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Introduction

Contexts and Challenges for 21st Century Communities

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In the 21st century, community practitioners around the world face extremely complex and serious challenges. Some of these entangled issues, such as the persistence of poverty, are ancient; others, such as the economic, demographic, and social consequences of globalization, have become more pressing and intertwined in recent decades due to the transformation of the market economy. Community practitioners must now confront the combined effects of escalating poverty and inequality in both the Global North and South in the context of persistent economic stagnation and calls for cutbacks in social welfare programs. Other challenges include addressing the needs of economic refugees and internally displaced persons; responding to the increased political and social tensions that have emerged in multicultural societies; and finding ways to end slavery, the acceleration of human trafficking, and the widespread problems of ethnic, racial, religious, and gender discrimination. In addition, environmental degradation and climate change will have major impacts on food supplies, available water and arable land, and the overall health of vulnerable communities.

For three decades, in established Western democracies of the Global North, increasingly polarized politics, a single-minded emphasis on economic growth and fiscal austerity, the focus on terrorism and security, the undue influence of mega-corporations, and the persistence of narrow neoliberal ideologies have produced inequitable responses to the needs of the excluded and the poor, resulting in the subversion of the essential features of democratic societies. More recently, the ongoing global financial crisis has wreaked havoc with the lives of many previously middle-class families, eroded long-established social safety nets, and placed the poor at even greater risk in the United States and throughout the European Union. The failure to develop effective policy responses to this crisis threatens the stability and legitimacy of economic and political institutions throughout much of the Global North.

In the Global South the effects of the worldwide financial crisis and recession jeopardize the existence of fragile social institutions and nascent democratic governments. Growing trade imbalances, the environmental and social impact of foreign-owned extractive industries, and the imposition

of mono-crop agricultural systems on former subsistence economies exploit the vulnerability of developing nations and threaten their national sovereignty through a 21st century version of colonialism. This intersection of social, economic, political, and environmental issues offers new challenges for community practice, from the grassroots level to the highest circles of international policy development. Both domestic efforts to promote greater democratization and effective cross-national coalitions are needed.

As the speed of communication and access to information reach unprecedented levels, committed, proactive work is needed at the local, state, national, and international levels to apply these technological advances to the strengthening of civil societies and the creation of new, more responsive institutions. By mobilizing geographic communities and communities of identity and interest, practitioners can help address this complex nexus of challenges by promoting sustainable social and economic development, organizing more effective and responsive services, engaging in planning and policy development to solve old problems in innovative ways, and advancing human rights and social justice through political and social action. As both the historical record and contemporary developments demonstrate, community practitioners can achieve these goals and create more socially just communities and a more socially just world. Difficult struggles will be required to achieve these goals, but as our past accomplishments indicate, they are certainly within our grasp.

GLOBAL CONTEXT FOR COMMUNITY PRACTICE

To meet the challenges confronting community practitioners in the 21st century, it is essential to understand the global context of local issues and problems. Over the past several decades, globalization has not only exacerbated the poverty of marginalized groups but has contributed substantially to a widening of the gap between rich and poor, within nations and between the Global North and the Global South (Lightman, Mitchell, & Herd, 2008). Globalization has altered the nature of welfare provision in industrialized and developing nations alike (Lyngstad, 2008; Olsen, 2007) and has led to an increase in transnational migration around the world (Chandler & Jones, 2003; Kim, 2009). As a result, the social work profession's historic commitment to social justice is imperiled (Polack, 2004) and issues such as immigration, public health, environmental protection, and economic well-being can no longer be understood or addressed without a global perspective (Xu, 2007).

Globalization has also transformed the nature of urban areas—a long-standing area of concern for community practitioners—as well as the relationship of cities to one another and to their surrounding regions (Mahutga, Xiulian, Smith, & Timberlake, 2010). This rapidly changing political, social, and ideological environment compels community-based nonprofit organizations to reassess their roles, develop new survival strategies, and create innovative approaches to the attainment of social justice goals in an environment of increasing economic, fiscal, and political uncertainty (DeFilippis, Fisher, & Shragge, 2009).

These changes have also intensified the stresses community residents experience, increased competition and conflict at the community level, and multiplied the pressures on community practitioners to produce new responses (Gonzales, 2007). In addition, they have affected the politics of social work practice in numerous ways. They have undermined the historic mission of nonprofits, transformed the nonprofit sector's relationship to the state, subverted long-standing interorganizational relationships, and altered the daily interactions of practitioners and constituents (Reisch, 2012).

We contend that in the 21st century community practitioners must understand the processes of globalization and confront its multiple consequences in order to serve communities effectively and to preserve the policies we espouse (Barbera, 2006; Dominelli, 2007; Lyngstad, 2008). One specific response to these developments that is particularly relevant to community practitioners is to redress

and prevent the further imposition of Western norms and values on international social work practice and social work education (Askeland & Payne, 2006). Another is to overcome the impression that globalization is a remote process in order to educate others about its direct and indirect effects on basic aspects of human well-being, including living conditions and the nature of work in both rich and poor nations (Lyons, 2006).

SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION: GLOBAL GLIMPSES

Since the publication of the first edition of this text, social work educators in the United States and other industrialized nations have made considerable strides to expand classroom and experiential content about international issues. These include the creation of short-term field experiences, longer-term internships, cross-national university and agency partnerships, and the creation of more "globalized" curricula that infuse international content in courses and expand the profession's long-standing commitment to social justice (Barbera, 2006; Collins, Kim, Clay, & Perlstein, 2009; Meyer, 2007; Rotabi, Gammonley, Gamble, & Weil, 2010).

During the past 50 years the development of social work education and practice has accelerated rapidly in the Global South. Numerous schools have been created that focus on both rural and urban issues, and more practitioners are entering the field. In some nations of the Global South, however, social work education has been long established. As Healy (2007) notes, social work education programs were established in Chile in 1925 and initiated in India by 1936. In Latin America there is a particularly strong tradition based in the extensive research of "dependency theorists" (see Chapter 8) who documented the continued exploitation of Latin American nations by North Americans and Europeans in the modern trade system. This perspective provided the conceptual framework for locally grounded, independent social work curriculum development in Latin America and has influenced practice and education for more than 30 years.

Argentina, for example, has strongly rejected the application of theories and methods from the United States and Western Europe and created a unique Argentinian social work ideology and approach to practice (Healy, 2001, p. 98). In the face of military repression and the apathetic responses of political leaders, social work faculty "struck out on their own and adopted popular education and social development theories and practice" (Garber, 1997, p. 164). They placed major emphasis on work at the community level and on social change while reducing attention to "individual and clinical interventions which were the preferred approaches of the established sectarian services" (p. 164).

Unfortunately, today, at the prompting of social work scholars—largely from the United States—a number of schools in Latin America are again adopting clinical methodologies of questionable applicability to local cultures and belief systems. As Dominelli (2007) notes, one of the risks of globalization in social work education is that instead of promoting mutual learning between educators and practitioners of different backgrounds, all too often faculty from Northern regions encourage their colleagues in the Global South to adopt established clinical theories and practices from Europe or the United States that undermine traditional values and time-honored traditions of community and small-group problem solving. This creates at least three problems. First, as a form of intellectual colonialism, it assumes the superiority of Western theory and methods. Second, these theories may not be suitable to communities that have enormous differences in history, culture, and context. Finally, it prevents social work educators in the Global North from learning the value and strength of collectivism from their Southern counterparts, as well as the excellent models of participatory community planning and development they have created.

The first school of social work in Africa was established at the University of Cape Town in 1924. As might be expected, its development was overseen by Afrikaners, with the goal of eliminating "white poverty" (Healy, 2001). The first school of social work in South Africa for non-Whites was established in 1941

through the collaborative efforts of a South African philanthropist and a Congregational missionary educated at Yale who was committed to human equality (Healy, 2008, p. 23). Over the past 70 years, social work programs at the bachelor's and master's levels have spread throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Due to a combination of economic stress, political instability, and the burden of structural adjustment debts, however, many of these programs are underfunded.

The first school of social work in North Africa opened in Cairo in 1936, the same year that Egypt became an independent state. The school adopted "the American model" of theory and research combined with a social reform approach. It was successful in promoting the development of a range of social services that amplified the traditional service work provided by mosques (Healy, 2001).

Professional-level social work in India began with establishment of the Sir Dorabji Tata Graduate School of Social Work through the generous funding of a philanthropist and the determined commitment of Clifford Manshardt, a Congregational minister/social worker who founded a settlement-type neighborhood house in 1926 in Bombay (now Mumbai). Manshardt was committed to the idea

> that the standard of social work in India could not be raised appreciably until a permanent School of Social Work was set up to engage in a continuous study of Indian Social Problems and to offer training for social work on a graduate basis (as cited in Healy, 2001, p. 15).

Initially, the school focused on urban problems and conditions affecting rural migrant laborers. Today, the Tata Institute of Social Sciences continues to thrive as a major research university and has recently established a new campus at Hyderabad. In 1946, the School of Social Work in Delhi was started with major support from the YWCA (Young Women's Christian Association) in India, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), and Burma (now Myanmar) and from the YWCA in the United States. Today, India has strong and growing undergraduate and graduate programs in social work throughout this nation of 1.2 billion persons.

Both Australia and New Zealand have strong traditions of social work and social work education and of collaborative work with indigenous populations (Gray, Coates, & Yellow Bird, 2010; Nash, Munford, & O'Donoghue, 2005). In these nations, social work practice emphasizes mutuality and the development of culturally appropriate methods for work with members of specific cultures and group contexts. For example, New Zealand is well known for the influence of Maori ideas on Family Group Conferencing (FGC). Maori leaders concerned about culturally inappropriate child welfare interventions worked with agency staff to establish a new practice approach to safeguard children and support families. In accordance with Maori traditions, FGC includes extended family members and support persons and employs practice methods that are grounded in the Maori cultural context to develop plans for children through partnerships between families and the child welfare system (Pennell, 2007; Pennell & Anderson, 2005). This model has proved quite adaptable to different social and cultural environments and is now used in multiple nations. Recently, scholars from Australia and New Zealand have also made major contributions to world social work literature, particularly regarding the application of critical theory, the development of flexible practice strategies to respond to specific needs, and the use of community-focused practice (Gray & Webb, 2010; Nash et al., 2005; Pease & Fook, 1999). In addition, three scholars—Mel Gray from Australia, John Coates from Canada, and Michael Yellow Bird from the United States—have edited a book of great value for work with indigenous groups, *Indigenous Social Work Around the World: Towards Culturally Relevant Education and Practice* (2010).

THE CONTEXT OF COMMUNITY PRACTICE IN THE UNITED STATES

As is occurring across the globe, major demographic shifts are transforming the context of community practice in the United States. In many cities and several large states, such as California, Florida, New

York, and Texas, the U.S. is rapidly becoming a minority–majority nation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Yet, despite this increasing diversity, significant disparities persist in income and wealth, political participation, and educational and health outcomes. The maintenance of high military expenditures even in peacetime, the massive "off-budget" costs of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and a regressive tax system have contributed substantially to unsustainable budget deficits, a crushing debt burden, and the fiscal inability to respond to pressing domestic issues. Attacks on long-standing social welfare entitlements, civil and workers' rights, and environmental protections increase. These problems are exacerbated by hyper-partisanship in Congress, state legislatures, and the media. Consequently, distrust of the nation's political institutions is at an all-time high, and on some critical issues the nation's political center seems to have moved far to the right.

In this context, in order to promote the interests of the widening proportion of the population that has been marginalized, community practitioners in the United States need to be better prepared to address conflicts within and across racial and cultural groups (Reisch, 2012). At a minimum, this involves the creation of diverse coalitions and a reordering of policy priorities to address common human needs (Gamble & Weil, 2010; Towle, 1965; Weil, 1994).

In fall 2011, the U.S. poverty rate was recalculated at more than 16%, a 15-year high. More than half the population and 90% of African Americans experience an episode of poverty lasting 1 year or more, and more than three fourths of the population experience at least a year of near poverty. Poverty is particularly widespread and severe among American Indians, African Americans, and Latinos, who are 2.5 to 3 times more likely to be poor, far more likely to be in "deep poverty" (below 50% of the federal poverty line), and more than 5 times more likely to experience chronic poverty (Rank, 2004). The long-term impact of poverty, particularly on children, cannot be understated.

Contrary to media images, poverty in the United States is no longer confined to inner-city neighborhoods or isolated rural areas. It is now a frequent feature of inner-ring suburbs in all regions of the nation. Since 2007, long-term unemployment and the growing number of housing foreclosures have driven many formerly middle-income families into poverty.

Future prospects are not encouraging. A simulation conducted by the Brookings Institution projects that the overall poverty rate will increase to nearly 16% by 2014 and the child poverty rate will increase to nearly 26%. If this is correct, by 2014 nearly 50 million Americans—including 20 million children—will be in poverty (Monea & Sawhill, 2010). In addition, the U.S. poverty rate is considerably underestimated, because it excludes persons who are homeless, incarcerated, or living with family members.

The widening gaps in income and wealth are also ominous indicators. Thirty years ago, the top 1% of all households earned 22 times as much as the bottom 20%. Today, they earn 70 times as much. The share of national assets owned by the richest 1% of households has grown from one fifth to more than one third of all private wealth—the most unequal distribution since 1928, the eve of the Great Depression. Inequality has increased for several reasons, including the decline of unions, outsourcing of jobs, stagnation of wages, decline in the value of public-assistance benefits, changes in tax policy, and transformation of the nation's occupational structure and corporate culture (Reisch, 2011).

These extreme inequalities create new challenges for community practitioners across the world in whatever arena they work. These include solving local problems whose sources are in the international arena; responding to cuts in governmental support for community development; and addressing changes in the role, culture, and status of nongovernmental (i.e., nonprofit), community-based organizations (see Chapter 3 in this volume).

Connected and Shared Problems: Global North and South

As noted above, many of these problems are the consequences of dramatic shifts in the political–economic environments of both the Global South

and North. Recognition of this relationship affirms Friedmann's (1992) assertion, based on his research in Indonesia and Latin America, that popular struggles take place in four overlapping spheres or domains: the state, the political community, the corporate economy, and civil society. To effect policy change at the local, national, and international levels and counteract the growing power of corporations, community practitioners across the world need to develop clearer goals and strategies that take into account the unprecedented global changes that have occurred in their communities and the international arena. In order for these strategies to produce sustainable results, however, practitioners and their allies must first work to strengthen civil society, particularly in nations where it has new and fragile roots, and expand participation in the political sphere. To achieve these goals, time-honored community practice methods in all nations need to be revitalized and strengthened with a broader range of strategies, including more effective use of new technology and research approaches. Many of the chapters in this volume focus on these issues.

Friedmann (2011) argues that strengthening low-wealth communities through the construction of internal and external associational contacts is a central means for building civil society, which Figueira-McDonough (2001) defines as "collaboration between intermediate organizations, formal and informal, to deal with common local problems" (p. 108). Community practitioners have important support roles to play in this regard, by working directly with grassroots and other voluntary organizations and by connecting them with other segments of civil society and the governmental, political, and corporate sectors. Friedmann (1992, 2011) also asserts that the state must invest in support of civil society to promote sustainable economic and social development. Community practitioners can play important roles both within government departments to develop community-based policies, projects, and programs, and as advocates for communities and vulnerable groups.

Local strategies that focus on capacity building and economic innovation are particularly needed in rural and newly developing areas, and in the informal settlements/slums/favelas surrounding the major cities of the world. Community practitioners can also help develop and apply new technologies that have the potential to open fairer and more appropriate communications, economic, and trade possibilities in agriculture, small manufacture, or microfinance (see Chapters 21 and 33 in this volume). Asset building strategies are also critical for the survival and sustainability of rural, agricultural, low-wealth, and remote communities (Barrett, Carter, & Little, 2006; Chambers, 1997; Chowa, Ansong, & Masa, 2010; Chowa & Sherraden, 2009; Krishna, 2007; see also Chapters 29 and 33 in this volume).

Sounding a hopeful note, Hoogvelt (2007) argues that where market forces abandon communities "transformative spaces are opened up in which those living in the castaway slums . . . would have the imagination and freedom to expand and develop a whole range of non-market, not-for-profit economic activities" (p. 41). He asserts that "there are lessons to be learnt" from studies of informal sectors in African and Latin American cities, subsistence sectors in South Asia, and efforts such as those of the European Network for Economic Self-Help and Local Development (p. 41). Sen's (1999) discussion in *Development as Freedom* and the work of Kabeer (2003), Nussbaum (2011), and others emphasize the centrality of capacity building for individuals and communities as the key to the creation of flourishing and sustainable communities in the global age.

Community practitioners can assist local communities in improving their position within the global economy. They can cultivate indigenous leadership; forge collaborative partnerships with local and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and business and local government leaders, particularly around community economic development; build grassroots political support; and create national and international networks to share information, experience, and support (Dominelli, 2010; Healy, 2007). The development and expansion of human and community capacities and both bonding and bridging social capital are essential components

of this work (Nussbaum, 2011; Reisch & Guyet, 2007; Sen, 1999). Figueira-McDonough (2001) and Chambers (1997), among others, emphasize that it is equally important to engage with constituents in a joint assessment of a community's capacity to initiate responsive and politically appropriate strategies (Noponen, 2005; Pennell, Noponen, & Weil, 2005).

In addition to focusing on multilevel strategies of social and economic development to address specific community problems, practitioners need to engage in social and political action beyond established community boundaries, preferably in broad-based, diverse coalitions that include service providers and progressive neighborhood organizations (Andharia, 2009; Dominelli, 2006; Shragge, 2003; see also Chapter 17 in this volume). Ensuring greater involvement of women in this work, particularly in leadership roles, is an important step in this direction for several reasons (Andharia, 2007; Dominelli, 2006; Figueira-McDonough, 2001; Fisher, 2001; Jacquette, 2009; Nussbaum, 2001; Shiva, 2010; Shragge, 2003; Subramaniam, 2006; Weil, 1986; see also Chapters 31 and 33 in this volume). Figueira-McDonough identifies "an invisible, resilient grassroots force" composed of women engaged in collective activism. Shragge (2003) and Fisher (2001) both underscore what all practitioners can learn from feminist organizations, particularly their emphasis on process and long-term goals. Subramaniam (2006) and Andharia (2007, 2009) focus on the power of women's organizing; Shiva (2005) highlights the importance of women's involvement in sustainable development (see Chapters 9 and 31 in this volume).

In the new global environment, community practitioners should also reexamine their conceptions of power, replacing a view of power based on domination and hierarchy (power *over*) with one based on equality and mutuality (power *with*). This perspective recognizes that power is a resource that grows with use, rather than a zero-sum game in which power is viewed as a finite resource that diminishes as used (Weil, 1986). This reconceptualization of power includes a focus on *empowerment* to enable individuals and groups in increasingly diverse communities to forge the solidarity required to enhance their economic and political power and generate belief in the possibility of progressive political change.

By incorporating new conceptions of power, development, and empowerment into their work, community practitioners increase the likelihood of generating and using this power to effect social justice-oriented changes. Drawing from the international development literature—particularly Sanders (1982) and Jones and Pandey (1981)—Midgley and Sherraden (2008) have similarly urged practitioners to adopt a social development perspective. In their view, this perspective transcends the century-long debates regarding residual versus institutional approaches to welfare "by encouraging the adoption of social programs that are primarily concerned not with providing social services but with enhancing the capacities of needy people to participate in the productive economy" (p. 437). To some extent, this complements Friedmann's (1992) alternative development/empowerment approach and the capacity development approach articulated by Sen (2005) and Nussbaum (2011).

Implementing this revised perspective requires both grassroots work and state investment to ensure that economic development actually "brings tangible benefits to ordinary people" (Midgley & Sherraden, 2008, p. 437). In such efforts, human development should have the same priority as economic development through a focus on projects, programs, and policies that are "productivist, investment-oriented, and committed to enhancing economic participation" (p. 438), particularly among groups that have been systematically excluded.

At the international level, the developmental perspective is reflected in several central concepts, a number of which have been explored by Sen (1999, 2005) and encoded annually since 1999 in the United Nations' *Human Development Reports* and *Human Development Indices*, initiated by Mahbub ul Haq (U.N. Development Programme, 2011). In these reports human development is increasingly discussed in terms of enhancing the skills, capacities,

and rights of individuals and groups (Nussbaum, 2011; Sen, 2005). To achieve these goals, development-oriented states would expand investments to promote employment, self-employment, and workers' cooperatives, and focus on social capital and capacity building to create and strengthen social networks within and among communities.

Friedmann (1992) asserts that these revised priorities would promote new forms of social power that can lead to increased economic viability. Development-oriented states, therefore, should "foster civic engagement and promote community solidarity . . . because they have positive implications for economic development" (p. 35; see also Midgley & Sherraden, 2008). Examples of such policy initiatives include expanding credit, developing local enterprises and asset-building programs, and supporting the multifunctional work of community development corporations and comprehensive community initiatives (Brisson, 2003; Sherraden & Ninacs, 1998; see also Chapters 23 and 24 in this volume).

To integrate these approaches into their ongoing work, community practitioners in all nations need to increase and expand the range of skills they possess to promote greater economic stability and sustainability in marginalized communities. Examples of such efforts can be found throughout the world—in the Mondragon cooperatives in the Basque region of Spain, in microenterprises in Bangladesh, in rural cooperatives in Central America and the Indian state of Kerala, and in the Dudley Street Initiative in Boston (Medoff & Sklar, 1994; see also Chapter 12 in this volume) and the Bethel New Life program (http://www.bethelnewlife.org/) in Chicago in the United States.

COMMUNITY PRACTICE APPROACHES

Communities are the context of all social work practice, and community practice is widely recognized as a major means to promote the profession's long-standing ethical commitment to social justice (Gamble & Weil, 2010; Netting, Kettner, McMurty, & Thomas, 2011). Just as our emphasis on the social aspect of our work underscores the importance of

human relationships at the community and societal levels, the primacy of social justice implies a commitment to fairness in our dealings with one another in all the major public domains of our lives. In this view, a socially just society should be based on human rights for all, systems of distributive justice, and a variety of opportunity structures, and be grounded in institutions that reflect both representative and participatory democracy.

The ethical imperative to work for social justice requires community practitioners to take action to increase fairness in the political and economic arenas and to expand social access and equality in the civil realm (Gil, 1988; Nussbaum, 2011, 2001; Rawls, 1970; Sen, 2005, 2011; Weil, 2000). It is based on the assumption that a direct relationship exists between improving the quality of life for people and communities and the development of communities' material and nonmaterial resources and social and political power. According to Rawls's (1970) conception of distributive justice, it would also require practitioners to focus greater attention on the needs of those individuals and communities who are least advantaged.

To achieve these social justice goals community practitioners work with diverse groups and organizations to improve life options and opportunities in communities—to advocate for the expansion of civil and human rights and political, social, and gender equality, and to seek equal social protections and fair social policies (Gamble & Weil, 2010; Ife, 2008; see also Chapter 4 in this volume). Community practice is grounded in values of "democratic process, citizen participation, group determination, empowerment, multiculturalism, and leadership development" (Weil, 1994, p. xxvii). The varieties of community practice range from grassroots work to social action and legislative advocacy in the international arena to change systems and institutions that undermine these values.

Four major processes that focus on the democratic revitalization of communities and societies reflect the scope of contemporary community practice across nations:

Development: The processes that focus on enabling and empowering citizens to work in united ways to change

their lives and environments and improve their economic conditions, quality of life, and social, employment, and opportunity structures. This work includes social, community, and economic development and, more recently, strategies of sustainable development.

Organizing: This includes those processes of empowerment that engage citizens in projects to change their social, economic, and political conditions. Organizing includes neighborhood organizing, consensus organizing, organizing against unjust policies or institutions, organizing communities of interest and identity at multiple levels, developing local leadership, and coalition building.

Planning: This includes the processes engaged in by citizens, advocacy groups, advocate planners, and public and voluntary sector planners to design projects, programs, and services appropriate for specific neighborhoods, municipalities, counties, states, regions, or international programs. Planning also relates to the design of more effective services, the coordination of services, and the introduction of major reforms of human service systems. It includes models of social planning, program development and coordination, and program evaluation.

Progressive change: This involves actions taken by groups to effect social, economic, and political changes that expand human rights, promote social justice, enhance human capacities, and create expanded opportunity structures. Change efforts include political and social action, legislative and media advocacy, leadership development, popular education, action research, coalition building and maintenance, and participation in social movements. Such efforts embrace levels of change from local to global. (Adapted from Weil, 1994, pp. xxx–xxxi)

PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNITY, COMMUNITY PRACTICE, AND EDUCATION FOR PRACTICE

Clearly, work to expand the rights and opportunities of disadvantaged and socially excluded populations requires efforts to change systems and institutions and to transform negative life conditions. To promote social justice and the positive development of under-resourced areas, practitioners, scholars, and researchers need to understand the context of specific communities (Fisher &

Karger, 2000); how to identify community assets, resources, and interests (Eichler, 2007; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993; Ohmer & DeMasi, 2009); and how to engage people in the process of development and expansion of their social, economic, and political power (Figueira-McDonough, 2001; Mondros & Staples, 2008; Reisch, 2008; Ross, 1955).

The idea of community has been a central aspect of both human life and social thought throughout history, and concerns about the nature and role of community have been the subject of major philosophical debates for millennia in virtually all societies. Communities can be understood either as geographic entities or as groups that share a special interest or identity as functional communities. Contemporary theories that have expanded ways of thinking about communities are presented by Robert Chaskin in Chapter 5 of this volume. Here, we briefly summarize some central ideas that have contributed to the conceptual foundations of contemporary community practice.

Roots in Early Social Sciences and Social Thought

Early Western sociologists, most notably Tönnies (1889/1955) and Durkheim (1895/1964); 19th century social theorists such as Weber, Spencer, and Marx; and 20th century social philosophers and activists such as Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and Nelson Mandela introduced different views about economics, society, and justice that continue to be debated today (Scott, 1995). Many current questions about community can be traced back to earlier conceptions of what it means to be human and to be part of a social, economic, and political collective. Every society in every era addresses these perennial questions and provides its own interpretation of *community* and *society*.

During the 18th century, writers of the Scottish Enlightenment developed the concept of *civil society,* related to the arena of "market exchange" and "contractual relations" that had emerged in Europe with the rise of capitalism (Scott, 1995, p. 4). In the late 19th century, Tönnies (1889/1955) posited a crucial distinction between *Gemeinschaft* (communities

based on reciprocity; informal, mutual, and interdependent bonds; shared norms; and face-to-face, relationship-oriented interaction) and *Gesellschaft* (communities organized around formal, larger-scale, associational, and task-oriented interaction), establishing a dualism that is still a central rubric of contemporary sociology.

Hegel saw the emergence of what we now refer to as civil society as a product of the decline of *Gemeinschaft*. With the rise of individual self-interest expressed through interdependent commercial exchange and the increasing differentiation of social strata or classes, civil society became a central organizing force (Marcuse, 1941). Today, our conception of civil society has shifted; it now represents a nongovernmental and nonbusiness sphere of society that is home to intermediary organizations, associations promoting citizen involvement, social action groups, the nonprofit social service sector, arts institutions, and other vehicles that embody community practice concerns (Figueira-McDonough, 2001; Friedmann, 1992).

Current Theories and Their Historical Roots

Current theorists and practitioners still grapple with the complex and dynamic changes occurring in the relationship between individuals and society. Echoing Hegel, there are also heightened concerns about the declining influence of face-to-face communities as a by-product of globalization, technological developments, and increased demographic mobility (Fisher & Karger, 1997; McKnight, 1997; Putnam & Feldstein, 2003). Community practitioners today face the added challenges of viewing individuals and groups in a global context, addressing the decline in long-standing supportive communities, and confronting the local impact of global economic and political forces (Dominelli, 2007, 2010; Fisher & Karger, 1997; Rifkin, 2000).

In recent years, with a few notable exceptions (such as the work of Marx and W. E. B. Du Bois, 1896, 1935), classical sociological theories and the practice approaches they have spawned have been subject to much greater scrutiny. They have increasingly been critiqued (by critical theorists, among others) for reflecting hegemonic cultural values, for being vested in current political–economic power structures, for ignoring many aspects of power, for providing little if any focus on women's actions and contributions in society, and, most typically, for not making efforts to reflect the views of marginalized groups. Although 19th and early to mid-20th century theories still offer useful concepts, it is critically important to develop, investigate, and apply newer perspectives that have emerged in the current international milieu and that reflect changing political, economic, and social conditions.

As community practice continued to evolve, it benefited from the development of theories that focused more intently on factors of larger community structure and community change. Just as 19th century social theory contributed to the conceptual foundation of early social work knowledge, community theories developed in the 1960s and 1970s had considerable influence on community practice for decades. Roland Warren is perhaps the foremost American theorist of this period; he elaborated key concepts such as horizontal and vertical relationships, internal and external linkages, nested systems, and interacting systems that perform various functions, either supporting or constraining community life (Warren, 1978).

Industrialization and the Great Change: Warren's Perspective

A major aspect of Warren's (1978) work was his delineation of the "Great Change in American Communities." If one were unaware of the original publication date (1963) of his classic work, *The Community in America,* parts of his discussion might sound eerily contemporary:

> Changes on the community level are taking place at such a rapid rate and in such drastic fashion that they are affecting the entire structure and function of community living. How shall we grasp and analyze this vast, complex, many sided, interrelated process of change? (p. 52)

It is perhaps worth noting that some of Warren's (1978) concerns are remarkably similar to those raised by Durkheim (1895/1964, 1893/1984) and Weber (1904–1905/1930) during the rise of industrial society nearly a century before. Then, as now, conditions of life and livelihood were changing—requiring a new framework for thoughts and ideas about ourselves and our world. Community theory is, perhaps, most needed in times of major social and economic change.

The factors that Warren (1978) identified as characterizing the "Great Change" occurred over a long period, but, in combination, they constituted extraordinary societal shifts:

WARREN'S (1978) "GREAT CHANGE" CHARACTERISTICS

a. A new division of labor

b. Differentiation of interests and association

c. Increasing systemic relationships to the larger society

d. Heightened bureaucratization and the depersonalization of social relations

e. Transfer of functions to profit enterprises and government

f. Urbanization and suburbanization

g. Changing norms and values (p. 53)

These factors are still present in industrialized nations; many are also occurring now in the Global South. In addition, emerging issues produced by the new global context have complicated and accelerated the changes community practitioners face. Although both industrialized and developing nations confront similar issues, the manifestations and effects of these issues will vary based on specific economic and cultural circumstances. In some cases, the dramatic shifts caused by globalization may produce more rapid changes, which, in turn, may increase social disruption. In other cases, globalization may foster the development of reactionary social and political movements. We have updated and expanded Warren's earlier analysis to reflect contemporary global challenges and to place the emerging issues we discussed above in a concise framework that illustrates which forces have changed and which have remained remarkably constant.

CURRENT CHALLENGES IN THE GLOBALIZING WORLD: UPDATING WARREN'S CHANGE FACTORS

The evolving nature of labor. The worldwide division of labor has intensified as globalization and consumerism increase and industrial production moves from developed to developing nations. Clear distinctions now exist between the qualifications for and benefits of high-tech and service-sector jobs, which have significant implications as a consequence of the increasing movement of manufacturing, high-tech, and service jobs (e.g., call centers) to

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developing nations. Around the globe more and more women are entering the paid labor force, changing societal and cultural patterns between men and women within and among families. Both unemployment and underemployment continue to increase in the United States and many other Western nations as a result of the global economic crisis, as well as the dislocation of workers due to economic and political upheavals, particularly in Southern Europe. In developing nations, the movement of production sites by multinational corporations in pursuit of cheaper labor provides more jobs—though often under problematic conditions. Urban migration continues to increase, and rural areas suffer agricultural, demographic, and economic losses.

Differentiation of interests and association has further stratified populations within and across nations through escalating wage gaps and relocations; these have produced increased poverty and concentration of wealth in many nations. The dismantling of the social safety net in the United States and many European nations increases social problems as people face growing economic and fiscal pressures, increased privatization, and a diminished quality of community life. Many nations of the Global South have been compelled by enforced structural adjustment policies or insufficient economic growth to cut back or forestall development of social welfare systems and social and community development programs.

Increasing relationships to the larger society are now experienced not only within nations but in the unprecedented impact of the global economy in both the Global South and North. Results in the North include the loss of millions of semiskilled and low-wage jobs for American and European wage earners. In the Global South, despite the increase in jobs and paid employment (especially for women), where factories and work sites have relocated, work often takes place in unsafe and unhealthy conditions. Developments in both hemispheres reflect the increasing power of multinational corporations and international financial institutions, changing international alliances, and the often negative impact of globalization on the physical environment.

Bureaucratization has lessened in some sectors of the industrialized North, partly because devolution has resulted in the transfer of responsibility for service delivery from federal governments to state/provincial and local governments, often without adequate funding to deliver these services effectively. In the South, bureaucratization grows along with industrialization. In both hemispheres, state and local governments continue to face fiscal pressures as a consequence of structural adjustment policies or economic crises that have reduced funding for many social services.

Urban decay and suburbanization in the Global North and increasing poverty, migration, and the growth of mega-cities in the Global South. Prior to the recent economic recession and fiscal crisis, many urban areas in industrialized nations experienced revitalization and gentrification. As the U.S. economy worsened, however, inner-city neighborhoods, as well as inner-ring suburbs, faced increasing economic pressures, particularly because of the housing, employment, and foreclosure crises. In many Northern nations, the distance between the workplace and home in larger metropolitan areas has continued to increase, particularly for low-income workers. In addition, racial and economic housing segregation is increasingly prevalent, as reflected in the expansion of inner-ring suburban mass housing—largely for immigrant populations—in nations from Italy to Sweden (e.g., Hessle, 2007). In many regions of the Global South, massive migration to urban areas (because of drought, civil conflict, or the decline of subsistence agricultural economies) has swelled the populations of mega-cities, such as Lagos, Delhi, and Sao Paulo, and produced the extensive overcrowding and extreme poverty of mega-slums.

Changing values. Our current era is a time of disturbing value flux in areas related to community practice across the world. Whereas Warren (1978) discussed issues of race and class in America and expressed concern regarding the decline of a sense of community, our current period reveals the continuing effects of institutional racism in the

United States, in such areas as health disparities and inequalities in employment, housing, and education, despite the gains of the Civil Rights Movement (Halpern, 1995; Wilson, 1987). There are also growing racial, ethnic, and religious divisions in parts of Europe, and many areas of the Global South continue to struggle with the economic and social legacies of colonialism and extremes of poverty and wealth. Thus, the exclusively market-driven values of global capitalism offer serious challenges to both industrializing and post-industrial societies (Fisher & Karger, 1997; Gamble & Weil, 2010). In many parts of the world, increasingly polar political ideologies, a declining sense of community, the privatization of formally public spaces and functions, and the emergence of serious questions about the future of social safety nets have often reduced the political will to strive for the common good.

Persistence of poverty and associated problems. Poverty has increased globally, particularly since the recent global economic crisis. UNICEF (2012) reports that 50% of the world's children are seriously affected by poverty or the AIDS epidemic, as well as high rates of malnutrition, infant and child mortality, child labor, and child slavery and sex trafficking. The feminization of poverty continues in developing countries around the globe (Cox & Pawar, 2006). Several chapters in this text provide in-depth discussion of issues related to global poverty.

Natural disasters and environmental degradation. The impact of increasingly frequent natural disasters and their devastating social, economic, and political implications have greatly affected communities, particularly among chronically vulnerable populations (Cox & Pawar, 2006). Environmental degradation as a result of natural disasters, the effects of global warming (e.g., extreme weather conditions, drought, and famine), and the exploitation of natural resources have greatly affected communities around the globe.

Displacement and refugees. This wide range of economic, political, social, and environmental problems has caused increasing numbers of people, especially the poor, to leave their homes in search of employment, physical security, assistance, or enhanced economic opportunities in other nations (Cox & Pawar, 2006). As a result of civil wars and international conflicts between nations that share boundaries and because of persistent problems such as drought, an estimated 50 million people worldwide are currently displaced from their home areas.

Global health problems. HIV/AIDS and risks of rapidly spreading epidemics (e.g., SARS) without effective treatments are pervasive, particularly as a consequence of increasing international travel and transnational migration. HIV/AIDS has devastated much of sub-Saharan Africa, resulting in the loss of key sectors of the workforce each year (e.g., 1,300 teachers were lost in Zambia in one year; Cox & Pawar, 2006). Other major global health crises include child mortality in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia due to polluted water and unsafe sewage disposal; malaria, which kills up to 1 million people a year in tropical areas; and tuberculosis, which kills up to 2 million people a year (Cox & Pawar, 2006).

Clearly, contemporary societies are experiencing a major shift to an interdependent global economy, which has produced increasing privatization, shifting national alliances, and the growth of cyber communication. Communities in both the Global North and South must now grapple with larger-scale and much more rapid change. Careful analyses of our current situation, knowledge base, and research are needed to determine optimal practice strategies to deal effectively with these myriad problems.

CURRENT SITUATION: COMMUNITY IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD

Community practice in social work has entered its second century, and although it flourishes in many aspects and many places throughout the world, significant opportunities and difficult challenges lie ahead. The shifting geopolitical context presents national and international challenges for the further development of democracy around the world. This

is especially true in nations such as Russia, where formal democratic procedures, such as voting, have been implemented without allowing people the liberty to choose freely or participate in civil society (Zakaria, 2003), or in Syria, where "the UN estimates that more than 8,000 people, mostly civilians, have been killed, and tens of thousands have been displaced since the protests . . . began in March last year" (U.N. News Centre, 2012) and where countless other civilians continue to endure military attack, arbitrary imprisonment and torture, and other forms of political repression.

During the Arab Spring of 2011, protesters in Egypt and Tunisia toppled long-established autocratic regimes and promoted hopes of democratic reform. (Protesters were collectively named Man of the Year by *Time* magazine.) As the election of representative governments in these nations proceeds, however, it is important to remember that voting itself does not create a democracy, particularly when entrenched elites, such as the Egyptian military, retain substantial economic and political power or, as in Libya, when the intensity of a revolutionary conflict complicates the formation of a representative government.

In order for the democratic promise of the Arab Spring to be realized, the young, technology-savvy protesters who played a significant role in these movements—many of whom learned about protest methods and strategies from former protesters in the Czech Republic and other Eastern European nations via the Internet or cell phones—must remain involved to sustain the development of civil society. Most nations of North Africa and the Middle East do not yet possess the deep and broad network of NGOs and other civil society institutions required to meet the needs of the thousands of people who have been disrupted, internally displaced, detained, and tortured. New governments face the complex challenge of establishing viable welfare systems to assist the very poor and disabled, promote economic development in both rural and urban areas, and establish social services for a wide range of needs, including assisting people in overcoming the effects of serious trauma.

In many African nations, strong citizen efforts are attempting to build workable democracies. However, the oppressive methods of colonial administrations have persisted in many post-independence regimes. African governments have also struggled to overcome the effects of the artificial demarcation of national boundaries by European powers and to diminish ancient religious, tribal, and clan animosities, even as internal and international competition for valuable resources has intensified.

Preparation for Contemporary Community Practice

Contemporary responses to the above crises among social work educators reflect nations' specific histories and current problems. For example, a strong tradition of social work education exists in sub-Saharan Africa, especially in South Africa, Kenya, and Ghana. In some nations, the severity of the HIV/AIDS crisis has prompted social workers to assist with patient care and establish community caring structures for mutual support. Numerous international and African NGOs, such as the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, have formed partnerships to work on this issue. Aside from responding to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, African governments in nations such as Zimbabwe often do not provide continuous support for schools of social work and social work students. Some nations have had to make drastic cuts in their allocations for social and human services because of the pressures of the structural adjustment policies established by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Nevertheless, in Africa there is still a strong cross-national infrastructure of social workers that is building professional knowledge and schools that attempt to prepare students for work in areas of extreme poverty, often through partnership-based asset-development programs (see Chapter 29 in this volume).

In Latin America and the Caribbean the status of social work and social work education varies considerably as a consequence of the unique histories of the nations in the region, centuries of colonial

control, and the oppression of indigenous peoples, which continues in some states even now. In large parts of Central and South America, the methods of conscientization and Popular Education developed by Paulo Freire are considered the foundation of pedagogy in both education and social work. However, the degree of support for such methods varies among nations because of different political ideologies. Although there is a strong and growing NGO sector, the need for more civil society institutions persists. As discussed above, some schools of social work in the region are moving rapidly toward clinically oriented practice, while others struggle to maintain a focus on community work, direct work with the poor and their organizations, and advocacy. In nations as diverse as Brazil, Bolivia, and Venezuela efforts to maintain a community focus within social work education and practice have been strengthened by the advent of populist regimes and, in Mexico, by the influence of the Zapatista movement in the state of Chiapas.

In Asia there are multiple approaches to social work practice, as there are multiple types of welfare regimes and political systems. Scholars studying social welfare systems have identified Japan, Taiwan, and Korea as developmental or productivist regimes (Gough, 2004). In China, a considerable and increasing number of schools of social work focus on direct practice, although schools serving rural areas are more likely to focus on economic and social development. Practitioners in China also confront major problems resulting from the connected issues of abject rural poverty and the industrial poverty of millions of migrants who have left the countryside to work in cities. Social work in India still has roots in the mutual aid perspective of Gandhi and its traditions as a socialist democracy. There are now hundreds of schools of social work—many with a central focus on community development and on women's empowerment and economic independence. India has also fostered the development of special schools of social work for Muslim and Christian minority populations. Given the range of regional issues and challenges, greater emphasis on community practice and the growth of the nonprofit sector would be useful, particularly concerning practice focused on poverty amelioration and livelihood development.

Long-established Western democracies, particularly the United States, face major challenges resulting from reduced political participation and the risk of equating national interests with multinational corporate interests. In addition, many Western nations, including the United States, are increasingly multicultural and are dealing with the effects of rapidly growing immigration from the Global South. Although immigrant labor is needed in the economies of the Global North, the expansion of immigrant populations has produced many social tensions—often in the form of racial, ethnic, or religious intolerance.

While the social work literature in the United Kingdom has increasingly focused on anti-oppressive and anti-racist practices (Dominelli, 2003, 2008), neither governments nor civil societies have as yet successfully adapted to these new dimensions and norms of diversity. Governments and citizens of Western democracies have much to learn to adapt effectively to population changes and work collaboratively with newer citizens for the common good. While they possess growing knowledge about multicultural and intercultural practice, community practitioners have more to learn to enable them to develop positive intergroup relations and common political and social concerns. In this regard, there are numerous lessons to be obtained through the study of the group-focused work undertaken during the Settlement Movement, as well as from the growing research on intercultural/multicultural communication (see Chapter 20 in this volume).

Thus, both traditional societies and long-standing democracies are challenged by various economic, social, and political pressures to ensure full human rights for marginalized and excluded populations, especially women and girls and racial and religious minorities. The United Nations' *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* offers guidance in this regard, but within and across nations, peaceful means of expanding human rights are not sufficient (see Chapter 4).

Finally, globalization poses challenges not only to established systems, institutions, and customs but also to the survival of the world's poorest and most vulnerable populations. Every day, people perish for lack of food and potable water. Vital infrastructures are often lacking or nonexistent in post-industrial and developing states alike. We are bombarded daily with images of injustice and denial of opportunity, in our own communities and, through the media, around the world. Persistent and intensifying social problems require major governmental policy changes, stronger international compacts, and intensive social and economic development through public and nonprofit auspices. In all parts of the world, the solutions to these problems will require the collaboration of multiple disciplines and the education of more and better-prepared community practitioners who are able to work in diverse settings, develop innovative programs and services, forge new alliances, and advocate effectively in complex political/economic climates. There is also an increasing need for community practitioners who can facilitate and assist local leaders and organizations in strengthening community bonds, developing resources, and dealing with governmental structures to improve the quality of life for their residents in ways that enhance inclusion and social justice and decrease the exclusionary barriers of racism, sexism, classism, and homophobia. In response to this need for community-focused interventions, workers in other fields have increased their efforts. Social workers need to expand their historic involvement to strengthen communities and increase democratic participation at all levels of society.

CURRENT MACRO AND COMMUNITY PRACTICE EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND THEMES

The emergence of a multipolar and increasingly interdependent global community has potential benefits for practitioners and educators. While throughout most of the 20th century Western models of social work were imposed on the rest of the world, during the past several decades community practice frameworks developed within other nations have become increasingly influential. This cross-fertilization of ideas began in the 1970s with the exposure of North American and European practitioners to the conscientization movement in Latin America, particularly the work of the Brazilian educator and activist Paulo Freire (1970/2000b, 2000a). Other concepts that emerged from Canada (*animation* and structural social work) and the Netherlands (*agology*) have also had considerable influence (Mullaly, 2007; Reisch, Wenocur, & Sherman, 1981–1982). In different ways, these concepts transformed Westerners' thinking about community practice by emphasizing the development of community members' critical consciousness and power. Previous work on leadership development has been strengthened by this newer emphasis along with increasing attention, particularly in the Global South, on the "capabilities" approach for building capacities among local groups and leaders (Nussbaum, 2011; Sen, 2005).

This newer learning grounded in research and practice from the Global South has propelled seven contemporary trends.

THEMES AND TRENDS IN CURRENT COMMUNITY PRACTICE

1. Development of a more fully realized empowerment perspective for practice—enriching the work of Solomon (1976, 1985), Gutiérrez (2003), Gutiérrez and Lewis (1999), Staples (2004), Chambers (1997), and Dominelli (2011) with a Freirean focus on developing power through conscientization (Freire, 1970/2000b) and with the capability and capacity development focus of Kabeer (2003), Sen (1999), and Nussbaum (2011).

2. Increased focus on identity- or interest-based conceptions of community (Delgado, 1994; Rivera & Erlich, 1998; see Chapters 11 and 28 in this volume).

3. Expansion of assets-based approaches to practice and commitment to ameliorating global poverty (Chowa & Sherraden, 2009; Friedmann, 2011; Hulme, 2010; McKernan & Sherraden, 2008; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

4. Increased focus on social development (developmental perspective), capacity/capability development, and social capital development, although the meaning, emphases, and applications of these concepts differ somewhat across nations (Chambers, 1997; Midgley, 1995; Midgley & Sherraden, 2008; Delgado, 1999, 2011; Nussbaum, 2011; Reisch & Guyet, 2007; Sen, 1999).

5. Increased focus on rights-based practice (Ife 2008; 2012). Human rights literature is expanding rapidly with authors from many parts of the world; while there are arguments related to universalistic vs. relativistic views— it is critical that all people be viewed and treated as fully human. As Shirin Ebad has stated: "Cultural relativity should never be used as a pretext to violate human rights" (UNDP, 2004, p. 23).

6. Increased focus on participation, participatory methods, and community-based participatory research emerging from these ascendant concepts (Chambers, 1997/*2008*; Noponen, 2005; see Chapter 14 in this volume).

7. Increased focus on sustainable development and the relationship between environmental justice and social work practice, particularly at the community level (Shiva, 2005, 2010; see Chapter 9 in this volume).

Lessons From a Globalizing World

Today, Internet technology has vastly enhanced the possibility for community practitioners to learn from the rest of the world. In developing nations such as Brazil, China, India, and South Africa the concept of community practice is being expanded in innovative ways to address specific environmental contexts and to link community practitioners' traditional concerns about poverty and social exclusion to emerging issues such as climate change (Andharia, 2009; Shiva, 2005). Nations with established social work traditions, such as Australia, France, Germany, and Great Britain, have also developed new directions for community practice (Brake & Deller, 2008; Dominelli, 2011; Gray & Webb, 2010).

For example, Brazil has pioneered the use of participatory budgeting, an empowering method of decision making that gives community residents genuine democratic input in identifying problems and allocating resources to address them (Goldsmith, 2007; Lorenz & Menino, 2005). This idea has spread around the world and is just being introduced into North America. In India, community practitioners have linked the goal of social justice explicitly with the idea of environmental justice in both theory and practice. The social work program at Rajagiri College in Cochin (in the state of Kerala) has inspired the entire campus to "go green," demonstrating on a daily basis the importance of environmental concerns. It also involves all students in sustained efforts to assist nearby rural villages. Tata Institute's School of Social Work emphasizes social and community development and has centers focused on community development and women. The Institute also sponsors a Centre on Disaster Management and Research.

Social work programs in Hong Kong have responded to the enormous needs on the Chinese mainland by expanding student recruitment and satellite programs and emphasizing program, organizational, and leadership development within the nongovernmental social service and health care sectors. They have also promoted the integration of community practice and economic development issues into their curricula, particularly the needs of transplanted rural populations. South African educators and scholars have long recognized the

connection between economic and social development and have avoided the dichotomization of these issues that often characterizes Western approaches (Weil, 2000). This model has influenced the development of programs throughout sub-Saharan Africa in nations as diverse as Ghana, Nigeria, and Malawi.

Australian educators are working with organizations such as Oxfam International on community development projects among the indigenous population and throughout Southeast Asia. In France, where community organization, or *animation sociale,* has long been taught in specialized schools and been considered a distinct occupation, there is a growing emphasis on the integration of immigrant populations into a society that was formerly politically diverse but demographically homogeneous. Similarly, British scholars such as Dominelli (2010) and Payne (2005) are focusing on the issue of social exclusion in an era of fiscal austerity. In sum, for community practitioners, the possibilities for creative syntheses of these trends have never been greater.

Schools of social work have continued to multiply in the United States. There are now more than 200 Master of Social Work programs in the country. Many of them offer courses in community practice, community organizing, community development, and macro practice (combining community and management practice). We have conducted a web-search survey of 65 of these programs to ascertain whether they offer macro or community practice concentrations and, if so, what methods they offer. The results of this survey are presented in Appendix A. We are also pleased to present the curriculum language for a set of competencies for macro practice in the United States, developed by the Association for Community Organization and Social Administration (ACOSA) and the National Association of Social Work Managers (see Appendix B). The competencies are divided equally between community practice and management practice. ACOSA's goal was to have macro practice faculty develop the competencies for macro curricula. Dorothy N. Gamble led the competency development project over several years, with considerable

member participation and organizational support from Tracy Soska and Sondra Fogel of ACOSA. We hope that macro practice faculty at U.S. schools of social work will find the ACOSA competencies useful in their curriculum planning, as they are designed with both present and emerging challenges in mind.

CONCLUSION

In the years ahead, community practitioners around the world can make important contributions to local, national, and international efforts to respond to the dramatic changes produced by globalization and its multiple consequences. In order to promote human betterment, enhance human capacities, and protect human rights, new strategies are needed to address these issues. This volume is designed to help students, faculty, and practitioners gain new insights into the implications for community practice of the massive economic, social, political, and technological changes we face. It suggests ways to refine and adapt classic methods of organizing, development, planning, and social action, and encourages the development of new approaches to deal with the local and regional impact of global changes.

Social work curricula need to be globalized with greater attention to learning from local to global and global to local. While many schools in the Global North have made major efforts in this direction, there is much still to be done. Indeed, the curricula perspectives of schools of social work in the Global South are in general much more effectively "globalized" than are those of industrialized nations.

Abye Tasse, dean of the School of Social Work at the University of Addis Ababa and former president of the International Association of Schools of Social Work, has discussed this imbalance at several conferences. In 2003, during a discussion of international social work and global education issues at the Council on Social Work Education's Annual Program Meeting in Atlanta, after observing that internationalizing/globalizing curriculum for schools of social work was a Western preoccupation and need, Dean Tasse sagely noted that schools in the Global South already had internationalized/globalized curricula

for two major reasons: (a) as a response to their experiences with colonial powers that imposed Western models and approaches or (b) as a consequence of the inexorable forces of globalization that had already altered cultures and perceptions of local knowledge and integrated schools into a global system that favored Western knowledge, theory, and approaches (A. Tasse, personal communication, February 2003; also reported in Dominelli, 2007). Fortunately, many schools in the Global South are now reclaiming their own knowledge and culturally grounded practice. It is time for schools in the Global North to learn from their colleagues in the Global South—both because of the increasing diversity of their own populations and, more important, because educators in the Global North can learn valuable lessons about culture, humanity, respect, and group-based helping from them. In today's context, mutual learning, mutual respect, and reciprocity are the bases for advancing social work knowledge and community practice throughout the world.

This handbook is based on the principle that knowledge is a major form of power for community members, students, and practitioners. This knowledge base consists of a growing range of theories, concepts, methods, strategies, and skills to promote effective community practice and to assist in rebuilding and expanding the reach and capabilities of civil society in the 21st century (Figueira-McDonough, 2001). All community practice approaches require multiple skills, particularly those of facilitation and leadership. As history demonstrates, the pursuit of democracy, social justice, and sustainable development is never easy; perseverance and a long-term perspective are necessary to improve the future well-being of local and global communities.

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