

Introduction to the Inaugural Issue

Welcome to the first issue of the *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research (JSSWR)*. *JSSWR* is a peer-reviewed, online periodical that is the official publication of the Society for Social Work and Research. *JSSWR* was created as an open-access journal (i.e., no fees, no subscription required) to address the evolving demands of social work practice and public policy for rapid access to research-based knowledge. We are committed to the central role of research in the context of an increasing emphasis on evidence-based practice.

With so many social work journals available, why was it necessary to create an open-access journal? It is our sense that the recent proliferation of subscription-based journals in social work may have actually impeded the dissemination of information because ever-increasing subscription costs act to limit access in these tight economic times. Publishing is not equivalent to dissemination. Recognizing the critical balance between the need for information and the risk of information overload, *JSSWR* was designed to provide free access and timely publication of science-based knowledge.

First and foremost, *JSSWR* is a scholarly journal that is committed to the rapid dissemination of research that informs practice, evaluates social and health programs, assesses public policies, and encourages further research. *JSSWR* seeks to engage both scholars and practitioners in all aspects of social work research in the 21st century. However, *JSSWR* is not simply a print journal that is published electronically. The online format frees *JSSWR* from the limitations inherent in a traditional print format. *JSSWR* represents the transition of scholarly publications to a new format with the capacity to supplement text with photos, video clips, and links to other forms of supporting information. For example, after reading an article discussing a psychodrama method to elicit sensitive information from research participants, a reader could then watch a video clip of the research team role-playing that method. *JSSWR* has the capacity to enhance traditional research publication with a variety of visual methods.

Second, *JSSWR* is a journal that encourages mentoring of contributors. We believe the quality and dedication of the Editorial Board sets *JSSWR* apart from other journals. In reviewing manuscript submissions, the members of the Editorial Board provide detailed, constructive critiques that help authors improve their measurement, data collection,

and data analysis strategies. As part of the review process, reviewers offer authors the benefit of their expertise in addressing alternate viewpoints and counterarguments. The time and effort given to reviews is a valuable gift; the reviewers who make up the *JSSWR* Editorial Board have helped immeasurably to create a journal with standards that reflect excellence in scholarship.

Third, we envision *JSSWR* as a vehicle for opening an interactive, ongoing dialogue within the diverse community of scholars and practitioners who contribute to social work knowledge and to broader issues in practice and policy. *JSSWR* is dedicated to making scholarly work on both the theory and the practice of social work widely available. The systematic studies presented in *JSSWR* should appeal to audiences of experts and nonexperts, qualitative or quantitative researchers, and experienced practitioners as well as new professionals and students.

Publication Schedule

To facilitate timely dissemination of research, articles will be published online as soon as they have passed the peer-review process and been approved by the editor. This “rolling” publication schedule can take as little as a few weeks as opposed to the many months (or more) required to produce many print journals. Readers registered with *JSSWR* will be notified by e-mail when new articles are published. *JSSWR* will publish two issues in its first year, with the number of issues increasing when demanded by the number of manuscript submissions. The journal considers all forms of research, including qualitative, quantitative, comparative, mixed, and visual methods. Its focus encompasses research relevant to a wide array of substantive fields and disciplines. Both full-length and brief reports are accepted for review.

Articles in This Issue

The articles in the inaugural issue provide a snapshot of *JSSWR* while holding open the possibility of our vision for the future. Although each article contributes to current knowledge on a topic, each also describes ways in which the knowledge base is limited. As such, these gaps indicate fertile ground for future exploration. Whether the reader is new to the profession, a seasoned social worker, or an experienced researcher, the articles in this inaugural issue are intended to challenge, stimulate, and evoke thinking and further research.

Acknowledgments

Our ability to publish *JSSWR* is made possible, in part, by the work of the Open Journal System (OJS) created by the Public Knowledge Project, as well as the work of Julian Fisher and the Scholarly Exchange who adapted the OJS platform to make the technology easily accessible to organizations in the humanities and in the social and health sciences.

We thank the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) for its ongoing commitment to the advancement of social work research, and for taking the bold step of bringing this journal into existence. We

thank the members of the Society's Committee on Publications for their work in conceptualizing the journal, lending their expertise to the construction of the journal's framework, and supporting the ongoing management of the journal with their time, energy, and dedication.

We also thank the *JSSWR* Associate Editors and the Editorial Review Board who are contributing their valuable time to complete quick but careful reviews that allow for rapid turnaround of manuscripts:

Laura Sue Abrams
Leslie B. Alexander
Richard P. Barth*†
Audrey L. Begun
Melissa Hayden Bellin
David E. Biegel
John S. Brekke
Christina Bruhn
Daniel Brisson
Leopoldo J. Cabassa
John D. Clapp
Sandra K. Danziger*
Diane DePanfilis
Brett Drake
Theresa Early
Jeffrey Lee Edleson
Kathleen Ell*
Trudy Festinger
Diane E. Elze
Jerry E. Floersch
Cynthia G.S. Franklin
Sarah Jane Gehlert†
Shenyang Guo*
Dawnovise Fowler
Daniel S. Gardner
Eric L. Garland
Tamika DeLaine Gilreath
Debbie Irene Gioia
Michal Grinstein-Weiss
Vincent Guilamo-Ramos†
Donna Harrington

Daniel Herman*
Roberta Rehner Iversen
Jeffrey M. Jenson*†
Sean Joe*
Carolyn Knight
Susan Lambert †
Bethany Lee
Jung-Sook Lee
Elizabeth Lightfoot
Bridgette Lery
Julia H. Littell
Ellen Lukens
Mark Macgowan
Rebecca Jane Macy
Lambert Maguire†
James I. Martin
Bowen McBeath
Julie S. McCrae
William Meezan
Paul Montgomery
Yunju Nam
Christina Evangeline Newhill
Peter A. Newman
William Robert Nugent
Paula S. Nurius*
John G. Orme
Daphna Oyserman†
Deborah Kay Padgett*
Nan S. Park
Peter John Pecora

Juan B. Pena
Brian Edward Perron
Christopher G. Petr
Enola Proctor*
Karen A. Randolph
Virginia E. Richardson
Jennifer L. Romich*
Roderick A. Rose
Allen Rubin
Cynthia K. Sanders
Roberta G. Sands
Ian F. Shaw
Terry V. Shaw
Corey S. Shdaimah
Tazuko Shibusawa
Aron Shlonsky
Michael S. Spencer
Jennifer E. Swanberg*
Elizabeth M. Tracy
Jessica Strolin-Goltzman
Mark Testa
Elizabeth Caplick Weigensberg
Kathleen Wells
Rebecca Wells
Suzanne L. Wenzel
Michael Wolf-Branigin
Michael E. Woolley
Fred Wulczyn
Joanne Yaffe †
Joan P. Yoo
Sheryl Zimmerman

*Associate Editor † SSWR Committee on Publications

Mark W. Fraser
Editor-in-Chief

Diane Wyant
Managing Editor

June 22, 2010