

BCR Reports

Newsletter of the Bertha Capen Reynolds Society

Volume 2

Number 3

Bertha Capen Reynolds Week - 1989 -- March 4-11

Our second annual Bertha Capen Reynolds week begins on March 4th. We hope to build on last year's success in commemorating the legacy of Bertha Reynolds, energizing local chapters and providing a meaningful context for analyzing the economic, political, and social realities that confront today's social workers.

Activities which you might consider during the week include:

- organizing a chapter in your area;
- presenting a BCRS award to an outstanding local social worker
- sponsoring an education forum on the life and times of Bertha Capen Reynolds and the ideas of progressive social work, organizing events which would call attention to relevant local issues, such as demonstrations or teach-ins
- inviting outside speakers on issues such as the homeless, welfare reform, labor or other issues which are concerns of progressive human service workers in your community.

Organizing campus-based chapters is a particularly important goal for this year. Reaching the new generation is vital to creating a more progressive corps of social workers. We hope that BCRS members who are affiliated with schools of social work will initiate activities for students, faculty, and staff to help us realize this goal.

The Interim BCRS Steering Committee will be happy to assist your area in making this week as productive as possible. We can provide you with speakers, resources, and additional material upon request. Additional materials include a copy of the BCRS Call to Join, book order forms, copies of the newsletter and a collection of quotes from the writings of Bertha Reynolds prepared by Sharon Freedberg, our Education Coordinator. We encourage you to use this material in organizing the events of your local Bertha C. Reynolds week. If the week of March 4-11 is inconvenient because of local scheduling problems, please feel free to select another week in March.

For further information you can call:

Sharon Freedberg - Work (212) 960-8840 Home (718) 499-9458

Kane Loukas - Work (616) 387-1850 Home (616) 342-4592

(Sharon Freedberg and Kane Loukas)

**BCRS 3rd Annual Meeting
Smith College - Northampton, Mass.
July 7-9, 1989**

B.C.R. Society Organizes Support for Reverse Freedom Caravan

The Interim Steering Committee of the Society has voted to organize and fund a committee to mobilize support by social workers for the Reverse Freedom Caravan being organized by the Chaney, Goodman, Schwerner Memorial Coalition. The following resolution was adopted unanimously: "*The Bertha Capen Reynolds Society endorses the Reverse Freedom Caravan from June 21-24 and calls on Society chapters and members, all social workers and human services workers, and our unions and professional organizations, to mobilize support for the Caravan through educational events, fund-raising, direct participation in the car and bus caravan and to build social work contingents for events in Washington D.C. and New York City.*"

The Society voted to establish an ad hoc committee under the by-laws to organize the support; to make a small donation to the Coalition and to support the event in a manner consistent with the coalition's guidelines for participants. Coordinating the work around the event is Mike Dover, and members interested in learning more about the work of the committee and the Coalition can contact him directly: 453 Hamilton Boulevard, Morrisville PA 19067 (H) (215) 295-3972; (W) 215-898-7910.

Social Work and Human Services in Rural Areas July 29 - August 2 -- Bemidji, Minnesota

The 14th annual national institute on rural social work, sponsored by the Rural Social Work Caucus and hosted by the Social Work Program of Bemidji State University has been announced. Theme for the institute will be: **AN INTERNATIONAL CHALLENGE -RURAL SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**. Participants may be involved in four conference sub-themes: Cultural Diversity, The Changing Rural Family, Economic Development and Public Policy and The Business of Human Service Delivery. Further information about the insititute may be obtained from:

Mary Ann Reitmeir
Social Work Program
Bemidji State University
Bemidji, Minnesota 56601

(218)755-2835

It is hoped to organize a social work contingent in the car and bus caravan leaving Mississippi on June 21 and proceeding through Greensboro North Carolina to Washington D.C., arriving in New York City on June 24 for a culminating event at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Other social workers will join the Caravan as it leaves Washington D.C. early June 24 and proceed to N.Y.C..

The Coalition is also organizing individuals wishing to participate in non-partisan voter registration in New York City during the weeks following June 24th, in cooperation with local N.Y.C. groups working to maximize voter participation in the crucial upcoming Mayoral elections in New York City. Support is being sought from social work students between their first and second years or following their graduation who have time to give to the voter registration effort. Social workers in New York City will be sought who can provide lodging for those participating in the voter registration.

Finally, it is hoped to organize educational events in schools of social work in April and May along the route of the caravan and elsewhere. Speakers from the Coalition and from the earlier Michael Schwerner Memorial Fund's efforts will be available. Schwerner was a social worker in New York City and had been a student at Columbia University School of Social Work.

Members in Print

Sharon Freedberg-*"Self-Determination: Historical Perspectives and Effects on Current Practice"*. *Social Work*. January, 1989.

Milton Tambor-*"Collective Bargaining in Social Services"*. *New Management in Human Services*. Forthcoming.

Missing Members

The following members of the Society have moved and despite our best efforts, we cannot locate their current mailing addresses. Please put them in touch with Mike Dover, Membership Secretary, or send us correct addresses.

Ed Tilley
Ann Hull
Peg Brennan
Renee French
Laura Kotler
Eina Berg
Estela Andujo

ECCO Seventh Annual Organizer's Coffeehouse Series

ECCO, the Education Center for Community Organizing, is holding a series of discussions on Neighborhood Revitalization and Reinvestment. Highlights of the three part series include discussion of the Community Reinvestment Act, Anti-redlining strategies, banking, credit, mortgages, cooperatives and more. The second and third sessions will be held on Tuesday, February 28th and Tuesday, March 28th at Hunter College School of Social Work, 129 East 79th Street, New York City. Each session includes experts from the community on financial strategies and economic issues. Admission is \$5.00 per session (\$3.00 for ECCO members). Call Terry Mizrahi, Coordinator, for information or reservations at (212) 452-7112.

Membership Notes by Michael Dover, Membership Secretary

The Society leadership wishes to acknowledge those members who joined during our founding period as Lifetime Members of the Society and will soon publish a complete list of those members. At our September 1988 meeting, the Steering Committee voted to stop accepting further members in this category (as is reflected in the current membership brochure). Of course, current Lifetime Members will continue to be so and we look forward to their continued participation. By an earlier vote of the Steering Committee, their dues have been placed in a special "rainy day" fund within our budget to ensure that if the Society ever falls on hard times there will be funds available to reach out and revive it.

BCRS at CSWE

There will be a meeting of BCRS members at the Council on Social Work Education meeting in Chicago on the evening of March 6. For further information regarding the meeting contact Joan Dworkin at (312) 996-7384.

Newsletter Submissions

Submissions for BCR Reports **MUST** be sent typewritten, double spaced or as an ASCII text file (DOS format) on either 5,25 or 3.5 inch diskette (any density) to :

Debra W. Rosen, Editor
P.O. Box 1406
Old Chelsea Station
New York, NY 10011

Diskette submissions are greatly appreciated.

Family Policy and the Lives of Women

Heidi Hartmann, Ph.D., Director of the Institute for Women's Policy Research will speak on the impact of family policy on women's lives, at Hunter College, New York City, on Thursday, April 6 from 4 - 6 PM. The Family Policy Seminar Series is sponsored by The Center for the Study of Family Policy, co-directed by Mimi Abramovitz and Ruth Sidel. The meeting will be held in Room 217 West (68th Street and Lexington Avenue). Admission is free and open discussion will follow the presentation. Hunter College is accessible to the handicapped and interpretation for the hearing impaired is offered. Call (212) 772-4450 for further information.

Social Work Political Prisoners

The Committee for Chilean Inquiry, 415 Grand Street, #E 1905, New York, NY 10002 continues in its efforts to make us aware of the repression, torture and murder of social workers and other human rights activists worldwide. Full details on the following and other cases are available from the Committee.

Philippines

Evelyn Serrano, former Executive Director of the Philippine Association of Social Workers, member of the Human Rights Commission of the International Federation of Social Workers and head of the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines has sent the Committee a harrowing report of illegal arrest and torture of social workers, human rights attorneys and others by the Aquino regime under fabricated charges that they are members of the NPA (New People's Army). Gary Lim and Susan Aniban have been subjected to sexual torture since their arrest while visiting political detainees in Baguio City on November 28. Human rights workers Pearl Abaya and Lan Mercado have disappeared under mysterious circumstances. Community Health center head Susan Cueva-Howard, a nursing mother was held for months without trial. Recent events are characterized by Serrano as unprecedented, "even during the times of Marcos".

(continued)

Prisoners (cont.)

South Africa

Janet Small, a White South African Social Worker, after being held for three months without trial or charges has now been deprived of her job and confined to her parents' home. Amnesty International reports that she has been prohibited from returning to work at Black Sash, a human rights organization; is confined to her home after 6 PM; may not address any audience of five or more people and is forbidden any contact with the press. You are urged to write to President P.W. Botha of South Africa to protest her treatment.

Chile

Fermin Montes Garcia, a Chilean social work student has been imprisoned for eight years. His life sentence for human rights activities has now been reduced to 24 years. Garcia and 14 others hope for exile and political asylum in other countries. Members have been asked to write to him at the Carcel, Santiago, Chile expressing concern for his condition and continued detention.

Singapore

Kevin de Souza and other workers have been imprisoned by the government for social service and community organizing work.

BCRS is one of the sponsoring groups of the Committee for Chilean Inquiry.

Peace and Nuclear Disarmament

At the January National Steering Committee meeting it was decided that BCRS would work with Social Workers for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament on a number of upcoming projects. We invite your suggestions for other similar organizational connections.

Chapter Notes

New York City

New York City Chapter members marched in the Martin Luther King Rally to commemorate the late civil rights leader's birthday. The BCRS banner attracted a number of other marchers and on-lookers who expressed their support for and interest in BCRS. On March 9, there will be an open meeting at Hunter College School of Social Work (6:30 PM) on the subject of "Progressive Social Work Practice".

Philadelphia

The Philadelphia Chapter has sponsored a series of education roundtables. For information, contact Vicki Ellis at (215) 985-4436.

Kalamazoo

Don Cooney will return from sabbatical in Nicaragua in March.

MEMBERS WISHING TO ORGANIZE CHAPTERS--

A number of BCR members have expressed interest in forming local chapters. Aside from the obvious benefits of a local chapter, funds and materials are available from the National Organization to help you in organizing your area and you will have a direct representative on the National Steering Committee. The members listed below have expressed interest in this. If you are in any of these areas please contact us at the national address and we will put you in direct contact with them.

Chapel Hill, NC --- Charles Finch

Portland, OR --- Richard Vosler-Hunter

Thunder Bay, ON -- Sharon McKay

Wanamassa, NJ --- Marc Levin

Members in Print

Owen Williamson writes a biweekly humorous op-ed column for *People's Daily World*, 239 W. 23rd Street, NY, NY 10011.

Betty R. Mandell, edits *Survival News*, 102 Anawan Ave., W. Roxbury, MA 02132.

Write for samples and subscription information.

**PLEASE
RENEW
YOUR
MEMBER-
SHIP**

BCRS BOOK ORDER FORM

NAME _____ BCRS Member? _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE/PROV _____ ZIP _____

TITLE	QUANTITY	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
Learning and Teaching in the Practice of Social Work Reynolds stresses the need for the professional social worker to be educated as a whole person. She describes the stages of conscious intelligence in the process of learning and relates them to the motivation for learning. Softbound.		\$11.00	
Social Work & Social Living The practice and philosophy of social work are critically examined. Reynolds argues, based upon her experiences with labor unions, that the orientation of social agencies toward psychological dynamics makes it difficult for clients to seek help. Softbound.		\$ 7.00	
Between Client & Community Caseworkers are often caught between the conflicting needs of their clients and the community, especially in times of rapid change. Reynolds examines how these conflicting demands can be resolved. Softbound.		\$ 7.00	
Uncharted Journey Reynolds' inspirational autobiography dedicated to "young social workers who are facing realities and shaping our profession with courage and creativity". Covers the development of her practice philosophy and the course of her career from 1914-1964. Softbound.		\$10.00	
The Years Have Spoken A collection of annual greeting sent by Reynolds to her friends from 1935-1973. The collection includes her annual original verse and a narrative describing the condition of the world that year and how she had been affected by these events. Makes an excellent holiday or graduation gift. Softbound		\$ 6.50	

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Please make your check payable and mail your order to:

BCRS BOOK FUND
P. O. Box 20563
Columbus Circle Station
New York, NY 10023

Practicing Progressive Social Work

by Arline Prigoff

Bertha Capen Reynolds was a woman and a social worker who understood socioeconomic stratification in the U.S. and had a vision of a socially responsible social system, a socialist vision. She was committed to social justice and human dignity, and she participated in social struggles around issues of racial justice, economic security and peace, with the goal of a caring and socially responsible society in mind. All of us who are active in the organization named for her share her vision and goals. Bertha Reynolds also understood that mass culture in the U.S. has been conditioned by well-financed campaigns of disinformation to reject goals of collectivity, socialism, communism, and even liberal social planning as "un-American". In her teaching and communication she used terminology that was less loaded emotionally, and dealt more directly with social oppression as experienced concretely by people suffering in a nation which is highly stratified in wealth and affords access to resources according to class, race, ethnicity and sex. At the same time she set forth a vision of a more egalitarian society.

It seems to me that Bertha Reynolds was accurate in her assessment, both in regard to the problems of the nation and in her plan of action. As a Marxist, I consider that the politically conscious intellectual community in each nation and each area is responsible to analyze its own economic, political and institutional structures, as well as nation or regional languages and culture, and to function as an ally within community movements in order to achieve social changes that culminate in revolutionary social transformation. We need to do all of that with revolutionary optimism, because the revolution comes sooner with singing and dancing!

What are the implication of this formulation for our work in the Bertha Capen Reynolds Society? In the era of Reagan and Bush, I believe that we need to stay connected to and participate in, when possible, broad social issues and community based movements, to combat campaigns of disinformation about Marxism and left ideology, and to clarify the benefits of collective social planning. There are new opportunities to provide leadership on many levels and in all kinds of settings. The need for change becomes more difficult to deny; it is now almost universally recognized that the planet will not continue to be a life-sustaining environment without broad social planning on an

international level.

My own area of special interest and focus, in international planning, is Latin American solidarity work, including links with social workers in Central America and Latin America in general. It is exciting to find that social workers throughout Latin America have formed activist networks (CELATS-Centro Latinoamericano de Trabajo Social and ALAETS- Asociacion Latinoamericana de Escuelas de Trabajo Social) which would welcome liaison with North American social workers. In the regional conferences of CELATS and ALAETS issues of the relationship between sociopolitical structures and their social consequences, in terms of human rights, economic justice and unmet human needs, are addressed by Keynote speakers and provide conference themes. The schools of social work train community organizers and providers of services to needy communities, many of whom become allied with mass social struggles and

issues, sometimes at risk to their own lives under repressive regimes. We have a lot to learn from their practice, their gains and defeats under externally repressive conditions, and their achievements as leaders of community resistance to injustice and militarism, helping to alter political domination by the military in Latin America.

"We have a lot to learn from their practice, their gains and defeats under externally repressive conditions and their achievements as leaders of community resistance to injustice and militarism"

In the U.S., the social consequences of the militarization of society and political control by the right-wing military industrial complex are very complex, indeed. In addition to homelessness, unemployment, deterioration of urban life, expanding prisons and high level stress, the social consequences include many self-defeating behaviors, such as drug use, child abuse and many forms of addictions. Social workers are employed to clean up the wreckage of profit-oriented military-industrial disasters. As social workers, we are in a unique position to connect those consequences with the underlying sources of social irresponsibility in the social structure, and to call for socially planned political remedies. We need to be working with community coalitions and with progressive legislators. Progressive politics, throughout Latin America as well as in the U.S., are seen as a very serious threat by the forces of reaction, because they challenge reaction's political control of the national state and its fiscal resources.

At this stage in the economic history of world capitalism, progressive political coalitions can be revolutionary in their impact, because they may have the capacity to take some political control of the state apparatus away from reaction, which is counting on total control of national state fiscal

RESPONSE TO THE CALL TO JOIN THE BERTHA CAPEN REYNOLDS SOCIETY

- Please send me more information about the Society.
- I would like to join the Bertha Capen Reynolds Society. Enclosed are my dues in the amount checked below.
- Enclosed are my renewal dues for continued membership, in the amount checked below.
- \$10 Student, unemployed, low income member \$100 sustaining member
- \$25 Member \$250 Institutional member

NAME (Please print or type) _____

ADDRESS _____

INSTITUTIONAL/ORGANIZATIONAL AFFILIATION (optional) _____

TELEPHONE (Home) _____ (Work) _____

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