

# LETTER FROM THE OUTGOING EDITOR AND COMMENTS FROM COLLEAGUES

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Welcome to Volume 18, Issue No. 1, of *Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping*. On behalf of the students, faculty, staff and our Director, **Dr. Christian Molidor**, we hope that 2012 brings the best for you and those you care about and serve given such challenging times. We have already experienced dramatic economic stresses on national, state, and local levels, and especially for vulnerable children, individuals, and families. In California, the CSU campuses have been hit hard by budget cuts. To accommodate the cuts and minimize impact on students, faculty, and staff, we have sad news related to our *Reflections* journal. We have not been able to increase our subscriptions to cover our costs. Therefore, after publishing 68 issues – four each year for 17 years - our last issue is this Volume 18, Number 1.

We are delighted, however, to announce that we were successful in finding a new home for *Reflections*, with an impressive new Publisher and Editor! Cleveland State University (CSU) School of Social Work, under the direction of **Dr. Murali Nair**, will be the Publisher. **Dr. Michael Dover** of the CSU Social Work faculty has been appointed Editor. Dr. Dover is eager to connect with previous Editorial Board members and authors, and CSULB subscribers, as well as prospective subscribers, authors, and Board members. Please see the “Letter from the New Editor” on page 7. Dr. Dover can be reached at [m.a.dover@csuohio.edu](mailto:m.a.dover@csuohio.edu).

Those of you who have been with *Reflections* for so many years, as readers, authors, and/or as peer-reviewers, know that it has served a special place for teaching, learning, and sharing. There has been nothing comparable among peer-reviewed journals. The general and special-theme issues have been impressive. The cover art has been dramatic and meaningful; in fact, many of the covers were turned into framed posters that

decorate the CSULB School of Social Work hallways.

In addition to publishing nine compelling narratives, this last issue aims to thank and acknowledge everyone who has served *Reflections* over nearly two decades. We begin by giving heartfelt thanks and credit to two remarkable social workers, *Reflections*' founders **Sonia Leib Abels** and **Dr. Paul Abels**. It was Sonia's vision, along with that of her husband, Paul, to create a journal that would inspire a literary tradition of publishing narratives or first person accounts describing the process of helping others and shaping social change. In their own words, Sonia and Paul describe the birth of *Reflections* almost 20 years ago in “Letter from the Founders” on page 6. In tribute to this remarkably visionary couple, we have reproduced the cover of the first *Reflections*, *Volume 1, Issue 1*, January 1995.

Upon learning that *Reflections* would stop publishing, we received a number of thoughtful comments from distinguished colleagues:

**Venessa A. Brown, Ph.D., Associate Provost for Institutional Diversity and Inclusion, and Professor, Social Work; Southern Illinois University Edwardsville:** *Reflections* allowed me to bring my years in the trenches with me. My article “From one hand to another” was a testament to the resiliency of our children and families and their graciousness to allow us practitioners to serve them during traumatic times in their lives. *Reflections* is the voice that told the stories of committed social work practitioners in the field who are often not heard. Thanks for all your work with the journal and to all of the people who found value in publishing our stories. Always with hope.

**Richard Douglas, MPH, PhD, Professor of Health Administration, Eastern Michigan University, and Visiting Fulbright Professor, Ashesi University, Berekuso, Ghana:** There are very few ways to publish narrative in a field that is narrative-driven in practice. I enjoyed my role with the Katrina issue, and the interaction with staff regarding peer-review has always been rewarding. Thanks to the California crew for all your hard work on a project that was worth it!

**Alex Gitterman, Ed. D., MSW, Zachs Professor of Social Work, Director of the Doctoral Program, University of Connecticut School of Social Work, West Hartford.** I would like to express my appreciation to the former editors and editorial staff and to the founding editors, the Abels, and to Dr. Molitor as well as the prior directors for their gift to the profession.

**Martin Kohn, PhD, Director, Program in Medical Humanities, Center for Ethics, Humanities and Spiritual Care, Cleveland Clinic, and Associate Professor of Medicine, Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine of Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH:** My connection with *Reflections* goes back to Sonia Abels' visit to Hiram College in the early 1990s, when she was a participant in one of the programs we offered through the Center for Literature and Medicine that I was co-directing at the time. I soon became a member of the editorial board and have been happy to have contributed in any small way I could over the years. It was a good run and congratulations on the accomplishments.

**Lloyd Lyter, PhD., Professor of Social Work, and Director, School of Social Work and Administrative Studies, Marywood University, Scranton, PA;** I appreciate all of the efforts that everyone at CSULB has put into *Reflections* over the years. It has filled a void that would otherwise have existed in the social work literature. I'm sure you all regret seeing it leave you, but that you are pleased to know it will live on. Best wishes to all.

**Brenda McGadney, PhD, MSW, Sessional Professor of Social Work, University of Windsor, Ontario, Founding Faculty, Social Work BS & MA programs in Management at Ghana Institute for Management and Public Administration, Legon, Ghana:** It has been a pleasure to be affiliated with such a fine scholarly journal. I will be eternally grateful for the opportunity that *Reflections* has given to first time authors to publish their work in a peer-reviewed journal. In this manner, *Reflections* provided a forum for sharing rich and authentic experiences of the often voiceless and professional helpers who sought to advocate on their behalf. I want to thank *Reflections* team of Editors and staff for their hard work in making this journal possible. To get *Reflections* published quarterly, the ongoing maintenance of the journal has been a labor of love and commitment to social justice. Stay well!

And when learning that *Reflections* has a new adoptive family, our long-time child welfare advocate colleague, **Dr. William Meezan, Director of Policy and Research at Children's Rights, New York City,** wrote: "This is GREAT news... glad that *Reflections* will live on!

This last issue of the CSULB-published *Reflections* has been assembled as a tribute to the past, but also to celebrate the future. Our cover page, designed by CSULB Professor of Art, **Robin Richesson, MFA,** displays the infinity sign. Underneath are the words, "It did not start with me and it will not end with me." Professor Richesson chose the infinity sign to represent how *Reflections* has come full circle – from Cleveland to Long Beach and back to Cleveland. She added the words you will find in the powerful first article in this issue written by **Dr. Misty L. Wall** at Boise State University. In "A Lesson Brought Home from Seminar," Dr. Wall writes poignantly about lessons learned for her students and her own insights in reframing the challenge of change. The context is her overlapping roles of being an adoptive parent of a child with severe and persistent mental illness and a social work educator in a rural intermountain area. As you

read about her mantra, you may find yourself repeating it.

Two special issues that had been planned for 2012 were on Field Education and on Mentoring, and our new publisher and editor are going to honor that commitment. Dr. Wall's article is a preview of the Field Education special issue, and we have included another preview article on mentoring here. **Dr. Elizabeth Collardey** from the University of Michigan, Flint takes us on voyage in search of those who "inspire, support, and celebrate the diversity, creativity, and success of future educators." The title is "Mentoring the Social Work Academic: Oops – I Broke Alice's Looking Glass."

Staying with the theme of children's literature, "Beyond Green Eggs and Ham – From Refusal to Acceptance to Institutional Change," **Dr. Anne C. Deepak** and her Texas State University BSW student, **Loretta Lambert**, take us on a remarkable journey. It starts with personal questioning, and ends with public action. But know that the road linking the two will be heartfelt and intriguing.

At the University of West Florida, **Dr. Michael Humble** describes the "Use of Self – Merging our History with Teaching Practice Classes." He explores the use of disclosure in the classroom, while teaching social work practice classes. What happens when there are unresolved issues among some students? Read the unique perspectives.

This issue goes international with the next three articles. **Dr. Lloyd Lyter** at Marywood University, writes about "Passing on the Passion: Introducing MSW Students to International Experiences." Coming from a Viet Nam experience, he expands his adventures to Europe and then finds strategies so students can study in England, Northern Ireland, Australia, and Scotland, to start.

**Dr. Chikako Nagai** at CSULB describes in powerful detail her experiences in "Disaster-Relief Work with the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami." As a Japanese immigrant social worker who responded to this tragedy, she uses narrative documentation of disaster-relief volunteer experiences to help identify roles and detail responsibilities in the continuing recovery process.

What happens when relatively privileged North American graduate students embark on international learning projects in settings different from their life experiences? **Dr. Lynn Parker** and **Dr. Julie Anne Laser** from the University of Denver, describe the dynamics when students participate in courses that share a goal of "Increasing Social Justice Awareness Through International Education: Two Models."

Coming back to the U.S., **Dr. Michael Sanger** from Valdosta State University harkens back to September 11, 2001 with his article titled, "What is the Opposite of Terrorism?" Dr. Sanger defines and explores the power of the opposite of terrorism, illustrated by people and organizations demonstrating the concept.

It seems appropriate to end the articles in this issue with an imaginative look at "The Billiken: Bringer of good luck and cultural competence." Doctoral student **Sachiko Gomi** and **Dr. Edward R. Canda** at the University of Kansas, explore the various cross-cultural meanings of the Billiken, a good luck figurine, which they use in classroom and professional trainings about cultural competence and spiritual sensitivity -- in Japan as well as the U.S.

When learning that *Reflections* would be leaving CSULB, former faculty and editorial board member, **Dr. Benjamin Shepard** from The City University of New York, offered to write a longer tribute to *Reflections*, which is shared on page 83.

This issue closes by wishing each of you and those you serve all the best as one era ends and another begins. As *Reflections* leaves CSU – California State University in Long Beach, thanks to the leadership over the years: our former and current Department and School directors – **Dr. Jim Kelly**, **Dr. John Oliver**, and **Dr. Christian Molidor**, and our College of Health and Human Services Dean, **Dr. Kenneth Millar** - for their support to the fullest possible extent. Thanks to the executive and editorial board members, named on the inside cover, for their thoughtful peer reviews, especially **Dr. Marilyn Potts**, associate editor, for her wise counsel and comfort. Thanks to our former editor who followed **Sonia Abels** with equal passion:

the late **Dr. Jillian Jimenez**. Thanks to **Dr. Dan Jimenez** who provided the creative cover and inside artwork for many of our long-ago issues. Thanks to **Robin Richesson, MFA**, Professor of Art at CSULB, for her creative expertise, inspiring our journal covers over the past two years. Thanks to **Georgette Bradley** for her administrative support. Thanks to our colleagues in the University Print Shop, especially Graphic Specialist **John Feijoó** for making us look like a journal. As *Reflections* transitions to another CSU – Cleveland State University – well wishes to our new publisher and editor, **Dr. Murali Nair** and **Dr. Michael Dover**. We know they have the integrity and expertise to ensure that the future volumes and issues will include those narratives that are indeed stories worth telling.

Now, please relish the poignant, compelling, and informing articles in this issue. *After, please write and submit your own stories, and contact our new editor, Dr. Michael Dover at M.A. Dover@csuohio.edu.*

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