

# SSA magazine

A PUBLICATION OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION



## Beyond the **Minimum Wage** What's Needed to Improve Low-Wage Work

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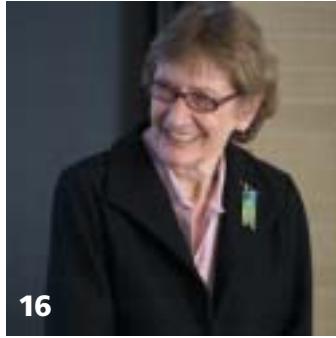


# SSA magazine

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**O**N BEHALF OF THE FACULTY OF THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SERVICE ADMINISTRATION, I am pleased to welcome you to the re-launch of our signature publication, *SSA Magazine*. We hope this magazine will serve as a forum to introduce important social work and social welfare issues and to highlight the impact of SSA's faculty, alumni, and students.

Social work as a field—and at SSA in particular—is concerned with a wide variety of topics. Our first issue of the new magazine demonstrates the far-reaching impact of the School's faculty, research, and teaching on the world around us:

- **Waldo E. Johnson, Jr.** is working with the United Way of Metropolitan Chicago to use knowledge gained through research to influence program design and funding decisions for programs to benefit African-American boys.
- **Sarah Gehlert** is leading a transdisciplinary team of scientists seeking to uncover the causes of breast cancer and the reasons behind racial disparities in its occurrence.
- **Susan Lambert** and **Julia Henly** are working with employers to determine how low-income jobs can be restructured to provide more predictability and security for workers.
- **Sharon Berlin** has spent her career developing a cognitive-integrative theory for clinical social work practice, a theory that reconciles the practice of psychotherapy, with its focus on a client's perceptions and beliefs, with the hard realities of many people's difficult life circumstances.
- **Gina Samuels** and **Yoonsun Choi** are among a new cadre of researchers examining aspects of life as experienced by multiracial people in American society.

The students at SSA and graduates also continue to impact social welfare in exciting and important ways. For example, in this issue you can read about the efforts of **Scott Petersen, A.M. '02**, and **Mary Bunn, A.M. '05**, to build a mental health system in Iraq, and the prestigious fellowship given to **Jewell Brazelton**, a doctoral student, to study the impact of disclosing childhood sexual abuse suffered by African-American women.

We very much want this publication to be the beginning of a dialogue between the School and you, our alumni and friends. We plan to publish your comments and feedback as "Letters to the Editor" in future issues of the magazine. We also welcome your suggestions for future stories. Please send your thoughts to us at [alumni@ssa.uchicago.edu](mailto:alumni@ssa.uchicago.edu).

Sincerely,



ROBERT CHASKIN  
*Associate Professor and Chair, SSA Magazine Editorial Board*

## SSA *Sui Generis*

**S**SA is an institution *sui generis*, a one-of-a-kind place, a social welfare institution unlike any other. Similar to the University of Chicago of which it is a part, the School of Social Service Administration has a unique place in higher education—in the caliber and influence of the ideas produced, the leaders prepared, and the organizational and community partnerships fostered. As we plan for the Centennial of the School in 2008, the record of accomplishment of this institution is really quite remarkable.

The overall scope of SSA tells part of the story: 7,000 alumni in all 50 states (plus Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands) as well as 32 other countries, who are in leadership positions in the public and private social service and community development sectors. These alumni reconnect with and support the School through more than 400 educational and research partnerships in Chicago and around the world.

More difficult to quantify has been the impact of the ideas coming out of the “Chicago School” of Social Service Administration. SSA is well known for helping to lay the foundations for modern social welfare policy, for systematizing existing knowledge, and for developing specific approaches to social intervention. A few examples of the contributions of SSA faculty: Helen Harris Perlman’s problem-solving process, Irving Spergel’s comprehensive community model of youth gang violence reduction, Bernece Simon’s generalist model, William Reid and Laura Epstein’s task-centered approach, Froma Walsh’s delineation of normal family processes, and Sharon Berlin’s cognitive-integrative approach to social work practice. The impact of this institution on the profession of social work and the field of social welfare has been powerful and far-reaching.

SSA’s founding mothers Edith Abbott and Sophonisba Breckinridge were prescient in understanding that training for social welfare work would require a distinctive intellectual environment that was perhaps uniquely available at the University of Chicago. They had received their training in the social sciences at Chicago during the first years of the University, when social scientists were attempting to define the role of disciplinary inquiry in social reform. Out of the intellectual rough and tumble with the men of the emerging sociology department, and the political rough and tumble with politicians and social activists in Chicago, they defined a framework for social welfare training that would influence the



**Jeanne C. Marsh**

development of the profession for decades to come. It was Edith Abbot's sentiments that only in a university, and only in a great university, could social workers be appropriately and rigorously trained.

Each and every graduate of the School carries forth the values of rigorous analysis in the service of social justice as an imprimatur of the University and the School. Graduates work in diverse arenas—schools, hospitals, social service agencies—and are engaged in diverse activities related to policy development and evaluation, community organization and development, program management, and direct provision of services. Despite the focus of their professional activities, graduates agree that SSA is an institution that is formative in their professional work and in their lives.

This was powerfully conveyed to me in a recent visit with an SSA alumna in Northern California, a 1947 graduate whose career in child welfare in Alameda County was extremely distinguished and who was still actively organizing reforms in her retirement community. When she reviewed with us the profound influence of her teachers, Edith Abbott and Sophonisba Breckinridge, she became a bit emotional. She apologized and explained, “I just hope I have lived up to their expectations.” A more recent graduate from New York City, one who has moved out of social work into business, explained that his experience in the School enabled him to have ideas that were “bigger” than he was, that is, to think critically and originally about complex problems. These skills have been valuable in developing and advancing his business. Further, when I encounter SSA graduates in diverse professional venues—in meetings of researchers, teachers, practitioners and others—the most impressive person in the room invariably turns out to be a SSA graduate. The values that shaped the founding of the School are embodied in the ongoing work of its graduates.

Clearly, my respect for SSA as an institution and its graduates is profound. Some of you are no doubt thinking that my assessment is, indeed, a bit “over-the-top.” You may even be concluding that my time as dean of SSA has eroded my objectivity and clouded my judgment. Here I must assert the objectivity of my perspective by virtue of the fact that I myself do not hold any University of Chicago SSA

degrees. While I definitely have received a great education at the University of Chicago, my own social work education comes from an institution just 300 miles east of Chicago with an excellent social work school and an equally fine football team (Go Blue!).

By virtue of shared values, shared experiences, and shared commitments, you, as SSA graduates and friends, are yourselves *sui generis*, a unique and quite remarkable group. You are the leaders and innovators in our field, the professionals who are thinking most clearly and critically about the challenges before us and devising the solutions to address those challenges. A colleague recently pointed out, with some distress, that we are currently preparing students for social work roles and positions that do not exist, where they will use technologies that have not been invented to solve social problems that have not yet been identified. But this is not new for SSA. Nonetheless, it is the genius of SSA graduates that you have used your educations so effectively to meet the emerging challenges of a rapidly changing society.

This re-launch of *SSA Magazine* is one part of an accelerated communications strategy designed to raise visibility and extend the influence of SSA. We hope that as a result of more frequent and effective communication from the School, we can create a sense of community with the School, a sense that you can call on the institution and other graduates for regular guidance and support. And, as we use the occasion of the Centennial to celebrate the School and its accomplishments, it is my hope that we can come together to further strengthen and invest in its future.

Whether you remember it or not, when you graduated from SSA, the president intoned, as she or he has for nearly 100 years: “By the authority vested in me... I express the hope that your work will promote the welfare of individuals and the achievement of a socially just society.” Evidence is ample that graduates of SSA have taken this presidential exhortation seriously. SSA is an institution that has had a powerful and enduring impact on you, as well as on the profession and the field. You have been shaped by its ideas and values. And you are uniquely qualified to continue its important mission of promoting social justice and individual well-being. ♦

**Each and every graduate of the School carries forth the values of rigorous analysis in the service of social justice as an imprimatur of the University and the School.**

*Jeanne C. Marsh, Ph.D., is George Herbert Jones Professor and dean of the School of Social Service Administration.*

# Boys to Men

**Focusing on African-American males from 10- to 16-years old**, the African-American Initiative of the United Way of Metropolitan Chicago aims to bring resources to an underserved population through partner agencies in five Chicago neighborhoods. In 2005, as the program was being developed, United Way asked SSA Associate Professor Waldo E. Johnson, Jr., director of the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture at the University of Chicago, to help frame the issues.

Johnson continues to work with United Way on the project, and in this Conversation, talks with Janet Froetscher, the president and CEO of United Way Metropolitan Chicago, whose experience includes serving as the chief operating officer of the Aspen Institute and executive director of the service arm of the Civic Committee of the Commercial Club of Chicago. Their wide-ranging discussion touched on everything from how family impacts poverty to how researchers can better influence work in the field.

>>> • <<<

**Froetscher:** One of the reasons we started to focus on African-American males was the feedback from the agencies we work with. They said, "It's a lot easier to get resources that focus on mothers and children; it's a lot harder to get resources that focus on males."

**Johnson:** In a number of instances, community resources have not been targeted toward males just because of the way male identity is constructed in American society. Males are expected to be able to be self-sufficient. They're expected to be responsible for their families. But such perspectives fail to acknowledge that African-American males are integral victims of a U.S. legacy of slavery, and as a result, the African-American population remains disproportionately poor. African-American males are specifically unsupported with community resources because they are often viewed as

threatening—boys as well as adult males.

So part of this project is to say that if African-American males can enhance their educational and labor force preparation during their developmental stages, more of them support themselves and pull their families out of poverty. Unfortunately, women in the U.S. earn between 72 and 76 cents of every dollar that males earn when they perform comparable paid work. So focusing on African-American male development not only enhances their potential self-sufficiency but also has an important implication for strengthening African-American families.

**Froetscher:** Our partner agencies have asked a lot of community stakeholders—kids, parents, community leaders, African-American girls—to articulate the issues facing young African-American males. I think they

thought they would hear the needs were about things like mentoring or Chicago Public Schools. But what they heard instead, very consistent among all those groups, were things related to crime—inability to travel or gangs—and parents. What they heard very loudly was, "I need you to teach my father how to be a father."

**Johnson:** We need to develop family and community enhancement strategies that enable African-American boys to

holds great promise. I'm wondering if you are seeing this across all of the communities that you're investing in via this initiative.

**Froetscher:** We're just starting to begin a Latino initiative now. Interestingly enough, from the perspective of the data—health rates, drop-out rates, instance of disease, unemployment, that type of thing—impoverished neighborhoods are very much the same. We're trying to unravel the family



have more enriching and fulfilling experiences with their biological fathers or other father figures in their lives to break the intergenerational cycle of male absence in their families. In my research on young African-American males, the young males recognize this problem and often set their own personal goals by saying "When I become a parent I want to be a better father to my child than my father was to me. I want to be able to support my family." But too many of them fall into the same cycle, becoming parents far earlier than they are prepared to assume the attendant responsibilities. As a result, they become the father that their fathers were, even though they have identified that as a part of the reason why they were having these difficulties as boys.

I think that a focus to address family, as well as community issues, to intervene with African-American males

piece, because it looks different for the Latino community. For instance, usually there are more adults in the house. Some folks say, "Well, they're in the house, but often they're working two or three jobs, so there's not an adult who really is in the kids' daily life." Others will say, "Well, you have still have adults who are physically present with the kids."

**Johnson:** That would not surprise me. There is some research that suggests that presence alone doesn't necessarily mean involvement in any kind of substantive way. We also see this phenomenon in some African-American families. Men may have resident status but may not be permitted or feel empowered to play socially anticipated parental roles, particularly when children are not their biological children.

**Froetscher:** Right. Another factor:

## “Often our two disciplines don’t talk to each other.”

### “Males are expected to be able to be self-sufficient.”

Even when the Latino parents have an interest in playing a role with the kids, they don't always know how to access the schools, they don't know how to help with homework. So they need help in learning how to be an effective parent too.

**Johnson:** Their inability or reluctance to engage social service agencies or even to engage the schools as advocates for their children may be compromised by their immigrant or legal statuses.

within the family. Social service agencies and schools need to take these kinds of cultural perspectives into consideration.

**Froetscher:** Another thing you helped us think about was this jobs piece, helping the kids understand the kinds of jobs they can get if they stay in school. There are often a lack of role models in the African-American population, while in the Latino population, there are jobs but not necessarily jobs

[implications] and what we can learn from this. We want to create something that we can replicate. I think what we see often is that our two disciplines don't talk to each other. Practitioners tend to read the research. But we don't always necessarily incorporate it actively into the design of what we do.

**Johnson:** I agree. Researchers and practitioners too frequently operate in very different worlds. I think one of this particular initiative's important contribu-

what we're seeing in the community. Putting those pieces together is hard when you're working in very distressed neighborhoods. I think when we start examining outcomes and some successes we'll need to ask why. Was it just this community or this agency that was effective? Or was it that the partners happened to be the right ones right here?

**Johnson:** Well, research and practice don't always line up neatly. And I think



**Froetscher:** I think there's a fear from an immigration point of view; there are also a couple of other things. One, there's a lack of knowledge that services exist, so they don't even know that they're there to be accessed. And then there are language issues. Sometimes there's a child who can speak the language, but a lot of times the parent doesn't. If you add all those things together...

**Johnson:** It makes for a very complicated family system. Families also may represent a cultural background where fathers don't participate in various domestic activities within the family as they are expected to do in the U.S. And in some of these cultural contexts, mothers, who may be the most likely people to reach out, aren't permitted to do so. They're not allowed to engage people outside the family, or all of the problems in the family are handled

the children want. So I think they're kind of similar pieces but they play out in very different ways.

**Johnson:** Having a second initiative can allow us to have a broader understanding of the degree to which family and community problems are not necessarily peculiar to a particular racial or ethnic group, but more specific to difficulties experienced by males in urban environments and their socioeconomic statuses. These are very important issues, because to the extent that we tend to believe that these problems are peculiar to certain groups, then we also pathologize those groups. We often say that the problem is with black males or the problem is with Latino males, when in fact these may be much more problems experienced by people living in poverty or at the margins in urban environments.

**Froetscher:** Let's talk about national

tions could be a broadening of the dialogue. Practitioners or people who work with families at the ground level have enormous contributions that they can make to researchers, but it requires us to spend more time getting comfortable with one another's language. And there are often both research and practitioner perspectives that have already been developed that don't necessarily get challenged or explained.

**Froetscher:** We [the United Way] are the largest source of funds for human services after the federal government. But we're still pitifully small in terms what resources are needed. So how do we focus our resources in the most effective way? That's where you have been so helpful, pointing out key leverage points and what the research says in terms of different options. We rolled that information into conversations with the practitioners and looked at

one of the real problems of research is that it's not always accessible to practitioners. It's not always framed from a practical standpoint, so although people might find it very interesting, they may find it difficult to try to relate it to the problems or issues they encounter in their work with families.

I think that a lot of family researchers would like their work to be viewed as engaged scholarship; that is, to have a social utility and help individuals and families cope better in society. What really holds the greatest promise is to articulate what you've done in ways that make sense to how people operate right there at ground level. I think there is great value as a family researcher in staying connected to practice with families. The degree to which a family researcher understands how problems are understood and taken into consideration when developing the research question is powerful. ☑

# Can Social Workers Help to Ward Off Cancer?

**S**OCIAL WORKERS might have a role to play in preventing or slowing cancer and other serious health conditions, based on preliminary results from a transdisciplinary research project at the University of Chicago.

Led by SSA Professor Sarah Gehlert, a study out of the Center for Interdisciplinary Health Disparities Research suggests that isolation and stress caused by conditions like high crime rates could be contributing factors to the above-average rates of aggressive cancer among younger African-American women on Chicago's South Side.

"Something gets switched off so the cells don't die naturally, and you get the growth of big tumors," Gehlert says. "It's this downward causation: We think we know about genes and how they affect your behavior; now we know it goes in the other direction. What happens in the social environment affects your genes."

Begun in September 2003 with a



## Transdisciplinary research led by SSA's Sarah Gehlert suggests stress fuels tumors

BY ED FINKEL

\$9.7 million grant from the National Institutes of Health, the investigation pulls together researchers from SSA, the Biological Sciences Division, and the Social Sciences Division.

Gehlert defines "transdisciplinary" as involving start-to-finish coordination of research methodology and process. "We're not just coming together at the beginning and end—that's interdisciplinary," she says. "The reason we are doing well is that our projects are completely interdependent."

The researchers started with studies

showing that socially isolated rats had a tendency to become more easily frightened—and a tendency to develop tumors. "Trying to understand that link between social environment and what's happening in cells, that's the black box," Gehlert says.

Teams of SSA students have conducted focus groups and one-on-one interviews with African-American

women on Chicago's South Side who have developed breast cancer to learn about their social conditions. "We don't think it's race entirely. We think it's living in marginal circumstances," Gehlert says. "It sets the stage for further inquiry."

The research has found high rates of women diagnosed with breast cancer who are not receiving proper treatment both for the cancer itself and for mental health issues like depression and post-traumatic stress stemming from past sexual assaults, Gehlert says.

"The historical realities of racial and economic discrimination are meeting up with today's less-than-adequate health system for all the people who need it," says Mildred Williamson, Ph.D. '00, a center advisory board member and director of program planning and research with Cook County's Ambulatory and Community Health Network. "The capacity issue is huge, as far as primary care, diagnostics, and follow up is concerned. One of the major areas where that's the case is in mammography."

Chris Masi, Ph.D. '01, assistant professor at the University of Chicago Hospital's Department of Medicine, sees the project as advancing the field of epigenetics, which focuses on the alteration of genes. That, in turn, will

impact social work. "One of the added benefits of reducing stress could be improvement in a person's health," he says. "We may find that the work of social workers may reduce the risk of chronic disease in their clients. I think we're going to see more and more evidence of that."

Gehlert believes that if the research continues to bear fruit, social workers will need to learn more about biology. "We need more courses for social workers that teach them how to pull together health, mental health treatment, and community practice. It's a lot to expect students to put it all together themselves," she says. "You can't just keep saying, 'I'm doing one part of it. You've got to know enough about the other area of specialty. Social workers are naturally good at taking the holistic approach, but it's not stressed in our curriculum. We need to apply what we know about group work with clients to teams of investigators. It's the way of the future."

Social workers' traditional skills in working closely with community members will continue to be crucial, Gehlert says. "To include the community is very, very important," she says, and many researchers in scientific disciplines "really don't have a clue on how to work with the community."

# Wordsmith

## When is therapeutic language also political?

BY CARL VOGEL

**S**UMMERSON CARR knows that words matter. An assistant professor at SSA, Carr studies the political and cultural implications of contemporary American social work, with a particular eye toward the use of language by social workers and clients. She's working on a book that delves deeply into how patients in drug treatment programs are affected by the language of therapy—and how they use therapeutic language to achieve disparate ends.

"Talk is the primary technology of therapy," Carr says, "and so much of the treatment literature sees language as a psychological tool that can help people express inner thoughts, dilemmas, and desires—but that's a very small portion of what language does or can do. I'm interested in how social workers and clients use therapeutic language in very social and political ways."

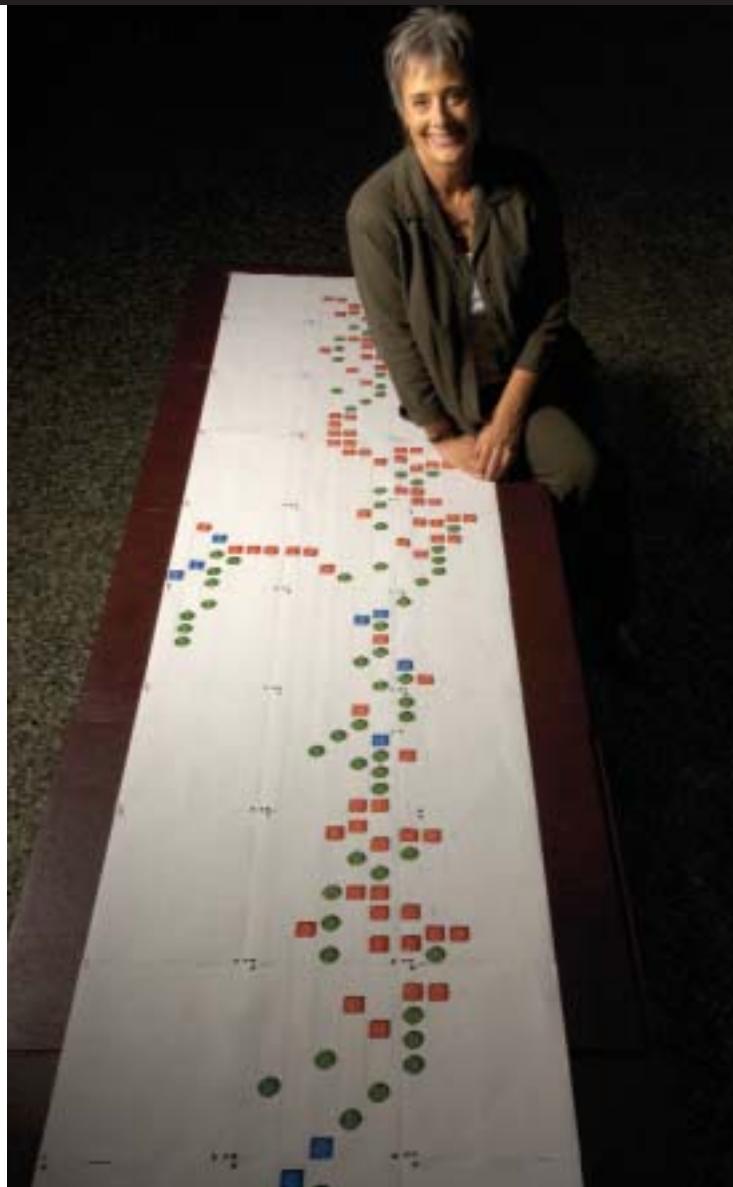
Carr, whose doctoral work was in cultural and linguistic anthropology, began research in language and ther-

apy when she was a master's student. In her field placement at an intensive outpatient drug treatment program for homeless women, she became intrigued by the way ideas and stories were exchanged in and out of therapy sessions. More specifically, she noticed that the language therapists encouraged clients to use in the therapy room was also put to surprising uses outside the room.

For example, a client who had been elected as a representative to the program's Advisory Board introduced herself by saying, "Hi, my name is Ester, and I am a recovering crack addict." Carr points out that there are many implications from those dozen simple words, including what impact they had

on Ester's success as a representative, how the board responded to her self-representation, and the complex reasons a client might use such a therapeutic idiom in an administrative context.

Carr's close ethnographic study of drug treatment discerns the skillful and sometimes surprising ways that people—with very different sets of interests and stakes—leverage material and symbolic resources with their words. "Clients get things—therapists' positive evaluations to respite child care, exonerating calls to parole officers, housing vouchers—with their words," she says. "My hope is that my book will be useful for people in the field by providing an anthropological perspective on the cultural and linguistic dynamics of social work."



## At the Root

### **"Root-cause analysis" can help family-services programs work better**

Adapted from a November-December 2006 University of Chicago Magazine article  
BY LYDIALY LE GIBSON

**T**INA RZEPNICKI first encountered root-cause analysis in an article on failed military operations—missions doomed by bad decisions, bad communication, unforeseen or unforeseeable obstacles, errors of action and inaction. "Things started looking familiar," says Rzepnicki, who is the principal investigator for the Program Practices Investigation Project, which examines

and develops better child-welfare practice for the inspector general's office of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

Root-cause analysis traces an outcome to its most basic triggers: an unmade phone call, an unheeded order, a missing part, a miscalculated step. It's typically used to assess disasters like airplane crashes, industrial accidents, and hospital mistakes, but Rzepnicki saw

the possibility to use the technique to help prevent smaller but no less terrible events.

"There are a lot of parallels," she says. "Any human-service agency that occasionally experiences tragic client outcomes needs a systematic way to take incremental steps back and analyze what went wrong. While it is easy to blame individual caseworkers for poor decision making, it is increasingly recognized that errors are as likely to result from problems at multiple levels of the organizational process. Remedies should be directed at improving defenses and removing error traps."

Rzepnicki, SSA's inaugural David and Mary Winton Green Professor and director of the University's Center for Social Work Practice, decided to test the method in the inspector general's office. Headed by Denise Kane, A.M. '78, Ph.D. '01, the office examines child deaths in families that have warranted recent DCFS attention. Three years ago Rzepnicki established a root-cause analysis pilot program there, adapting the approach to increase its applicability to the specific needs and large number of cases investigated by Kane's office.

The computer-assisted approach incorporates systematic questions about why and how specific events occurred. Getting the answers is a labor-intensive process that yields six- or eight-foot-long, color-coded diagrams. "You look at each discrete point, rather than lumping it all together. At each point in the chain of events, questions are asked, like, 'What led to this event?' 'What contextual factors were evident?' and 'What things should have happened but didn't?' Pretty quickly you end up with a lot of these red squares, which highlight what didn't happen that should have at a particular point in time," Rzepnicki says.

To see how it all works, take the case of an eight-month-old baby—let's call her Sarah—who died four years ago in Chicago from abuse by her father. Sarah had already been the subject of a DCFS investigation when her grandmother brought her to the hospital with bruises. At that time, the baby's mother first said her husband had hit

**Any human-service agency that experiences tragic client outcomes needs a systematic way to analyze what went wrong.**

Sarah, but later she claimed responsibility. Investigators took her at her word.

The analysis by Rzepnicki uncovered several opportunities for DCFS to have altered events. For example, the caseworker, who had provided therapy to Sarah's mother in the past and argued the infant should be kept with her parents, felt torn between being Sarah's advocate and her mother's former therapist. The supervisor, dealing with too many cases, failed to request reports on the mother's mental history and the father's prior violence. Deferring to the therapist-caseworker's judgment, others didn't verify the mother's claims with neighbors or family members.

"Hindsight bias" presents a constant temptation, and sometimes the conclusions are for changes in workplace culture, not policy. "We find that with a lot of these cases, the mid-level is where a lot of shortcuts are being taken, or where there are disincentives for good practice," Rzepnicki says.

Rzepnicki, with SSA's Dean of Students Penny Johnson, published a study of root-cause analysis in the January 2005 *Children and Youth Services Review*. Based in part on their work at DCFS, state legislation was recently proposed that establishes error reduction teams. These teams will work with agencies serving child welfare clients to plan, apply, and monitor corrective actions when patterns of serious error are detected. Rzepnicki is currently working with Kane's office to develop implementation details. In the future, she'd like to look at successful cases as well—children returned happily to reformed parents or rescued from deteriorating situations. "What actions, conditions, decisions led to a good outcome?" she asks.

# Building a Mental Health System in Iraq

BY KATHLEEN MCGOWAN



1

**N** 2004, THE FIRST TIME HE TRAVELED TO NORTHERN IRAQ, Scott Petersen expected to find a society devastated by war and violence, an arid, depopulated land where ordinary life had become impossible. Instead, as he gazed out the window during the long slow drive from the Turkish border to the northern Iraqi city of Sulaymaniyah, he saw a lush, beautiful landscape filled with people: kids playing soccer, men gathering in cafés for tea, marketplaces crowded with shoppers.

The loss and the suffering he expected to find were there, too, but they took longer to see. As Petersen was to learn in the years to follow in his work with the Heartland Alliance's Integrated Torture Treatment Services in Rural Iraq project, a full picture of contemporary Iraq has to take into account both the intensity of deprivation and adversity in the past-quarter century

and the Iraqi people's drive to put that past behind them.

"The resilience of the Iraqi people is remarkable," Petersen says. "In the past 25 years, they've lived through the rule of Saddam Hussein; U.S. sanctions, in which they were without routine access to basic needs; the constant fear of being kidnapped, of being tortured. And they continue to live their lives, in midst of everything that's gone on and is still going on."

Going so far away to help people who've endured such dramatic trauma was new for Petersen, a 2002 graduate of SSA's master's program. Before this project began, he spent more than 13 years in social services in the Chicago area, mostly focused on helping people struggling with drug use and mental illnesses. His regular role at Heartland is as director of clinical practice for Mental Health and Addiction Services. But in the aftermath of the 2003 U.S. inva-

sion, Petersen felt a personal responsibility to get involved.

"What I can bring as a social worker is a different way of responding to the violence and social injustice that people had experienced," Petersen says. "I wanted to offer people an experience of the U.S. that wasn't from behind a Humvee or a tank."

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UNDER SADDAM HUSSEIN, detention and torture were ubiquitous and routine, a way of ensuring social order.

trauma—post-traumatic stress, substance abuse, anxiety, depression, family conflict—the country has never had a modern mental health system: Iraq currently has as few as 100 psychiatrists, mostly in the cities. This history of pervasive trauma and dearth of resources was what inspired the Heartland Alliance, a large Chicago-based human rights and social service organization, to bring mental health services to rural areas of the country.

Heartland, with a history of counseling refugees in the Chicago area who had survived torture, secured State

Based on surveys in the Kurdish region and on the number of people who have registered with former-prisoner organizations, perhaps as many as 500,000 people in the south and more than 150,000 people in the north may have been jailed and abused. Political oppression took other forms: One Kurdish family gave Petersen a tour of the brutally cold mountain passes where they and others hid from the Ba'athist forces during the genocidal anti-Kurd al-Anfal campaign.

"War, internal conflicts, embargo, arrest, tortures, al-Anfal and chemical weapons, forced displacement—all those events traumatized our people in a way or another," says Dr. Ahmed Amin, the Iraqi medical director of Heartland's project. "And we don't have any institute or agency for delivering psychosocial support for those in need."

Although many rural Iraqis are living with the aftereffects of torture and

Department funding to work in Iraq. The agency decided to bolster Iraq's existing extensive health network rather than try to establish a new bureaucracy, inspired, in part, by the Iranian system, where most health centers include mental health and addiction services. Through the program, paraprofessional health care workers in rural clinics sprinkled across Iraq come to the Kurdish city of Sulaymaniyah, Duhok, also in northern Iraq, or Najaf in southern Iraq, for a series of six week-long courses in mental health diagnosis and treatment. The focus is on community education to decrease the stigma of mental illness, case management—addressing basic needs such as safety, financial stability, and family conflict—and easing psychological symptoms with medication when appropriate.

To minimize cultural and linguistic difficulties, the project uses a "train-

the-trainer" model. Petersen and others teach a mental health curriculum to a team of Iraqi health professionals, who, when they return to their towns and villages, present the course to larger groups of health care workers. The training process was built to be responsive, allowing feedback from the local staff to help design the final curriculum. About 240 of these community mental health workers have now completed the training.

"It makes more sense to invest training knowledge in a core technical team of Iraqis so they could continue to

human rights was especially appealing to Petersen, who sees the two as intrinsically interlinked. Although he's been a social worker essentially his whole life—he volunteered in high school and his first job out of college was at a organization for the homeless—his perspective changed radically when he went back to school for a master's degree at SSA. "My education was a transformative experience professionally," he says. "It equipped me to do the work I do today, including this project in Iraq."

When Petersen enrolled at SSA,

lecturer at SSA and a lecturer in the department of psychiatry. The two meet frequently to talk about professional decisions and intellectual concerns. "It's been instrumental in many ways, just invaluable," says Petersen. SSA is "like a professional lifeline," he adds. "Even when I'm in Iraq, I exchange emails with people from this community."

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**TRAUMA SURVIVORS EVERYWHERE**  
have some of the same problems: long-lasting pain from injuries, anxiety and

standard Western-style mental health services, which emphasize independence, confidentiality, and a medical model for dealing with a patient's emotional problems.

"The idea of reaching out to a stranger is foreign," Petersen says. "In some ways we are introducing a Western model, so we're trying to be open to adapting it to the needs of the country, which are diverse." One part of the strategy is to get local paraprofessional health care workers involved, since they may know more about the community than do doctors, who are



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provide training as needed," says Mary Bunn, A.M. '05, associate director of Heartland's international program and a social worker at Heartland's Marjorie Kovler Center for the Treatment of Survivors of Torture. "It's more collaborative, more sustainable, and it avoids language issues." The system does, however, illustrate some of the dangers of working in Iraq today: Sulaymaniyah, in the Kurdish-controlled northern part of the country, is relatively safe, but health workers who travel from the south for training must sometimes conceal their affiliation with an American aid group out of fear of retribution.

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**SCOTT PETERSEN HAS NOW MADE** five of the three- to four-week-long trips to Iraq to do trainings. The project's dual focus on social service and

he was planning to prepare for a career as an administrator or executive director. Within the first month of classes, though, he began to see social work in a new light. He realized that his true calling was really in direct service, what had inspired him to get involved in social work to begin with.

Petersen says his professors at SSA—in particular William Borden and Julia Henly—deeply impressed him, bringing an intellectual rigor to social work that he hadn't realized was possible, and combining that scholarly approach with deep personal commitment. "There's a part of them that I take with me in all of what I do, the core values of social work practice: The centrality of human relationships. The power of people to transform their lives," he says.

"Scott brings heart and mind and spirit to what he's doing. He's read widely, he's thought deeply, thought critically," says Borden, who is a senior

mood disorders, physical complaints like headaches or stomach pains. But survivors in Iraq face additional difficulties. The country's ongoing conflict makes it harder to recover. And to publicly admit that you'd been tortured was (and in some cases still is) dangerous, Petersen says, tantamount to an admission that you opposed the Ba'athist government.

When creating the project's program, Petersen and his colleagues also tried to take into account cultural differences and the character of rural life. Because community and family influence are strong in rural Iraq, the community mental health workers try to destigmatize mental illness, encouraging family members to see post-traumatic symptoms such as depression and crippling guilt as normal and natural rather than signs of insanity or spiritual failure. And while the culture's strong family networks can provide powerful support, they may also be at odds with

typically assigned by the Ministry of Health to rural areas for two-year appointments.

Although the State Department did not renew funding for the humanitarian mental health assistance, Heartland is continuing the program as part of its other Iraqi projects, which include a parallel program to assist displaced persons, focusing on substance-use problems. The program will also continue to provide technical support for the mental health advocates who've already gone through the training. These ongoing efforts will bring Petersen back to Iraq—which he's grateful for.

"In Iraq, there's a tragic history, but there's a lot more that's going on in people's lives than that they were tortured or lived under a repressive regime," Petersen says. "They want people to know about Iraq—it's a beautiful country, and they're a remarkable people." 





# Beyond the Minimum Wage

Working families are challenged by many policies of low-wage employment

BY TOM WALDRON

**a**neya, a part-time employee at a discount retailer in the Chicago area, is one of the parents that School of Social Service Administration Associate Professor Julia R. Henly has interviewed in recent years about the struggles

of low-wage workers to manage their jobs and families. Aneya, identified by a pseudonym, described how her employer required her to accept extra hours, even if they conflicted with her child care arrangements. At times, the job required her to stay well after the store closed at 11 p.m.

"I don't have no problem with [staying late] but after two, three hours go past... I think that that's too much because I have a child to go home to, and so does everybody else," Aneya told Henly. "They have family to go home to. And...they [employer] didn't care. It was just, when-



ever we're done, we're done."

Aneya's situation exemplifies a problem facing large numbers of low-wage workers: many workplaces impose burdensome scheduling policies that make it difficult to manage family responsibilities. Henly and SSA Associate Professor Susan J. Lambert are in the forefront of studying how employers manage the challenges of scheduling and how those scheduling practices affect workers and their families.

"Fluctuating hours and posting schedules at the last minute so employees can't plan....These are basic features of today's low-wage jobs, and they have impli-

cations for many aspects of people's lives," Lambert says of firms she has studied during 20 years of research into work-family issues. "It's a trend in business to pass risk and variation in consumer demand onto workers, particularly those in lower-level jobs."

A fair wage is the issue affecting low-income workers that generates the most attention (see "Making a Living Wage"). But researchers, advocates, and some policy makers are increasingly focused on a wider array of issues: scheduling, child care, health insurance, transportation, unemployment insurance, paid sick leave. "How do we structure work and public policy so people with limited earnings have greater access to a decent standard of living when their jobs fail them?" Henly asks.

## **Making Work Schedules Work**

Harriet Presser, a sociologist at the University of Maryland who has extensively studied work

schedules and their implications for family life, finds that the traditional full-time, Monday through Friday, daytime schedule does not actually characterize the majority of workers' schedules. National data indicate that at least forty percent of employees work the majority of their hours outside of daytime, weekday hours. While some workers choose to work nonstandard hours, for many—and especially for low-income workers with limited job autonomy and control—these hours are a requirement of the job rather than a preferred arrangement.

Henly and Lambert are collaborating on a project that will assess the effects of a workplace intervention designed to build more predictability and flexibility into the scheduling process, which could reduce work-family conflict, improve worker productivity, and facilitate family management and caregiving. It's a program they hope will benefit both the employer and the employee.



Rather than targeting workers by trying to find ways to help them **survive an unpredictable work environment**, this intervention targets the unpredictability of work itself.



The project, the Scheduling Intervention Study, is underway in a national clothing chain, which has agreed to participate in the random-assignment experimental study. The intervention being evaluated is targeted at improving both schedule predictability (advance notice of work hours) and flexibility (control over work hours):

Intervention stores will post work schedules four weeks in advance while control stores will continue the usual practice of posting schedules a few days before the start of the workweek.

The researchers will track how these changes affect measures such as absenteeism, turnover, sales-to-labor ratios, and employee attitudes about the company, as well as its potential impact on family processes and practices such as elder and child caregiving activities, child care arrangements, and parenting stress. The study, supported by grants from the Russell Sage Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Annie E. Casey Foundation, is currently being fielded in stores in the Chicago area but is designed to include sites in three additional regions of the country.

“What is unique about this intervention is its focus on changing employer practices directly. Rather than targeting workers by trying to find ways to help them survive an unpredictable work environment, this intervention targets the unpredictability of work itself,” Henly says. “We want to know whether employers can deliver greater predictability to workers by giving them more advance notice about their schedules, without compromising business goals.”

### The Impact of Work on Families

The Scheduling Intervention Study comes at a time when many American employers are increasing demands on employees to meet the preferences of customers and to maximize profits. This year, for instance, Wal-Mart, the nation’s largest private employer, began requiring many of its 1.3 million workers to move into a new system that schedules workers based on how many shoppers are in stores at a particular time. As described by the *Wall Street Journal*, “the move promises greater productivity and customer satisfaction for the huge retailer but could be a major headache for employees.”

Such practices have drawn the attention of a cadre of researchers, including Henly and Lambert. The two came to the issue from different backgrounds. Lambert’s expertise is on corporations and how low-level jobs are positioned compared to other jobs in the firm. In their joint research, Lambert has focused on the nature of the jobs low-wage earners hold and the obstacles these jobs pose to workers trying to support themselves and raise families. Henly began looking at the struggles of low-wage earners as welfare reform took place in the mid-1990s, and she has published research on the impact that unpredictable, low-wage jobs have on workers’ home life, particularly on child care.

“A growing body of empirical work suggests nonstandard work schedules have negative implications for worker and family well-being,” Lambert and Henly wrote in an article, “Low-Level Jobs and Work-Family Studies,” published this year by

the Sloan Work and Family Research Network at Boston College. While research is not conclusive, it has demonstrated negative associations between nonstandard schedules and the health of workers, marital quality and stability, and parent-child interactions.

“Instability at work gets passed on to home life,” Henly says. “Even when kids are with parents, instability results. Family time is really compressed by unstable work or work time that doesn’t provide employees with adequate flexibility. What stands out to me is how complicated managing child care arrangements can be when your work life is unpredictable.”

Take the example of “Jenna,” a retail sales clerk who was interviewed in a chapter the two researchers wrote for the 2005 book *Work, Family, Health, & Well-being*. In one week, Jenna was scheduled two shifts 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., a Friday evening from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., and a Saturday shift from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. That meant she had to find child care starting as early as 9 in the morning and ending as late as 10 at night, with no set pattern at all. The schedule forced Jenna to rely on her mother—her primary caregiver—her sister, her boyfriend, and her son’s paternal grandmother to accommodate her various work shifts. “The demands of work and the demands of running a family, when you’re being called in at unpredictable times, can be overwhelming,” Henly says.

Lisa Dodson, a research professor in sociology at Boston College who has studied the challenges confronting low-income working parents, has

Their goal is to get employers to focus on the challenges that workplace practices pose for workers and to convince employers to consider different ways of doing business.

interviewed many parents who have little choice but to accept extra shifts, even though it means they spend less time with their children. Dodson believes that the message being delivered to these low-wage workers is that they are expendable. "The ramifications of treating children and parents as if they don't matter are profound," she says. "What is shared by a lot of them is this sense that it's reached the point where the larger society is not concerned about what's happening to them."

### Changing the Workplace

In a 2003 study, Lambert analyzed employers' practices in 22 workplaces in Chicago in four business sectors—retail, hospitality, transportation, and banking—and documented how some businesses strived to achieve "just-in-time" labor to minimize worker costs. Lambert's analysis, as reported in her working paper, "Managing Work Flows: How Firms Transform Fluctuations in Demand into Instability for Workers," demonstrated that the companies were minimizing their own financial risk (such as having too many workers on hand, given the work load) by forcing employees to accept more uncer-

tainty in their work lives. For example, one retailer used hour-by-hour sales figures from the previous week to set schedules. Employers also sent workers home when there weren't "enough" customers to justify the staffing level, Lambert wrote, while some companies forced workers to be available for work on a call-in basis.

While the study did not assess how those employer practices affect worker performance or contribute to absenteeism or turnover, other research in the field has shown a link. "When jobs are unpredictable and unstable, so are workers," Lambert says. "That's the key point."

As part of their work, Lambert and Henly meet regularly with employers in the National Retailers Work-Life Forum, made up of major retailers, including Sears, Nordstrom, and Federated Department Stores. They have also met with Chicago-area employers to discuss workplace issues. Their goal is to get employers to focus on the challenges that workplace practices pose for workers and to convince employers to consider different ways of doing business.

"Part of the impetus for this is the Wal-Mart phenomenon," Lambert says. "Not all firms want to be pressed to take the Wal-Mart road. They want a business case for how to offer something else."

Some studies do show there very well may be a bottom-line benefit to firms. Jennifer Swanberg, an associate professor in the College of Social Work at the University of Kentucky, and Jacquelyn James of Boston College's Center for Work & Family have surveyed 6,000



Baltimore, Maryland

## Making a Living Wage

**M**UCH ATTENTION HAS FALLEN RECENTLY ON CONGRESS as it considered the first increase in the federal minimum wage since 1997. But the reality is that another important debate—this one over the concept of a "living wage" rather than a minimum wage—has been taking place for more than a decade, not in the nation's capital, but in cities and states around the country.

A living wage is calculated to be what is minimally necessary to support a family. To date, 140 cities and other local governments have approved a living wage for municipal workers or, in some cases, employees of contractors doing business with those local governments.

The first locality to approve a living wage ordinance was the city of Baltimore in 1994. The ordinance increased the pay for about 1,300 employees of city contractors to \$6.10 an hour, a rate that was more than 40 percent higher than the existing minimum wage. Following Baltimore's example, other local governments have accepted the notion that workers who work full-time should be better able to support themselves and their families.

Maryland recently became the first state to move toward enacting a living wage law. In 2004, the Maryland General Assembly passed a measure requiring state contractors to pay their employees at least \$10.50 an hour, but it was vetoed by then-Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr. The legislature was considering a similar measure this year, with the support of a newly elected governor.

Some nonprofit groups have made the living wage a key focus. The Tides Foundation in San Francisco has spent \$3.4 million since 2001 to support local living wage campaigns and related efforts. "We identified the living wage effort as one of the most effective tools to affect economic justice," says Christopher Herrera, director of communications at Tides.

Support for living wage laws has been buttressed by intensive research into the actual financial conditions of low-wage earners in America. Leading that research has been the Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit Wider Opportunities for Women, which worked with Diana Pearce, a professor at the University of Washington's School of Social Work, to develop realistic self-sufficiency standards for how much it costs for families to support themselves, reflecting local costs for such expenses as housing, child care, health care, and transportation. While these costs can vary widely from area to area, the bottom line remains consistent: families that earn slightly more than the federal poverty income threshold are hard pressed to support themselves.

In Miami, for example, Wider Opportunities has determined that a single parent with two young children requires an annual income of \$39,053 to be self-sufficient. By comparison, a family of three, throughout the 48 contiguous states, is considered to be out of poverty if it has an annual income of more than \$16,600. Even starker was the finding that that same parent of two, if paid the minimum wage, would earn only 31 percent of what is needed to support the family.



## Healthy Sick Days

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT NEARLY HALF of all private-sector workers have no paid sick days. Low-wage workers are even worse off—more than three-quarters have no paid sick days. Of those workers who do have paid sick leave, fewer than half of them can use it to take care of sick children.

For the first time, Congress is considering legislation that would require many employers to provide sick leave to their workers. The Healthy Families Act, sponsored by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.) and Rep. Rosa L. DeLauro (D-Conn.), would require employers with 15 or more employees to provide seven paid days of sick leave that workers could use when they are sick or if they must miss work to care for a sick relative.

The Healthy Families Act has "a wildfire of support across the country," Senator Kennedy told *The New York Times* recently. "When you talk to workers, this is, besides an increase in the minimum wage, the most important issue for these families. This is a families issue. This is a values issue."

Some in Congress are also pushing to expand the reach of the Family and Medical Leave Act, which was passed in 1993 and allows workers at larger employers to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave for personal health problems. Advocates now want to extend the law's coverage to workers at smaller employers and to allow parents to use their allotted leave to attend important school events such as teacher conferences.

Several local and state governments are also moving to mandate paid leave for workers. Voters in San Francisco approved a measure last November that requires all businesses with more than 10 employees to provide workers with up to 72 hours of paid sick leave annually and smaller employers to provide up to 40 hours. The measure, which was approved with more than 60 percent support, allows workers to take the paid leave to care for certain relatives or domestic partners.

At least seven states have enacted laws that require employers who provide paid sick leave to allow workers to use it to provide care to sick dependents. In Illinois, lawmakers were considering a bill to provide paid leave to workers to compensate them when they are sick or when they need to care for an ailing relative or after the birth of a baby. Maryland this year is considering a bill to require larger employers to provide up to 56 hours of paid leave.

Ellen Bravo, former director of 9to5, National Association of Working Women, and now the coordinator of a network of state groups working on work-family issues, says such issues are receiving new and deserved attention—from the media and from elected officials. "Finally some political candidates are coming to us to say, 'How do I talk about this?'" she says. "That's progress, but there's still a lot of work to do."

hourly and salaried employees of a national retail chain to gauge how they are affected by the company's workplace practices. For example, the survey asked if employees had input into their schedules and if employees had opportunities to make last-minute changes in their schedules without jeopardizing the number of hours they worked. "Some of the preliminary analyses support the idea that employers who have this flexibility...that it is associated with a higher level of employee engagement," Swanberg says.

Employers will need to hear that type of message to make changes, says Helen Neuborne, senior program officer in economic development at the Ford Foundation, which has funded research in workplace issues, including the Scheduling Intervention Study. "If you talk about this by making a business case you win the argument," she says. "It's not a simple argument of, 'Let's be nice to the employees.' It's about making an economy function better for everybody."

### Wanted: Public Policy Improvement

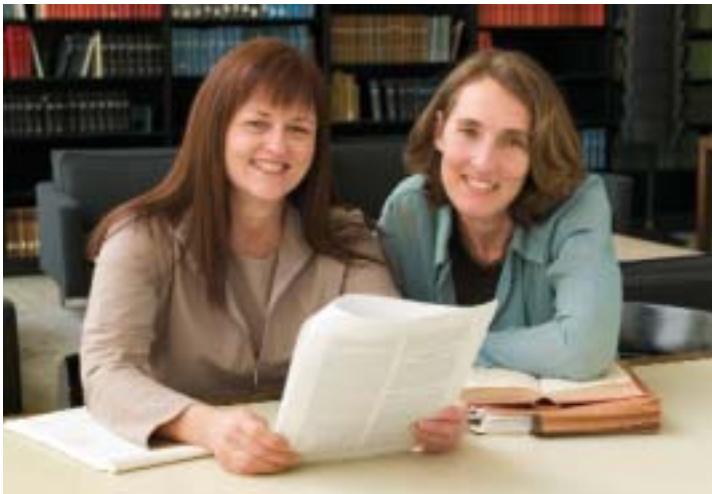
There is a role for government in building better quality low-income jobs. More than 45 million people in America have no health insurance, with the working poor particularly likely to be uninsured. Federal and state child care subsidies have failed to keep up with the demand, leaving many low-income parents unable to afford dependable, high-quality care. Unemployment insurance—a vital safety net for a worker who loses a job—is disproportionate-

ly unavailable to low-income workers, who often don't work enough hours to qualify. And mass transit in many communities does not reflect evolving employment patterns, making it difficult for many low-wage workers to reach the jobs they qualify for.

"The nation has a policy focused on putting people to work, but it's doing very little to make work viable for people," says Alice O'Connor, a poverty researcher and history professor at University of California, Santa Barbara. "The biggest barriers many people face are work-related: child care, transportation, a lack of health care. All of these are huge issues that are only spottily and sporadically being addressed."

The United States trails much of the developed world in how its laws treat working families. Although the U.S. has one of the highest guaranteed pay rates for overtime work in the world (150 percent), on many other measures, the country lags, according to research by the Institute for Health and Social Policy at McGill University.

Perhaps most glaringly, most low-wage workers have no paid sick leave and often are ineligible for unpaid leave—making it difficult to attend to family problems and remain employed (see "Healthy Sick Days"). Of 173 countries around the world the institute studied, 145 provide paid sick days. The U.S. only requires some employers to provide unpaid time off for serious illness through the Family Medical Leave Act. The institute found that 168 countries offer guaranteed paid leave to women in connection with childbirth.



Associate Professors Susan Lambert (left) and Julia Henly are co-investigators of the Scheduling Intervention Study.

Of those, 98 countries offer 14 or more weeks of paid leave. The U.S. guarantees no paid leave for mothers and, unlike 137 other countries, does not mandate any paid vacation leave.

While such numbers are discouraging enough, Lambert points out that the practical reality is that workplace protections in America are often not available to low-wage workers. Employees who are entitled to paid sick time can receive demerits for actually using the time. Some employers sometimes vary the day of the week that a pay period begins, a practice designed to prevent workers from claiming overtime pay. “We’re far behind in many ways,” Lambert says. “And even when there are policies on the books, they may not be available to workers in practice.”

Rhonda Present, A.M. ’89, is the unpaid director of ParentsWork, an Illinois group that is among many advocates at the state and federal levels attempting to organize working parents to advocate for change. Low-wage workers, she notes, have the fewest resources to cope with disruptions in their lives,

such as an unexpected early dismissal at their children’s schools. “Most people at a lower wage level don’t get any pay for this. They’re lucky if they can get the time off,” she says.

A range of changes are on the agenda in state capitals and in Congress. Advocates identify key policy changes to bolster low-wage workers:

- Expand the federal Family and Medical Leave Act to cover all workers and allow for use for care of same-sex partners, siblings, and other family members.
- Create a living wage requirement.
- Provide better health care and child care.
- Give employees more union organizing rights.
- Require employers to provide paid sick days and allow parents to take time off to attend to important school activities.
- Provide parity for part-time workers, so they don’t get penalized with lost benefits if an employer cut their hours.

SSA’s Lambert agrees with the need for public policy reforms because, she says, no

matter how well businesses respond to the needs of employees, “there will always be a group of workers who are left out of opportunities.” For example, she notes that many social benefits defined in both workplace and public policy—such as unemployment insurance, time off guaranteed by the Family and Medical Leave Act, or, in many cases, health insurance—are conditioned on the number of hours worked. “This is why we focus on scheduling. It’s central to many public policy issues,” she says.

Many efforts remain targeted at improving individuals. Some nonprofits are seeking clearer pathways for low-wage workers to move into better-paying jobs by obtaining additional skills. The Working Poor Families Project, which was launched by several national foundations, including Ford, Rockefeller, and Annie E. Casey, has found that many states do not adequately fund educational and training programs geared toward adult workers or have failed to align their programs with the needs of workers and employers. Without a system that encourages them to improve their skills and provides an affordable way to do that, these low-wage workers are hard-pressed to move into better-paying, family-supporting jobs.

“None of these things is a panacea, but education and skills training is a very important component to helping a low-income worker’s opportunities now and in the future,” says Brandon Roberts, manager of the national Working Poor Families Project. “Putting this issue on the radar screens of policy makers in the states is critical.”



Workplace protections in America are often **not available to low-wage workers.** Employees can receive demerits for using sick time. Some employers change when a pay period begins to prevent workers from claiming overtime pay.



# Deep Analysis

Sharon Berlin has spent her career showing how social workers can stretch and adapt psychotherapy to a patient's needs

BY CARL VOGEL



IT'S A LONG WAY FROM THE UPPER WEST SIDE to the poorest sections of Chicago's South Side. That's true for anybody, no less so for a practicing therapist. But while the common image of psychotherapy might be a weekly appointment on a nice leather couch in Manhattan, the reality is more likely to be a patient from a beleaguered background talking with a social worker about how to repair a life scarred by poverty or deprivation.

Filling the gap between psychoanalytic theory that suits a middle-class patient and that for a social worker's clients is at the heart of the work of Sharon Berlin, the Helen Ross Professor at the School for Social Service Administration. The synthesis of a 40-plus-year career is captured in her 2002 book, *Clinical Social Work Practice: A Cognitive-Integrative Perspective*, which lays out her take on how current life conditions and memory impact our view of the world—and what to do when they collide.

Cognitive therapy is an increasingly popular method of helping patients from all walks of life deal with psychiatric troubles. In her cognitive-integrative perspective, Berlin deftly synthesizes a wide range of therapeutic techniques and theories into a model explicitly for social workers, then adds her own twist: When people whose life circumstances are terrifically difficult show up at the mental health center door, it is quite probable that their problems are not all in their heads. A part of helping such clients psychologically involves helping them get on their feet.

"I find the cognitive-integrative approach to be extremely useful. The framework allows social workers to recognize the complexity of the clients we work with, while also being practical and flexible enough to be applied to the diverse work environments social workers are involved in," says Lynette

DePeter, A.M. '05, a former student of Berlin's who uses different pieces of the approach in her role as a school social worker and in work with people who have experienced the loss of a loved one through suicide.

In many ways, Berlin's personality infuses the cognitive-integrative approach. Her ability to hold and incorporate many different complex theories, her compassion for those who have been dealt a hard hand, her calm demeanor are all reflected in the theory. "Sharon is a very deep thinker, but she also is deeply committed to what happens in the field. She has a sense of balance in terms of thinking very constructively and creatively about a problem without being co-opted or distracted by irrelevant issues or insignificant considerations," says Jeanne Marsh, the dean of SSA and co-author with Berlin of a 1993 book, *Informing Practice Decisions*.

"Sharon has a certain kind of grace and passion and moral energy," says Bill Borden, a senior lecturer at SSA who has been a student and colleague of Berlin and now is planning a day-long event for academic experts to gather to discuss and expand upon her work. The conference, entitled "The Play and Place of Theory in Social Work Practice," will be a swan song for Berlin, who is retiring in June after a distinguished career that has included winning SSA's teaching excellence award in 1997 and the 2002 Richard Lodge Prize for contributions to Social Work Theory. "She's provided a crucial reorientation of cognitive theory for social workers," Borden says. "I think that her work has really yet to be fully appreciated."

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BERLIN LEANS FORWARD a bit on her feet in front of class, her hands knotted around a paper cup of coffee as she gently asks for input from the 20 or so students in her course, "A Cognitive Perspective for Social Work Clinical Practice." With her all-black outfit, stylish glasses, and an easy-going manner, she's reminiscent of



Berlin has influenced generations of social workers over her more than 40-year career as a scholar and educator.

A close-up, slightly off-center portrait of a woman with short, light-colored hair and glasses, wearing a dark blazer and a pink shirt. She is smiling and looking slightly to her left. A small, rectangular pin with a landscape image is visible on her left lapel. The background is bright and out of focus.

"Sharon has a certain kind of **grace and passion** and moral energy."

**"In the classroom,**

**Sharon is  
incredibly  
relaxed and  
open to  
what people  
have to say.**

**It is so refreshing  
to hear her say that  
learning is open  
to change; it's  
a process."**



a favorite, hip aunt, the one who always listens to your troubles when she visits. To the side, a PowerPoint projection of a psychiatric org chart looms, illustrating the complexity of how she wants her students to see a client's psyche: boxes and arrows delineating input patterns, compensatory themes, internal cues.

The class starts suggesting how to fill the boxes with details from the last reading, a case study of a Ms. M, a part-time nurse's aide who presents a confounding list of troubles. She was abandoned by her mother, then abused by her stepmother. Married twice to abusive husbands—the second marriage ending when her husband left her for her sister—she is barely in contact with her adult children. She has type 1 diabetes, and recent renal failure caused her to lose her job. It is, quite literally, depressing: Ms. M had come to seek treatment for ongoing depression.

Berlin starts the discussion with Ms. M's history because the cognitive school of therapy is built on the idea that we use our memory patterns, or cognitive schemas, to interpret events in the present. Usually this reliance on organized memories works well,

but when someone becomes unable to recognize when different circumstances require different thinking, they can become stuck in old and unhelpful ways of understanding. And with that can come feelings of depression, fear, or rage. "Cognitive theory says that people are meaning makers. Whatever a person thinks a thing means, that's what it is," Berlin explains. "But the idea behind cognitive therapy is to help people consider how to enlarge their realities."

With a current emphasis in psychology on evidence-based practice, the cognitive model has become increasingly popular over the last 20 years. The therapy lends itself to outcome measurement, where it performs well. Insurance firms like it; mental health centers like it. "It's really one of the ascendant areas of empirically based medicine," says Mark Reinecke, a professor and the chief of the division of psychology at the Feinberg School of Medicine at Northwestern University. "For example, the British government has now mandated its use in their healthcare system."

Berlin has been impressed with cognitive concepts for years. Much of the cognitive-integrative perspective is connecting the standard approach with a wide variety of other therapeutic techniques, including neuroscience, personality theory, social psychology, narra-

tive studies, relational psychoanalysis, and most importantly, the emphasis on real-life circumstances that comes from social work. Colleagues consider it a bravura performance, a melding of many different ideas into a comprehensive and comprehensible whole.

In Berlin's eyes, there is no one way to approach all clients; the best route to wellness depends on how much of the client's difficulty stems from negative information that comes from life circumstances and how much comes from relying too heavily on out-dated memory patterns. "Sometimes the information coming to the patient overwhelms their level of skills and knowhow, so the clinician can borrow ideas from behavioral approaches to help the client gain new skills and increased competency. Or the negative information coming in might have a lot to do with family conflict. In those times we sometimes borrow tools from the family therapy domain," she says.

"Sharon is very suspicious of mechanistic solutions that don't look at the complexity and the context of the clients' lives," says Jim Clark, Ph.D. '95, the associate dean for research at the College of Social Work at the University of Kentucky and a former student of Berlin's. "It's really hard work, but her approach as a clinician is that, yes, it's hard, but you have to do it to be effective."

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THE BIG IDEA WOVEN THROUGH *Clinical Social Work Practice: A Cognitive-Integrative Perspective* is a re-evaluation of the role of social worker in therapy. Berlin argues that—in certain situations—to help a patient change her perspective on life, a social worker needs to help that patient to change her life.

"Cognitive theory says that people's sense of helplessness or an overriding sense of sadness are a function of negatively biased understanding of their prospects in the world," Berlin says. "I think that notion is accurate to a degree, but it suggests that distorted thoughts are behind people's feelings. That seems overly simplistic to me. It puts all the onus on the person. From my earliest social work training, I learned that part of the reason people feel so demoralized about their lives is because their life situation leaves them with so few options."

If it is true that people change their minds when they repeatedly encounter events or find personal capacities that are different from what they already know, then a social worker needs to be sure that there are actually discrepancies to be noticed. "We need to create them or work with clients to create them, and then focus the client on making something meaningful from them," Berlin says. "That could mean helping the client get better housing or assisting her in cleaning up and organizing her current place. It could mean cutting through bureaucratic red tape so the client can get the services he needs; or it could mean sticking with the client no matter how many times she forgets or doesn't show up."

"The cognitive behavior theory is built on the idea that people

construct their own reality. What Sharon has brought to the field is a counterpoint: The context in which they're living can contribute to their psychopathology, and we should understand the cognition in that context. That's a valuable contribution. It's useful, and I happen to agree with it. I also think it fits well with the position a social worker is in. You bring what works to people," Reinecke says.

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**b**ERLIN BEGAN HER SOCIAL WORK career on the child care staff at the Children Home Society in Seattle, Wash., after earning her bachelor of arts at the College of Idaho in the state where she was born and raised. Her Master's of Social Work and Ph.D. in Social Welfare are from the University of Washington in Seattle. To this day, her tidy office gives away her love of the Pacific Northwest with a few postcards and a Native American totem pole image in a 1992 Distinguished Alumni Award from her alma mater. When she retires this year, she will return back to a home she owns on Whidbey Island in Washington State.

Berlin first joined the faculty at SSA as a visiting associate professor in 1983. Over the years she has helped provide the spark that any academic institution requires to thrive. She served for a time as the School's associate dean for academic affairs. She directed a National Institute for Mental Health program to train Ph.D. students in research in the field. After student requests, she introduced a class into the curriculum that examines the intersection of human rights and social work. All along she has inspired students with her passion for the work and her comfortable yet challenging classes.

"Her courses are one of the best things I encountered at SSA. Sharon is incredibly relaxed and open to what people have to say. She believes that this is hard and valuable work and is open to discussions about how to go about it," says DePeter. "She would often focus on 'What does work?' It is so refreshing to hear her say that learning is open to change; it's a process."

When she arrived at the School, Berlin had already written a few working papers that sketched out her ideas about the role of the environment in psychotherapy, and with her curious nature, she continues to explore its ramifications. "Since I wrote the book, in some ways my understanding has become more refined," she says. For example, in a 2005 paper published in *Social Service Review*, she wrote at length about the history and value in social work direct practice of the concept of acceptance, the balance of compassion for a client with an appreciation for his or her autonomy.

The paper also touches on another of Berlin's areas of interest: mindful meditation as a therapeutic tool. It's a concept that is grounded in Buddhist philosophy and stems from Marsha Linehan's work to help patients with borderline personality disorders. "Some of the newer work in the field suggests that instead of

fighting to change your mental state and wrestle negative thoughts away, you should just allow them—notice them, accept them, and decenter from the experience," Berlin says.

These are concepts that a practitioner can use to help a client in the cognitive-integrative approach, and they certainly match well with Berlin's demeanor. While she says she doesn't regularly practice meditation herself, she has taken a trip to Tibet last summer, as part of a University of Chicago, Rockefeller Chapel program available for students, staff, and faculty and has read extensively on Eastern meditation. "I try to use the acceptance and decentering technique in my own life at times," she says. "If something seems to work, why not, right?"

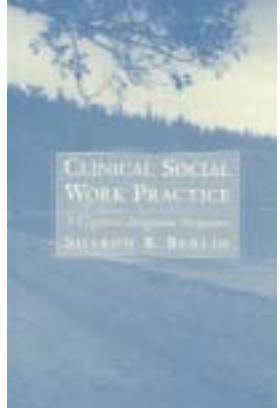
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DESPITE THE ENTHUSIASM for the cognitive-integrative approach by many, sales of

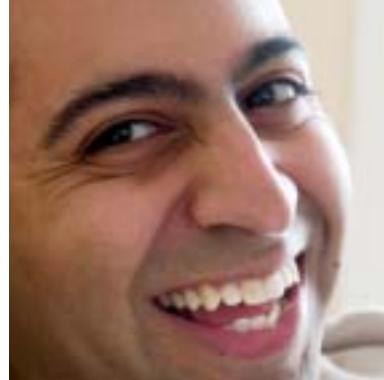
*Clinical Social Work Practice: A Cognitive-Integrative Perspective* have been relatively slow. Supporters say that the long-term impact of Berlin's thinking may come from her teaching, as her students use the technique in practice and teach it to a new generation of social workers.

Take, for example, Justin Heilenbach, A.M. '05, a program administrator and therapist at Dragonfly Transitions, a residential treatment center for young men with mental health and substance abuse issues in Kalmath Falls, Ore. Heilenbach says Berlin's courses and her approach have become infused into his work. "The idea of bringing in new information to the patient is huge, whether it's a new experience that he can have where he's more successful than in the past or insight into old memories where he can see himself in a different light," he says. "Linking that 'social worker' work with the work in therapy, having that concept be part of your global way of viewing things, that can make a real difference."

Heilenbach views Berlin as a mentor, even though since his graduation she has been two time zones away. "Sharon is very much on the ground and present whenever you talk with her," he says. "She sees clients' lives as important and valued. She's a true social worker that way. She completely embodies those values." ■



Berlin argues that—in certain situations—to help a patient change her perspective on life, a social worker needs to help that patient to change her life.



# Check All That



**S**INCE AT LEAST the times of Eston Hemings (the likely son of Thomas Jefferson and his slave, Sally Hemings), multiracial Americans have been making headlines. Even so, it is hard not to be taken aback by the intensity of our interest in the bloodlines of Sen. Barack Obama since he announced his run for the Democratic presidential nomination. Google “multiracial” combined with “Barack Obama” and you’ll get 31,600 results, and another 59,300 for “biracial” and “Barack Obama.” And the primaries are still nearly a year away.

Obama refers to himself as an African American, but it seems that the American public and the American media aren’t so sure. Is he on his way to becoming the first black president? The first multiracial president? The first black president because he is multiracial? We’ve been through this before with Tiger Woods; only in that case, Woods refused to be put into a standard category, referring to himself as “Cablinasian” for his mix of caucasian, black, Indian, and Asian heritages.

“The discussion that is being had about Obama—‘What is he?’—is the same discussion that everyone who is racially ambiguous has every day or hears every

day,” says Gina M. Samuels, an assistant professor at SSA.

Even to have a conversation about the topic is difficult because, while multiracial Americans have some common experiences, much of their triumphs and trials are unique to their own racial combination. A black-white woman has a dramatically different set of experiences and issues than an Asian-Hispanic man. And someone’s age, or where she grew up, or her parent’s attitudes all can play a role in how she feels about being multiracial as well.

While Samuels’ research examines how society’s definitions of race affect how multiracial individuals identify them-

selves, her colleague, Assistant Professor Yoonsun Choi, looks at the implications of these definitions. “It is not ‘multiracial’ that is a problem, it is how [society] responds to it,” Choi says.

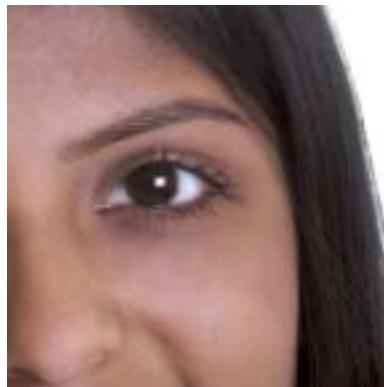
With more and more of the American population comprised of multiracial individuals—and new research opportunities available because of how agencies such as the U.S. Census gather information on racial background—the work of Choi and Samuels is part of a wave of scholarship on the issue of multiracial identity, from both the societal and personal point of view. The answers say a lot about how far we have, and haven’t come, in dealing with race in this



# Apply

**SSA faculty members are at the forefront of research on multiracial identity in an era of many options.**

BY MARGARET LITTMAN



country, and what it means for our future.

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AS MUCH AS 20 PERCENT of the U.S. population will identify itself as multiracial by 2050, according to a National Academy of Science study. The trends are built on a number of factors. For one thing, Americans are more diverse than ever. Nearly a quarter of the U.S. population in 2002 was immigrants and their children, the Census shows. And it's more acceptable for people of different races to have children together. This year is the 40th anniversary of *Loving v. Virginia*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruling

that declared states could not prohibit interracial marriage (although many kept the unenforceable laws on the books: Alabama's was not removed until 2000).

The Chicago-based Council on Contemporary Families, co-chaired by SSA Associate Professor Waldo E. Johnson, Jr., found that black-white marriages grew from 55,000 in 1960 to 440,000 in 2005. Today about 13 percent of American marriages are unions of people of different races, estimates Jennifer Lee, an associate professor in the department of sociology at the University of California, Irvine and a 2006-2007 visiting associate professor at the Center for

the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture at the University of Chicago.

The ability to measure and analyze the multiracial population in the U.S. got a huge boost in 1997, when the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) decided that, beginning with the 2000 Census, respondents would be permitted to check more than one box in response to the question asking one to classify his or her race. Someone with a black father and a Hispanic mother could check both boxes, rather than deciding which of the two races better defined who he or she was. In that 2000 Census, 2.4 percent of the population identified with

more than one race. That equals 6.8 million respondents, 2.8 million of whom were under age 18.

Other agencies are following the Census' lead. Last year the U.S. Department of Education urged colleges and universities to start offering multiracial options when they collect data on students. In 2005 the Food and Drug Administration recommended adding multiracial options for clinical trial participants. Many states are starting the practice as well, meaning there will be even more data into which researchers may delve.

Ann Morning, an assistant professor in the department of sociology at New York University, points out that in



the 19th century the Census included "mulatto" (referring to those who had both black and white heritage) and "mixed-blood" (applying to those with American Indian and white backgrounds). However, in modern times, U.S. residents were required to fit themselves into just one box until now.

"Our history has had mixed race people for a long time," Morning says. "But now that the OMB lets people mix-and-match in a way they didn't in the past, sociologists and demographers are picking up the baton and thinking about the context of mixed race. Part of the reason we are acknowledging it now is that in some ways racial classification doesn't matter. Before, race dictated who you could marry, where you could live, and it was a way to enforce class."

Of course, nobody is claiming that race has become irrelevant to people's lives. The complicated relationship we have with race may be more accurately reflected by multiracial identities, but it isn't changed. "People may think identifying



someone as multiracial obscures the differences. But if you put a lot of emphasis on people being one-half this, one-quarter this, I think that in some ways that reinforces the old ways of thinking," Morning says.

We live in a moment when there is no clear way to identify people whose parents are of different races. In a study at the University of Missouri-Columbia, kindergarteners who had both a white and a non-white parent were overwhelmingly more likely to be identified by their parents as the race of the non-white parent.

There were, however, some odd twists in the data. Girls who had both Hispanic and white parents were more likely to be identified as Hispanic, while boys were more likely to be identified as white. Students living in the Western U.S. and with a higher family socioeconomic status were more likely to be identified as multiracial. Morning notes that other studies have shown those who live on the coasts are more likely to identify as multiracial than those in the heartland.

Lee points out that regardless of how a person may wish to be perceived, society won't necessarily agree. "Given the history of the one-drop rule of hypodescent—by which all multiracial

Americans with any black ancestry were identified as black—black multiracials continue to be limited in their racial/ethnic options," she believes.

"While the rule may no longer

be legally enforced, it remains culturally reproduced in everyday interactions and in institutional contexts, so that regardless of how black multiracials choose to identify, they are often identified by others as black."

The blade cuts both ways. Barack Obama's self-identity as an African American has been questioned because of his multi-ethnic background, while Tiger Wood was criticized by some within the African-American community for refusing to identify as black.

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SAMUELS has learned that individual's notion of multiracial identity can be as hard

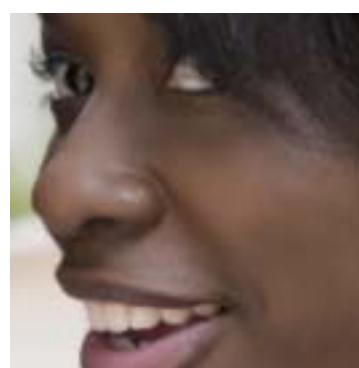
to pin down as society's. Her research focuses on the black-white biracial experience, with interviews of transracial adoptees between 20- and 32-years old. Subjects were asked about the stories they were told about why they were put up for adoption and adopted, how they were socialized to think about race/mixed race and their own identities, and their racialized experiences at school, home, and in their lives as adults.

"The one-drop rule says if you have any black heritage you should identify as black. But developing an identity is more complicated than that. The idea that one racial heritage always trumps the other, or that identities are fixed and don't change, does not reflect how many multiracials develop a racial-ethnic sense of self," says Samuels, who



herself is multiracial and adopted. "It is much more complex than just identifying how society views an individual, or the individual simply choosing any identity she or he wishes. It's the individual and society operating simultaneously, at different force, and one's daily context that shape identity across one's lifetime."

For example, when children of white mothers and black fathers were put up for adoption in the late 1960s and 1970s, it was often because having a biracial child caused problems for the white mothers. For some white families looking to adopt, though, faced with a small pool of healthy white babies to choose, those same children (now labeled as black), were considered



more desirable because their skin tone was lighter.

Samuels also found that people don't necessarily identify themselves the same way all the time. High school students among African-American friends or family may call themselves black, while with their white friends or relatives, they may say they are mixed race. "And what

someone calls themselves when they are 10 may be different than when they're 30 or change again at 40," she adds.

Other research shows how pervasive this phenomenon can be. A study by Princeton University of 2,000 students aged 14 to 17 who had at least one immigrant parent showed that half of the students changed the way they classified their race,

can come with a price, making it hard for a multiracial person to identify with a group. Samuels says that when families of one race adopt a child of another, it can be difficult because the parents do not have the same racial experience as the child and may not be able to provide first-hand guidance. "What was most powerful was the ways in which this group had to navigate so much

recipient of the Research Scientist Development Award from the National Institute of Mental Health, she is conducting a series of interrelated projects to identify the multiple developmental trajectories of Asian youth and the factors that predominate in the determination of these outcomes. Part of that work has been looking at multiracial children.



## Multiracial Identification by 2000 Census Racial Categories

	RACIAL IDENTIFICATION <sup>a</sup> (millions)	MULTIRACIAL IDENTIFICATION <sup>b</sup> (millions)	PERCENT MULTIRACIAL
White	216.5	5.1	2.3
Black	36.2	1.5	4.2
Asian	11.7	1.4	12.4
Other	18.4	3.0	16.4
American Indian and Alaska Native	3.9	1.4	36.4
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0.7	0.3	44.8

<sup>a</sup>Racial/ethnic group totals do not sum to the total U.S. population because multiracial persons are counted here in more than one group.

<sup>b</sup>Multiracial persons are counted for each race category mentioned.

Source: Lee, J., and F. Bean. 2004. "America's Changing Color Lines: Immigration, Race/Ethnicity, and Multiracial Identification. *Annual Review of Sociology* 30:221-42.

and by age 24, most had developed a hyphenate way to describe their racial identity.

"The ways we need to think about race and identity must be fluid. At different moments in our lives, different parts of us come forward," Samuels says. "The study of identity must reflect its lived complexity. It has traditionally been theorized as coming from the inside. But my work challenges this and suggests that identity work is dynamic and grounded within our socio-political structures of race, our family experiences, and our individual ways of making sense of this."

All this shifting of identity

of this on their own," she says. "There is not a transracial adoptee side of town. There is not a country you can visit, and so sometimes people felt they did not have a community. But having this sense that there are others like you is helpful."

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**Y**OONSUN CHOI'S research seeks to understand the familial and environmental processes that influence and impact ethnic minority children and their development. As a

Working with a sample of 2,000 middle school students in Seattle, Choi and colleagues at the University of Washington studied specific problem behaviors among multiracial youngsters such as substance use and interpersonal violence. Examples include smoking cigarettes, drinking alcohol, carrying a gun, and participating in fights. For many behaviors, multiracial children were more at risk. When it came to smoking, for example, Choi found that the odds were

38 percent less that white students would smoke than for their multiracial peers, 32 percent less for black students, and 51 percent less for Asian students. White kids were 63 percent less likely than multiracial kids to have been in a fight.

"I do not want to say these kids are problematic. The majority of kids do not show any problems. But we have not done a good job of integrating them and that can cause the problem," says Choi. In fact, incidence of the problematic behaviors was higher in schools and neighborhoods with perceived racial discrimination, and Choi notes that other research has shown that "in Hawaii, multiracial kids did not show problems, because Hawaii is somewhere where multiracial is the norm."

As if to illustrate the problems of acceptance for multiracial children, when Choi's research was first published, hard right extremists used the results as ammunition for their arguments for limiting immigration and interracial relationships. "I was surprised by that reaction. That is exactly what puts these kids in trouble," she says. "If people hate me because of my article, that's okay, I'm misunderstood. But if this is what these kids have to deal with every day, then we have to do better." ■



Founded in 1927, *Social Service Review* is committed to examining social welfare policy and practice and evaluating its effects.

Providing multidisciplinary and multicultural analyses of current policies and past practices, *SSR* publishes critical research from social welfare scholars and practitioners, as well as sociologists, economists, theologians, historians, psychologists, and political scientists. *Social Service Review* is edited by the faculty of the School of Social Service Administration, led by Emily Klein Gidwitz Professor Michael Sosin.

Below are summaries of three articles that appeared in the 2006 issue of *Social Service Review*.



## Neighborhood Matters

### A leading child welfare scholar questions a longstanding approach to foster care placements

**C**ILD WELFARE AGENCIES are entrusted with some of America's most vulnerable and damaged children. And yet it's no secret that agencies are struggling. Burdened with high case loads and overworked staffs, they labor to find stable homes for foster children or to reunite them with their families in ways that avoid further abuse or neglect.

Recently many agencies have embraced a new approach to foster care, seeking to place children in foster homes within their neighborhoods as part of a wider emphasis on neighborhood services for families needing help. Los Angeles and New York City have adopted the neighborhood approach, and many states, counties, and municipalities are following suit. The influential Annie E. Casey Foundation pro-

motes neighborhood placement through its "Family to Family" program, arguing that "child welfare agencies can effectively partner with disadvantaged communities to provide better care for children who have been abused or neglected."

Now, Jill Duerr Berrick, a professor in the School of Social Welfare at the University of California-Berkeley, ques-

tions whether neighborhood placements are such a good idea after all. In the December issue of *Social Service Review*, she challenges what she calls the "enthusiasm" for neighborhood placements and offers evidence that foster children from "distressed" neighborhoods may have a better chance to thrive in neighborhoods more able to support and nurture them. "The odds for vulnerable children are not favorable in some neighborhoods," she writes.

The neighborhood approach is an old idea. Berrick traces it back to Jane Addams' settlement house movement and the principle that "supportive services should be readily accessible and close to home." In many ways, she says, the approach makes sense. Families that are "struggling with parenting and other stressful life events" can benefit from services in their own neighborhoods. Such neighborhoods clearly need help. But making them the focus of services to strengthen families does not make them appropriate places for foster children.

The reality, Berrick writes, is that some neighborhoods simply are not healthy for children. She cites studies linking child abuse and neglect to poverty, substandard housing, high mobility, and high rates of female-headed households. Children are also more likely to suffer in neighborhoods with a high concentration of bars, liquor stores, and police-related alcohol or drug incidents.

The challenge is not simply to find skilled and compassionate foster parents. The surroundings matter, too. Neighborhoods suffering from such

problems as poverty, unemployment, and high numbers of single-parent families are often dangerous for kids. They have poor schools. "Do distressed neighborhoods provide foster children and families with essential services, sufficient strengths, and adequate resources?" she asks. The answer is usually no.

Berrick does not reject neighborhood placement altogether. She says that older children who are likely to remain in foster care only a short time may benefit from the continuity that staying in the neighborhood offers. But she suggests that younger children and those less likely to return to their families may do better in neighborhoods that can offer greater safety and more resources.

"My argument is not to take kids and move them into homes of tremendous affluence and privilege," she says. "My argument is to give some children greater opportunities, in families with somewhat greater means and higher incomes. The incomes that are typically found in nearby or more distant neighborhoods not only offer children access to better education and safety, but also higher social capital on the part of the foster families."

Berrick said she undertook her study after noticing a "wave of enthusiasm" for neighborhood placement without evidence to justify the approach or a debate about its effectiveness. "There has been no conversation," she says. "That's what these kids need so desperately. There hasn't been public debate to discuss the benefits of this approach."

At a deeper level she takes issue with how new ideas are taken up uncritically in child welfare. "Child welfare in my opinion is very faddish in nature," she says. "It tends to embrace new ideas with a rush of enthusiasm, often with little evidence to support the new ideas. The research and reflection usually come later." 

Berrick, J.D. 2006. "Neighborhood-Based Foster Care: A Critical Examination of Location-Based Placement Criteria." *Social Service Review* 80 (4): 569-83.



# International Support

**In nearly two dozen industrialized nations, spending increased for children and families over the last 20 years**

**W**HEN IT COMES TO THE CHALLENGES FACING children and families, the United States is not alone. Most industrialized nations find themselves in the same boat, with aging populations and families increasingly vulnerable to a global economy that disadvantages, among others, immigrants, the poor, and single-parent households. A new comparative study of 21 industrialized countries, however, finds that support for children and families has been growing to meet these challenges, though in a variety of ways.

In an article published in the June issue of *Social Service Review*, Shirley Gabel of Fordham University and Sheila Kamerman of Columbia University look at public support for children and families between 1980 and 2001. Their study, "Investing in Children: Public Commitment in Twenty-One Industrialized Countries," finds that even though children declined as a percentage of the population everywhere, all 21 countries increased the amount they spent on children and families.

This paradox, the authors say, reflects changing realities across the industrialized world, including a growing percentage of children born to single mothers, and widespread changes in policy. For example, in the late 1970s child support in most countries consisted mainly of cash payments to families with children. Thirty years later, support had shifted toward services that help families balance work and family.

The study looks at several different kinds of public benefits, including cash payments, parental leaves, child care, and early childhood education. Countries vary widely in the mix of benefits they provide. English-speaking countries, for example, share an emphasis on encouraging parents to work. Most industrial countries have liberal policies on parental leave, but not the United States.

At the same time, though, the authors say the United States can no longer be regarded as a "laggard" in supporting children and families. The United States provides substantial support through its tax benefits, a category that is seldom systematically measured or acknowledged internationally. "We've been measured in the use of instruments in which the U.S. is least generous," Gabel says.

Gabel and Kamerman undertook their study in part because so much had changed for families and children. "It's a very different world today than it was 20 years ago," Gabel says. "There have been significant changes in the way we live. And policy should respond to those changes."

Gabel, S.G., and S.B. Kamerman. 2006. "Investing in Children: Public Commitment in Twenty-one Industrialized Countries." *Social Service Review* 80 (2): 239-63.



In the late 1970s child support consisted mainly of cash payments. Thirty years later, support had shifted toward services that help families balance work and family.

# A Delicate Balance

**Case managers employ a range of strategies to get the mentally ill to accept treatment**

**F**EW CHALLENGES ARE AS difficult or as controversial as getting people with severe mental illness to accept treatment. One approach that has had some success is Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), a form of intensive case management that uses teamwork and frequent personal contact to encourage clients to take their medicines and accept other help to live stable and autonomous lives. But some criticize the approach as coercive and paternalistic—an effort to bend the will of unwilling patients.

In an article published in September's *Social Service Review*, "Promoting Treatment Adherence in Assertive Community Treatment," researchers from the University of Chicago and the University of Wisconsin-Madison examine how case managers in two ACT programs cope with uncooperative clients. What they find is a wide range of strategies, many of which fall short of coercion.

ACT appeared in the 1960s as an alternative to hospitalization. The idea was to bring the comprehensive services available in a hospital to a community setting—a "hospital without walls," says one of the authors, SSA Assistant Professor Beth Angell. The approach involves low client-staff ratios and close coordination among experts in different areas, including medication management, vocational rehabilitation, and occupational therapy. Case managers reach out to clients rather than wait for them to seek services. "By communicating concern for the client, repeated outreach efforts are intended to erode client resistance to treatment," the authors write.

Some strategies are clearly coercive. Courts mandate treatment. Mental health agencies use support payments to compel cooperation. These strategies are becoming more

common, and most people with severe mentally illnesses encounter them at some point in their lives.

But case managers often employ less forceful strategies that rely instead on frequent contact and on developing a relationship with the client. These include distributing medicines to their clients daily or even twice daily, handing out spending money and medicines at the same time, listening to the client's reasons for resisting treatment—what one case manager describes as "getting on the client's trampoline"—using persuasion, rewarding clients by buying them lunch, confronting them, or simply letting them suffer the natural consequences of their non-adherence.

The authors argue that "coercion" cannot adequately describe this range of possibilities. They define them rather as "social influence strategies" that employ many of the same means that all of us use to influence the decisions of others.

Nevertheless, case managers face an inescapable dilemma. They have what the authors call a "dual mandate," promoting the client's autonomy but also protecting the safety of the client and the public. The difficulty lies in determining how much autonomy to allow and "how forcefully" to intervene when the client, in exercising that autonomy, resists treatment.

Angell, B., C.A. Mahoney, and N.I. Martinez. 2006 "Promoting Treatment Adherence in Assertive Community Treatment." *Social Service Review* 80 (3): 485-526.

**Case managers often employ less forceful strategies that rely instead on frequent contact and on developing a relationship with the client.**

## Fulbright Takes Grogan to Northern Ireland

Associate Professor **Colleen Grogan** has been awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to spend several months at Queen's University of Belfast, in Northern Ireland. Grogan is well-known for her work on health policy and politics and the American welfare state. While in Belfast, she is based in the School of Law and is lecturing and researching on "Public Policy, Health Disparities, and the Politics of Medicinalization."

"Fulbright Fellowships are a wonderful way to foster cross-cultural understanding, friendships, and learning," says Grogan. "I am working on a collaborative project involving a team of researchers from Queen's University in Belfast and Trinity College in Dublin. We're trying to understand the factors that influence policy decision-making in public housing and health policy in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland, in a time of real change. This project fits well with my own research interests and will help us to better understand how public policies are implemented in different political-economic environments."

The Fulbright Fellowships were established in 1946 to promote "mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries in the world" through international educational exchange. Fulbright Scholars are chosen for their leadership potential and have the opportunity to observe the political, economic, and cultural institutions of their host country. Fulbright grants are primarily awarded for university lecturing, graduate study, and teaching in K-12 schools. The program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State.



**SSA Associate Professor Colleen Grogan is in Northern Ireland for her work on health policy and politics.**

## Gehlert President-Elect of Society for Social Work and Research; Lambert Joins the Board

**Sarah Gehlert**, SSA professor and a leading authority on the connections between social work and health care, will serve as president-elect of the Society for Social Work and Research and begin a two-year term as president in 2008.

"I represent the organization's members to the research community, notably to the National Institutes of Health and to the legislature. I intend to work at forging ties with other professional organizations in the field to raise the profile of social and behavioral

research in this time in which they are challenged," Gehlert says.

Gehlert says the group plans to work with organizations, such as the American Psychological Association, that conduct social and behavioral research to demonstrate its importance in the health and well-being of the U.S. population. "In this environment, in which research funds at the national level are compromised, we need to demonstrate that social and behavioral research complements and extends

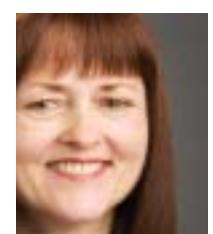


**Sarah Gehlert**

basic research," she says.

Gehlert, who is also deputy dean for research at SSA, professor in the Institute of Mind and Biology, and director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Health Disparities Research, is particularly interested in research related to women's health and social factors that impact group differences in health. The co-editor of the *Handbook of Health Social Work*, recently published by John Wiley & Sons, Gehlert has published broadly on issues about the interactions of genes and environment, women's health and mental health, psychosocial aspects of epilepsy and other chronic health conditions, as well as issues on maternal and child health.

Associate Professor **Susan Lambert**, an expert on organizational theory and management, the relationship between work and personal life, and lower-skilled jobs and low-wage workers, has also been elected to the board



**Susan Lambert**

of directors of the Society for Social Work and Research. Lambert is the co-editor of *Work and Life Integration: Organizational, Cultural, and Individual Perspectives*, published by Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. She joins Associate Professor **Waldo E. Johnson, Jr.** as a member-at-large on the SSWR Board.

## Henly, Co-Authors Win Research Award

Associate Professor **Julia Henly**, and co-authors Sandra K. Danziger and Shira Offer, received the 2007 Excellence in Research/Best Scholarly Contribution Award from the Society for Social Work and Research for their 2005 article "The Contribution of Social Support to the Material Well-Being of Low-Income Families." The article,

which was published in the *Journal of Marriage and Family*, analyzes the nature and function of social support available to low-income mothers through their social networks. The authors conclude that informal networks often provide essential coping resources that help low-income families get by on a daily basis; however these networks are ill-suited for helping low-income families advance up the socioeconomic ladder.

The Best Scholarly Contribution Award recognizes outstanding social work research that advances knowledge with direct applications to practice, policy, and the resolution of social problems, and honors original scholarly contributions to the peer-reviewed research literature in a given year.

## Study to Examine Fathers' Roles in Child Abuse

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have funded a three-year, \$895,000 study on the roles that fathers and father-figures play in the origins of physical child abuse and neglect. The research, led by SSA Professor **Neil Guterman**, will look at longitudinal data for families with children from birth through age three—when they are at the greatest risk for the most severe forms of physical abuse or neglect—and attempt to identify the various fathering pathways that place children at risk. The study uses data from a nationwide sample and examines the fathering role at multiple levels: the community level, the relationship between the parents, and the interactions between parent and child.

"Even though fathers and father-figures are disproportionately represent-



**Julia R. Henly**

ed as perpetrators in the most severe, and often fatal, forms of physical child abuse or neglect, we currently have a poor understanding of what specific fathering influences place children at risk," Guterman says. "Developing this knowledge will enable us to make major strides in designing more effective prevention strategies that stop child maltreatment before it occurs."

## Johnson to Lead the Council on Contemporary Families

The Council on Contemporary Families elected **Waldo E. Johnson, Jr.**, as its national co-chair. Johnson, associate professor at SSA and the director of the Center for the Study of Race, Politics, and Culture at the University of Chicago, has served on the CCF board for five years and is co-chairing CCF's 10th Anniversary conference, "What Have We Learned? How Can We Translate it to People Living in Families?"

"In its relatively brief existence, CCF has made an incredible contribution to the public discourse regarding the statuses, strengths, and needs of contemporary American families in the U.S. and abroad. The CCF membership comprises many of the nation's leading family researchers and clinical practitioners who individually inform U.S. family policy and practice via their scholarship and practice wisdom respectively," Johnson says. "Collectively, CCF's work with journalists in examining and explaining often complicated issues facing families in 21st century America and a global society has helped to broaden the public conversation, thus offering explanations and interventions based on solid research and practice experience with families and as a result, making these discussions more accessible for a wider audience."

Johnson's research focuses on male involvement in adolescent pregnancy, paternal and family

involvement among nonresident fathers in fragile families, and the physical and psychosocial health statuses of African-American males. He is a research consultant to Strengthening Healthy Marriage, a seven-year longitudinal research and evaluation study of strategies for enhancing couple relationships among low-income, married parents in the United States and an investigator for the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing study.

Johnson is also a convener of the 2025 Campaign for Black Men/Boys, a national initiative designed to build community capacity to enhance the status and well-being of African American males across the life cycle in the family and community, led by the 21st Century Foundation.

The Council on Contemporary Families is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of family researchers and practitioners that seeks to further a national understanding of how America's families are changing and what is known about the strengths and weaknesses of different family forms and various family interventions.

## Richman Honored for His Efforts on Behalf of Youth

Distinguished faculty member and former dean **Harold Richman**, Hermon Dunlap Smith Professor Emeritus, was among those honored with the 2006 Kids Count Award from the advocacy organization Voices for Illinois Children. Richman was recognized for his long-time dedication to improving the lives of children and for his leadership as the founding director of the Chapin Hall Center for

Children at the University of Chicago.

Richman was also honored for his international efforts on behalf of young people by SSA students and others at a student-run conference in November 2006. "Global Issues Facing Youth" brought together child welfare scholars from around the world, as well as graduate students and practicing social workers, to discuss poverty, disease, violence, racism, and other challenges for children and young people throughout the world (see related story in "Memoranda").



**Waldo E. Johnson, Jr.**

## MacArthur Foundation Supports Research on Mixed-Income Communities

The Chicago Housing Authority is eight years into a bold effort to transform public housing, in part by relocating residents to lower-density, newly developed mixed-income communities.

Associate Professor **Robert Chaskin**, working with colleague Mark Joseph, assistant professor at The Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case-Western Reserve University, has received a three-year, \$600,000 grant from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to



**Robert Chaskin**

fund research on the implementation and early community-building process at three of Chicago's new mixed-income developments. The research will examine the early stages and initial strategies used to build the mixed-income communities and the initial experiences of residents being integrated into them, as well as the lessons, challenges, and key issues that are emerging as these developments are taking shape.

"Chicago is in many ways, because of its scale and pace, at the forefront of a nation-wide transformation of public housing," Chaskin says. "The CHA Transformation presents us with a unique opportunity to examine and understand the potential, the complexities, and the appropriate place of mixed-income development as a strategy to raise the quality of life for low-income families and to promote community revitalization."

## Engstrom Receives Hartford Faculty Scholar Award for Gerontological Research

Assistant Professor **Malitta Engstrom** has received a two-year, \$100,000 award for her research into the lives of women who must care for their grandchildren when their daughters are incarcerated. Her project, entitled "Women, Incarceration, and Substance Use: Caregiving Grandmothers as a Missing Link in Family Intervention," will examine the needs and strengths of these families, as well as pilot an innovative intervention model aimed at all three generations.

"The incarceration of women in the United States is increasing at an alarming rate and disproportionately impacts women of color," noted Engstrom in her application. "Grandmothers are disproportionately likely to become the grandparent caregivers and to experience complex caregiving challenges that exceed usual grandparent caregiving burdens as they offer support to their incarcerated daughters, often in the context of longstanding burdens associated with their daughters' substance-use problems, and as they provide care for their grandchildren who are likely to be experiencing numerous psychological, behavioral, and academic problems associated with their mothers."

incarceration and substance-use problems."

The project is funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation and is administered by the Gerontological Society of America.

## Roderick Convenes the Network for College Success

To strengthen leadership in the Chicago Public Schools' high schools and improve the ability to prepare students for college, **Melissa Roderick**, Hermon Dunlap Smith Professor at SSA, and colleagues from the Chicago Public



**Melissa Roderick**

Schools, the Center for Urban School Improvement, and Harvard University have founded the Network for College Success. Principals of eight mid- to

high-performing high schools meet monthly to share ideas for school improvement efforts with a focus on ensuring students are ready to go to college. Network members include principals from charter, neighborhood, and selective enrollment high schools, University researchers, and leaders from CPS and the University who are charged with reforming high schools in Chicago.

The McDougal Foundation and the Polk Bros. Foundation have together provided more than \$100,000 to support the implementation of the network. The project addresses three central challenges: Supporting high school leadership in developing instructional visions, strategies, professional communities, and learning environments that raise the bar; creating mechanisms for cross-fertilization and transfer of innovation between schools; and increasing the capacity of the entire system to change by creating networks of leaders with demonstrated success

and tools available for replication.

Roderick and her team are working to expand the Network for College Success to include other schools, and are in the early planning phase of establishing a Principals' Center.

Roderick is a prominent scholar on education and an expert in urban school reform, high-stakes testing, minority adolescent development, and school transitions. She is co-director at the Consortium on Chicago School Research at the University of Chicago and faculty director of the Community Schools program at SSA. From 2001 to 2003, Roderick served the administration of CPS as founding director of the Department of Planning and Development.

at-risk youth. New chapters present resilience-oriented approaches to recovery from major disasters and demonstrate community-based and international applications. Walsh is the Mose and Sylvia Firestone Professor at SSA and the Department of Psychiatry.

## Spergel Book Advocates Community-Based Solution to Gang Violence

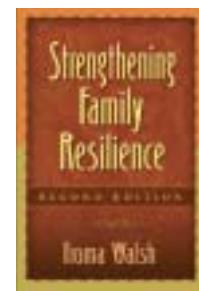
Cities across the nation struggle to reduce gang violence, but efforts often fail to unite law enforcement and community interests, leading to an emphasis either on gang suppression or outreach youth-worker approaches. Rarely do they involve empirical research evaluating these strategies' effectiveness. **Irving Spergel**, George Herbert Jones Professor Emeritus, has spent five decades researching gangs and evaluating effective ways to reduce the violence. His newest book *Reducing Youth Gang Violence: The Little Village Gang Project in Chicago*, published by AltaMira Press, details the efforts—and results—of his Chicago project to reduce youth gang problems, including violence and illegal drug activity. The Little Village Gang Violence Reduction Project is a comprehensive, community-based model that brings together a coalition of criminal justice, neighborhood, and academic organizations with a team of tactical officers, probation officers, and former gang leaders to address hardcore violence from two gangs: the Latin Kings and the Two Six. The book describes their successes and failures at the individual level, within the gang itself, and in the community

## 2nd Edition of Walsh's *Strengthening Family Resilience* Published

Internationally-renowned scholar **Froma Walsh** has revisited her book *Strengthening Family Resilience* for a revised, updated, and expanded second edition published by The Guilford Press. The book presents Walsh's family resilience framework for intervention and prevention with clients dealing with adversity. Drawing on extensive research and clinical experience,

Walsh describes key processes in resilience for practitioners to target and facilitate. Useful guidelines and case illustrations

address a wide range of challenges: sudden crisis, trauma, and loss; disruptive transitions such as job loss, divorce, and migration; persistent multi-stress conditions such as serious illness or poverty; and barriers to success for



at large. Spergel's integrated project has since become the model for a series of initiatives across the country.

## Chaskin Book Leads to Chinese Trip

Associate Professor Robert Chaskin recently traveled to Beijing to participate in a working seminar on "Bridging Research, Policy, and Practice for Children." Sponsored by Childwatch International and China Youth and Children Research Center, the event brought together researchers from six continents to discuss strategies and processes for using research-based knowledge to influence policy and practice. The seminar was based on a book that Chaskin is co-editing, *Research for Action: Cross-National Approaches to Connecting Knowledge, Policy and Practice for Children*, which will be published by Oxford University Press.

"We have a lot to learn in the social welfare and human service fields about how to effectively implement evidence-based policy and practice," noted Chaskin. "It's not simply a question of supplying evidence that gets applied to action. Knowledge gets mediated in all kinds of ways—through relationships, in light of competing priorities, interests, and expectations, and shaped by the specific context in which it's developed. By drawing on examples from throughout the world, we hope to better understand the kinds of strategies, roles, and tools that researchers can use to foster better knowledge utilization."

## Moving On: Courtney Heads to Seattle

McCormick Tribune Professor **Mark Courtney** has accepted a new position at the University of Washington School of Social Work. Courtney will become the Ballmer Endowed Chair for Child Well-Being and will head up Partners for Our Children, a public-private partnership working to improve Washington's child welfare system. 





Jared Diamond spoke to a standing-room-only audience at SSA.

## Hartford Fellowship for Study of Childhood Sexual Abuse

SSA doctoral student **Jewell**

**Brazelton** has received a prestigious Hartford Doctoral Fellowship for her dissertation research on how mid-life African-American women interpret and disclose childhood sexual abuse.

Brazelton hopes that her research will increase the understanding of how African-American women have



**Jewell Brazelton**

experienced this trauma while providing a foundation for the future development of culturally sensitive interventions for them and their families.

Brazelton noticed that African-American women were often under-represented in empirical studies on childhood sexual abuse and disclosure. When they were included they were often under the age of 35. Her research considers the challenging issue of disclosure of childhood sexual abuse for a

cohort of African-American women ages 40-55, focusing on how the trauma has affected the social functioning and well-being of these women as they execute their many mid-life roles, including parenting and caring for aging relatives.

Much of Brazelton's direct practice has been with African-American women in mid-life, and she has completed fieldwork practica in the areas of homelessness and domestic violence. At the University of Chicago, Brazelton serves as a research assistant conducting in-home interviews for the Center for Interdisciplinary Health Disparities Research, lead by Professor **Sarah Gehlert**, focusing on the higher rates of breast cancer that African-American women in Chicago face. She also has served as a teaching assistant at SSA for Assistant Professor **Yoonsun Choi**'s research methods classes and lectured on qualitative research methods such as those she is using in her dissertation research.

"SSA has offered me a wonderful opportunity to grow academically, and to hone my research and teaching skills," Brazelton says. "The opportunity to interact with some of the premiere professors in the nation is something for which I will always be grateful."

## International Children's Issues Focus of Student-Run Conference

The world's issues of poverty, disease, violence, racism, and other problems are especially difficult on children and young people. The "2006 International Child Welfare Conference: Global Issues Facing Youth," a day-long event on Saturday, November 4 at SSA, took a hard look at these issues, bringing together child welfare scholars from around the world and graduate students and practicing social workers from throughout the Chicago area.

Professor Emeritus **Harold A. Richman** was honored at the beginning of the conference for his extensive work on behalf of children throughout the world. Dean of SSA from 1969 to 1978, Richman also served as the founding director of Chapin Hall and received the University of Chicago's Quantrell Award for Excellence in Teaching in 1990. Richman currently serves as chairman of the board of the Center for the Study of Social Policy in Washington, D.C., and is active in seven international child welfare organizations in countries including South Africa, Jordan, Israel, and the United States.

Richman says his work has been based on a simple idea: "Policy is better when it is based on good data and good analysis." Second-year SSA student **Liz Bomgaars**, the 2006 International Social Welfare Fellow, presented Richman with a photo of children who have benefited from the increased ability of the many organizations he has influenced to develop good data and analysis.

SSA alumna **Irene Rizzini, A.M. '82**, gave the keynote address at the event, and Associate Professor **Dexter Voisin** was among the presenters. The conference was sponsored by the School of Social Service Administration, the Center for International Studies' Norman Wait Harris Fund, the Chapin Hall Center for Children, the Office of the Reynolds Club and Student Activities, and SSA's student-run International Social Welfare group.

## 2006-2007 Lecture Series Features Distinguished Scholars

Each year, SSA sponsors a series of public lectures on important issues in social work and social justice. Last year's events addressed an especially wide



range of topics, from global warming to racial politics to spirituality in social work.

**Jared Diamond**, professor of geography and physiology at the Geffen School of Medicine, UCLA, gave the Helen Harris Perlman Lecture on October 19. He spoke on "Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed" based on his book of the same name.

**Froma Walsh**, the Mose and Sylvia Firestone Professor at SSA and the department of psychiatry, gave the Ruth Knee Lecture on Spirituality and Social Work on November 9. She discussed "The Spiritual Dimension in Suffering, Healing, and Resilience: Expanding Clinical Theory and Practice."

**Randall Kennedy**, the Michael R. Klein Professor of Law at Harvard University, delivered the Pastora San Juan Cafferty Lecture on Race and Ethnicity in American Life, on April 12. His lecture was entitled "Sell Out: The Politics of Racial Betrayal."

**Sharon Berlin**, the Helen Ross Professor at SSA, concluded the lecture series with the Rhoda G. Sarnat Lecture on June 2, during Alumni Weekend. Her talk was entitled "Why Cognitive Therapy Needs Social Work."

## SSA Students Named Human Rights Interns

SSA students were well represented among the recipients of the University of Chicago Human Rights Program Awards, which provide a \$5,000 grant for each student to spend the summer working on an international human rights issue aligned with his or her academic discipline, career goals, or personal interests. One-quarter of the campus human rights internships went to SSA students.

Two SSA students who won the award will be in Guatemala this summer: Second-year student **Emily Marion** will work on children's rights issues, while doctoral student **Ben Roth** will address migrant rights. Second-year student **Kristin Buller** will work in a Cambodian women's crisis center, and **Xavier Williams**, a third-year student in the Extended Evening Program, will focus on juvenile justice issues in South Africa.

First-year student **Ben Reuler**, who will work on violence prevention projects for UNICEF in Namibia's capital city, Windhoek, has visited the country twice before, as a student and as a researcher. Reuler is eager to return but says, "Being away from my wife Aisha

for ten weeks will be one of the biggest challenges of my life." He notes, however, that Aisha, a student in the University of Chicago Medical School, encouraged his application to the Internship Program.

"Namibia has some amazing social workers and great opportunities for learning," Reuler says, adding that he hopes to establish an ongoing partnership between agencies in Namibia and the University.

In addition to financial support, the University of Chicago Human Rights Internship Program provides award recipients with services such as resume translation and a student liaison who assists students throughout the year-long process. **Jessica Darrow**, a second-year A.M./Ph.D. student, is the current student coordinator and a previous Human Rights Intern. Darrow spent last summer in northern Rwanda working for the American Refugee Committee on HIV/AIDS awareness among refugee populations.

## SSA Welcomes Visiting Scholars

**Inhoe Ku** is a visiting professor at SSA this year while continuing his sabbatical

from the department of social welfare at Seoul National University in South Korea. Professor Ku holds a Ph.D. from the University of Washington in Seattle, and his research interests include poverty, child welfare, and social welfare policy.

**Lorraine Waterhouse** was a

visiting professor at SSA for the 2006 Autumn Quarter. Professor Waterhouse currently holds the appointment of professor of social work at the University of Edinburgh, where she recently completed a term as head of the School of Social and Political Studies. Her research interests include child welfare and juvenile justice.

**Sam Choi** is a post-doctoral

scholar on the National Institute on Drug Abuse's Women and Substance Abuse Treatment Services Project. Choi was the recipient of the 2006 Society for Social Work Research Outstanding Dissertation Award and completed her Ph.D. in August at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. While at SSA, she will also continue work on the Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Waiver Demonstration Project for the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. 

## Alumni Association News

### AA Board Welcomes New Members and Officers

At its annual meeting during Alumni Weekend, the SSA Alumni Association elected new officers and members to fill the vacancies left by members completing their terms of service.

Congratulations to

#### Officers

President Molly Baltman, A.M. '99  
Vice-President Annie Rosenthal, A.M. '98  
Secretary Tom Wedekind, A.M. '73

#### Members

Glenn Dillon, A.M. '05  
Elizabeth Frate, A.M. '06  
Allen Hernandez, A.M. '06  
Nicole Hrycyk, A.M. '04  
Terri Travis-Davis, A.M. '99

Our sincere gratitude to those who completed their terms of service on the Alumni Association Board

Harley Grant, A.M. '96  
Timothy Hilton, A.M. '97  
Marilyn Omahen, A.M. '78  
Margaret "Peggy" Philip, A.M. '00  
Will Weder, A.M. '70



### African-American Alumni Committee Forms

Establishing and strengthening connections among SSA's African-American alumni, and engaging under-represented groups with the School are two of the motivations behind the formation of a new committee of the Alumni Association. **Renée Rose, A.M. '04**, is chairing the new committee, whose members are working to develop a mission and vision statement for the group. More information about forthcoming events and activities will be included in SSA's electronic newsletter, or you can find out more by contacting the group at [alumni@ssa.uchicago.edu](mailto:alumni@ssa.uchicago.edu).

#### Members include

Alvinetta Burks, A.M. '79  
Misty Drake, A.M. '00  
Gregory Gaither, A.M. '84  
Tawakuliti Jogunosimi, A.M. '01  
Erwin McEwen, A.M. '98  
Theresa Matthews, A.M. '98  
Denice Murray, A.M. '98

April Porter, A.M. '01  
Dhamana Shauri, A.M. '98  
Ray Thompson, A.M. '03  
Terri Travis-Davis, A.M. '99  
Quenette Walton, A.M. '04  
Monica Monae Whittington-Eskridge, A.M. '96

## Alumni Updates

**Paul Kusuda, A.M. '49**, was recently presented with a 2006 Community ChangeMaker Award by the Wisconsin Community Fund for his work as an activist promoting Asian-American rights and culture and the rights of older adults. During WWII, Kusuda and his family were sent to the Manzanar Relocation Camp for Japanese Americans. While there, he helped start a school for the children living in the camp. Kusuda left the camp to attend SSA. Following graduation, he and his wife moved to Wisconsin, where he worked for 35 years with the Wisconsin Department of Health and Human Services, retiring in 1987. Kusuda has remained active, particularly around issues of aging, earning accolades from other organizations such as the Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups, which gave him and his wife the 2004 Award for Leadership. A contributing writer to Asian Wisconsinite, Kusuda was given the 2005 Editor's Award. In 2006 he received the Dane County Martin Luther King, Jr. Recognition Award.

**Barbara Jackson, A.M. '69**, joined nine other social workers on a two-week trip to Durban, South Africa, in July 2006, sponsored by NASW-IL, part of an exchange program with social service providers from South Africa. Jackson is a member of the committee hosting a reciprocal group from Durban and possibly Casablanca in Chicago this summer. The visitors' itinerary includes a visit to SSA to discuss diversity in human services. Jackson is a master practitioner instructor for field work at SSA, coordinating the School's partnership with the Revere Community School.

**Colleen M. Jones, A.M. '74**, was recently presented with the Social Worker of the Year Award by the Illinois Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers. Jones is the executive vice-president and chief operating officer of Metropolitan Family Services in Chicago, where she has worked since 1974. She is particularly known for her

program development efforts with a range of populations, including preschoolers, school-aged children and families, and the elderly. Jones was a founding member of the board of directors of the Illinois Center for Violence Prevention, and served as chair. She also is a founding board member of the Healthcare Consortium of Illinois and serves on several other boards as well.

**Doris W. Koo, A.M. '75**, has been selected to lead Enterprise Community Partners, a national affordable housing and community development organization. Prior to her selection as president and CEO of the group, Koo served as executive vice president, overseeing the organization's Gulf Coast rebuilding initiative, as well as activities in California, Colorado, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, and Washington. Koo is a nationally respected leader with nearly 30 years of experience in the field of affordable housing and community development. Enterprise is a leading provider of the development capital and expertise it takes to create decent, affordable homes and rebuild communities.

**Tom Scott, A.M. '75**, was recently elected President of Housing California, the leading statewide advocacy organization for affordable homes for low income families, seniors, and the disabled in California. He was also awarded a Fannie Mae Foundation Fellowship to Harvard's Kennedy School of Government Executive Education Program for Senior Executives in State and Local Government.

**Pat Dowell, A.M. '80**, was elected to the Chicago City Council on April 17, after a runoff election against Alderman Dorothy Tillman. Dowell is a community field coordinator at SSA and has been a long-time activist in the area of community and economic development. She is also a former deputy planning commissioner for the city and served as executive director of the Near West Side Community Development Corporation.



**Lucy Steinitz, Ph.D. '80**, was recently featured in the *Baltimore Jewish Times* for her work in Namibia. Steinitz moved with her family to Namibia in 1997, where she worked with UNICEF to publish one of the first studies about orphans in that country. Steinitz was also instrumental in establishing Namibia's first church-based response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which has grown since its inception to become a role model for other organizations.

**Sunny Fischer, A.M. '82**, has received the 2007 Visionary Award from Rape Victim Advocates in recognition for her long-time efforts to end violence against women. Fischer began her career as an activist against domestic violence, was the founding executive director of the Sophia Fund—one of the first private women's foundations in the nation—and the co-founder of the Chicago Foundation for Women. Fischer is currently the executive director of the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation and serves on the boards of several organizations, including the Family Violence Prevention Fund and the Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law, of which she is the chair. Fischer is a member of SSA's Visiting Committee.

**Irene Rizzini, A.M. '82**, gave the keynote address and presented an educational session at "2006 International Child Welfare Conference: Global Issues Facing Youth" (see page 30). Rizzini is a professor of social work at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro, and currently is serving as an international fellow for the Kellogg Institute at the University of Notre Dame. In 1984 Rizzini founded the Center for Research on Children, today known as the International Center for Research and Policy on Childhood (CIESPI), and she is president of Childwatch International Research Network, a consortium of 50 child welfare institutes in 45 countries.

**Pamela Fladeland Rodriguez, A.M. '82**, was recently named one of nine juvenile justice experts appointed to the federal Coordinating Council on

Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. Chaired by the U.S. Attorney General, the council coordinates all federal juvenile delinquency prevention and detention programs. As executive vice-president for Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities of Illinois, which serves adults and youth with substance use and mental health disorders, Rodriguez oversees service delivery to more than 30,000 individuals who are referred by the courts, corrections, and child welfare systems. Rodriguez also serves as a member of the Illinois Juvenile Justice Commission and the oversight board for Redeploy Illinois, an initiative to reduce youth incarceration by supporting local efforts to offer community-based treatment for juvenile offenders.

**David. W. Engstrom, A.M. '83, Ph.D. '92, and Lissette M. Piedra, Ph.D. '06**, co-edited *Our Diverse Society: Race and Ethnicity—Implications for 21st Century American Society*, a new book recently published by the National Association of Social Workers. Dedicated to SSA Professor Emerita **Pastora San Juan Cafferty**, the volume is a response to *The Diverse Society: Implications for Social Policy*, a ground-breaking book co-edited by Cafferty and Leon Chestang. Engstrom is an associate professor of social work at San Diego State University, and Piedra is an assistant professor at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

**Lieutenant Colonel David Rabb, A.M. '85**, has received a Bronze Star from the U.S. Marine Corps for his leadership in the Iraq war. LTC Rabb has served for the past 18 years with the 785th Medical Company, U.S. Army Reserves at Fort Snelling, Minn., including the past four years as the unit's commander. The primary mission of the 785th is to provide combat stress control services and treat soldiers with combat stress and battle fatigue. Following a one-year deployment in Iraq, the unit earned the U.S. Army Meritorious Unit Commendation.

## Thanks to Alumni Career Volunteers

SSA wishes to thank all the alumni who volunteered their time in Winter Quarter to assist students with networking, job search strategies, and advice on career paths. As an essential part of the SSA community, these alumni's participation made the networking events, career luncheons, and Washington Week resounding successes and helped the next generation of social work leaders find their way.

Roxanne Alvarez, A.M. '00  
 Deborah Anderson-Irving, A.M. '95  
 Gina Anselmo, A.M. '98  
 Caleb Avraham, A.M. '06  
 Molly Baltman, A.M. '99  
 Kiley Bednar, A.M. '03  
 Moushumi Beltangady, A.M. '03  
 Debra Berth-Mallek, A.M. '99  
 Tatjana Bicanin, A.M. '04  
 Courtney Bledsoe, A.M. '04  
 Ilana Gotz Bodini, A.M. '03  
 Linda Bowen, A.M. '82  
 Aviva Cahn, A.M. '93  
 Lekesha Campbell, A.M. '04  
 Seth Chamberlain, A.M. '04  
 Peter Chapman, A.M. '86  
 Iris Chavez, A.M. '05  
 Jessica Chen, A.M. '03  
 E. Tyna Coles, A.M. '73  
 Pamela J. Cook, A.M. '05  
 Tammy Cook, A.M. '94  
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 E. Aracelis Francis, A.M. '64  
 Harley Grant, A.M. '96  
 Tim Hilton, A.M. '97  
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 Phyllis Johnson, A.M. '78  
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 Patricia King, A.M. '04  
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 Jessica Kuendig, A.M. '06  
 Tanya Larson-Topp, A.M. '04  
 Anna Marie Lawrence, A.M. '03  
 Christopher Link, A.M. '06  
 Tiffanie Luckett, A.M. '01  
 David Lysy, A.M. '05  
 Sara Manewith, A.M. '97  
 Sarah Marshall, A.M. '04  
 Stan McCracken, A.M. '78, Ph.D. '87  
 Araceli Ramirez Med, A.M. '05  
 Judith Meltzer, A.M. '71  
 Marcy Mistrett, A.M. '95  
 Emily Niederman, A.M. '03  
 Sara Oberst, A.M. '04  
 Marilyn Omahen, A.M. '78  
 Neelam Patel, A.M. '05  
 Jacquelyn Payne, A.M. '05  
 Nancy Perlson, A.M. '05  
 Scott Petersen, A.M. '02  
 Peggy Philip, A.M. '00  
 April Porter, A.M. '01  
 Heather Powers, A.M. '04  
 Ellyce Roitman, A.M. '92  
 Renée Rose, A.M. '04  
 Laura Rosenfeld, A.M. '01  
 Martha Ross, A.M. '99  
 Bina Robinson, A.M. '06  
 Elizabeth Scheibe, A.M. '03  
 Richard Scott, A.M. '96  
 Mara Siler-Price, A.M. '01  
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 Terri Webb, A.M. '06  
 Tom Wedekind, A.M. '73  
 Will Weder, A.M. '70  
 Renita White, A.M. '93  
 Nicole Williams, A.M. '06  
 Susan Wilschke, A.M. '98  
 Keith Witham, A.M. '06  
 Laura Zumdalh, A.M. '04

# the alumni community

In 2005, LTC Rabb received the Social Worker of the Year Award from the Minnesota Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, and in 2006 he completed the Veterans Administration's National Leadership Program. In January 2007, LTC Rabb relinquished command of the 785th Medical Company and remains in the Army Reserves, serving as the 330th Brigade chief social worker/operational combat stress control consultant at Fort Sheridan, Ill. In his civilian job, LTC Rabb is the executive assistant for the under secretary for the health diversity advisory board of the Office of Management Support.

**Ann Maxwell, A.M. '96**, gave a presentation to students and faculty as a part of the University of Chicago Graduate Program in Health Administration and Policy's Ray E. Brown Fellows speaker series. Her February 27 talk was entitled "Evaluating within the Office of Inspector General, Medicaid Drug Pricing: The Success and Failure of Getting Your Recommendations

Implemented." Maxwell is the regional inspector general for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The debut novel by **Ben Tanzer, A.M. '96**, *Lucky Man*, was published in March by Manx Media. The novel follows four friends from the final days of high school through their first years out of college. Tanzer lives, works, and blogs in Chicago with his wife and young sons. He can be reached at [ben-tanzer.blogspot.com](http://ben-tanzer.blogspot.com).

**Carol St. Amant, A.M. '97**, has retired from her long-time position at the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. For the past four years, she has been a part-time lecturer at Knox College, where she teaches a two-term course Social Service Internship, combining classroom education in the social service system with a five-month community internship experiential learning component. St. Amant has also recently begun consulting for private child welfare organizations.

**Evette Cardona, A.M. '98**, was

interviewed on NPR's Latino USA program in a show that aired on April 29. She discussed Amigas Latinas for a story on Latino LGBT issues. Amigas Latinas is an outreach and advocacy organization devoted to lesbian, bisexual, and questioning Latina women; Cardona was among the founders of the organization and serves as the treasurer of its board of directors. Cardona is also a senior program officer at the Polk Bros. Foundation in Chicago.

**Ron Huberman, A.M. '00, M.B.A. '00**, was appointed by Mayor Daley to head the Chicago Transit Authority on April 19. He has been serving as Mayor Daley's chief of staff for the past two years. Prior to that, Huberman was head of the city's Office of Emergency and Communications (including the 911 call center) and a senior official in the Chicago Police Department.

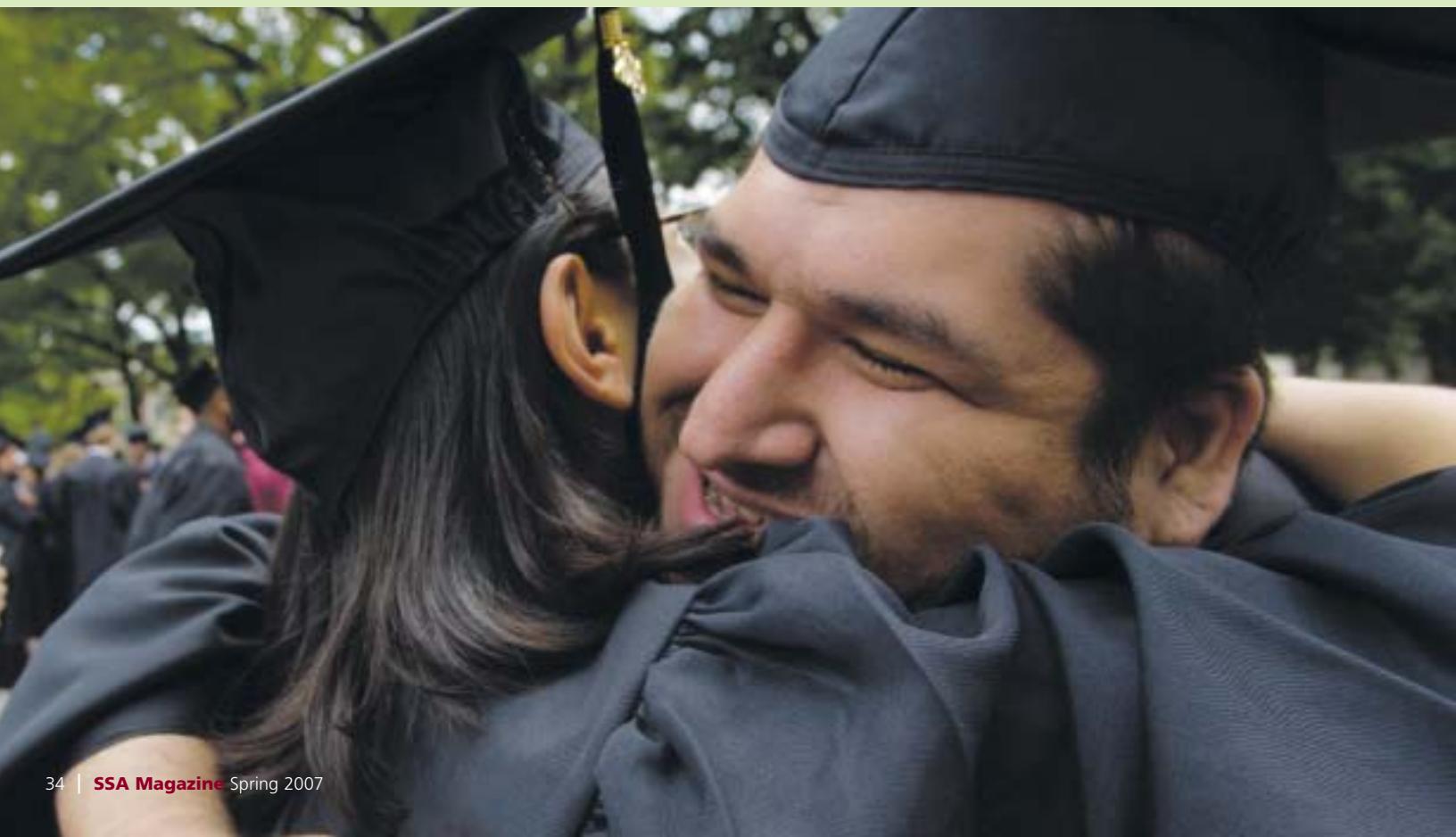
**Caren Jeskey, A.M. '02**, is currently working at the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago as a care manager for patients with a variety of diagnoses and rehabilitation needs, and their families,

providing care to patients who have had joint replacements and spinal surgeries. Prior to her new position at RIC, Jeskey worked in an employee assistance program as a counselor and stress-management workshop facilitator. She has also taught yoga since 1999 to adults and children with and without special needs, and in corporate settings.

**Joe Strickland, A.M. '02**, was among the panelists at the annual Chicago Dinners event organized by the Community and Economic Development Organization, a student group at SSA and the Harris School. Strickland is the founder and CEO of Metropolitan Area Group for Igniting Civilization, an organization based in the Chicago community of Woodlawn with a mission to organize residents of the neighborhood and surrounding areas to stimulate social change.

**Robin Tillotson, A.M. '02**, was recently appointed to the board of directors for Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly. Her responsibilities will include chairing the service delivery committee. 

**Maintain the Connection:** Remember to stay in touch with the SSA community by sending your news to [alumni@ssa.uchicago.edu](mailto:alumni@ssa.uchicago.edu).



SSA has recently learned of the death of **Grace Angle, A.M. '34**.

**Olive Swinney, A.M. '37**, died on February 8, 2007 at the age of 97. Swinney began her social work career during the Great Depression, directing federal relief programs in Minot, N.D., and the coalfields of West Virginia. After graduating from SSA, she and her husband moved to Washington, D.C., where she devoted herself to social justice causes, including improved housing and services for low-income families. Swinney was known for her slide show "In the Shadow of the Nation's Capitol," which revealed slum dwellings, outhouses, and destitute women and children living in alleys, as a part of her campaign to improve public housing in Washington. She retired in the 1970s from her position as a senior official with the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. In retirement, Swinney and her husband remained active and dedicated to improving the lives of others. Together they accepted a two-year assignment with the World Council of Churches to evaluate medical mission programs in more than 50 countries. Swinney was also a long-time volunteer with Common Cause, working to enact campaign finance reform, and in her retirement home, advocating for improved services for the residents. She is survived by her daughter, son, and four grandchildren.

SSA has recently learned of the death of **Josephine Riggins, EX '39**.

**Robert (Bob) S. Burgess, A.M. '43**, passed away on December 25, 2006, in Hanover, N.H., at the age of 90. Burgess began his career as a field secretary for the American Friends Service Committee. He then worked for the Illinois Board of Welfare Commissioners before returning to Rhode Island as assistant warden at the Correctional Institution and then as supervisor to the Department of Public Assistance. Burgess served on the National Association of Social Workers board from 1969 to 1972, and three of his four children followed him into the profession of social work.

SSA has recently learned of the death of **Jack M. Kaplan, A.M. '47**, on December 4, 2004. At the time of his death, Kaplan was living in Teaneck, N.J.

and was enjoying retirement from his career as a social worker with H.I.P. of Greater New York.

SSA has recently learned of the death of **Thelma Danilson, A.M. '48**.

**Nancy Sperling Scheftner, A.M. '66**, died on April 6, 2007. After graduating from SSA, she worked at the Madden Mental Health Center in Hines, Ill., and the Stickney Mental Health Center in Burbank, Ill. She became a dedicated docent at the Brookfield Zoo, where her memorial service was held on April 14.

**Jane Roiter, A.M. '72**, died on March 8, 2007. For many years, Roiter was a clinical social worker in private practice. She was very involved in the Illinois Society for Clinical Social Work, including most recently serving as the organization's president. Among her other contributions to the Society, she organized a popular series of Sunday seminars that served as a professional resource for social workers in private practice. Roiter also served as an adjunct faculty member at Kendall College and National-Louis University. In 1997, she earned her Ph.D. from the Institute for Clinical Social Work.

**Elizabeth Ann "Beth" Kutza, Ph.D. '77**, died on June 9, 2006. Kutza was a nationally known expert on the social and public policy issues affecting the elderly and a strong advocate on behalf of the aging. After earning her Ph.D., Kutza taught at SSA from 1976 through 1987, leaving to become a professor and director of the Institute of Aging at Portland State University. She was widely sought after as a consultant for Congressional and Cabinet-level offices on issues such as health care policy for the elderly and the societal impact of the aging Baby Boomers. Kutza was a member of the Gerontological Society of America, the Association for Public Policy and Management, and the American Society on Aging, where she chaired the editorial board for its journal *Generations*. Kutza served on the boards of several nonprofit organizations, and received numerous honors and awards throughout her career, including being named a "Woman of



## Friend of SSA

**David Green, A.B. '42, A.M. '49**, died on March 26, 2007. An entrepreneur, philanthropist, and political advisor, Green was a noteworthy presence in Chicago and Illinois. He founded Quartet Manufacturing Co., which made bulletin boards and other office products, and built it into a \$150 million company before selling it in 1997. Green played a significant role in electing Dan Walker as governor of Illinois in 1972 and also served as an advisor to presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson. Green was a noted philanthropist who supported several Chicago institutions, including his alma mater. In 2005, Green and his wife, SSA Visiting Committee member **Mary Winton Green, A.M. '49**, established the David and Mary Winton Green Professorship to support the work of a distinguished clinical faculty member at the School, one of three named professorships the Greens established in recent years at the University of Chicago. The couple also provided crucial sponsorship for SSA's groundbreaking field education initiative, as well as student scholarship aid. He is survived by his wife, Mary Winton Green; a daughter, two sons, and their spouses; and eight grandchildren.

Achievement" by the Portland YMCA. SSA has established a memorial fund to honor her life and her contributions to the fields of aging and social work. Contributions to the Elizabeth Kutza Fund will support the work of Ph.D. students at SSA. For more information, please contact 773.834.1763.

**Phyllis Ham Garth, A.M. '90**, died in January 2007. From 1997 to 2002, Garth taught "Human, Social, and Economic Diversity: Implications for Policy and Practice" at SSA as an adjunct instructor. She earned her Ph.D. from Northern Illinois University in adult continuing education, and went on to teach at other area institutions, including Northern Illinois

University and Argosy University.

SSA has recently learned of the death of **Wendy Friedman, A.M. '02**, on January 8, 2007.

**Edward Averette, A.M. '04**, died on February 6, 2007. Averette was one of the first African-Americans to attend the United States Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, N.Y.; he served in the United States Navy. He also worked as a college professor, an administrator, and a social worker. Averette attended Columbia College in Chicago and was pursuing a Ph.D. at Clark Atlanta University. Survivors include his brother, **Arvis Averette, A.M. '78**.

**A**mericans with intellectual disabilities have made great progress towards full citizenship. Long-shunned by local schools, children with intellectual disabilities have won the right to appropriate education at public expense. Once marginalized from workplaces and other aspects of common life, they have achieved legislation such as the Americans with Disabilities Act which symbolize and enforce inclusion. Mass media, once dominated by fearful or freakish imagery, now often depict intellectually disabled people as valuable and productive citizens. Once excluded from medical and social services, people with intellectual disabilities enjoy broad access to cash aid and other services. Inflation-adjusted public spending for people with intellectual disability has been rising 10 percent annually for 25 years and enjoys broad support.

Perhaps most striking has been in support for family care. In 1960, the birth of an intellectually disabled child was seen as a private tragedy. Parents were expected to care for the child as best they could, for as long as they could, or they placed the child into institutional care. Professionals typically advised the latter course. Periodic exposés revealed appalling conditions in state homes for the retarded and similar facilities. Yet in the absence of feasible alternatives, many parents saw institutionalization as the only available choice.

By the 1970s, however, the advent of Supplemental Security Income and the emergence of community services gave families real choices. Millions of people who might have been institutionalized in an earlier era came to live with their parents or in group homes, achieving higher functioning and better quality of life than was previously thought possible.

#### Growing Older

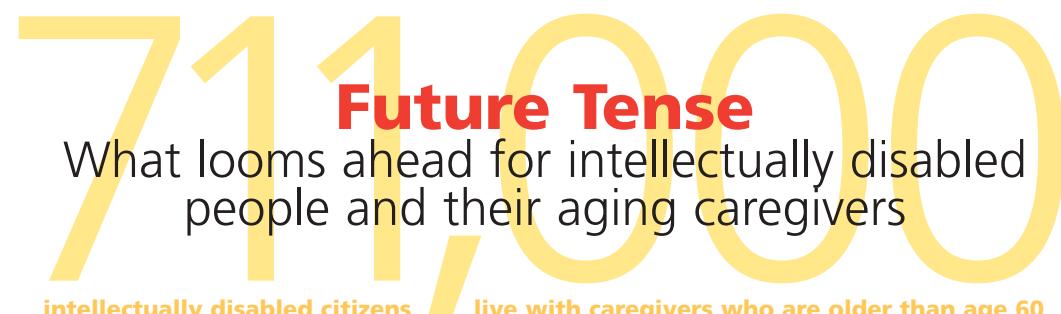
These achievements deserve celebration.

Yet they left key vulnerabilities unaddressed. One serious problem arises from the sharply improved health of intellectually disabled people. Fifty years ago, infants born with intellectual disabilities typically died quite young due to cardiac defects and other morbidities. Over time, however, medical innovations produced dramatic increases in longevity. By the 1970s, the majority of people with intellectual disabilities were adults. Today, many will outlive their

make this transition harder and more painful than it needs to be.

The essential challenge is to make residential services sufficiently attractive and available that families are able and willing to choose these options while they are still capable of providing care at home. When a parent can form lasting partnerships with professional caregivers, she is spared many fears about what will happen once she is gone. Her child is also spared, because the sad-

Parents also need practical help in monitoring available services. Movement to community-based services presents caregivers with a bewildering array of choices they are ill-equipped to make well. Across the country, residential care is provided through 140,000 providers. Few caregivers can scrutinize whether they are getting the right services. The professionals charged to help families navigate care systems may be equally unable to find the best option



parents or live long enough that their aged parents can no longer provide proper care in the family home.

Census data indicate that 711,000 intellectually disabled people (including 30,000 in Illinois) live with family caregivers older than 60 years of age. Growing numbers of families feature a physically challenged 75-year-old parent who cares for—and often is helped by—an intellectually disabled son or daughter. Every year, tens of thousands of aged caregivers die, ending the only caregiving arrangement an intellectually disabled person has ever known.

Surprisingly little research has been done about how families address inexorable realities of human frailty and death. Available data indicate that many families are unprepared. Many parents lack an explicit plan. Many have neglected the mechanics of wills, changes in guardianship, special needs trusts, and similar matters. In many ways, public policies and interventions

ness of a parent's infirmity or death will not be compounded by a simultaneous and drastic life change.

#### Obstacles in Policy

How can public policies help families navigate this transition? One obstacle is simple denial. No one likes to face the prospect of one's death or infirmity, particularly when the prospect implies a frightening loss of control over the care of one's child. Public care systems miss many opportunities to engage families in addressing these concerns.

Greater difficulties are posed by social service systems, which often provide little reason for caregivers to seek help. Long waiting lists for basic services pose large barriers for many families. Almost 60,000 people nationally are now on waiting lists for residential services. Given such scarcity, states understandably prioritize emergency cases, thus undermining efforts to make smooth transitions before a crisis hits.

in such a system.

In the end, one must confront the bad experience many families have with public caregiving systems. Despite decades of progress, many families experience available services as unhelpful and, often, inaccessible and unwelcoming. Despite steady increases in funding, states provide sufficient resources to keep clients clean and safe, but not much more. Workers on the front lines of community-based care earn an average hourly wage of \$8.68, with corrosive consequences for morale, professionalism, and skill. In failing to show a human face, we encourage caregivers themselves to turn away, to use services grudgingly, to try to ride things out in the family home. ■

*Harold Pollack is an associate professor in the School of Social Service Administration and faculty chair of the Center for Health Administration Studies.*

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