7TH EDITION

SOCIAL WORK MACRO PRACTICE

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Social Work Macro Practice

SEVENTH EDITION

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We dedicate this edition to the memory of
Peter M. Kettner
our cherished colleague, mentor, and friend

Much of the impetus for conceptualizing, drafting, and updating this book came from our long-time co-author and muse, Pete Kettner. Pete's intellectual contribution, along with his constancy and support, served as an anchor in our first edition and subsequent revisions. We could always count on him to clarify, focus, and guide us, no matter the challenge we faced in the writing and publishing process. Pete modeled collaboration in his gentle, purposeful way, and since his death we have missed him terribly. Working and learning with Pete was a gift to us all, and this book was made immeasurably better by his contributions. The quality of his work and the beauty of his friendship are legacies we will never forget.

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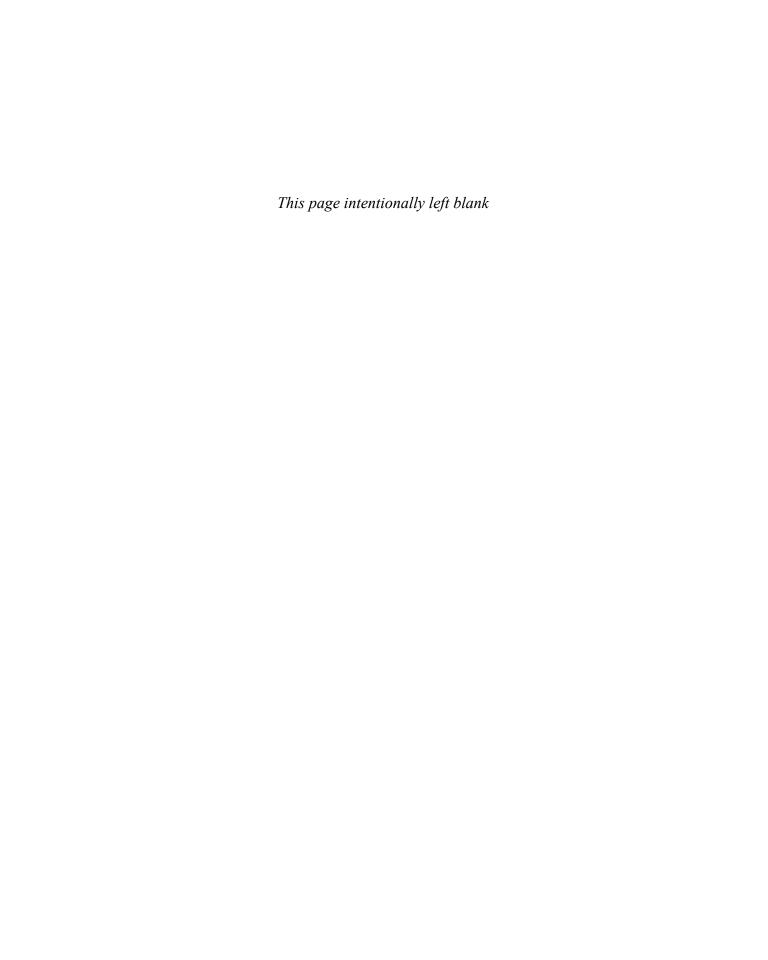
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Preface

Thirty years ago, three colleagues at Arizona State University School of Social Work decided to write a book to use in two courses in the foundation macro practice sequence in which we were teaching. At that point, we were using course packs comprising readings from professional journals and book chapters, and we needed a textbook that integrated a growing conceptual and empirically based literature on organizational and community change. Through multiple revisions, we continued our collaboration, and in 2012, we added a fourth author to our team.

Much has changed in 30 years, but our commitment to our original goal remains steadfast. From the beginning, we wanted to recapture a broader definition of *social work practice* that recognizes that all social workers must be able to engage, assess, and intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. In short, we believed (and continue to believe) that active involvement in community and organizational change represents one of the richest and proudest traditions of social work practice.

The Importance of Macro Practice

Social workers who see clients every day identify patterns in the conditions and problems they encounter. This offers constant reminders of the need for macro-level change. We contend that even if social workers are not in a position to take the lead in initiating change, they need to understand the systems within which they operate well enough to know who is in a position to address those conditions and problems. They need to be voices for exposing the need for change, which means that all social workers must have macro practice skills, no matter what position they hold, and they have a responsibility to be supportive of others who are involved in macro-level efforts. Macro practice, understood within this context, defines the uniqueness of social work. Many professions claim expertise in working with individuals, groups, and families, but social work has a longstanding tradition of focusing on the organizational, community, and policy contexts in which service recipients are embedded. The concept of person-in-environment is therefore not simply a slogan but recognition that it can be the *environment* and not the *person* that needs to change. Mullaly and Dupre (2018) state that social workers are not simply called to be direct practitioners but are equally called to be change agents in situations that place service users' best interests first. Our book is designed to prepare social workers to be agents of change for the purpose of improving people's quality of life.

The history of social work as a profession has been marked by shifts in and tensions between intervention with individuals and intervention with and within larger systems. Early perspectives on the latter tended to focus primarily on policy-level involvements (especially legislative processes). As the need for content on social work administration and management and community practice was recognized and incorporated into the curriculum of many schools of social work, these topics were also

embraced as an area of concentration for those who wanted to work with and within larger systems. To manage oversubscribed curricula, students have often been forced to concentrate in *either* macro or micro areas, creating a false dichotomy, when social work of all professions is uniquely positioned to integrate both.

Therefore, over the years as we taught required foundation-level courses on community and organizational change, and as we worked with students and professionals in the field, we became aware of the changing dynamics of practice and expectations for practitioners. Both students and practitioners were working with populations such as homeless persons, members of teen street gangs, survivors of domestic violence, chronically unemployed persons, frail older adults, and disenfranchised groups. Although social workers will always need casework and clinical skills to help people in need on a one-to-one basis, it was becoming increasingly evident to many in the profession that they needed to intervene at the community level if any long-term change was going to happen. Typical activities included advocating for the development of safe shelters, developing neighborhood alternatives to gang membership and juvenile incarceration, addressing chronic unemployment, navigating the complexity of long-term care services, and finding transportation for people to access their voting precinct. It was becoming more and more evident that social workers must be contextual and critical thinkers, challenging the status quo and advocating for change.

These activities are not new; many closely mirror the work of settlement-house workers in the early days of the profession. Yet many social work students have traditionally seen themselves as preparing strictly for interventions at the individual or domestic level. It is unexpected and disconcerting when they find themselves being asked to initiate actions and design interventions that will affect large numbers of people, or to take on conditions that need to change at the community or organizational level if they are not prepared for these kinds of professional activities. When social work practice with macro systems is seen as solely the realm of administrators, community organizers, program planners, and others, a vital linkage to millions of people who struggle daily with deep-seated environmental constraints and racial injustice has been severed. Macro-level change may, but does not necessarily always, involve large-scale, costly reforms at the national and state levels or the election of candidates who recognize that systemic racism, discrimination, and environmental conditions must be addressed if we are to survive as a society. Sometimes useful macro-level change can involve organizing a local neighborhood to deal with blight or gentrification and displacement; sometimes it may mean initiating a self-help group and stepping back so that members will assume leadership roles. Thus, the focus of this book is on enabling social work practitioners to undertake whatever types of macro-level interventions are needed in an informed, analytical way and with a sense of confidence that they can join with others to effect change.

As this seventh edition goes to press, schools of social work and professional associations continue making hard decisions about what content to cover, what courses to offer, and which methods to use (e.g., classroom, hybrid, and online) in delivering that content. Reports on the state of macro practice social work have been issued, and a Special Commission to Advance Macro-Practice in Social Work continues its multi-pronged strategic approach to deal with imbalances between micro and macro content, the marginality of macro practitioners and educators, and the lack of support for

macro practice (ACOSA, 2018). Challenges to professional macro practitioners' identity, lack of knowledge from the public about the field, recognition of tensions among social work educators, and concerns about state licensing that privilege clinical roles all add fuel to a continuing dialogue (Calhoun et al, 2020).

Amid these debates and challenges within social work education and the public's perception of the profession is an increasing recognition of the need to "recenter social work as a profession uniquely capable of effective work with the poor, disenfranchised, and oppressed … reimagining what professional life and work can be in the 2lst century" (Burghardt, 2021, p. xxx). It means recognizing that skilled macro practitioners are needed more than ever within a global context (Santiago, Soska, & Gutierrez, 2014). So much has happened in the past 30 years that could not have been predicted. Within this global context, we believe it is critical to reiterate our original goal—to recapture a broader definition of *social work practice* that recognizes that all social workers must be able to engage, assess, and intervene with individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. Burghardt asserts that it means instilling the belief "that collective well-being for [social workers] themselves is as worthy as it is for their clients and communities," getting beyond "quick fixes" (p. xxx). Across the world, macro practice skills are needed more than we ever imagined 30 years ago when we started this endeavor. It is our hope that we may contribute to preparing the next generation of social workers to embrace their calling in the spirit of activism and change for the common good.

New to This Edition

It is our intent in this edition to bring readers abreast of the changes within our field. We have worked to make the seventh edition more practice-oriented, integrating more field-based vignettes and examples throughout and elaborating the planned change model originally introduced in earlier editions. We have paid special attention to the use of technology such as social media and electronic advocacy, in addition to adding video links to each chapter. We have provided four new, detailed vignettes to illustrate practice principles guiding social workers and the diverse roles they play in dealing with everything from disaster preparation to addressing microaggressions. Structurally, we have rearranged chapters, deleted dated material, added new material, and updated conceptual and empirical scholarship in all chapters. Across all chapters, at least one-half of all references are new to this edition. In all changes in this edition, we have tried to be as attentive and responsive to reviewers' feedback as possible while ensuring consistency with current professional literature on macro practice.

Specific changes follow:

1. **ADDING MORE IN-DEPTH CONTENT ON JUSTICE.** Framing macro practice within the current social and political environment requires attention to justice in all its forms and presents the question of how professional social workers can thrive in a rapidly changing and often contentious environment. For example, in Chapter 1, we have ramped up the social justice section to include new material on environmental, racial, and gender justice and created Spotlight 1.2 on different forms of justice. Also, Chapter 1 now introduces the concept of ecological justice and ecosocial work and offers more content on burnout, positionality, and

self-care. Chapter 2 extends this focus on justice, highlighting new material on intersectionality as well as social work's commitment to diverse and oppressed populations.

2. **INCORPORATING NEW PRACTICE-BASED VIGNETTES.** Early in Chapters 3 and 8, we integrated four new, detailed, practice-based vignettes that are used to introduce the frameworks for assessing focal populations and conditions. In Chapter 3, the "Persons with Dementia" section demonstrates how well-meaning professionals can get so caught up in planning *for* something to change that they engage in epistemological injustice that subjugates the contributions of the focal population. A second vignette offers insights into the microaggressions faced by a focal population of Native American youth in high school. In Chapter 8, "Disaster Preparation in Long-Term Care" provides an overview of the difficulties faced in preparing for potential environmental conditions that affect local communities. A second vignette, titled "Rebranding Women's Power," focuses on how feminist organizations evolve and change over time, requiring skill in balancing respect for an agency's history and ideology with the need to change in order to survive in challenging conditions.

3. **RE-LANGUAGING TO REINFORCE STRENGTHS.** We changed Figure 1.1 to reflect our revised approach to planned change, replacing "problem" with "condition." We then reinforced this reframing process throughout the book, changing "target population" to "focal population," since targeting implies that it is the population that needs to change when in fact, it is more often conditions to be targeted. We also added content on assets and strengths throughout each chapter to underscore how the lived experiences of focal populations offer crucial insight into any change effort. For example, in Chapter 3, we expanded our emphasis on cultural humility. It is our intent to avoid deficit-based language and focus on strengths.

4. **REORDERING CHAPTERS.** What in previous editions had been Chapter 4 (assessing conditions) is now Chapter 8. We believe this provides a more logical flow—starting with Chapter 3 on engaging with diverse populations, moving to community (Chapters 4–5) and organizational arenas (Chapters 6–7), and then finally moving to a chapter on assessing conditions (the relocated chapter). This allows Chapter 8 to lead directly into Chapter 9, smoothing the transition from an etiology hypothesis to a working intervention hypothesis.

5. **INTEGRATING CONCEPTS/METHODS OF FORMATIVE, PROCESS, AND SUMMATIVE EVALUATION THROUGHOUT THE BOOK.** We have reinforced the importance of evaluation throughout each chapter, adding content on qualitative methods that can be particularly useful in formative and process evaluation. For example, new Spotlights on Appreciative Inquiry and Photovoice now appear in Chapter 8 and on Ripple Effects Mapping in Chapter 9. Not only do these methods emphasize the importance of inclusion, but they reinforce the content on cultural humility and assets-based approaches to change. In revising Chapter 12, our chapter on evaluation, we have expanded content on qualitative as well as quantitative methods.

6. **INCREASING CONTENT ON POWER.** Although power has always been emphasized throughout the book, we have added additional content on types and forms of power. In Chapter 3, we define power as the ability to exert one's influence, and we explain that this ability can come in different forms. Recognizing that there are different ways to influence others, in Chapter 4 we offer a new Table 4.7 on six types of power. These types are applicable in organizational, community, and policy arenas, and we include definitions and relevant examples. This content is reinforced by recent research on power dynamics in organizational and community settings.

7. **ADDING CONTENT ON ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY AND ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES TO PLANNING.** In Chapter 10, we have added a section on economic feasibility, along with resources for locating funding and tips for applying. For example, new Spotlights 10.2 and 10.3 provide an overview of grants and contracts, and types of fundraising activities and sources of revenues. In Chapter 11, we discuss both emergent and outcome-based approaches to dealing with complex community changes. New Table 11.1 compares assumptions of linear and nonlinear approaches.

8. **UPDATING REFERENCES.** We have updated references throughout the book. Our goal was to tie content to the most recent conceptual and empirical work in hopes that readers will access these valuable sources to supplement their learning process.

Key Content Updates by Chapter

Specific chapter-by-chapter changes include:

Chapter 1: Coming from a strengths perspective, Figure 1.1 is updated so that "condition" replaces "problem" in the intersecting circles. Content on professional identity and leadership are added, and the four case examples are revised and introduced much earlier. The use of pronouns and misgendering is added to the section on The Importance of Terminology. New material on environmental, racial, and gender justice are featured, along with a new Spotlight 1.2 on different forms of justice. A new Spotlight 1.3 highlights strategies for thriving in professional practice. Concepts of ecological justice and ecosocial work are defined, along with more content on burnout, positionality, and self-care.

Chapter 2: Chapter 2 extends the focus on justice, highlighting new material on intersectionality as well as social work's commitment to diverse and oppressed populations. Historical trends include a new section on science-based practice, along with new material on the development of community and administrative practice. Facts and figures about population groups and contemporary policies have been updated throughout. Updated discussion on influential policies affecting the well-being of vulnerable populations includes more in-depth description on housing-related policies and the impact of post-industrialization on urban communities and concentrated poverty.

Chapter 3: Two new vignettes are added at the beginning of Chapter 3. "Persons with Dementia" demonstrates how well-meaning professionals can get so caught

up in planning *for* something to change that they engage in epistemological injustice that subjugates the contributions of the focal population. A second vignette offers insights into microaggressions faced by Native American youth in high school. Discussion of cultural humility is expanded, nativism has been added to the list of isms, and a new Spotlight 3.2 lists tenets of intersectionality. References to TribalCrit and LatCrit now accompany material on critical race theory (CRT).

Chapter 4 (formerly Chapter 5): Over 50 new references are added to Chapter 4 to update scholarship on community fully. Sections on assets mapping, capacity building, and social networking are expanded. Boundaries, boundary maintenance, and boundary-spanning concepts are explained, along with new sections on psychological sense of community theory and types of power. These types are applicable in organizational, community, and policy arenas and include definitions and relevant examples. This content is reinforced by recent research on power dynamics in organizational and community settings.

Chapter 5 (formerly Chapter 6): Vignettes on "Canyon City" and "Lakeside" are revised and updated, their implications threaded throughout the chapter. Expanded foci on building relationships, community organizing, and examples from the scholarly literature are incorporated into this revised chapter. A new Table 5.1 compares deliberation and community organizing approaches. Added to reasons for doing a community assessment is a new section on formative evaluation. Spotlight 5.2 highlights resiliency, Spotlight 5.3 focuses on different types of social enterprise, and Spotlight 5.4 is on community members' engagement.

Chapter 6 (formerly Chapter 7): The introduction is rewritten to tie into the discussion of power introduced in Chapter 4. There is also new material on leadership. The "Diversity as an Element of Culture" subsection is updated to include three themes that are important to theory-building and research on diversity as an element of organizational culture: (1) contextuality, (2) intersectionality, and (3) multiplexity. We reemphasize the need to think critically about how understanding diversity has moved from being a purely representational approach based on numbers of people in certain categories to exploring the complexity of a diverse workforce fully. Table 6.2, in which dimensions of key organizational theories are compared, is relocated toward the end of Chapter 6. (It was at the beginning in our previous edition.)

Chapter 7 (formerly Chapter 8): Vignettes on "Canyon City Department of Child Welfare" and "Lakeside Family Services" are revised and updated, their implications threaded throughout the chapter. Numerous studies are cited regarding newer approaches to management and leadership style and human resource management strategies used to address disparities in access and provision of services to groups having diverse characteristics. New content on methodologies such as meta-analysis and systematic reviews provide evidence-based interventions. Spotlight 7.3 is new to this edition and offers guidance in assessing organizational cultural competence.

Chapter 8 (formerly Chapter 4): This chapter is moved to immediately precede the changed plan model in Chapters 9 through 12. Two new vignettes have been

written to introduce Chapter 8: "Disaster Preparation in Long-Term Care" provides an overview of the difficulties faced in preparing for potential environmental conditions that affect local communities. "Rebranding Women's Power" focuses on how feminist organizations evolve and change over time, requiring skill in balancing respect for an agency's history and ideology with the need to change to survive in challenging conditions. Two new Spotlights highlight Appreciative Inquiry and Photovoice as methods used in assessing community and organizational conditions.

Chapter 9: Chapter 9 has been renamed "Designing and Building Support for an Intervention." The section titled "Frame the Statement of Change" has been completely revised and the language has shifted from problem (a deficits approach) to condition. Early in the chapter, the theory of change is introduced, along with studies demonstrating the use of ripple effect mapping. Material on digital storytelling and up-to-date use of social media is added to engage participants in the planned change process. The framework in Chapter 9 has been reorganized to identify additional approaches to monitoring and documenting the change process and is designed to reinforce the importance of formative evaluation.

Chapter 10: There are now four rather than three tasks in Chapter 10's framework so that politics and economics get equal attention. Over 25 new references are cited and used to point the student to further reading on the subject. In Chapter 10, a new section on economic feasibility has been added, along with a plethora of resources for locating funding and tips for applying for grants. For example, new Spotlights 10.2 and 10.3 provide an overview of grants and contracts and types of fundraising activities and sources of revenues. In addition, sections on lobbying, mass media, and civil disobedience have been expanded.

Chapter 11: The introduction in Chapter 11 has been revised to include both emergent and outcomes-based approaches to using logic models. We explain that there is a risk that those who use the dominant approach in this book can be lulled into reducing complex change opportunities into neat graphical displays that do not fully describe the complexity of social conditions. If the voices of participants are truly heard, an interactive process may occur in which action system members double back, reassess the original model, and recalibrate what they are doing. When this happens, participants will have engaged in episodes of emergent planning as they move through the change process. New Table 11.1 compares assumptions of linear and nonlinear approaches to change.

Chapter 12: In Chapter 12, "outcome evaluation" has been expanded to "summative evaluation" to include both outputs and outcomes as part of a final evaluation. A new section on formative evaluation reinforces earlier chapters in which formative evaluation was mentioned throughout the book. An emphasis on qualitative methods now accompanies content on quantitative evaluation methods, including information on one-on-one interviewing, conducting focus groups, engaging in community forums, and the use of nominal group and Delphi techniques. Spotlight 12.1, on how changes can fail, has all new references and updated examples from the latest research.

Pedagogical Features

Features specifically designed to facilitate instruction include:

Learning Outcomes Each chapter begins by listing major concepts the reader will understand with mastery of the chapter content.

⌄ Learning Outcomes

2.1 Identify historical social conditions and ideologies leading to the establishment of social work as a profession.

2.2 Discuss how professional social work education and practice developed during the 1900s.

2.3 Describe issues faced by diverse and oppressed population groups.

2.4 Identify contemporary challenges related to social work macro practice.

2.5 Explain why change is so important to social work practice.

Principles in Practice To solidify key concepts, real-world vignettes have been included to show the principles under discussion in practice.

Principles in Practice: Two Vignettes

Vignette 1   Persons with Dementia

Around the world, persons are living with dementias that affect the normal functioning of the brain. Alzheimer's disease (AD) is most prevalent, but other common types include vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia, and

Tasks To help readers make the abstract more concrete, Tasks are included throughout. These break down larger concepts into more manageable steps that, together, lay the groundwork for the successful incorporation of theory into practice.

Task 1: Develop an Intervention Hypothesis

During the early phases of a change effort, many people involved in the process (paid staff, service users, volunteers, and others) are eager to propose a specific intervention. They may have experienced the frustration of working in what they perceive to be flawed programs, under perceived oppressive community or organizational policies, or as participants or members of communities that seem powerless to bring about meaningful change. Understandably, they are eager to propose immediate change and may be impatient with the idea of carefully thinking through the alternatives. This can be a great temptation and a potential pitfall if change agents do not insist on dealing with the findings developed to this point and avoid straying too far off course.

A well-informed, professional approach to macro-level change requires that the foregoing assessments of population, arena, and condition identified in Chapters 3 through 8 be addressed first. However, it is the unusual change agent who is not constantly mindful of a preferred intervention and who is not continually molding and

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- **Video Examples** One of the features in each chapter is the *Video Examples* that illustrate principles or concepts aligned pedagogically with the chapter. Some videos show real-life conversations between social workers trying to effect change, while others explore key concepts in greater depth.
- **Interactive Glossary** All key terms in the eText are bolded and provide instant access to full glossary definitions, allowing you to build your professional vocabulary quickly as you are reading.

LMS-Compatible Assessment Bank

With this new edition, all assessment types—quizzes and application exercises—are included in LMS-compatible banks for the following learning management systems: Blackboard (**9780135868218**), Canvas (**9780136821595**), D2L (**9780136821533**), and Moodle (**9780136821564**). These packaged files allow maximum flexibility to instructors when it comes to importing, assigning, and grading. Assessment types include:

- **Learning Outcome Quizzes:** Each chapter Learning Outcome is the focus of a Learning Outcome Quiz that is available for instructors to assign through their Learning Management System. Learning Outcomes identify chapter content that is most important for learners and serve as the organizational framework for each chapter. The higher-order, multiple-choice questions in each quiz will measure your understanding of chapter content, guide the expectations for your learning, and inform the accountability and the applications of your new knowledge. When used in the LMS environment, these multiple-choice questions are automatically graded and include feedback for the correct answer and for each distractor to help guide students' learning.
- **Application Exercises:** Each chapter provides opportunities for students to apply what they have learned through Application Exercises. The exercises require students to watch short videos, read scenarios, or revisit chapter elements and then answer open-ended questions. When used in the LMS environment, a model response written by experts is provided after students submit the exercise. This feedback helps guide students' learning and can assist the instructor in grading.

- **Chapter Tests:** Suggested test items are provided for each chapter and include questions in the following formats: multiple choice and short-answer/essay. When used in the LMS environment, the multiple-choice questions are automatically graded, and model responses are provided for short-answer and essay questions.

Instructor's Manual (9780135868362)

The Instructor's Manual is provided as a Word document and includes resources to assist professors in planning their course. These resources consist of suggestions for syllabus construction, chapter summaries, discussion prompts, learning exercises, and additional media resources. These have been carefully selected to provide opportunities to support, enrich, and expand on what students read in the textbook.

PowerPoint® Slides (9780135868447)

PowerPoint® slides are provided for each chapter, highlight key concepts, and summarize the content of the text to make it more meaningful for students.

Note: All instructor resources—LMS-compatible assessment bank, instructor's manual, and PowerPoint slides—are available for download at www.pearsonhighered.com. Use one of the following methods:

- From the main page, use the search function to look up the lead author (i.e., Netting) or the title (i.e., Social Work Macro Practice). Select the desired search result and then click the Resources tab to view and download all available resources.
- From the main page, use the search function to look up the ISBN (provided above) of the specific instructor resource you would like to download. When the product page loads, click the Downloadable Resources tab.
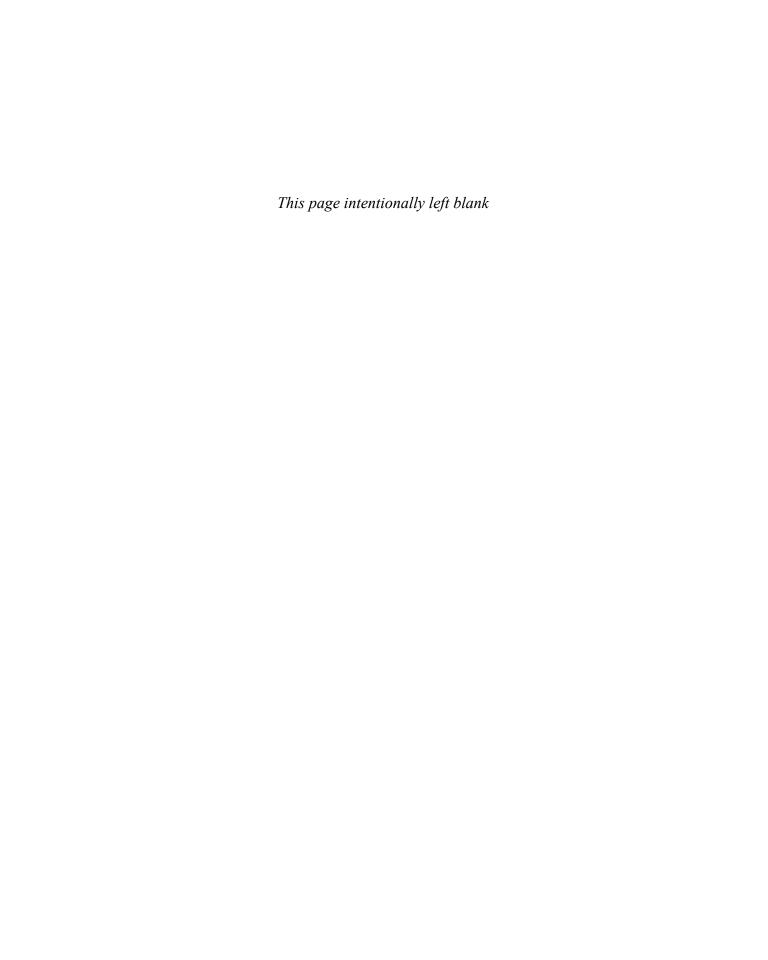
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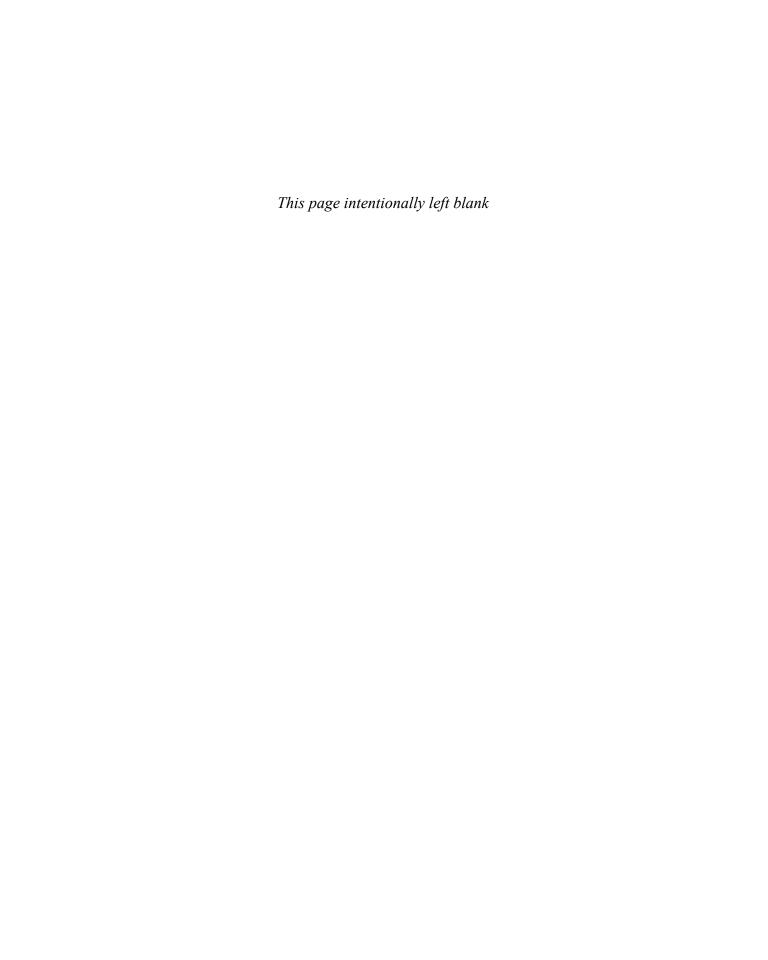
Acknowledgments

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Brief Contents

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Chapter 1

An Introduction to Macro Practice in Social Work

⌄ Learning Outcomes

1.1 Define macro practice and its relationship to micro practice.

1.2 Discuss case examples used to illustrate macro practice.

1.3 Explain the theoretical and values foundation of macro practice.

1.4 Discuss methods used to address practice challenges.

⌄ Chapter Outline

What is Macro Practice?

Learning Outcome 1.1 Define macro practice and its relationship to micro practice.

This book is intended for all social workers, regardless of whether they specialize or concentrate in micro or macro tracks within schools of social work. We believe that all social workers are professional change agents; therefore, we use the terms *social worker, professional*, and *change agent* interchangeably throughout this book.

This book is also designed to be an introduction to macro practice as a set of professional activities in which all social workers are involved. Although some practitioners will concentrate their efforts primarily in one **arena** more than another, all social workers encounter situations in which macro-level interventions are the appropriate response to a need, a condition, or a problem. Therefore, we define **macro practice** as *professionally guided intervention(s) designed to bring about change in organizational, community, and/or policy arenas*.

Professional identity is a relational concept in that one identifies with a community of colleagues who share a common value base and who jointly engage in activities that enhance the common good. Motivations to pursue a particular career will vary, but wanting to become a professional social worker is typically not monetarily or authoritatively driven as much as it is attached to a personal desire to make a difference in the lives of others (Webb, 2017). This characteristic has led a number of writers to refer to professions as *callings* because they literally call members to contribute to the civic good. Professions are therefore client oriented and conform to a set of values that encapsulate the community good that is to be served. In many ways, it is this commitment to the understanding and changing of larger systems that defines social work. Sullivan (2005) argues that the very nature of professionalism implies a responsibility to the larger society and to the common good.

In his classic book, *Social Work as Cause and Function*, Porter Lee (1937) described the dual calling of social work—to address systemic social problems and to provide for the immediate needs of individuals and families. Lee acknowledged the inherent tension in trying to do both. In planning for social change while simultaneously responding to immediate need, social work finds its unique "both-and" contribution (Gates, 2017). This book is based on the assumption that professional social workers will always experience tension as long as they recognize the importance of both providing direct services and addressing organizational and community needs. Social workers must see themselves as doing both to truly be doing social work. The only other option is to ignore recurring larger system issues. Thus, macro practice is not an option but an integral part of being a professional social worker.

All social workers will engage in some form of macro practice and will become leaders. We are not referring to leadership with a capital *L*, but mean leadership in the way Wheatley (2017) defines the term: **Leaders** are people who are committed to serving people and who understand how important it is to engage with others to effect change.

The Interrelationship of Micro and Macro Social Work Practice

A broad focus on **arenas** for change is a feature that makes social work unique among helping professions. When the arena for change is limited solely to casework with individuals and families, an assumption is being made: that causal factors associated with the condition or need can be found only in some deficit in the micro system—the client, couple, or family coming for help—or in their abilities to access needed resources. Broadening one's analysis to include organizations and communities recognizes the possibility or likelihood that the pathology or causal factors may be identified in the policies and/or practices of macro systems—communities and their various institutions—and that there are strengths from which to draw that service recipients may not have even realized that they have. For example, an organization may fail to provide relevant and needed services or may provide them in a narrow and discriminatory manner so that clients feel disempowered. Or some members of a community may find themselves excluded from participation in decisions that affect them when they have a great deal to contribute in the decision-making process.

It is not unusual for direct practitioners to have clients ask for help with concerns that at first appear to be individual or interpersonal, but, after further examination, require macro-level intervention. A family that loses its primary source of income is subsequently evicted and finds that there is no affordable housing and a three-month waiting list to get into a homeless shelter represents a symptom of a community condition that needs to change. Clearly, the family's immediate shelter problem must be resolved, but just as obviously, the community-wide lack of affordable housing and emergency alternatives must be addressed.

A veteran may report having difficulty getting an appointment to see a specialist at the Veterans Administration and is put on a waiting list. This may seem like an isolated incident until social workers begin to see a pattern developing among their clients who are service members or veterans. When one of those social workers watches the news one night to learn that this delay is keeping thousands of veterans from getting health care services and that policies surrounding how waiting lists are handled need to change, what seemed like an individual's problem is quickly seen as a macro need for change within the veterans' health care system. Collecting data, advocating at the local level, and joining others around the country to advocate for system reform become necessary if clients are to receive what they need.

For example, a White social worker employed by a community-based agency on an American Indian reservation talks about the importance of her work, because she constantly has to educate herself and ask Indigenous people for advice so that she does not make assumptions about the people with whom she works. The concept of community and what it means to this tribe, even the value of the land as a part of their tradition, is crucial. It is much more complex than she had assumed when she was in school. In her position, this social worker has come to appreciate the false dichotomy between micro and macro social work. Although she works directly with tribal members, she is constantly assessing their environment and recognizing the cultural context in which all her actions are embedded. She is also learning about the structure of helping and the emotional burden that Black, Indigenous, and other Persons of Color (BIPOC) carry as they must regularly explain themselves to White people like her.

In instances like these, micro-level interventions alone may be inefficient, ineffective, and sometimes harmful ways to address macro-level conditions, and they also run the risk of dealing only with symptoms. In some ways, using micro-level interventions to address a macro-level condition is similar to treating individuals who are suffering from a new flu strain one at a time rather than vaccinating the whole population before they contract the disease. In short, it is as important for social workers to understand the nature of individual and group interventions as it is to understand the nature of organizational, community, and policy change. For more examples about the interconnections of micro and macro practice, see the special issue of *Reflections: Narratives of Professional Helping* edited by Bailey and Emmerson (2018).

Macro-Level Change

Intervention in organizations or communities is referred to as *macro-level change*. Managing macro-level change requires a good deal of professional knowledge and skill. Poor management, inaccurate assumptions, and flawed decision making in the change process can result in serious setbacks that can make things worse for those already in need. On the other hand, many positive changes in organizations and communities have been orchestrated by social workers and others who have carefully planned, designed, and carried out the change process.

Social work students often express the concern that they came into the profession because of an interest in working with individuals and families, not with communities and organizations. This can sometimes present an **ethical dilemma**, because at times what a client or family most needs in the long run is macro-level change. This does not mean that the immediate need is not addressed. It also does not mean that the social worker is left alone to bring about community or organizational change. Macro practice is a collaborative effort, and change will rarely be immediate. In fact, macro change may take years, leading to multiple phases of intervention. But ignoring the need for change is not a viable option. Any social worker who encounters the need for change can at the very least take two basic actions: acknowledge and discuss the structural nature of the condition with their client and bring awareness of the condition to those persons who are positioned to effect change. Both actions can begin a process that will make a difference in the lives of multiple people.

Given the complexity of macro interventions, practitioners may begin to feel overwhelmed. Is it not enough to perform good direct practice or clinical work? Is it not enough to listen to a client and offer options? Our answer is that professional practice focusing only on an individual's intrapsychic concerns does not fit the definition of social work. Being a social worker requires seeing the client as part of multiple, overlapping systems that comprise the person's social and physical environment. The profession of social work is committed to seeking social and economic justice in concert with marginalized and underserved populations, and macro-practice skills are necessary in confronting these inequalities. For example, consider a woman reported for child neglect who lives in a rundown home with inadequate plumbing and a rodent and insect infestation her landlord refuses to address. A direct-practice intervention designed to strengthen her emotional coping skills might be useful, but that intervention alone would ignore the context of the conditions facing her and other women living in

similar situations. Social workers engaging only in working with their individual cases and ignoring larger-scale conditions may be doing so to the detriment of their clients.

Similarly, social workers who carry out episodes of macro practice must understand what is involved in the provision of direct services to clients at the individual, household, or group level. Without this understanding, macro practice may occur without an adequate grounding in understanding client conditions, needs, and problems. One example might be a social worker who conducts a community crime prevention campaign to combat high rates of petty theft in a neighborhood, unaware that most such acts are the work of a relatively small number of residents desperately in need of addiction intervention. The interconnectedness of micro and macro roles is the heart of social work practice (Austin, 2019; Rothman & Mizrahi, 2014; Tropman & McBeath, 2019).

Macro-Practice Arenas and Roles

This book is not designed to prepare practitioners for full-time agency administration, program planning, community organizing, or policy analysis positions. Social workers who assume full-time macro **roles** will need a more advanced understanding than this text provides. Nor is this a book on how to specialize in macro practice. Instead, it is designed to provide basic knowledge and skills on aspects of macro practice in which competent social work practitioners will need to engage. We also want to raise awareness about how versatile social work is as a profession and about the potential one has to engage at the macro level. It is critically important for social workers to see the big-picture social environment in which their clients live their daily lives and to know how to advocate for change (Reisch, 2017).

There are different ways to conceptualize the **arenas** in which macro social work practice occurs. Rothman, Erlich, and Tropman (2008) identify three arenas of intervention: communities, organizations, and small groups. We have selected communities and organizations as the arenas on which the majority of this text will focus, folding small-group work in as a critical part of most interventions in both communities and organizations. *Small groups* are seen as collections of people who collaborate on tasks that move toward agreed-upon changes. Small groups are often the nucleus around which change strategies are developed in both communities and organizations, and they are therefore more logically conceptualized as part of the strategy or medium for change than as the focus of change.

Other writers focus on the policy context in which macro intervention occurs (Barusch, 2018; Jansson, 2018, 2019; Chapin & Lewis, 2020; Lane, Palley, & Shdaimah, 2020; Popple & Leighninger, 2019; Pyles, 2021). Organizational and community arenas are deeply embedded in political systems, which are typically the starting points for development of social policies. Although the creation and analysis of these policies are not our main focus, an understanding of how ideologies and values are manifested in local, state, national, and international politics is fundamental to macro change. Also, it is important to recognize that policies are developed, enacted, and implemented in every arena. For example, groups develop working rules, organizations have governing boards that establish policies and procedures, communities develop policies that pertain to their jurisdictions, and associations develop policies to guide the actions of their

membership. Thus, it becomes important for practitioners to know what body created a policy that needs to be changed, and who to target when policy change is needed.

The majority of social workers deal with change directly with clients, usually working with individuals one on one or with families or small groups. Some practitioners focus on communitywide conditions (Gutiérrez & Gant, 2018). Others work in the areas of planning, management, and administration of organizations (Austin, 2018). Regardless of the professional social worker's primary practice orientation, it is crucial that all social work practitioners support the position that although some conditions can be resolved at an individual or family level, others will require intervention that takes on a broader scope, including the need to effect changes in organizations and communities. Social workers are constantly identifying changes needed to make systems more responsive or sensitive to **focal populations**. Other professionals may also see themselves as change agents, and it is important for the contemporary social work practitioner to collaborate and partner with those from other professions so that the knowledge of diverse fields can be used in planning effective change. Macro changes are typically too complex for one to address alone.

It is not uncommon to have social workers describe themselves as *psychiatric social workers, geriatric specialists, child welfare workers*, and so on. These specialties denote the populations with whom these practitioners work. Just as common are terms such as *medical social worker* and *behavioral health specialist*, indicating a setting in which these professionals are employed. Within all of these specialties or settings, there are multiple roles one can play as a social worker (Kerson & McCoyd, 2013).

Terms such as *planner, manager, community organizer, case manager*, and *group worker* describe actual functions social workers perform. In addition, social workers plan, develop, and coordinate programs as well as administer, manage, and supervise staff in human service organizations. Social workers develop and organize communities around the world. They advocate for policy change and work as policy analysts in local, regional, national, and international arenas (Santiago & Smith, 2018).

Social work practice is broadly defined and allows for both micro (individual, domestic unit, or group) and macro interventions (organization, community, or policy). See Spotlight 1.1. Social workers who undertake macro interventions will often be engaged in what is called "policy practice" (Jansson, 2018) because policy change is so integral to what happens in organizations and communities. Given this division of labor, some professional roles require the social worker to be involved full-time in macro practice. These professional roles are often referred to by such titles as *planner, policy analyst, program coordinator, community organizer, manager*, and *administrator.*

The micro service worker or clinical social worker also bears responsibility for contextualizing problems for their clients and initiating change in organizations and communities. Workers in micro-level roles are often the first to acknowledge or recognize patterns indicating the need for change. If one or two persons present a particular problem, a logical response is to deal with them as individuals. However, as more individuals present the same situation, it may become evident that something is awry in the systems with which these clients are interacting. The social worker must then assume leadership in alerting the appropriate persons who can identify the system(s) in need of change and the type of change needed. The nature of the system(s) in need of change and the type of change needed may lead to communitywide intervention or intervention in a single organization.

SPOTLIGHT 1.1

Focus of Intervention and Examples of Roles

	Primary Focus of Intervention	Examples of Roles
Micro	Individuals	Clinician Care Coordinator
Micro	Households	Family Counselor Case Manager
Micro & Macro	Small Groups	Group Worker Supervisor
Macro	Organizations	Human Service Administrator Midlevel Manager Program Coordinator Supervisor
Macro	Community	Community Developer Community Organizer Community Planner Social Activist
Macro	Policy	Legislative Advocate Policy Analyst

Suppose, for example, the staff in a senior center discovers that a number of older persons in the community are malnourished because of self-neglect and social isolation. A caseworker could follow up with each person, one at a time, in an attempt to provide outreach and needed services. But this could take a long time and produce hit-or-miss results. An alternative would be to deal with the condition from a macro perspective—to invest time in organizing agency and community resources to identify older people who need the senior center's services and to ensure that nutritional and socialization services are provided through a combination of staff and volunteer efforts.

Or assume that a social worker begins seeing more and more mixed-status families, composed of members with varying legal status. Parents fear being targeted by deportation laws that could force them to leave the country without their citizen-children. Hard choices are made every day because parents must face either leaving their children in hopes that they will have a better life, or taking their children with them even though this will mean taking them into danger or limited economic opportunities. The social worker recognizes how untenable this position is for parents and decides to document these cases and asks her colleagues to do the same thing, so that they can join forces in advocating for immigration reform (Finno-Velasquez & Faulkner, 2018).

This may seem like a complex undertaking for someone who came into social work expecting to work with people one person or family at a time. Yet, these social workers know that they have valuable practice experience that can be used to advocate for change and, as social workers, they are committed to amplifying voices that are unheard or ignored.

Although it is true that macro-level interventions can be complicated, we will offer a somewhat systematic approach that attempts to make such efforts more manageable. Remember, too, that these interventions are typically accomplished with the help of others, not alone.

A Systematic Approach to Macro Social Work Practice

Social workers find themselves drawn into aspects of macro practice through a number of avenues, which we will refer to as (1) population, (2) arena, and (3) condition. The three overlapping circles in Figure 1.1 illustrate the focal points of the social worker's efforts in undertaking a macro-level change episode. As the intervention becomes more clearly conceptualized and defined, political and policy contexts must also be taken into consideration. Figure 1.1 illustrates an approach that social workers can use to identify, study, and analyze the need for change and to begin formulating solutions.

Initial awareness that a condition in need of change exists may occur in a variety of ways. A client might bring it to a social worker's attention. A group of residents within a neighborhood may present issues and concerns that need to be addressed. Issues in the workplace, such as the quality of service to clients, may surface and require organized intervention. Community conditions may be so glaring that the need for change comes from many directions. Social problems may be broadcast around the world, illustrating that multiple societies are struggling with some of the same challenges that one has identified in a local arena. Regardless of how social workers identify change opportunities, they function in a political environment that cannot be ignored.

Figure 1.1 Macro Practice Conceptual Framework: Understanding Population, Arena, and Condition

More will be said about these interacting factors later in this book, as the analytical and intervention phases of macro-level change are described. The following examples will illustrate these different points of entry into an **episode of change**.

- A social worker working with a senior center discovers that assisted-living resources in the community are limited for low-income seniors. In this instance, the worker's point of entry into the episode of change may be through the *population* of low-income older adults, helping them organize and approach the city council, county commission, or the state legislature about the need for more options for low-income seniors who can no longer live alone.

- A social worker at a community center learns that many apartments in the neighborhood are being used as drop points for undocumented immigrants, where they wait until they are sent to various communities across the country. Some community members express concerns about exploitation. Other community members argue that they are concerned about safety and sanitation. In this instance, the worker's point of entry into the episode of change may be the community or neighborhood, perhaps by sponsoring some communitywide meetings to discuss the impact, involving the appropriate community leaders, and working toward a resolution. This represents entry through the community *arena*.

- A social worker with a neighborhood service center may discover that among the many families served by the center are five or six single parents who have recently secured employment but are unable to find affordable child care. Working with this group's *condition* or need (children who need to be cared for while the parent is at work) as his or her point of entry into the episode of change, the social worker and others develop a plan for child care for the children of these single parents.

In the course of engaging with and assessing populations, arenas, and conditions, the social worker will inevitably focus on the areas of overlap depicted in Figure 1.1. To engage in macro practice to help a client who has a substance use disorder, for example, the social worker must understand the background of the person addicted (e.g., older, retired men), the arena (community or organization) within which the people live, and the condition (alcoholism). It would be important to review literature on the population, theory about how alcohol addiction develops, and reports from studies testing various interventions. As the change agent builds a body of knowledge about the population and condition, it becomes especially important to focus on the overlap between alcoholism as a condition and its unique impact on the population of retired people.

It is likewise important to understand how the phenomenon of alcoholism affects the local community (the overlap between condition and arena), and to what extent the needs of the population is understood and addressed in the local community (overlap between population and arena). Ultimately, in an episode of macro practice, the objective is to work toward an understanding of the area where all three circles overlap (alcoholism and its impact on retired men in a given neighborhood or town).

Social and community needs must also be addressed within a larger context that affects the population, the condition, and the community or organization. Dealing with social and community conditions and needs effectively requires an awareness of the political environment within which the change episode will be undertaken. For these

reasons, we have placed the three circles (population, arena, and condition) within a large dotted outer circle intended to depict the political environment. The importance of and the need for understanding the political and policy contexts within which macro-practice tasks take place cannot be overemphasized.

Four Case Examples

Learning Outcome 1.2 Discuss case examples used to illustrate macro practice.

Some of the aspects of social work macro practice that need to be understood by the student and the beginning practitioner can be illustrated by case examples. We selected the following examples because they contain similar themes but focus on different population groups: children, older adults and persons with disabilities, immigrant and refugee youth, and persons who are homeless. As these cases and the workers' thoughts are presented, we encourage the reader to think about how macro-level change might be approached by beginning with a study of the population, the arena, and the condition. We also hope that these examples will illustrate both the systemic nature of social work macro practice and the types of value dilemmas confronting social workers.

Case Example 1: Working in Child Protective Services

Child Protective Services (CPS) workers have responsibility for dealing with the abuse and neglect of children. When reports of alleged abuse or neglect come to the unit, the CPS worker must investigate the report and make decisions about the disposition of the case. It is a very demanding and emotionally draining area of specialization within the field of social work. One CPS worker took the time to record the details of a particular case and then shared a list of dilemmas and contradictions he had encountered over the years in the interest of helping new workers prepare for what they will face as they enter practice.

Friday, 7:40 P.M. Supervisor texted me about a report of neglect. She felt it should be checked out today because it sounded too serious to be left until after the weekend (as agency rules allow with some neglect allegations). According to the neighbor's report, parents have abandoned three minor children.

7:50 P.M. Got in my car, loading the address in my GPS. I know the neighborhood well. It is predominantly Black, one of the poorest in the town, and often unsafe at night. A high percentage of families are unemployed and receive some kind of assistance. Homes owned by absentee landlords are rundown, streets are littered, and the city long ago stopped investing in this community. I'm from a nearby neighborhood and I know that life here is hard.

8:15 P.M. The house at the address given is among the most rundown in the neighborhood. The house has no front steps—just a cinder block placed in front of the door. Window casings are rotting out for lack of paint. There is no doorbell. I knocked. There was rustling inside, but no answer. I waited and knocked again. I walked around and peered through a window and saw a small child, about 3 years old I guessed, curled up in a chair. An older girl, about age 8 or 9, peeked out from behind a doorway.

I remembered that the oldest child was named Kiara, so I called out to her. After a bit of conversation, I persuaded her to come to the door. There were three children—Kiara (age 9), Jeremiah (age 6), and Angelique (age 3). Only the oldest

would talk and she told me that her mom was at work and that she was in charge of her brother and sister since her grandmother was sick. Kiara said their mother would be home soon, so I waited for her.

8:35 P.M. The mother arrived and a conversation with her revealed the following:

Father: Johnny, age 27, was in jail where he was awaiting trial for a minor trespassing offense. They hadn't had the money to pay for bail.

Mother: Nia, age 25, had once been receiving Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) and had recently received her certified nursing assistant credentials. She went to work immediately in two retirement centers. The children had been staying with her husband's mother who had recently been diagnosed with breast cancer. Nia said that she was still in her probationary period at work and she couldn't take time off to stay with the children or she would lose her job. Her oldest daughter had always been very responsible and so in desperation, she gave her daughter a list of instructions to care for her siblings.

10:15 P.M. Informed the mother that I was required to open an investigation because the children had been left alone. Filed the appropriate forms with agency and the police. Entered field notes into laptop for the record. Emailed brief summary to supervisor.

Over the years, as this CPS worker engaged with similar cases, he kept a running list of the kinds of dilemmas, frustrations, and contradictions he and his colleagues regularly faced. These are excerpts from his list:

1. While there are definitely horrible cases of intentional abuse and neglect, often cases of neglect are related to the economic conditions of their families and reflected in the neighbors and neighborhoods around them. Caring parents are caught between a rock and a hard place as job demands compete with parenting demands. To meet basic needs for food and housing, the job demands often win. These conditions in their lives present a clear challenge. Young children can't be left alone, but most programs to assist families have stringent work requirements, and the threat of eviction is ever-present. Something must change, but in the meantime, how do we support families like Johnny and Nia's? Can we draw from the strengths within this community by identifying emergency child care? Could we find volunteers willing to take on this type of challenge and the legal liabilities associated with it? Could we approach congregations, PTAs, or service organizations?

2. A disproportionately high percentage of poor Black families have a family member in jail or prison. We must recognize historical and contemporary practices and policies that have resulted in and maintained racial disparities, fueling systemic narratives that oppress and stereotype Black men. Many misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies result in substantial jail time before trial because individuals living below the poverty line don't have the money to pay bail. The loss of a spouse, partner, or parent's wages may result in housing and food insecurity for their children. Addressing these issues can focus on meeting *population* needs or on an *arena* that needs to change. How do we support the families of incarcerated individuals? How do we protect their children from the economic consequences of a parent's incarceration? How do we change the institutional practice of cash bail, knowing

that for families living below the poverty line, it results in jail, unlike for families with resources.

3. And what about parents like Johnny and Nia? Based on the conversation with Nia and my subsequent investigation, I believe they are caring parents. True, they are breaking the law and must be accountable for leaving such young children alone, but that approach won't alter situations caused by economic and labor conditions. How do we support families like this until systems work better for them and their children? How do we prevent our involvement in the first place? This might be approached from either a *condition* perspective or a community *arena* perspective.

Case Example 2: Case Managing with Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities

Case managers work in a variety of public and private settings. They are responsible for screening potential clients, assessing client needs, developing care plans, mobilizing resources to meet identified needs, and monitoring and evaluating services provided. The case manager in this example works for a nonprofit agency in a rural neighborhood, where many of her clients have lived all their lives. She is assigned to the home and community-based long-term care unit and carries a caseload of about 60 older adults and persons with disabilities. As part of the program evaluation, she was asked to keep a diary of what happened during a typical day. The following are excerpts from her diary.

Wednesday, 7:30 A.M. Arrived early to catch up on email. Entered client data from previous day. Organized three new care plans and five medical reports.

8:00–8:10 A.M. Mrs. Garcia (age 79) called, distraught over a letter received from the Social Security office, thinking it meant her benefits would be cut off. Explained that it was a form letter, a routine change, not affecting the amount of her check. Knowing that she is often forgetful and has a hearing problem, made a note to make home visit tomorrow.

8:10–8:30 A.M. Met with Jim from In-Home Support Services. Mr. Thomas, age 93, fell last night. Is in Mercy Hospital. Home aide found him when she arrived at 7:00 this morning. He is not expected to live. Aide is very upset. Texted his daughter and will meet her at hospital later this morning.

8:30–9:30 A.M. Staff meeting regarding 10 clients discharged from County Hospital with inadequate discharge plans. Discussed how to work better with discharge planners. As I left, another case manager told me that Mrs. Hannibal had refused to let the home health nurse in.

9:30–9:45 A.M. Called Mrs. Hannibal (age 77), no answer. Called lifeline program to meet me at her apartment.

9:45–10:00 A.M. No one answered when I knocked; got manager to let me in. Mrs. Hannibal had been drinking. Threw bottle at me and screamed, "No one is going to get me out of here. I'll never go to a home. I'll die first." Worked with lifeline staff to calm Mrs. Hannibal down. She goes in and out of hospital and has a severe drinking problem.

10:00–11:00 A.M. Arrived at Mercy Hospital. Met Mr. Thomas's daughter, who was in tears, saying it was all her fault, that if he had been living with her this would have never happened. Talked with her regarding her father's desire to live alone, that this had been his choice. Contacted hospital social worker to work with daughter.

11:15 A.M.–12:00 P.M. Back to office. Entered notes on visits to Mrs. Hannibal and Mr. Thomas. Called two new referrals, scanned and emailed documents to hospital, and set up appointments to do assessments tomorrow.

12:00–12:30 P.M. Ate lunch with Adult Protective Services (APS) worker. Discussed abusive relationship of Mr. and Mrs. Tan, a couple in their 60s living in a mobile home community. Agreed to work closely with APS regarding this situation.

12:45–2:00 P.M. Conducted in-home assessment for new client, Ms. Johnson. She was released from hospital yesterday and is receiving home-delivered meals and in-home nursing. Small house is a mess, roaches everywhere. Needs chore and housekeeping services, but there's a long waiting list. Called and cajoled volunteers at Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to help her temporarily. Ms. Johnson was too weak to complete full assessment, will come back tomorrow.

2:30–3:30 P.M. Attended public hearing preceding the planning process for the AAA. Testified about the need for more flexibility in providing services to persons with disabilities under age 60. Gave examples of persons in their 40s with severe mobility conditions.

3:45–4:15 P.M. Stopped to see Mrs. Martinez, newly admitted to Sunnyside Nursing Home. Has been my client for five years. Doesn't know me, seems confused. Checked with social worker regarding her meds and called physician regarding potential drug interactions. Used smartphone to access health department's report card to see if there are complaints about this facility. Texted local long-term care ombudsman about any issues she might be aware of. Made note to check on Mrs. M's disabled daughter, who is still at home and will need supportive services previously provided by her mother.

4:45–5:15 P.M. Returned to office, found out Mr. Thomas had died. Called his daughter. Tried to call physician about Mrs. Martinez's medications, but his nurse could not reveal any information to me because of the privacy act.

Just as the CPS worker had kept a running list of the kinds of dilemmas he faced through the years, the case manager had kept a list of her dilemmas as well. In preparation for the Area Agency on Aging public hearing, she had updated the list in hopes something could be done. Excerpts from her list follow:

1. Although some of our resources can be used to serve any older person in need, most of our funding is tied to income and age eligibility. Slots for people who aren't destitute are quickly filled, and there are long waiting lists. Clients with disabilities who are not yet 60 years of age do not qualify for case management, even though physically they may be as challenged as many much older adults. Focusing on the diversity within aged and disabled *population* groups and recognizing the needs of vulnerable subpopulations are critically important. Couldn't we organize population groups to help each other advocate for their needs? How do we familiarize policy makers with the diverse needs of these populations and persuade them to consider changing income and age eligibility criteria?

2. So many of the older people I see have had issues all their lives. You can almost tell what's going to happen in their old age by what happens to them as they go through life. The lack of economic resources earlier in adulthood continues to have

an impact on adults later in life. Drug and alcohol problems often get worse. Abusive situations escalate. If someone had intervened early, it would have been much easier because the economic impact and behavior patterns are well established by the time I encounter them. I know people can change at any age, but it seems harder when one is under stress or facing hard times. Is there some way we could organize a prevention effort to prepare middle-aged people for their senior years and address *conditions* earlier? How can we draw on strengths rather than focus on deficits?

3. I'm learning some revealing things about case management. Case managers attempt to coordinate what is really a non-system of services. If we had a real system, we wouldn't need to pay people like me and we could put those resources toward client services. This is exacerbated in a rural context. We are investing a lot in institutionalizing case management when it often just covers up a bigger problem—that we don't have an accessible service delivery system in place. Change will require engagement in organizational and community *arenas* to get agencies to collaborate in establishing a coordinated and accessible system of services. Who should be involved in a communitywide coalition to work toward a more integrated system of care for older adults and persons with disabilities?

Case Example 3: Organizing with Immigrant and Refugee Youth

Numerous nonprofit organizations work to support immigrant and refugee populations in the United States through advocacy and humanitarian services to facilitate integration into local communities. These agencies often attempt to fill in the gaps when the government does not adequately provide for or protect unaccompanied youth. Two social work students were completing their second-year field placements in an agency that worked to organize and support Latino/a/x immigrants. One of their primary assignments was to help Latino/a/x youth to organize around equal access to higher education, opportunities, and a range of civil liberties. The students worked with the agency's advocacy director to help support youth leaders and facilitate youth-led efforts. As one of their learning activities, the students kept records of their daily activities and some of the questions and dilemmas they faced or observed.

Monday, 9:00 A.M. At a weekly agency staff meeting, the client services director described difficulties her office faces in locating affordable housing for recently arrived immigrant families who have fled violence in their own country. She announced a reception for local landlords to build relationships to open up affordable housing opportunities. We described the event we will be leading on Saturday at a local street fair to draw attention to the deportation of unaccompanied youth.

10:00 A.M. The youth advocacy director, also our field supervisor, pulled us aside to discuss a protest he had just learned about. A national anti-immigration group had secured permits to protest outside deportation hearings at the federal courthouse on Thursday. He asked us to research this group's activities and then meet with the advocacy team to discuss our findings.

10:15 A.M. We began research on the anti-immigration group. Juanita focused on the group's website and recent publicity. I focused on descriptions of the

anti-immigration group by organizations like the Southern Poverty Law Center that monitor the activities of hate groups. We found the group registered as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and with a slightly different name as a 501(c)4 organization. Because the organization is registered as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, we were able to get its 990 form, which lists major donors. A local manufacturer that provides numerous jobs in our immigrant community was listed as a major donor.

We discovered that this group was responsible for the blowback that our agency and a number of its collaborators were getting over the Quit Using the i-Word Campaign. Ever since U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor had used the term *undocumented immigrant* to refer to persons who were in the United States without proper authorization, a social media firestorm had been blazing. We had been naïve when we had helped initiate the campaign last year and couldn't believe the angry reaction. This anti-immigration group may have been at least partially behind this harsh reaction and continued to call anyone coming into the country an "illegal alien." Our field liaison complicated our lives even more by referring us to a book that suggested the term *unauthorized* was more accurate than "undocumented" because many immigrant people arrive with legal documents but overstay their visas, and others may have false or forged documents. (Lee, 2013, p. xviii)

12:15 P.M. Met with the advocacy team to present our findings. They were surprised to find out about the affiliation of the local manufacturing firm with the anti-immigration agency. The fund development director was particularly concerned about the implications of the discovery. No one was surprised to learn that the group had opposed the i-Word Campaign, and they pulled up a number of irate messages about the campaign that the group had posted on Facebook.

2:00 P.M. We met with field supervisor about mutual interest in international social work. We had located a number of professional resources, including the International Federation of Social Workers, the International Association of Schools of Social Work, the National Association of Social Workers (NASW), and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) immigration materials and international publications, and the Global Agenda for Social Work and Social Development. We found job opportunities through the United Nations, the Peace Corps, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and a number of other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). We discovered a growing literature on the type of work we are doing and calls for action to address the immigration humanitarian crisis (Finno-Velasquez & Faulkner, 2018). Lopez and colleagues (2018) explored the detention and deportation of undocumented family members and the impact on citizen-children born in the United States. Rodriguez, McDaniel, and Ahebee (2018) reported lessons learned from leaders in U.S. towns and cities about receptivity to immigrant communities and creating policies that encouraged and supported immigrant populations. The changing face of immigration was studied by the Urban Institute (Gelatt, Adams, & Monson, 2014), and journals such as *International Social Work* and the *Journal of Community Practice* explored numerous issues challenging social work practitioners and educators in preparing students to practice in a global world (see, e.g., Dominelli, 2014; Ferrera, 2017; Gates, 2017; Santiago & Smith, 2019). We need to take advantage of these and other resources as we prepare for contemporary practice.

4:30 P.M. Attended the youth organizing meeting. Youth leaders discussed plans for Saturday, including how participants should handle encounters with individuals who oppose our efforts.

The social work interns discussed questions and dilemmas that had arisen that day. The following excerpts are related to the activities noted in the preceding list:

1. Juanita is a member of a first-generation immigrant family from Colombia, South America, with roots in Colombia and the United States. I am a White American with roots in U.S. southern culture and tradition. Sometimes our observations are very similar. Sometimes they are not. How can I become more aware of my own prejudices and of White privilege? What do I need to do to become more culturally humble? One thing is clear. We need to immerse ourselves in learning about the *population* of Latino/a/x youth with whom we are working. Meeting with them individually and in groups is essential for finding out how they perceive the conditions they face, and including them in every aspect of any change effort is absolutely necessary.

2. Agency staff really struggled with how to address the planned anti-immigration protest because one of our agency's key donors is a partner in the manufacturing firm that supports the anti-immigration organization that is leading the protest. A number of staff members wanted to confront our donor. Others wanted to have a conversation with him about his organization's involvement in anti-immigration efforts. Others wanted to gain more information before deciding on a course of action. How should our team address this *condition* when what is needed by the organization (fundraising) may contradict the advocacy efforts of the organization? What constitutes a conflict of interest here?

3. It is still hard to believe how angry to the point of violence people can become when their beliefs and attitudes are threatened. We're still reeling from some of the comments the anti-immigration group posted for all the world to see. As social workers, we believe that calling someone illegal is dehumanizing and that no human being is illegal. But we also realize that there are people who think we are bleeding-heart liberals, and convincing them to use different terminology is like asking them to change their worldview. How do we confront these issues without being intolerant of intolerance within our own community *arena*?

Case Example 4: Advocating for Persons Experiencing Homelessness

A social worker at a homeless shelter had a caseload of 25 clients and was responsible for orientation, coordinating physical and dental exams, and referral and transportation to community agencies to deal with concerns related to income, permanency of housing, employment, counseling, and other conditions and needs caused by their homelessness. Excerpts from the social worker's field notes follow.

Tuesday, 8:30 A.M. Jack C., a three-month resident, had been delivered to the shelter the previous evening by local police after having been cited for drunk and disorderly conduct. I went over the shelter's policies on alcohol and drug abuse and explained that additional offenses could result in expulsion from the shelter. His response was very passive and noncommittal, and he indicated that he really didn't care if he stayed at the shelter or not.

9:00 A.M. Went to my office to check my email and return phone calls. Set up two meetings with case managers at a local clinic for individuals experiencing homelessness. I want to see how the service providers understand the conditions

faced by homeless adults experiencing serious mental illness. I also want to begin to better identify the strengths of the population—I've noticed that much of our conversation about adults experiencing homelessness are about their challenges, not about their resilience and strengths, including the ability to survive on the street.

10:30 A.M. Met with Trevor L., a 45-year-old man who had been at the shelter for two weeks. He had been referred to two employers and was waiting to hear whether he was still in the running for either job. He had a list of available apartments provided by the shelter, had circled several possibilities in red, and was prepared to follow up if he got one of the jobs. I reinforced his initiative in following his care plan and told him I was available if he needed any help or direction.

1:00 P.M. At the request of my supervisor, met with a community housing committee that was exploring the creation and development of a new shelter. The group reported on two older motels on a major bus route that could potentially be converted into efficiency apartments for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness.

2:30 P.M. Met with my group of seven residents to discuss progress they were making with their care plans. There is really a wide range of conditions and needs even just across these seven, including chronic versus short-term homelessness, drug and alcohol addiction, mental health issues, length of unemployment, and many others. For many, it is challenging just to set goals. Others feel they know exactly what they need and are in the process of trying to resolve their problems.

4:00 P.M. Read some materials that my supervisor shared with me on a concept called *housing first*, an evidence-based practice in homeless services that differs from the traditional *treatment-first* model. Housing-first models assume that individuals experiencing homelessness need the stability of permanent housing to succeed in services. Treatment-first models assume that individuals experiencing homelessness need services to become ready for housing. The article presented compelling evidence that housing first was effectively reducing chronic homelessness in many cities across the country.

5:00 P.M. Was notified by one of the attendants at the residence that Alan W. was ill and running a fairly high temperature. Since he was in a wheelchair, I took him to see the on-call physician's assistant at the shelter and provided her with necessary information.

The dilemmas this social worker experienced focused on both micro and macro concerns about the population experiencing homelessness. Reflections from the social worker's notes follow:

1. Persons experiencing homelessness tend to get lumped together in the minds of the general population and even the professional community. Yet, even in my own case-load, there is a wide range of conditions and needs. Some people need just a place to live and a job, and they are ready to be independent again. Others are facing serious mental health problems and addictions, and some lack the skills needed for employment and independent living. Is there a need to categorize, or can we experiment with placing some of our residents regardless of problems or needs into independent-living situations and allow them to seek the services they need as some housing proponents suggest? These issues focus on a *population.*

2. Some of the providers I met with were particularly concerned about the philosophy of the housing-first program we were studying, in that they felt that

participation in recommended services should be required. How could we help people experiencing homelessness if they weren't required to participate in services, quit using substances, and take the medication that would help them recover? Traditional services ensured that people were housing-ready by measuring and rewarding rule compliance. How could we justify serving people who weren't willing to follow the rules while so many people were in need and willing to meet eligibility requirements? These are legitimate concerns that need to be thought through, but, at the same time, the treatment-first model has not exactly produced excellent results—and isn't housing a human right? And housing-first honors self-determination and is a more strengths-oriented approach. These issues tend to focus on a *condition.*

3.   If we are going to move ahead, we need to focus on developing popular support and the political will to try out the housing-first model. After all, this isn't a particularly popular population to serve—people often assume that people are homeless because of bad choices and a refusal to address their addictions to alcohol and drugs. How can we develop a communitywide effort to promote the positives of this model and to build on strengths rather than focus on deficits? These issues tend to lend themselves to being addressed in the *community arena*.

The Foundation of Macro Practice

Learning Outcome 1.3 Explain the theoretical and values foundation of macro practice.

We have presented these rather lengthy scenarios and the accompanying observations of the workers in an attempt to characterize the kinds of conditions, issues, and problems social workers face almost every day. The nature of a capitalist system is that some people succeed economically, whereas others do not. For the most part, social workers deal with those who are not able to care for at least a part of their own needs. It should be clear by this time that direct-practice interventions alone cannot address large-scale community conditions. Social workers must also master the self-reflection and leadership skills involved in organizing people who may want change and have good intentions but need additional resources, coordination, and support.

Understanding the professional mission of social work that integrates micro and macro interventions and respects the practitioners who perform these roles is essential to recognizing why macro practice is important. Essentially, social workers have a mission to join the strengths of doing "both-and," being able to intervene with an individual service recipient and then skillfully communicate with others who can advocate and facilitate larger system interventions that will make a difference in the lives of multiple individuals.

Similarly, the person-is-political perspective underscores the belief that individuals cannot be viewed separately from the larger society. The actions—or lack of actions—of individuals influence those around them and may have broad implications for others within an organization or a community. Thus, micro and macro roles are interconnected.

For those social workers committed to bringing about positive change not only for individual clients but also for whole neighborhoods, organizations, and communities, the question becomes: How is it possible to meet all the expectations of a job and still be involved with larger issues?

In Chapters 3 through 12 of this book, we will attempt to present the building blocks of a planned change model that makes it both possible and manageable to carry out episodes of change. Again, it is important to remember that macro interventions are rarely done alone. Before we focus on a change model, it is necessary to develop a foundation for macro practice. That foundation is based on an understanding of the relevance of language; values and ethics; and theories, models, and approaches.

The Importance of Terminology

It is important to acknowledge terminology used to describe diverse population groups with whom social workers interact. Social workers need to recognize that terms used to define and distinguish different populations can be applied adversely in ways that reinforce stereotypes or isolate the members of these groups.

Abramovitz (1991) called attention to how common speech sends messages beyond those actually spoken. She offered as an example the phrase *feminization of poverty*, which calls attention to the economic concerns of women but may also imply that poverty is a new issue for women. She argued instead for the term *povertization of women*, which better reflects the long history of women's economic disadvantage. She also argued against the use of the sociological term *underclass*, which has been suggested as a replacement for *multiproblem, disadvantaged*, or *hard-to-reach* poor people, because of its stigmatizing connotations. In Case Example 1, in which children were left alone by their parents, the social worker described the conditions in which they were living but was careful not to label this family as underclass. He acknowledges that there are major problems to overcome but raises the chance of rebuilding a stable family as the ultimate goal.

The term *persons with disabilities* is considered appropriate as a broad descriptor of individuals who have different physical or mental challenges. The term *differently abled* has been advocated as a way to avoid categorizing members of this group in terms of their perceived limitations, but this phrase has not yet been commonly adopted. Individual countries are exploring terms such as *diffability* in efforts to be more sensitive in their language (Suharto, Kuipers, & Dorsett, 2016). In Case Example 2, the case manager was working with older adults and persons with disabilities. She did not use the term *elderly* or *aged* but used *older adult* or *older person*, yet in the popular press, the term *senior* is often used. In this book, we will use *older adults, older persons*, or *seniors*, but in practice, to be as sensitive as possible, it is best to ask what terms they prefer.

Since the 1950s, growing attention has been given to employing more accurate and less historically laden language when referring to various populations or groups. For example, among ethnic and racial groups, Blacks adopted the term *Black* as a preferred descriptor in the 1960s and 1970s. Since the civil rights movement, the term *African American* has gained widespread use, and research indicates that African Americans are evenly divided between *Black* and *African American* with regard to their preferred term (Grammarist, 2019). Among Native Americans, the term *Native American* has been

promoted as more appropriate than *Indian.* However, the full phrase *American Indian* is considered appropriate to be used interchangeably with *Native American*. In 2019, the city of Los Angeles replaced Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples Day to recognize the diversity of Native American groups, acknowledging that being indigenous has deep historical meaning over simply being native to an area. In Canada, the term *First Nations People* has come into general use, replacing the term *Indian* for the Indigenous people of the Americas. Most recently, the phrase *Black, Indigenous, and People of Color* (BIPOC) has been used to ensure that the more generic descriptor, *People of Color,* does not erase the particular history of slavery and colonization that activists have noted could easily be overlooked with such a generic term. BIPOC recognizes that not all People of Color experience the same levels or forms of injustice.

The terms *Latino* and *Latina* are used as a generic expression to represent male and female persons of Latin American ancestry, including Puerto Ricans, Cuban Americans, Mexican Americans (who also use the term *Chicano*), and many others. Advocates of the use of *Latino* or *Latina* contend that *Hispanic* (which was originally created by the U.S. Bureau of the Census) is appropriately applied only to persons with links to Spain (Gutiérrez & Lewis, 1999), but a survey by *Hispanic Magazine* (2006) found that *Hispanic* was preferred by about two-thirds of the more than 1,000 registered voters in the sample. About one-third chose to identify themselves as *Latino* (Granado, 2006). *Latinx* is a more recent gender-inclusive version that appeared first in 2004 and grew to more widespread usage after 2015 (Padilla, 2016), but it has not been extensively embraced by persons of Latin and Latin American descent. Therefore, in Case Example 3, in which the focus is on youth who are entering the United States from Latin America, the term Latino/a/x is used to be as inclusive as possible.

Finally, the term *White*, despite its common usage, is poorly defined, but it remains more broadly applicable than *Anglo* or *Caucasian.* Results from a study to determine the term they prefer to be used when describing their group showed that, among Whites, *White* was preferred by a wide margin (62 percent) over *Caucasian* (17 percent) (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1995). Often readers may assume people are White if another specific group is not identified. These assumptions and use or lack of use of a racial group identifier for White people is important contextual information to consider critically.

With respect to sexuality, *gay* and *lesbian* have been preferred terms for at least the past four decades, whereas individuals who are *bisexual* or *transgender* have also become better recognized as distinct groups. Members of each group were previously referred to as being distinguished by their *sexual preference*, but the term *sexual orientation* is now considered more appropriate because it reflects research indicating that such orientation is innate rather than a matter of choice. The abbreviation *LGBT* (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) has become commonplace and is now often expanded to LGBTQ. In some uses, the additional letter stands for "questioning," referring to people who are uncertain about their sexual orientation. In others, it stands for "queer," a once derogatory term that activists have embraced as a sign of defiance against discrimination. With respect to gender, some feminist writers have argued for use of the terms *womyn* or *wimin* on the basis that they are less derivative of the word *men*, but as yet these terms have not gained wide use. Cisgender and transgender, however, have become used more widely.

Of particular importance is the respectful use of pronouns. Binary pronouns such as "she/her/hers" and "he/him/his" are gender exclusive, whereas "they/their/theirs" are inclusive. Using a person's pronouns as they wish is critical to show respect and sensitivity to their identity. Vogler-Elias, Mack, Goings, and Dehaven (2020) recommend that professionals introduce themselves with their preferred pronouns and ask others what their pronouns are to avoid misgendering. **Misgendering** occurs when one incorrectly uses pronouns that do not reflect the gender with which a person identifies.

Whatever terminology is used, it is important for the social worker to recognize the heterogeneity within groups. In Case Example 3, the term *undocumented immigrant* is used, yet Lee (2013) contends that even that term would be more appropriate if it was *unauthorized*. In Case Example 4, the social worker recognizes how diverse the population of persons experiencing homelessness is and that lumping this group into a category of "the homeless" would not only dehumanize them but would fail to acknowledge the diversity within the population group. This would be like thinking of persons with disabilities as "the disabled" or older persons as "the aged," terms that lump diverse groups into homogeneous categories.

We recognize the importance of language and the absence of it, and it is our intent in this book to reflect that importance in our use of terms. Based on the preceding reviews, we will intersperse the terms *Black* and *African American; Indigenous* or *Native American* and *American Indian; Hispanic* and *Latin/a/x; and White*. We will also use the term *BIPOC*. Our goal is to be sensitive to the convictions and wishes of as many people within diverse population groups as possible, and to reflect what is considered standard terminology by members of those groups. We hope the reader will recognize this as evidence of the dynamic, evolving nature of modern language and as an acknowledgment that social workers need to ask the persons with whom they work about what language they view as respectful terminology (Pomeroy & Nonaka, 2013).

Underlying any planned-change process is recognition of the potential value conflicts and ethical dilemmas that can occur in macro practice. We now turn to those.

Values and Ethics

Professional judgment derives from the ability to skillfully apply and discern the quality of the best knowledge available in a workable manner. Therefore, professional practitioners typically need guidelines rather than rules, because guidelines offer direction instead of rigid formulation. Guidelines as well as standards allow professionals to exercise discretion and use their judgment. However, professionals also carry enormous responsibility because what they decide and how they act will affect both their clients and the multiple constituencies previously discussed in our case examples. In professional practice, every choice is a value judgment (Sugrue, 2019).

Being a **professional** implies identification with a set of values that places the interests of the client first; a professional relies on knowledge, judgment, and skill to act on those values. We define *values* as those strongly held beliefs about what is necessary and worthy that many or most members of a social system perceive to be fundamental to quality social work practice. Values provide a framework for understanding and analyzing situations. **Ethics** provide guidelines for practice in carrying out values.

One can feel strongly about something, but acting on that feeling involves ethical behavior, which is the operationalization of that value.

Because codes of ethics serve as guidelines for professional practice, it is imperative that students know the content and limitations of written codes. It is also important for social workers to know that codes of ethics develop over time (they change as new issues arise), that there are multiple codes of ethics for social workers around the world, and that there is an international code of ethics for social workers.

The International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) has published a Code of Ethics that endorses human rights and social justice as fundamental to the social work profession. The Federation publishes the journal *International Social Work*. Its website links to codes of ethics in over 25 countries throughout the world. Codes in Canada and the United States are very similar, and comparative studies have examined the relationship of national codes to the IFSW Code (Powell, 2009). A commitment to social change is evident across social work codes, even though it is viewed as dangerous for social workers in countries such as China to pursue this agenda (Staniforth, Fouche, & O'Brien, 2011, p. 196). With assistance from the Center for the Study of Ethics in Professions, Buila conducted an online review of 700 professional codes of ethics in health, dental, mental health, and education fields. She selected 55 for in-depth review, using key terms such as *social justice, diversity*, and *discrimination*. She concluded that social work codes are unique in the value they place on social responsibility to pursue social and political action (Buila, 2010). It is important to note that even though human rights is mentioned in many nations' codes of ethics, the U.S.-based National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics (2021) does not mention human rights. Mapp, McPherson, Androff, and Gabel (2019) encourage social workers to see clients as rights-holders rather than charity-seekers, which means focusing on root causes rather than on individual pathologies. A human rights perspective, then, is congruent with macro practice, in which the logical consequence of addressing causes is advocating for change.

The NASW Code is intended to introduce a perspective that drives practitioners' thinking, establishes criteria for selecting goals, and influences how information is interpreted and understood. Regardless of which role the social worker plays—program coordinator, community organizer, political lobbyist, or direct practitioner—these professional actions are not value-free. The NASW Code of Ethics (2021) lists six core values on which the ethical principles of social work are based: service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. We focus on these core values from the NASW Code to illustrate values conflicts that social workers may face when responsibilities to multiple constituencies clash.

SERVICE

Social workers are often simultaneously engaged in both direct and indirect practice, actions intended to help people in need and to address the social conditions they face. Closely related to providing service is the concept of **beneficence**, which is based on the desire to do good for others as well as not doing harm. Persons entering the field of social work will often say that they chose this profession because they want to help others. The core value of service is typically a primary motivator for those professionals who work in health and human service settings.

There is an ongoing debate in the field of social work around the core value of service. Historically, there has been tension over where to direct limited resources, with more radical members of the profession arguing that focusing on delivering social services will redirect limited resources away from more aggressive methods of changing oppressive systems and advocating for social justice. Mainstream proponents argue that services must be provided to population groups that are suffering and that collective action is fine as long as the focus on immediate need is not lost. This debate and accompanying tension can be framed as a conflict between the desire to provide service (status quo) and the quest for social justice (social change). A social worker may feel there is never enough time to fully provide high-quality services without becoming part of a system that needs reform and losing sight of the bigger picture. The conflict is that providing services (a responsibility to clients) may put a Band-Aid® on social conditions that need to be addressed at the broader system level (a responsibility to the profession).

In the four case examples we presented earlier, social workers struggle with this dilemma. The child protective services worker must often respond to emergencies, literally attending to children who have been neglected. Yet, the worker is fully aware that if larger system issues are not addressed, these situations will continue to repeat themselves. Similarly, the social worker who works with older persons and persons with disabilities is addressing immediate service needs that form the basis for advocating at public hearings for changes in policy that would permit younger clients to receive needed services. Yet until change occurs, she will have to address immediate direct-service needs as best she can. The advocacy organization in our third case example is attempting to gain access to services for Latin American immigrants, and until access is granted, it will have to find creative ways to meet immediate daily needs of its **focal population**, just as in the fourth example the social worker who works with persons experiencing homelessness will be consumed with filling in service gaps until housing can be located for her clients. This balance between providing direct service and advocating for systemic change reflects the interconnection between micro and macro social work and the interface of multiple values: service and social justice.

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Social justice means being committed to challenging injustice and pursuing social change with and on behalf of individuals and groups experiencing oppression. The principle underlying this core value has traditionally focused on social workers addressing poverty, discrimination, unemployment, and related issues. Jansson (2018) points out that social justice is based on equality. With the many entrenched interests one encounters in local communities, it is likely that social workers will focus their efforts on oppressed focal population groups and will always be discovering new inequalities. Because so many groups face problems related to having enough financial resources, social workers often extend the principle to include economic justice, thus focusing on social *and* economic justice concerns.

Dotolo, Lindhorst, Kemp, and Engleberg (2018) contend that a broader conceptualization of social justice is needed, one that bridges micro and macro interactions. So often social justice has been seen as distributive justice at the macro level when in fact it has to be carried out at every level of intervention. Using the case of a caregiver who

is caring for his gay partner, they illustrate how practitioners can demonstrate social justice in their daily work by how they relate to clients with respect and fairness, just as larger-scale change to influence discriminatory policies can be pursued at the macro level. In other words, social workers can simultaneously practice the principle of social justice in their encounters with individuals as well as with groups and organizations.

Concerns about social and economic justice are exacerbated when clients cannot pay for services. As long as clients can pay, professional decision making may not conflict with the larger society, because resources do not have to be redistributed. Conceivably, as long as clients can pay for professional services, professions can operate within the market economy. Private-practice and fee-for-service agencies conform to this approach. Quality care is exchanged for economic resources, often in the form of third-party payments. The key to this approach is that the client has insurance coverage or access to sufficient personal funds. This approach breaks down, however, when clients cannot pay. Many social work clients have inadequate incomes to meet their needs, and other resources are not available. Social workers face ethical challenges when the practice settings in which they work limit eligibility based on socioeconomic status. Patients with AIDS may find themselves unable to pay for care at the same time that their needs increase because they are fired from jobs when news about their disease becomes known. Older people could avoid institutional care by hiring in-home caregivers, but despite having considerable lifetime savings, medical expenses may leave them with too few funds to meet their needs. Youth who have grown up in poverty may feel there is no way out except to break the law.

Social justice takes multiple forms beyond redistribution of economic resources. For example, environmental justice focuses on the impact of climate, natural resources, and manmade products on human health and well-being and the equitable distribution of the earth's resources, particularly on Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. Pfeifer (2016) examined the effects of pesticide contamination on the land and its harmful effects on migrant farm workers. Human damage to natural ecosystems is a social justice concern, and advocating for workers who are dangerously exposed to chemicals used to advance agricultural profits falls within the domain of social work's commitment to social justice. Another example is in the area of disaster risk and recovery. Pyles (2017) notes that as social workers are more and more called to respond to disasters throughout the world, interventions made by well-intentioned disaster relief agencies and actors may become oppressive without careful consideration and action that respects local cultures. To respond in an environmentally just way, social workers must understand and respect the social, political, and structural context in which they are intervening.

Broader than environmental justice is the concept of ecological justice. Whereas environmental justice is **anthropocentric**, focusing on the way in which humans are affected by such things as climate change, access to resources such as water and power, and environmental degradation, ecological justice takes the sustainability of all plant and animal life into consideration. Ecological justice recognizes the interconnections of human and companion species and their relationships to the natural environment. Thus, **ecosocial work** calls professionals to focus beyond the effect of environmental issues on people, by considering the effects on all aspects of the natural world (Hudson, 2019; Rambaree, Powers, & Smith, 2019; Teixeira, Mathias, & Krings, 2019).

Racial and gender justice seek power, equal access to opportunities and resources, and positive, equitable outcomes for all people regardless of race or gender. Before social workers can be effective practitioners, they must recognize their own privilege as professionals who have the benefit of education. They will engage with diverse population groups as well as individuals with whom they may not have shared life experiences. There are times when our language and behavior, no matter how sensitive we think they are, will be perceived by clients and others as discriminatory or prejudicial. When this happens, **microaggressions** can occur in which we are perceived by clients (individuals, groups, even whole communities) as being unjust. Microaggressions will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

Recall Case Example 3, in which student interns were attempting to work with youth who had emigrated from Latin America. Anti-immigration groups wanted to label these youth illegal when others viewed them as unauthorized. The interns were advocating for access to education and other resources so that the youth could be empowered. This was a racial justice challenge. For more examples of how to pursue social justice for diverse population groups, see Moya, Chavez-Baray, Martinez, Mattera, and Adcox (2018); Pulliam (2017); Santiago & Ivery (2020); and Weng and Clark (2017).

Spotlight 1.2 lists examples of different forms of social justice. These are not all-inclusive, but illustrate how the focus of social justice activities can vary. For example, social justice activities in Case Example 2, in which the social worker advocates for persons with disabilities at the public hearing, could be part of the Disrupt Ageism Movement. This movement seeks to change attitudes, language, and actions that discriminate against people of any age, and its advocates hope to change the cultural narrative.

SPOTLIGHT 1.2

Forms of Social Justice

Ecological Justice addresses the entire ecosystem, acknowledging that humans are only part of that broad system, and if it collapses, humanity will not survive. This term is more encompassing than the more anthropocentric term, environmental justice (Rambaree et al., 2019, p. 205).

Economic Justice addresses poverty, unemployment, and discrimination in the workplace, based on distributive justice that seeks to address legal and political barriers to social and economic societal resources (Dotolo et al., 2018, p. 144).

Environmental Justice addresses the unsustainability of natural resources, climate change, and the risk of natural disasters around the world and their impact on people's well-being (Pyles, 2017).

Gender Justice addresses any discrimination based on sex, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity (see, for example, https://www.genderjustice.us/).

Racial Justice addresses all forms of racial prejudice and discrimination in policies, practices, attitudes, and actions and focuses on equalizing access, power, and opportunities for all people (Pulliam, 2017).

Relational Justice focuses on how interactions are perceived by clients as microaggressions and seeks to expose and change oppressive attitudes and assumptions (Dotolo et al., 2018, p. 149).

DIGNITY AND WORTH OF THE PERSON

Often called *self-determination* or **autonomy**, valuing the dignity and worth of each person means respecting and honoring the right of that person to make their own life choices. Concepts such as empowerment are built on the value of dignity and worth, implying that power or control over one's life means seizing the opportunity to make one's own decisions. The social worker trying to understand the nature of housing-first services in Case 4 provides an example of self-determination. Housing first is built upon the value of self-determination. Fidelity criteria for the evidence-based practice require that choice be built into as many aspects of housing and services as possible (Stefancic, Tsemberis, Messeri, Drake, & Goering, 2013). Self-determination is not simply a key social work value, but rebuilding choice and control are crucial for individuals recovering from traumatic stress (Van Der Kolk, 2014). In the case example, the social worker must discern between self-determination and a contrasting view of self-sufficiency in which individuals who are experiencing homelessness must comply with rules and regulations to demonstrate their ability to be housing-ready.

Similarly, respecting the dignity and worth of people means that social work is committed to addressing the needs of persons who are marginalized. One example is faced by same-sex couples who want their committed relationships to be recognized by the larger society. Even when the law supports marriage equality, there is pushback by various groups that continue to believe this should not be allowed. For example, there are religious groups who will punish ministers for marrying a same-sex couple, making it difficult for couples who want to be married within the church with which they are affiliated. Access to survivor and spousal benefits, retirement income, and inheritance; hospital visitation rights; adoption; and immigration are just a few of the civil and financial issues faced by same-sex couples. The dignity and worth of persons are disrespected in policies that still do not recognize same-sex relationships or by prejudicial attitudes of individuals and groups that discount the moral legitimacy of these relationships. Social workers attempting to honor these relationships may be advocating for changes at all levels of policy making and may find themselves in conflict in practice settings that do not recognize the rights of same-sex couples (Pelts, 2014).

In our case examples, there are multiple instances where the dignity and worth of persons are not respected. The CPS worker attempted to find strengths in a stereotyped and stigmatized family and neighborhood. The case manager who faced challenge after challenge in her work with older and disabled persons went to a public hearing to advocate for her clients who were falling through the cracks in the long-term care system. The student interns were constantly encountering people who were protesting against immigrant and refugee youth who were seen as a faceless minority, and the social worker at the homeless shelter railed against lumping people who experience homelessness into one category. In these situations, social workers attempted to find ways to honor the dignity and worth of people who were often invisible individual human beings to the larger community.

IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS

The NASW Code of Ethics (2021) lists the importance of human relationships as a core social work value. This means continually finding new and meaningful ways to facilitate consumer as well as citizen participation in organizational and community arenas.