience in the field. I know this is being addressed at the macro level in many arenas, especially with the advent of new legislation regarding concurrent planning and welfare reform. I know it involves dollars. And I passionately believe the dollars can be best spent if focused particularly on providing viable treatment options for this population. Dollars spent on treating substance abuse can and will, in the long run, have a positive impact on society as a whole and begin to address many of the social problems, so prevalent, that continue to endlessly cycle with each generation. I resolve to learn more about what has been undertaken in addressing addiction at the child welfare level historically as well as presently.

I wonder if the policy makers truly grasp the degree that addiction plays in creating the need for child protective services in our communities. Even though I question my sanity, I toy with the idea of a doctoral degree, or at least of doing post-graduate research with the potential to make an impact on current policy regarding drug and alcohol treatment for child welfare clients. I am especially interested in looking at the impact of familial addiction on children and the possibility of intervention for children of addicts currently in the system. It makes sense to me that providing specifically designed intervention in the addictive process as it begins in the children of alcoholics and addicts, who are currently in the system, could have far reaching effects. It is a social problem of such magni-

tude and scope that it is hard to even imagine where I would start.

Then, coming back to earth, I look down at the court report I'm writing regarding Victoria's case. This, then, is where I begin.

□

The Creation of CalSWEC 1989-1992: Why Did it Work?

The author was the first Executive Director of CalSWEC and offers his perspective of overcoming early barriers in the creation of the program.

by
Bart Grossman

Bart Grossman, MSW, Ph.D., is Adjunct Professor and Director of Field Supervision, School of Social Welfare at U.C. Berkeley.

The California Social Work Education Center was, at its inception, and continues to be the largest state coalition of social work educators and practitioners in the United States. It manages and disseminates more than 16 million dollars and supports about 600 MSW students a year; it conducts in-service training, curriculum development, and research. Its membership includes 14 Schools of Social Work, 58 County Departments of Social Services and Mental Health, the State of California Department of Social Services, and California NASW. It is about to celebrate its 10th anniversary.

How did such an unlikely thing come to be? How did this alliance take off and stay on its flight path despite the vagaries of funding, turnover in leadership, institutional mistrust, and competitive interests, while many others have crashed and burned? As founding Director, I got to sit on top of the booster. The experience taught me a great deal about building and maintaining coalitions—about the power of seizing opportunity, the necessity of stubborn persistence, the inexpendibility of leadership, the political potency of good faith, and about depending on the kindness of strangers who become friends.

The inspiration for CalSWEC came from a variety of people, places, and policies, but there is no question that it all came together around Harry Specht, Dean of the School of Social Welfare at UC Berkeley. A complicated, committed, curmudgeonly charmer, Harry was the indispensable man who convinced, cajoled, connived, and sometimes cowed a group of strong, creative personalities into working together for a common cause. The background to the story was an interrupted courtship.

Graduate Social Work Education and the Public Social Services: The Second Time Around

The profession of social work in the United States, despite the distractions of the depression and two World Wars, has maintained a primary commitment to the sponsorship of nongovernmental services and individual-focused practice. At the start of the 60's there were some indicators of a new focus—government-funded cooperative-research and training endeavors, state funded stipend programs and on-site field units all based in public social service agencies.

It might have been expected that the partnership between the public social services and graduate social work education would grow and flourish. In fact, in California, as in other places, the courtship did not end

in marriage. The left-based attack on welfare institutions, which preceded the attack from the right, was in great part abetted by social work faculty and students. Nascent partnerships and field placement relationships produced more conflict than constructive change.

By the mid 70's, relationships between schools of social work and social services departments became so poisonous that the state had closed down its rather generous stipends program. The proportions of students placed for field work in public social services departments dwindled, and, to a substantial extent, for 15 years social work faculties and social welfare administrators stopped talking to one another.

However, by the late 80's, the schools of social work, the professional organizations, and the public agencies began to talk again. What changed? The saying goes, "The enemy of my enemy is my friend." The profession, the schools, and the public agencies had all endured a withering attack from the right. It was natural that they might begin to recognize the advantages of an alliance. Those social workers who did go into the public social services in the 60's and 70's, people like Richard O'Neil in Santa Clara County and Ernie Hirose in San Mateo, had been moving up in the ranks. They believed that the person-in-environment perspective made social workers uniquely qualified to serve multi-problem clients, but they were having difficulty attracting and retaining MSW workers.

The 80's saw a marked growth in the population requiring services. It also saw public outrage over both increased reporting of child abuse and ineffective social work practice by untrained and inappropriately educated workers. Courts in some states had already ordered welfare agencies to improve worker training, and the states turned to the social work schools for assistance. The federal government began to allocate resources to meet the demand for a professionally prepared child welfare workforce. Most significantly, access to Title IV-E foster care funds for training and education was eased and the federal matching share increased.

At the same time, the tremendous growth of immigrant and minority populations in California created a special recruitment issue for agencies here. Simply not enough social workers of color were being trained and hired to begin to match the diversity of the client population. Where there were workers of color, they tended to be in the lower employment ranks with limited opportunities to move up. These trends energized social work educators who were discouraged by the growth of social work involvement in private practice. Alliances with the public agencies presented an opportunity to reinvigorate the commitment of the profession to the poor and to public social welfare. Increased financial aid resources and public employment opportunities could attract both idealistic young students of color and promising current employees to the profession and to the schools. One of the loudest voices crying out against the drift of social work to private practice with the "worried well" was the voice of Harry Specht.

The Birth of BASSC

UC Berkeley School of Social Work, under his leadership, had struggled to enact a mission preparing MSWs for the publicly supported social services. It had reinvigorated its field placement relationships with county welfare agencies. When I came to Berkeley as Director of Field Education in 1981, I found only one student in a child protective service agency field placement. By 1988 all first-year students were in public agency or contract placements, and we had substantial fieldwork relationships with nine Bay Area counties.

Discretionary funds available to the School were used for student fellowships to encourage students to do additional field work in public agencies. Curriculum requirements were focused on work with populations served by the public services. New faculty were hired with this priority in mind.

Ed Nathan, Director of the Zellerbach Family Fund, became Harry's major co-conspirator. Ed had a good relationship with the local counties and he played matchmaker, funding conferences and luncheon meetings among educators and the directors of county social services. These efforts led to the formation of the Bay Area Social Services Consortium (BASSC) around 1985. This consortium, which continues to this day, consisted of nine Bay Area County Social Services department executives, the Berkeley Deans and the directors of the three regional State University Schools of Social Work: Sacramento, San Francisco, and San Jose.

Development of a Statewide Program

The success of the BASSC co-occurred with the beginnings of a training partnership among the three Los Angeles County Schools University of Southern California, CSULB and UCLA—and the Los Angeles County Child and Family Agency. Fate lent additional hands by providing an interested, forceful President of NASW, Marsena Buck, who was at the same time the President of the California Welfare Directors Association (CWDA). With the prodding of Marsena and NASW executive Ellen Dunbar, the state social work deans and the directors of county social services met for a weekend in 1988, battering each other with recriminations and finally deciding to get beyond past resentments. The meeting concluded with an agreement that the two groups would work together to create a state-supported stipends program to attract graduate students to careers in the publicly supported social services.

Ed Nathan moved events along again, introducing Dean Specht to John Lanigan of the Ford Foundation. John was having little success in a quest for social work educators interested in training a work force to meet the demands of the recently passed Family Support Act. Ed saw that Harry and John were made for each other. He also assembled a group of local foundations to provide a match for a five-year Ford grant.

It took approximately one year to write a formal proposal establishing The California Center for Graduate Education for the Publicly-Supported and Nonprofit Social Services (which became CalSWEC because our receptionist could not possible say the original name every time he answered the phone). I helped write the grant and came on board as director with a full-time secretary and two graduate student assistants, Tony Santagelo, who went on the write his dissertation about CalSWEC, and Sherrill Clark, who is now CalSWEC director.

Barriers to Collaboration

The creation of a coalition of organizations is inherently a political process. Participants generally have some interests that overlap and some that conflict. For example, the vision for CalSWEC covered all fields of public social work practice, including child and family welfare, health, mental health, and aging. But the agency representatives on the Board of Directors were county welfare directors who took the lead in initiating legislation to create a state stipend program, thereby capturing the initiative for child welfare.

The budget for the Center was channeled through Berkeley, tapping into some long - standing suspicion among the other Deans, who had little history of cooperation at the state level. Some feared that they were getting into bed with an elephant.

Between the schools and agencies, barriers to collaboration arose from differences in organizational culture including differences in values, norms, reward systems, and decision- making and operational styles. For example, agency administrators were surprised to learn that deans and directors could not commit their schools without faculty consultation.

The pace of change in the schools was slow, yet the personnel seemed relatively consistent. The agency directors had much greater authority, but they seemed to come and go much more frequently. In truth, after ten years only two of the original deans and none of the foundation social services directors remain.

What Worked

BASSC provided lessons that we applied in creating CALSWEC; other things we learned from other experiences and by instinct, accident and necessity. These included:

1. Build the partnership first: While the promise of funding was a key motivation and CalSWEC eventually unlocked a substantial state/federal funding source, we took the time to build relationships before we started looking for money. We also took the time to shape a broad common vision of significance to all members for a major change in social work practice and education. These relationships and the broad, shared vision sustained the coalition during the first difficult years.

Moreover, we sought to pursue funding in ways that would strengthen the partnership. For example, rather than employ an outside consultant to write our state contracts, we decided to learn the IV-E rules and regulations and do the work ourselves. This created a substantial

learning curve for me, but it ultimately provided us with more control of our own fate and with expertise in the central administration, enhancing the value of the coalition to its members.

2. Show them the money: It was important to demonstrate early that a coalition could accomplish things that none of the parties could accomplish alone. Although it meant diverting some energy from the longer term objectives, we immediately pursued an HHS interdisciplinary grant that no one thought we could get. Not only did we get it, but we got the largest national multi-year award ever given by the Children's Bureau. It seemed a coalition of all the social work schools and counties in California could get some attention.

That experience within the first year of CalSWEC's existence not only sustained us through the ensuing two-year struggle to unlock federal child welfare funds, it helped us to build capacity, skills and important contacts, and it taught us to work as a team. In the long run, IV-E was an ideal funding source for this coalition. The funds would never have been available to the Universities alone nor could the state have "made the match" without access to University overhead. Thus, it was a shared resource. It was also a significant enough resource to deliver on a substantial piece of the founding vision.

3. Spread it around: It was important to demonstrate that while Berkeley housed the central offices and handled the accounting, it was not going to try to grab the lion's share. Many projects were sub-contracted to other members. For example, CSULB, under Director Jim Kelly, took the lead on distance education programs. We worked with Fresno State to develop the first regional child welfare training academy. Research priorities on "best practices" studies were controlled by the agencies since they have the greatest immediate need for this information.

Funding opportunities for research, creation of training materials, innovative educational outreach programs, etc., were made available to everyone in the coalition. Project directors were funded along with faculty in each school, so the connections were multi-leveled and the budgetary impacts were significant enough to overcome personnel changes. The links among individuals expanded to become links among institutions.

4. Reframe conflict as opportunity: The greatest threat to the survival of the coalition came within the first few months when it was learned that the Los Angeles County school deans, Rino Patti, Jim Kelly and Len Schneiderman, were proceeding with a separate IV-E contract with their county agency head, Peter Digre. This was initially perceived as undercutting and greedy by the other schools. The L.A. deans saw it as responding to a unique and huge county with over 40% of the kids in the state and 600 open positions.

Some demanded that the L.A. schools choose one path or the other. To have pushed that demand would certainly have split the coalition and probably disabled the broader initiative. Instead, after some ventilation, an accommodation was reached allowing the L.A. schools to participate in the statewide effort but adjusting their participation so that their total IV-E share would be comparable to other schools.

This accommodation was based on a realistic appraisal of the differences between other regions and Los Angeles. The L.A. effort then became a sort of pilot that helped to garner state support for the broader project. The experience of weathering this crisis and of making a decision based on longer-term good rather than short-term emotions strengthened CalSWEC immeasurably. It modeled a way of operating that allowed the participants to "lay all their cards on the table" in future dealings, with the expectation that others would respond supportively to their individual needs and constraints.

5. Respect "turf": As CalSWEC began to define its program, our early processes of coalition building provided a base of mutual understanding and sympathy among the beleaguered administrators on the board. The members respected the integrity of the participating institutions and developed procedures and norms that wouldn't threaten anyone's autonomy. For example, rather than devise one standard model for all schools, the curriculum committee, under the leadership of Ben Cuellar, director at Fresno State, and Sherrill Clark, devised a set of common competencies

which each school could deliver within its own curricular framework.

The selection of social service directors for the board was left to CWDA, seen as the proper venue to manage inter-county politics. In order to respond to the pressing staff needs of the agencies, preference for student stipends was given to current non MSW employees and to applicants of color. It was agreed that agency staff who applied would require a letter of support from the county director who could thereby stay on top of personnel issues in their own organizations.

6. Balance the power: Every effort was made to ensure equity and share control. While Harry was principal investigator on the grant, he was never the chair of the board. In the first three years Anita Harbert of San Diego State was chair, so Dick O'Neil, a welfare director, was vice chair. After Dick became chair the balance was rotated ever few years. Meetings moved around the state and between schools and agencies.

Though the Center was located at Berkeley, staff devoted as much or more time to developing and supporting projects in other schools and regions. It was a sign of Harry's vision that he never clutched. He understood that CalSWEC needed to be more than Berkeley.

7.Never give up: The first year or so of CalSWEC was a dicey time for me. I began to understand the potential of IV-E, but I encountered one obstacle after another. When deans and directors asked in meetings, "When will the stipends begin," I would smile and say, "Soon, soon." I knew it would happen sooner, or later, but certainly not never—I wouldn't let myself go there.

Every system seemed to have a "pencil pusher" whose job was to prevent anything from happening. I came to understand that these pencil pushers could also become allies who would make things happen if you engaged them with respect.

When direct strategies failed, we improvised. With Andy Dieppa, Dean of San Jose State, and Dick O'Neil, Director of Santa Clara County DSS, I set out to involve the state Department of Social Services which would have to draw the federal money. However, there was no one home in Sacramento. It was two years into the Wilson administration and no one had been appointed state Director of Social Services.

Finally we decided to invite the Undersecretary of California Heath and Welfare to make a presentation to BASSC. Over lunch, we surrounded her with deans and county directors and Carol Rosen, one of those "bureaucrats" from HHS Region IX. Carol deserves the most credit of anyone for making the stipend program happen. Carol patiently explained how IV-E could support education with no additional cost to the state. Watching Carol that day, I came to understand that chiefs come and go; in the end it's the "bureaucrats" that make things happen.

Conclusion

That CalSWEC happened, that it worked, that it goes on seems both unlikely and over-determined. It was the right time, but mostly it was the right people—people like Harry and Ed and the others mentioned above who were able to dream together and willing to work together despite the unlikelihood of the dream coming true. Langston Hughes wrote, "Hold fast to your dreams for if dreams die life is a painted bird that cannot fly." It was a bumpy but a terrific flight. I'm very pleased to have been aboard. □

REFLECTIONS:

NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL HELPING

Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping (ISSN 1080-0220) is published quarterly by the University Press at California State University, Long Beach under the auspices of the Department of Social Work. Annual Subscription Rate: individuals, $30.00; libraries and institutions, $45.00; outside USA, add $15.00. Single copies: $12.00. Payment: check, money order, or credit card (Visa or MasterCard, please include number and expiration date). Please send to **REFLECTIONS: CSULB; Long Beach, CA 90804-0902**. We remind subscribers to please immediately notify Reflections of address changes, providing both new and old addresses. Please allow six weeks for address changes to take effect.

The purpose of ***Reflections*** is to publish narratives, personal accounts that describe and explain the process of helping others and shaping social change over time. The journal seeks to build a literary tradition and a record of wisdom for critical study and fruitful discovery. It encourages stories that convey a sense of immediacy, portray practice across diverse populations and capture the range and variety of strategies and systems within the helping professions. Priority is given to articles that provide a new understanding of practice. The journal publishes stories of professional helpers such as ethicists, psychotherapists, community organizers, case and group workers, policy makers, family and child practitioners, health and mental healthcare providers; educators, researchers, and administrators in the helping professions.

Reflections publishes personal accounts of professional action to aid and support human and social development. The stories have a lieterary presence and offer new perspectives on research, policy, and practice. The narrator should explain the reasons for the action, and freely identify mistakes made. The purpose of the narrative is not to demonstrate achievement; rather it is to capture experience.

Narratives are personal stories that give readers a fresh perspective about the practice of change. Written in a temporal sequence and or within a thematic structure; narratives recount the helping process. Narratives are explored within a contextual frame and supply a rich textural description of the experience, taking into account time, place, action, persons, behavior, and interaction. Narratives explain and describe events results; conflicts; complicating actions; and how, why, and what was done. In narratives, the writer evaluates the experience, whether or not there is a resolution, and explores the meaning of the experience. Some narratives end with a coda, that is, aperspective on what occured.

Writing Instructions and Submission: Manuscripts are peer reviewd. Articles appropriate to the journal'spurpose are reviewed anonymously by members of the Executive and Editorial Board. Articles are accepted based on their contribution to practice knowledge. Publication decisions require about four months.

1. Authors are expected to use the most recent APA publication format.
2. The manuscript length depends upon the temporal sequence of the event.
3. Include, on a seperate page, a brief abstract written in the same style as the narrative.
4. Place identifying information such as name, affiliation(s), title(s), address, and phone/fax numbers only on cover page.
5. Send three (3) printed double spaced hard copies of the manuscript to the editor.

Upon Acceptance of the article for publication, one (1) copy on disk in Rich Text Format (RTF) for IBM based or Mac PCs and one (1) additional hard copy will be requested. Submission of narrative poetry and photography or artwork is strongly encouraged.

Names of persons and organizations mentioned in the articles published in Reflections have been changed to protect their privacy. *Reflections* discalims responsibility for statements, either fact or opinion, made by contributors.

REFLECTIONS: Narratives of Professional Helping
California State University Long Beach
Department of Social Work
1250 Bellflower Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90804-0902
(562) 985-4626 www.csulb.edu/depts/socialwk/reflections

REFLECTIONS: NARRATIVES OF PROFESSIONAL HELPING

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, LONG BEACH
Department of Social Work - 111194
1250 Bellflower Boulevard
Long Beach, California 90840-0902

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Periodicals postage paid at Long Beach, CA.