

# BCR REPORTS

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Social Welfare Action Alliance

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## A COLLECTIVE OUTRAGE IS A TERRIBLE THING TO WASTE

**H**ow to respond in the era of W, in a time when the essential illegitimacy of American politics has been exposed. That question is one that we need to address and address quickly and smartly. On the one hand, there is a huge grassroots sentiment that the election was stolen, that the political process is corrupt, that institutions are suspect. On the other, the lack of outrage at what is being done by this bogus President is frightening.

When I ponder the strategic question before us, I think of the counter-inaugural rally at which I spoke in Albany. It was called by NOW and included speakers from a range of communities and issue organizations – people of color, labor, gay and lesbian organizations, environmentalists, peace activists, all the usual suspects. Among the things I said at the time included:

“The flyer for today’s rally said ‘Bush doesn’t have a mandate, resist.’ And, even if he did have a mandate, we’d still have to resist those proposals that would deny basic human rights, economic justice, and the basics of life to people.”

Acknowledging the range of issues represented at the rally, I went on to say: “We need to acknowledge the interconnections between the issues. For instance, the globalization of the world economy is an attack on labor,

the environment, poor people, and women around the world. That is why the Seattle and DC protests were so encouraging – union members, environmentalists and leaders and activists in the poor peoples movement marched arm in arm to stop the capitalist machine. Against such a powerful force, if we don’t support each other’s struggles and make them our own – because they are – we will be isolated and marginalized. And, we can’t afford that.

We also should resist the self-serving calls for bi-partisanship. What’s wrong with being a partisan? Remember, welfare reform was a bi-partisan effort. NAFTA was bi-partisan. The Defense of Marriage Act was bi-partisan. In this country, bi-partisan means whatever the owning classes want. I worry when the two parties agree. Everyone should. So, let us stand fast around partisan issues and resist the demands of politicians and pundits that we lower the volume and let the corporate juggernaut continue to roll.

Finally, it also would be good to identify some global principles we can rally around. Poor people’s organizations around the world are organizing around the U. N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its call for: the right to a decent job at a living wage, the right to a suitable home, the right to food, the guarantee of quality educa-

tion and quality healthcare, and a future for us and our families. That’s a pretty good platform. I can easily see it embracing all of our causes while highlighting the international nature of the struggle and framing our concerns in terms of our basic rights as people.”

Sadly, the energy represented by the Albany rally and similar rallies around the country has not been translated into a coordinated resistance to W’s initiatives. His attack on international family planning, on environmental regulations, on worker protections against injuries in the workplace, coupled with his continued push for tax cuts for the rich, has met with virtually no opposition. Have we all forgotten that Bush lost the election? We need outrage. And, we need unity.

My greatest fear for the coming political period is that the resistance will be narrowly focused on the single issues that have been the agenda of many progressive groups. If we cannot find our common cause with each other and join each other’s actions and campaigns, we will be outnumbered, outspent, and out-organized on every issue. That would be tragic, coming at a time when much of the public recognizes how stacked the political game is. ■

Fred Newdom

# Looking for Trouble? SWAA Confronts the Advertising Age

**S**hould *BCR Reports* accept advertising? Recently bruted on the SWAA listserv, this issue can stir strong feelings among SWAA progressives. Some regard the prospect of Reports advertising as capitulation to crass commercialism; others think that there are multiple benefits to be derived from a more “pragmatic” approach.

Here is a rough summary of the opposing positions:

## Against Advertising

*BCR Reports* is a modest publication serving a community fervently opposed to the ad-saturated corporate media. It would therefore be inconsistent, if not hypocritical, for SWAA to countenance advertising in its own publication. The only principled position is instead to support the ad-less status quo: *BCR Reports* is a perfectly adequate medium for SWAA purposes; opening its pages to profit-seeking vendors would only be distractive to readers and disruptive of organizational purposes.

One can press the argument further by citing the well known Gresham-like dynamic, whereby “bad” advertising subverts “good” media. As the history of public television notoriously demonstrates, increased dependence on advertiser dollars closely correlates with a decline in substantive quality. To progressives, the causal relationship is obvious: programmatic quality has sunk because corporate media buyers demand ever-higher ratings, thereby assuring the eroding educational value of PBS shows. Antique bazaars inexorably trump and bump American Playhouse, until, tragically, only the Beverly Sills and Louis Rukeyers remain.

A similar downward spiral is certain if *BCR Reports* takes ads. Initial changes might be almost imperceptible, but eventually even inattentive readers would notice the increased attention to the trivial and transitory. Once it began, editorial decline would probably prove irreversible.

*BCR Reports* may be “modest,” but it is still too precious to risk in an ignominious search for monetary gain. Advertising may have a prominent, even dominant, place in American society, but it shouldn’t be allowed to dominate one of the relatively few publications still dedicated to conveying the harsh realities behind the mannequin’s smile and the copywriter’s glib phrases.

## The Pro-Ad Retort

While subversion-by-advertising is certainly evident elsewhere, it has little relevance to a newsletter with *BCR Report’s* demographic profile. Publishers are the traditional space-buyers in such small publications, and themselves are usually small and similarly progressive “niche” firms unlikely to indulge in the power games conjured up by status quo (sic) progressives.

In any case, the opponents of advertising overlook the potential synergy between Reports readers and leftist publishers: the former are eager

to learn of newly published titles; the latter, at least equally committed to knowing and satisfying the reading tastes of their core clientele. Neither can rely solely on book reviews to satisfy their priorities. From this perspective, then, advertising can be construed as the near-ideal mechanism for bringing these parties together. Niche advertising should, in any case, never be confused with the mass advertising polluting the mainstream media. Reports readers, like those of other Left publications, are simply too discerning to be bamboozled by sensationalist ad copy. Instead, to succeed in this particular marketplace, progressive firms must publish a quality list marketed in an appropriately dignified way.

Finally, and most conclusively, those doubting the “pro” position should survey the five Big “anti-Bush” League publications: *Dissent*, *The American Prospect*, *The Progressive*, *The Nation*, and *In These Times*. All have long carried (mainly book) ads; none has lost its radical bite as a result. Even the staunchest SWAA “anti” can draw only one rational conclusion: opening *BCR Reports* to advertising is not a threat to be feared but an opportunity to be seized. To conclude otherwise is to evidence the very insularity and negativism that have long helped to blunt the Left’s political impact. In this reactionary age SWAA progressives thus have no choice but to eschew the status quo. ■

— by David Katz (*Katz is an Associate Professor of Social Work at Michigan State University*)

## Wanted: Course Syllabi

Please forward by e-mail or postal mail any “Radical” course syllabus you would like to contribute toward the creation of a syllabus bank for the “University of the Poor.” For more detailed information, contact [David.Ellenbrook@castleton.edu](mailto:David.Ellenbrook@castleton.edu) (Castleton State College). ■

# GROWL ROARS IN D.C.

**A**t the opening session of the New World of Welfare Conference held in Washington, D.C. Feb. 1-2, 2001 grassroots welfare rights leaders staged a silent protest of Charles Murray's speech. They held signs contrasting his lies with the peoples' truths. Lie: welfare mothers are ignorant. Truth: we are smart enough to organize.

And organize GROWL (Grass Roots Organizing for Welfare Leadership) did, with a week of lively activity in New York and D.C. GROWL, a nationwide network of welfare rights and related grassroots organizing groups convened by CTWO (Center for Third World Organizing), began the week with delegations that visited foundation funders in NYC and continued in D.C. with visits to the Center on Law and Social Policy, Center on Budget & Public Policy, Food Research and Action Center and other policy groups: AFL-CIO; AFCSME, SEIU; the National Council of Churches; Hispanic Caucus; Progressive Caucus; and others.

More than 100 grassroots welfare rights leaders and organizers from 32 different organizations and 25 states were involved in these activities. Planning meetings were simultaneously translated in English, Spanish, and Haitian Creole! There was a public action and press conference at the office of incoming Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Tommy Thompson's office to demand hearings across the country to hear directly from recipients about the impact of welfare reform.

The New World of Welfare conference was a stacked deck. Organized by the University of Michigan School of Public Policy and the C.S. Mott and Annie E. Casey

Foundations, the right's point of view was highly visible. No welfare recipients were permitted to speak until the final session when CWTO gave its spot on the closing panel to three GROWL leaders. Eight hundred conference participants offered little challenge to the right's continuing assault on welfare recipients and rarely was a progressive point of view heard. GROWL did distribute hundreds of packets prepared by the Applied Research Center (ARC) including their study "Cruel and Usual Punishment" documenting race and gender discrimination and other illegal practices in TANF programs around the country.

GROWL challenged New York City Commissioner Jason Turner and succeeded in getting Tommy Thompson to cancel a planned speech at the conference.

GROWL's actions provide a rallying point for the struggle on welfare and related food stamp, childcare, and work support policies coming up with TANF reauthorization in 2002. GROWL will build on these activities with a Day of Action around Mothers Day, policy hearings in Washington, D.C. sponsored by religious and labor allies, and continued support of local welfare rights organizing.

I know SWAA members have been

involved in support of welfare rights groups and have worked to air progressive public policy dissent and vision during this welfare deform era. Now it is time to ramp up these efforts and join the GROWL/CTWO/ARC work to build grassroots welfare rights power, reframe the welfare debate, and provide alternative policy visions and popular education. Here's how to hook up:

GROWL: [www.ctwo.org/growl](http://www.ctwo.org/growl)

CTWO: [www.ctwo.org](http://www.ctwo.org)

ARC: [www.arc.org](http://www.arc.org)

GROWL c/o CTWO

1218 East 21st Street

Oakland, CA 94606 (510)533-7583

e-mail: Dana Ginn Paredes

([dparedes@ctwo.org](mailto:dparedes@ctwo.org))

Send a contribution – checks to CTWO marked for GROWL and get a packet describing the week of action highlighted above! ■

– by *Tim Sampson*. (*Sampson retired last year after 30 years teaching at San Francisco State University School of Social Work. A veteran of the 60's welfare rights movement, he is an emeritus member of the CTWO Board and a long time BCRS/SWAA member. You can contact him at [tsampson@sfsu.edu](mailto:tsampson@sfsu.edu) He is interested in hearing about SWAA contacts with welfare rights groups and progressive welfare policy work!*)

Tim Sampson

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Fax: please call first!

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Please forward all contributions for the next *BCR Reports* to:

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(E-mail submissions are preferable)

FAX: 716-395-2366

Letters to the editor, essays, news items, BCRS Chapter activities, cartoons, etc., are all welcome!

**Please note:** The deadline for materials submitted for inclusion in the next *BCR Reports* is **Sept. 15, 2001.**

# PROGRESSIVE ACTION AND THE INTERNET – PART I

Articles such as this are becoming commonplace with both professional and popular literature. Many of you reading this have expertise using the Internet for your progressive information gathering and activism already. My purpose here is to remind those of you who already use the Internet and those of you who are new (or might be) to its possibilities to meet the progressive goals we share as members of SWAA.

In this first of two articles, the focus will be on email and internet mailing lists while the second will involve using the World Wide Web for searching and sharing information and connecting with other progressives in cyberspace. Recognizing not all reader-members share an interest in computers and others are concerned, properly so, about the various race, gender, class, ability and age digital divides, this article seeks to provide some information about identifying and using the tools that computer technology might offer and does not represent any prevailing view from the membership or steering committee.

## EMAIL

E-mail, or electronic mail, is commonplace but has not replaced surface or ground mail in most cases (as evidenced by the newsletter you are holding now). Email, also written “e-mail,” is a totally electronic form of personal communication. Just like regular mail, email is sent to a person at an address. For example, when you want to send email to someone, you would send the email to an address that looks like *sername@location.ext*. A username is a pseudonym that identifies a person’s account on an Internet service. The *@location.ext* is the address of the Internet service itself. For example, the President of the United States can be reached at *president@whitehouse.gov*. *President* is the username and *@whitehouse.gov* is the address of the White House on the Internet. When read aloud, an email address becomes “username at location dot extension.” Email uses an Internet connection for two or more

parties to share information, preferably brief messages.

First, you need an email account. You can use a service provided by your library, your school, your employer, purchase a paid subscription service (e.g., AOL) or a free email provider at one of literally 100s of sites on the web (see <http://www.fepg.net/providers.html> or <http://www.emailaddresses.com/>). Once you have an e-mail address, you might want to find someone else’s address. Many sites claim to have the most e-mail addresses such as <http://www.worldemail.com/>. Some say there is an email culture and involves adjusting one’s tone to accommodate the absence of verbal intonations found on the phone or verbal and nonverbal aspects of face-to-face (F2F) communication. Two helpful sites about writing effective emails are <http://www.webfoot.com/advice/email.top.html> and <http://www.iwillfollow.com/email.htm>.

Collecting e-mail addresses at local meetings and national conferences is almost a contact sport in some settings but using the addresses collected is key – just as address and phone numbers have been in organizing traditionally. When making these contacts with other organizations, potential members, colleagues and students, you may find that you need to quickly disseminate flyers or other information clearly and rapidly. In addition to your message you may find you need to send an attachment of a document or two. This site <http://bert.nmit.vic.edu.au/Koori/email.htm> includes information on how to attach documents to your email. Of course, the program you use will determine the process and quantity of information you can send per email message.

## INTERNET MAILING LISTS

When email is used to organize groups of people and organizations, lists of addresses can be collected by an individual to create individual email mailing lists. Usually a list is made up of subscribers who share an issue or mission in common and use

“broadcast” lists to stay in touch. Some lists are one-way communication with information sent only to subscribers while others make it possible for parties to communicate directly to the list and/or other individuals on the list. Some lists are heavily moderated while others have little involvement of such a moderator.

To access list management programs, many free (usually with advertising) and paid mailing and discussion list services are available on the web. Several well-known Internet mailing list management programs are Listserv ([Listserv.com](http://www.listserv.com)) and Majordomo (<http://www.greatcircle.com/majordomo/>) but, there are many others to choose from (see <http://www.catalog.com/vivian/ mailing-list-providers.html>). Many universities and employers use these programs and provide free access following their policies. Other programs include [topica.com](http://www.topica.com) and [yahogroups.com](http://www.yahogroups.com). Many of you will recognize the latter as the new address for the *bertha-swaa* discussion list. [Yahogroups.com](http://www.yahogroups.com) purchased [eGroups.com](http://www.eGroups.com) and provides our discussion list as well as several other services via the web access at [yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com). Our list is moderated only for subscriptions but members can add websites, dates to the calendar and create polls, for example. These added features are not necessary to participate in or create your own lists but they may be tools for additional communication.

Email lists vary with number of subscribers, number of active participants and “lurkers”, and the number of messages sent per day. Some services such as [yahogroups.com](http://www.yahogroups.com) provide a summary of the number of messages sent per month. Some services make it possible for you to receive emails one time per week or month (called digest mode) and have other commands so you can manage email subscriptions to your preferences. Some subscriptions can be accessed directly from a web page while others require you send a message to a computer address or to a personal moderator.

For those of you who want more

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email in your box on topics of interest to you, there are many sites that provide lists of Internet discussion groups/lists on the web. This site <http://ccis09.baylor.edu/Library/BeyondLib/lists.html> includes general info about lists as well as sites that include access to lists of discussion groups. One example, <http://tile.net/lists/> includes an alphabetical list as well as a search capacity for your interests.

### CAUTIONS

Despite the appearance of *email privacy*, it is indeed considered by many businesses including state and federal government agencies, to be the "property" of the employer. Thus, email should be sent and received with caution where private matters are concerned. Your email may be stored on an employer's server and could be downloaded and checked for certain phrases or words or selected by your email address for review. You should check your employer's email privacy and use policies for specific detail. Similarly, caution is urged for *replying* to messages especially when the recipient is meant to be an individual but the message is sent to an entire list. *Copyrighted material* should be sent via email with caution and permission should be sought for using particular materials from the Internet – even if used on the Internet. This is especially true if you are forwarding a message authored by another on to members of your list. If you copy a message, even in part, you should *credit the source* in your email.

A final caution about *spamming*: using a list to advertise or allow access to advertising which abuses the use of names and breaches participants' trust. You will learn about the policies of most lists when you first subscribe and receive the welcome message. It is recommended that you keep these email lists for information about the protocols of the list and how to unsubscribe, should you desire to do so at a later date.

### ACTIONS

First, get your email address and check your service provider's privacy and use policies. Second, subscribe to [bertha-swaa@yahoogroups.com](mailto:bertha-swaa@yahoogroups.com) and

check out the other services at our yahoo site as well. Third, participate in our list by sending events, questions, create a poll or add a useful website to our yahoo page. Fourth, join another list and then share the information about each organization

with the other to foster growth and communication. Fifth, follow-up with next newsletter and sixth, come to the meeting in Philadelphia and see how Internet organizing works! See you in June! ■

– Michel Coconis

## SWAA on the Web

Ever wonder what you would find if you searched for Social Welfare Action Alliance or Bertha Capen Reynolds Society on the web? I did, and here's what I found. For SWAA I found 47 hits for SWAA activity.

In Oregon, the Web says that the Social Welfare Action Alliance – Oregon Chapter – (Manzanita, Oregon) was an endorser of D2KLA, the Mobilization for Domestic and Global Justice held at the Democratic National Conference last summer. SWAA pops up on the Radical Social Work Resource List in the Twin Cities (<http://www.geocities.com/rswsg/resource.html>).

According to the Web, Mary Bricker Jenkins of SWAA will present at a Spring 2001 forum on Welfare Reform sponsored by NASW. The next hit is for the Washington D.C. Chapter of the Committees of Correspondence for Democracy and Socialism, where Walter Teague of SWAA. ([wteague@erols.com](mailto:wteague@erols.com)) has posted photos of the Lansing conference of SWAA. Just visit <http://dccofo.org> and click on the SWAA in Lansing – Photos link. Also note that the website has a list of social services in the Metro DC area, a great integration of services and activism in the Bertha Reynolds tradition.

SWAA is listed as a sponsor of the First Monday campaign about gun violence: <http://www.firstmonday2000.com/social.html>. SWAA is listed as an official student organization at Ohio State University. At what in the Buckeye state they call "that school up North", a Michigan Daily article listed SWAA as supporting a rally in defense of affirmative action. The article says: "It's great to see people come out for something they support and believe in," said Mike Trepper, a Social Work second-year student and member of Social Welfare Action Alliance, a group that supports affirmative action. "I wouldn't want anything but a diverse environment," said Brett Seabury, a Social Work professor and SWAA member. Seabury noted many recent studies that cite the positive impact of diversity on campuses across the country.

The Washington State NASW chapter newsletter has an article about SWAA entitled "Social Work is Social Change", written by Marilyn Moch, long-time membership committee and steering committee member. There were many other hits that had links to SWAA from other organizational websites.

Entering Bertha Capen Reynolds Society, one can find the following site that includes a tribute to Bertha by Billie Langston delivered at the NASW Leadership Academy: <http://www.naswdc.org/NASW/piopeop/reynolds.htm>. There are also a few dozen hits about BCRS activity prior to the name change. One of the interesting things about the Web is that as more and more social workers have personal websites, those that list SWAA or BCRS on their resumes produce hits! To see Michel Coconis' web page, travel to <http://www3.gvsu.edu/wcb/schools/GV/sw/coconism/coconism.html>!

A good way to check out SWAA on the web is to use a free piece of software that searches across multiple search engines (Lycos, Alta Vista, Direct hit, Google, Yahoo and several others) for exact phrases and using Boolean logic. It can be found at Copernic.com and is called Copernic2000. It's the best web tool for searching I've found. Try entering Social Welfare Action Alliance or Bertha Capen Reynolds Society. It produces many other links to social welfare activism. It is a freestanding program and doesn't interfere with existing browsers, although you still use them to visit the hits it comes up with. ■

– Michael Dover



# RACE, CLASS AND WELFARE REFORM

**T**he legislation and funding for the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRA) expires in Fall 2002. As the reauthorization debate heats up, we need to ask how clients have fared under what is popularly known as “welfare reform.”

Politicians continue to declare “the end of welfare as we know it,” a victory. Between 1996 and 2000 the welfare rolls plummeted by 50% nationwide, 47% in New York City, and 39% in New York State ([www.acf.dhhs.gov](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov)). The thriving economy (until recently) contributed its share of jobs by helping women leave welfare for work. But punitive policies such as sanctions for missing an appointment or violating a welfare mandate and upfront diversion at the front door of the welfare center also drove many women off welfare.

## Can't Make Ends Meet

Few of the women who left welfare celebrate “welfare’s end.” In contrast, time and again they report that having more trouble making ends meet than before, with as many returning to the rolls. Regardless of why they left welfare, many former recipients now live far below the poverty line due to low-paid, part-time, unstable jobs; the lack of fringe benefits; shortages of quality and affordable child care services; and discrimination by gender and race. The sanctioned group which includes many people with disabilities, fared worst of all. The loss of Food Stamps and Medicaid adds to their economic hardship. Some women became ineligible for these important benefits. But others were never told by the welfare department that they still qualified.

## Racializing Welfare

A second disturbing outcome of welfare reform concerns race. It is not unreasonable to assume that public programs such as welfare would provide equal treatment to all.

However, researchers have found racial discrimination by welfare caseworkers, employers, and policy makers.

Susan Gooden (1998) found that caseworkers – who have considerably more discretion since welfare became a state run block grant – serve black and white women in Virginia differently. Despite similar backgrounds and needs, black women on welfare received far less support with job-search, education, and transportation. More than white women, they feel unfairly treated by the welfare department. In a 13 state study, Rebecca Gordon (1999) found that welfare officials sent significantly more people of color than white persons to workfare than to a regular job and frequently humiliated them. A caseworker told one African American woman to change her baby’s name because “he doesn’t need a name that long.” Another caseworker denied benefits to a woman with a biracial child telling her, “I don’t approve of mixed relationships.”

Other studies document similar discriminatory treatment of Latino families and immigrants. For one, welfare reform excluded many immigrants from the program. Those who qualify in New York City and elsewhere suffer sanctions, English-only forms, a lack of translators, and general disrespect. Unlike whites, caseworkers regularly asked them to submit proof of marriage and citizenship prior to setting appointments, and have threatened immigrants with deportation (Bauen, 1999).

Gooden (1999, 2000) also found that employers in Virginia did not treat black and white job applicants with similar work and educational histories the same. Black women reported shorter interviews; more pre-employment drug tests, criminal background and other checks; greater differences

between the job offered and tasks actually performed; more evening work hours, and a negative relationship with their supervisors most of whom were white. Unlike for whites, higher educational attainment did not yield higher wages for blacks because they lacked access to better jobs.

This differential treatment of women by race easily translates into uneven rates of job attainment and job retention. In fact, the racial composition of the welfare program shifted dramatically since welfare reform both nationally and in New York State. In the U.S., between 1995 and 1999 the proportion of white families on welfare fell from 35.9 to 30.5%. In contrast, the black and Latino proportions rose from 36.9 to 38.3% and from 20.1 to 24.4 % respectively. For the same period, white families in New York State dropped from 19.9 to 17.1%. Meanwhile, the black and Latino proportion jumped from 34.6 to 42.1% and from 37.2 to 38.2% respectively ([www.acf.dhhs.gov](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov))

A Brookings Institute study points to such uneven racial outcomes. It found that the nation’s largest cities now house a mounting share of the nation’s welfare recipients. Additionally, counties with largest cities had a slower reduction in the welfare rolls than other counties in the same state. The report did not focus on race, but it is widely known that poor persons of color are concentrated in the nation’s largest cities.

A connection also exists between the racial composition of a state’s welfare caseload and its adoption of welfare reform’s harshest policies. Soss et al (1999) found that states with higher proportions of African American and Latino recipients were more likely to implement harsh sanctions, the child exclusion (which denies aid to children born on welfare) and a shorter time limit than the five year maximum permitted by the PRA.

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<p><b>Keeping Women and Children Last</b>, Ruth Sidel Softbound. List/ Member \$11.95/\$9.50 Sidel explores the condition of America's poor women today, with particular focus on the federal government's attempts to dismantle the welfare system, delivering a chilling indictment of the current trends and political maneuvering that threaten to keep America's poor women and children last.</p>			
<p><b>Illusions of Prosperity. America's Working Families in an Age of Economic Insecurity</b>, Joel Blau 1999. Hard cover. List/ Member \$30.00/\$21.00 Blau looks at recent reforms in NAFTA, education, job training, welfare, and much more, showing that the new social policies have made matters worse, because reforms that rely on the market can't compensate for the market's deficiencies.</p>			
<p><b>Social Security Primer: An Advocacy Tool</b>, Mimi Abramovitz, Jerry Sachs and Ken Grossinger 1999. Softbound. List/ Member \$9.00/\$9.00 The Primer describes the Social Security program, the drive toward privatization, the impact of "reform" on different groups, mainstream proposals and similar reform efforts in other countries.</p>			
<p><b>Social Welfare: A World View</b>, Katherine van Wormer 1997. Softbound. List/ Member \$44.00/\$39.00 Dedicated to the world's marginalized people, this exhaustively documented text studies that United States' social welfare system in comparison to international approaches with extensive coverage of the systems in Canada, the United Kingdom, Japan, Mexico, and Norway.</p>			
<p><b>Social Work with Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals</b>, Katherine van Wormer, Joel Wells and Mary Boes 1999. Softbound. List/ Member \$31.00/\$26.67 van Wormer et al take the reader beyond tolerance to acceptance and finally, celebration. It is a journey that draws on both art (including film and literature), and recent scientific research.</p>			
<p><b>Clinical Work and Social Action: An Integrative Approach</b>, Jerome Sachs and Fred Newdom 1999. Softbound. List/ Member \$24.95/\$21.00 Sachs and Newdom illustrate a new way both to improve clients' lives and rectify social, political, and economic ills. A much-needed uniting of social work values, theories, and practice for action.</p>			
<p><b>Confronting Injustice and Oppression: Concepts and Strategies for Social Workers</b>, David Gil 1998. Softbound. List/Member \$21.00/\$19.00 Gil identifies violence, unemployment, racism, and poverty as the chief injustices in society, and outlines the steps that must be taken in order to confront and abolish these through education and activism.</p>			
<p><b>What's Love Got to do with it? A Critical Look at American Charity</b>, David Wagner. 2000. Hard cover. List/Member \$20.00/\$18.00 Wagner cuts through the self-congratulation that accompanies charity giving in the United States, and asks the important question: why, with all this philanthropy, does the country have so much poverty, homelessness, infant mortality, imprisonment? He points rightly, to the need for a change in the way our economic system distributes benefits.</p>			
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TITLES BY BERTHA CAPEN REYNOLDS:	Quantity	Price	Total
<b>Learning and Teaching in the Practice of Social Work</b> Softbound. List Price \$21.95/Member Price \$20.00 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.			
<b>Social Work &amp; Social Living</b> Softbound List Price \$8.95/Member Price \$8.00 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.			
<b>Between Client &amp; Community</b> Softbound List Price \$8.95/Member Price \$8.00 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.			
<b>Uncharted Journey</b> Softbound List Price \$21.95/Member Price \$20.00 Reynolds' inspirational autobiography dedicated "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.			
<b>The Years Have Spoken</b> Softbound List Price \$12.95/Member Price \$10.00 A collection of annual greetings sent by Reynolds to her friends from 1935-1973. The collection includes her annual original verse and 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.			
<b>TITLES BY SWAA MEMBERS:</b>			
<b>Regulating the Lives of Women, Social Welfare Policy from Colonial Times to the Present, 1996 edition, Mimi Abramovitz.</b> Softbound. List/ Member \$22.00/\$20.00 (1991 Edition \$16.00/\$8.00) This dynamic history demonstrates that the "feminization of poverty" and the welfare state's current assault on women are not recent developments but have long been a defining feature of women's conditions.			
<b>Social Welfare and the Feminization of Poverty, Shirley Lord.</b> Hardcover. List/ Member \$36.00/\$33.00 This is a comprehensive look at the political and economic causes of homelessness including an analysis of the nature of the government policies and some proposals for a more effective response.			
<b>Under Attack, Fighting Back: Women and Welfare in the United States, Mimi Abramovitz .</b> Softbound. List/ Member \$12.00/\$10.00 This book describes the ongoing debates over federal and state welfare proposals, debunks the myths and stereotypes used to support coldhearted reforms, reviews feminist theories of the welfare state, and details the activism of working and middle class women who have always fought back.			



The data also shows that while many white women leave welfare because they get jobs and earn too much to qualify for benefits, more women of color have their cases closed for non-compliance or other administrative reasons.

The racialization of welfare is hardly new. Fifty years of invidious racial stereotypes have shaped the popular images of poverty and welfare (Gilens, 1996). The 1935 Social Security Act excluded farm laborers and domestic workers with impunity – the two main occupations open to black and Latinos at the time. In the 1940s and 1950s southern welfare offices shut down during the cotton and tobacco harvests to ensure a steady supply of labor. In the 1960s more than a few states with large black welfare caseloads threw women off welfare for having children on their own. Most recently, the welfare “reformers” evoked racial stereotypes by portraying women on welfare as lazy, Cadillac driving “welfare queens,” who had “kids for money”, “lived high on the hog” and “cheated the government” (Abramovitz, 1996).

In the past we could refute these racial stereotypes by pointing to the similar proportions of black and white women on welfare. As the above figures indicate this is no longer possible. Some will attribute the slower exit of African Americans and Latinos from welfare as “proof” that women-of-color are lazy and uninterested in work instead of acknowledging the underlying racism.

Congress may use the racially tinged stereotypes to justify more punitive rules and less funding in 2002. However, our job is to expose the racial implications of welfare reform because the polls show that when the public views a policy as racially targeted, support for it quickly erodes (Brown, 1999).

In the April 2000 issue of *Currents*, which focused on racism in child welfare, Elaine Congress, then

the President of NASW stated, “we are all responsible for racism and class bias in that system.” She urged social workers to assume leadership in the effort to combat these destructive forces. This includes becoming aware of how *all the* “isms” intersect with welfare mandates. It also means raising our voices to challenge the impact of racism and sexism during the upcoming Congressional debate on TANF reauthorization. ■

– Mimi Abramovitz 2/29/01

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## Words from Bertha Capen Reynolds in *Learning and Teaching in the Practice of Social Work*:

“Whether in a period of war or in one obsessed with fear of war, whether in the elation of hope that a new day is breaking or in an almost despairing search for guiding stars, the struggle never ceases for betterment of the conditions for human life on this planet. The important thing is that the struggle does go on and that it is the deepest concern of social work and the compelling reason for learning in its service.”

*Learning and Teaching* is available through the SWAA Book Fund in the center of this publication. ■

## Seeking SWAA Members in Chicago

SWAA Members in the Chicagoland Area – interested in networking with other members? We are trying to organize activities in the Chicago area. Please call Mackenzi Huyser (708) 239-4809 or email Mackenzi.Huyser@trnty.edu if you are interested in being a part of this opportunity. ■

# Journal of Progressive Human Services

*The Journal of Progressive Human Services* (JPHS) is available to members of SWAA at a substantial discount. It can be ordered through SWAA using the application in this issue of the *BCR Reports*. Neither the JPHS collective nor SWAA are involved in subscription fulfillment, that is the responsibility of our publisher, Haworth Press. If you are a subscriber and have not received an issue, contact Kathy Rutz at 1-800-HAWORTH. If you want to submit an article to JPHS, send four copies of your manuscript and abstract to: David Prichard, JPHS Collective, University of New England, School of Social Work, Hills Beach Road, Biddeford, ME, 04005. It is important that your name and any other identifying information not appear on three of these copies. We also welcome submissions of short (500-1000 word) opinion pieces for our Soapbox column, letters to the editors, and poetry.

The Table of Contents of the current issue (hot off the press, March 2001) and the Fall 2001 issue appear below:

## Volume 11, Number 2, 2000

**SOAPBOX** Sandy Wachholz

### **ARTICLES**

- Everyday Practice of Race, Class and Gender: Struggles, Skills, and Radical Social Work* Donna Baines  
*Public Investment or Pork: The Meaning of New Deal Public Works* Robert Leighninger  
*The Politics of the Textbook*  
Sandra Wachholz and Bob Mullaly  
*Survivors of Woman Abuse: Compassionate Fires Inspire Collective Action for Social Change*  
Norma Jean Profit

### **FROM THE ARCHIVES**

*When Social Workers and Unions Allied in the 1930s*  
Leslie Leighninger

### **POETRY**

- Survival* Angela Thompson  
*Betrayal* Angela Thompson  
*Silence* Angela Thompson  
*Foolish Ways* Derrick Corley  
*Feather in the Wind* Derrick Corley

### **BOOK REVIEWS**

- Empowering Women of Color*, by Lorraine M. Gutierrez and Edith A. Lewis  
Reviewed by Marcia Cohen  
*Social Welfare: A World View*, by Katherine van Wormer  
Reviewed by Marilyn Moch  
*Tales of Wayward Girls and Immoral Women: Case Records and the Professionalization of Social Work*, by Karen W. Tice  
Reviewed by Robert Fisher

*Poverty, Welfare and the Disciplinary State*, by Chris Jones and Tony Novak

Reviewed by Betty Reid Mandell

## Volume 12, Number 1, 2001

**SOAPBOX** *Fragments From the Edge*  
Laurel Lewey

### **ARTICLES**

- What Does Flexibility Mean for Children's Services? Dilemmas of Reform*  
Lynn Nybell & Michelle Williamson  
*Claiming or Soul: An Empowerment Group for African American Women in Prison*  
Patricia O'Brien  
*Critique of U.S. Work/Family Programs and Policies*  
Blanche Grosswald  
*Creating a Family: Perspectives from Teen Mothers*  
Linda Davies, Margaret McKinnon & Prue Rains

### **FROM THE ARCHIVES**

*The Discovery of Illegitimacy in the 1950s*  
Leslie Leighninger

### **POETRY**

- Homelessness* Heather Blanchard  
*In Memoriam,*  
*Matthew Shephard* Samuel R. Friedman  
*Shame* Derrick Corley  
*Pollution* Derrick Corley

### **BOOK REVIEWS**

- Work Under Capitalism*, by Chris Tilly and Charles Tilly  
Reviewed by Michael Reisch  
*The Professionalization of Poverty: Social Work and the Poor in the Twentieth Century*, by Cary Lowe and P. Nelson Reid, Editors  
Reviewed by Karen W. Tice  
*Social Work and Community in a Private World*, by Robert Fisher and Howard J. Karger  
Reviewed by Steve Burghardt  
*Against Conventional Wisdom: A Primer for Current Economic Controversies and Proposals*, by Douglas Dowd  
Reviewed by Ellen T. Kennedy  
*Illusions of Prosperity: America's Working Families in an Age of Economic Insecurity*, by Joel Blau  
Reviewed by Peter Leonard  
*Working with Class: Social Workers and the Politics of Middle-Class Identity*, by Daniel Walkowitz  
Reviewed by David Wagner

# SWAA Membership Information

The Social Welfare Action Alliance "New Year" is May 1 each year. The Membership Committee sends out membership renewal notices in April. The Membership Committee is currently going through changes in database maintenance. We apologize to those members who have received multiple renewal notices this year. To avoid future confusion (as much as possible), the Membership Committee is putting in place the following measures:

- **CURRENT MEMBERS:** Renewal membership is good for one full year, from May 1 to April 30 of the next year. If a member forgets to renew in May and sends in his/her dues later that year, he/she is current until May of the following year. For example, if a member sends in dues in October 2001, he/she would be current through May 2002. If a member has paid twice in one year, he/she will receive credit for the additional year he/she paid ahead.
- **NEW MEMBERS:** New members are encouraged to join at any time of the year. New members receive a full year of membership until the following May. For instance, if a person joins in January 2001, he/she is paid through May 2002.

In addition:

- If you change your address or other information and have already paid dues, please correct the information on a membership renewal form and send it in to SWAA (indicate that it is an address change **ONLY**) **OR** send your name, new address, telephone number, e-mail address, etc. to SWAA and indicate that you have moved.
- If you change your address but have **NOT** paid dues for the year, correct the information on the membership form and send it to SWAA as part of the annual membership renewal.
- If you would like a membership packet, send a request to SWAA.

All membership renewals, new memberships, and any other correspondence may be sent to:

Social Welfare Action Alliance  
Columbus Circle Station  
P.O. Box 20563  
New York, NY 10023

Or

E-mail: [mochCIHRI@aol.com](mailto:mochCIHRI@aol.com)

Thanks, and we look forward to hearing from you in 2001!

# CHAPTER UPDATES:

## *Ann Arbor/University of Michigan:*

The members of the Ann Arbor chapter of SWAA thought they would know the results of the elections on November 8 (how naïve!) and planned a Post-Election Bash. Speculation was in full swing that afternoon, and discussion centered on expectations. Members provided refreshments and games for the University of Michigan School of Social Work community. The dart game, which featured photos of "Dubya," Gore, Nader, and Buchanan, proved the most popular. Students and faculty also cracked open piñatas and attempted to pin the brain on Bush. Too bad our SWAA party didn't last 36 days while we waited for the results.

SWAA showed "American Dream," a documentary film about the Hormel strike in Austin, Minnesota as part of the Social Workers Advocating for Multiculturalism film series. Discussion followed.

SWAA co-sponsored a presentation of the film "Dreamworlds," a documentary of the portrayal of violence against women in everyday commercials, TV, and movies and a ribbon-preparation session with the members of the White Ribbon Campaign, an annual anti-violence against women event. A University of Michigan faculty member, Richard Tolman, also spoke at the event.

Throughout the semester, members participated in the Affirmative Action rallies at the University. The first of the two lawsuits against UM's admissions policy was held in November and the case against the law school is in court now (January 2001). Members also participated in discussions concerning multiculturalism and prepared for the next semester.

*Rochester:* Our SWAA chapter has had a very busy last few months, full of events and chapter building. Several events have helped the chapter gain members and attention from local students, grassroots folks and other Rochester community members.

Two SWAA Members, along with five Members of the Rochester Poor People's Coalition and four SUNY Brockport students, attended the International Poor Peoples Summit sponsored by the KWRU in New York City this past fall. The SUNY Brockport social work students sold raffle tickets and did a "spare change" drive to raise money to pay for the van that we drove to New York (as well as some travel expenses). The students sponsored a viewing of "Poverty Outlaw" to help build interest in this project.

We also sponsored the "Poverty Without Borders" speaking tour that was part of the World Summit; this event brought sweatshop workers and organizers from Thailand as well as KWRU members to campus to talk about the linkages between poverty in the U.S. and low-wage labor globally. SWAA organized a second speaking engagement that same evening in the City of Rochester at Laborer's Hall. This event was especially exciting because we were able to solicit co-sponsorships from: Laborers Local 435; Monroe County Federation of Social Workers; Nazareth College's Social Work Department; the Rochester Labor Council; the SUNY Brockport Women's Center; and the SUNY Brockport Social Work Student Organization

This past March 5th, SWAA co-organized an all-day conference, "Beyond Band-Aids: Advocating for Change" with the SUNY Brockport Student Social Work Organization

(SSWO). The SSWO was able to get two grants, as well as funding from the SUNY Brockport Women's Center – to bring Fred Newdom, Willie Baptist, and Diane Dujon to campus. There was also a lunchtime panel discussion, which featured two local poor people, a staff member from the House of Mercy (homeless shelter) and the Director of the Public Interest Law Office. Later that same evening, SWAA – in conjunction with the House of Mercy and Rochester Poor Peoples Coalition – hosted Willie Baptist and Diane Dujon at a local Settlement House for a discussion on "Surviving the War Against the Poor". (The most amazing thing about these events was the attendance, despite a brutal Rochester-style snowstorm!)

To follow up the March 5th event. A speak-out was held at a local Church to give poor people a place to voice the truth about the welfare system in Rochester. The Director of the Public Interest Law Office also spoke to give participants some ideas on how to handle some of the problems they brought to the meeting and inform them of their rights. Social work students helped to leaflet poor neighborhoods several times before the meeting, and 65 people attended. This gave us an opportunity to help build interest in the Rochester Poor People's Coalition and strategize next steps such as lobbying in Albany and coalition building with other organizations.

The Rochester SWAA chapter is currently working on sponsoring poor people to attend the SWAA conference in June, as well as publicizing the conference to people in the community. We are also discussing the creation of a reality tour of Rochester in conjunction with the RPPC and supporting the formation of a union of human service workers. ■

# SWAA Book Fund Submission Policy

1. Author must be an active SWAA member.
2. Author must have presented at a SWAA regional or national conference.
3. Author will negotiate with their publisher for the best discounted purchase price.
4. Books will be sold to active SWAA members at a discount from the list price.
5. Only paperback or "reasonably priced" hardcover books with general distribution potential will be considered.
6. Submissions will be considered yearly by January 31st.

Forward submission requests to:

Laura Walther  
c/o SWAA Book Fund  
Columbus Circle Station  
P.O. Box 20563  
New York, New York 10023

## HOW TO ORGANIZE A SWAA CHAPTER:

"How to Organize a SWAA Chapter" organizing packets are available by contacting Mel at Communication Services at (518) 438-2826, 50 Colvin Avenue, Albany, NY 12206. The contents of the packets include such things as posters, brochures, book order forms, recent newsletters, copy of by-laws, names of SWAA organizers from the Steering Committee who will help you, and much more! Allow 4 weeks for delivery. ■

## SWAA National Steering Committee

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