



R A D C H A T T E R

Welcome to our quarterly member newsletter: Radchatter!

September, 2025 (Issue #6)

Here we provide updates on SWAA initiatives, relevant news, upcoming events, and recommendations for what to read, watch, or listen to in the radical sphere of our world today. [Readers, we invite you to submit entries to or propose contributions for this newsletter!](#)

Table of Contents

- Calls to Action and National Months
 - Back to School: Resources For Students, Faculty, and Alumni
 - Announcing Upcoming SWAA Events
 - Chapter Updates
 - Latest Issue of the Journal of Progressive Human Services
 - Resources for Building Solidarity
 - Getting Involved with SWAA!
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Call to Action Continues

Solidarity for the people by the people through organizing, empathy, and compassion

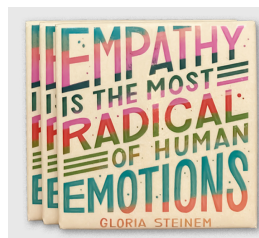
What in the teaching and practice of social work and human services informs us to counter the normalizing of cruelty? This is not the only question we face today, but if cruelty is the point, then what are the tools with which we can organize, strategize, and fight back? This is why SWAA exists and why we seek solidarity with other organizations working towards not only dismantling this growing culture of cruelty but the greater task, perhaps, of creating a culture that we want: compassion, empathy, peace, equity, inclusion, visibility and the long worklist we have ahead.

Before this renewed and constant cruelty (nationally to locally, we encountered policies and safety net limitations that we might have termed cruel, repressive, and oppressive), we were working to improve *that* reality. Now we face orchestrated and intentional attacks on nearly every sphere of life. This fight is not new. Even solidarity movements are not new.

Trump associate and conservative pundit, Steve Bannon, famously stated/revealed an important strategy back in 2020: "Flood the zone with sh**t." So put on your waders - and help others put on theirs - and let's remember enough self-care to thwart the onslaught while keeping our feet dry for marching!

We can do this - by speaking out, standing up, sitting in, teaching forward, lifting up, leaning in, and connecting with each other - mutuality and solidarity are how we move toward a world of care. Care is a human right. Care is a public good.

Remember, unprecedented times call for unprecedented levels of thought, engagement, hope, innovative solutions, and connection!



Remembering What Matters!



Food Bank Day > First Friday of September*

Hunger Action Month

Hunger and food insecurity have long remained a problem for many in the U.S., and that was before the program cuts at the [Big Bad Bill](#) recently passed, as well as the many state actions to limit further support for food banks, farmers and gardeners, school and afterschool lunches and snacks, and senior center meals. So let us not forget to do all we can in our own homes and budgets with small actions to collect food for the food banks or pantries, congregate meal sites, free food boxes, and refrigerators, but also limit food waste and work to learn more about the food policy involved in your state or local community. You can learn more about food policy councils and how you can get involved [HERE](#).



Suicide Prevention Month

In April of 2025, the Trump Administration proposed eliminating the LGBTQ+ support of the 988 Mental Health Crisis line which was finally defunded in the Big Bad Bill signed into law. Nevertheless, suicide prevention for LGBTQ+ youth may still find support and connection through the [Trevor Project](#). Read [more](#).

Want to help even more people in your community understand what to look for and assumptions to correct about mental health illness and wellness? You might consider directing people to or hosting an in-person or virtual training by **Mental Health First Aid**. Find a session or learn how to host one [HERE](#). Training can be tailored to focus on adults, youth, seniors, and coworkers.



Sunday, September 21st: EcoSocial Work and Environmental Action Day

Back to School: For Students, Faculty, and Alumni

Educators, SWAA's **Faculty Network** is sharing some resources that might be relevant to your classes. Whether micro, mezzo, or macro focused - SWAA has something for you!

[Archived Newsletters](#) - From BCRS to SWAA

[Archived Webinars and Transcripts](#)

*** * Featured Presentation Slides* ***

- [Standing Up In Difficult Times](#) - Dr. Rosemary Barbera's June 24 #RadChat presentation "*Hope is an Action*" (Although we do not record #RadChats, we hope you enjoy the presentation slides. Questions, [contact us](#) for more information).



Check out our issue chapters Social Workers & Allies Against Solitary Confinement ([SWASC](#)), Social Worker Equity Campaign ([SWEC](#)), and Social Workers Ending Poverty Together ([SWEPT](#)) - each can help with issues around criminal legal matters, especially solitary confinement; issues facing social workers as social workers and students seeking equity; and issues related to being allied with the New Poor People's Movement and National Welfare Rights Organization (Detroit).

[Link](#) to references to Bertha Capen Reynolds, our organization's original namesake, and her relevance to practice today, along with a SWAA Bibliography.

COMING ATTRACTIONS

This year, SWAA celebrates 40 years of bringing the heart, passion, analysis, and action of radical practice to the social work and human service academic and practice areas!

In recognition of this, we are developing a series of webinars on the current authoritarian crisis and how radical social workers and progressive activists have, and can, respond to these types of crises.

The first session will focus on the historical background of prior periods of repression, as well as how radical activists have organized and engaged in movement-building to resist these outbreaks of authoritarianism. Implications of these lessons will be examined, setting the stage for the second planned session, which will focus more on concrete strategies and tactics that can be implemented in the current period. The first session is tentatively planned for November 2025, with the remaining sessions to be held early in 2026.

Registration opens soon at socialwelfareactionalliance.org

If you want to suggest a topic or issue to explore, have resources (people, materials, etc.) to assist in planning an announced topic, or would like to be considered as a panel member or #RadChat breakout room leader, we'd love to hear from you.

Recommended Event

SOCIAL WORK ACTIVIST
COLLECTIVE PRESENTS

An Evening of Solidarity & Support

September 25, 2025
7:00-8:30pm ET

Join us as we kick off a new academic year with an evening of fun, friendship, and solidarity. While we hope the summer provided some rest, we know the work of social change continues to be incredibly challenging. This is our space to support one another as we engage in this work and share our struggles as well as opportunities. We hope you can join us!

Register Here:
<https://bit.ly/SWACSept25>



Learn about our mission and partners: swactivists.com

CHAPTER HIGHLIGHTS



The [Connecticut Chapter](#) is working on its program of legislative advocacy and work for radical policy change in CT. In addition to our legislative advocacy work, we are also in the process of working with existing advocacy coalitions to expand our ability to influence policy through organizing strategies to build power. The chapter continues to meet monthly, and our legislative advocacy committee is meeting weekly. Find us on [Facebook](#).



In Memoriam - Rest in Power

On June 23rd, 2025, **Moya Atkinson** passed away after a sudden, brief illness. Social Workers & Allies Against Solitary Confinement lost its founder, SWAA lost a longtime member, and the world lost a tireless voice for justice.

Moya will be remembered by all who knew her as a force, whose ideas, perseverance, and tenacity knew no bounds. She applied her gifts in myriad ways throughout her career: as Executive Director of the Office on Aging in Alexandria, VA (1983-1992), the E.D. of the National Association of Social Workers Maryland Chapter (1993-2002), and the founder of Social Workers & Allies Against Solitary Confinement in 2014 during her "second career." With her leadership and support, SWASC became a national network of social workers, allies, and directly impacted people, contributing to social work education, leading NY state legislation, and engaging in ethical debates with social work organizations. Moya was also a longtime, passionate member of SWAA; she cherished the organization's commitment to justice and the community it gave her over the years. A virtual

memorial service is tentatively planned for **October** and will be announced to SWAA members. You can view SWASC's full tribute to Moya [here](#). To stay informed, visit [SWASC's website](#) today! You may donate to SWASC in Moya's memory [HERE](#).

[NASW Remembrance](#)

[Three-part series on Solitary Confinement and Social Work](#) - links and discussion guide created by Moya Atkinson



Social Worker Equity Campaign (SWEC) is our new SWAA issue chapter, extending our alliances to a worker campaign. You can read more about SWEC [HERE](#).

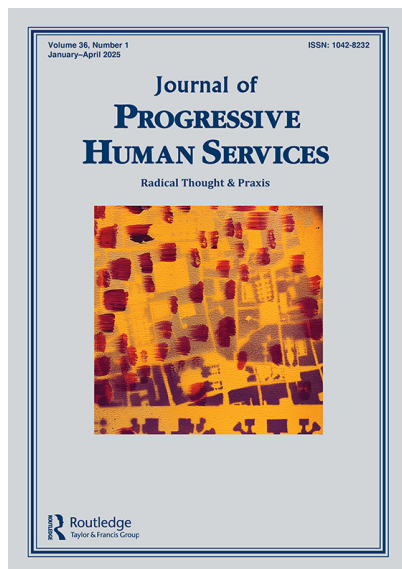
SWEC co-founder and SWAA Member **Steve Burghardt** is the author of a book that launched this organization and movement: [The End of Social Work: A Defense of the Social Worker in Times of Transformation](#)

Social Workers Ending Poverty Together (S.W.E.P.T.)



Please join Michigan Welfare Rights (MWRO) for their Mondays with Marian and Maureen by following their [FACEBOOK Account](#). You can ask questions, see past discussions, and by scrolling down, find out about various events happening with them - locally to nationally. Photo: Maureen Taylor speaking at the Detroit May Day, 2025!

The Journal of Progressive Human Services: Radical Thought and Praxis covers political, social, personal, and professional problems in human services from a progressive perspective



and has a long-standing affiliation with SWAA. SWAA members can purchase a discounted print/online subscription to the journal for \$30. To subscribe, contact societies@tandf.co.uk and include SWAA as the "name of society."

Sample article titles from JPHS' current issue:

- [A Critical Case for De-Implementation in U.S. Social Services: Abolishing What is Ineffective, What is Inefficient, and What Harms by Jacoba Rock et al.](#)
- [Rejecting the "New Normal": A Call for Collective Action for the Justice-Oriented Social Work and Public Health Community by Jack Wolcott et al.](#)

Taking Action to Build Solidarity



More Tools for the Revolution!

Recommended by a longtime member using these tools in their policy and macro social work courses. These are a variety of "trackers" to aid in understanding the changes coming our way. Use them to understand and then, to take actions - writing, organizing, posting to social media, creating hashtags, calling electeds and appointeds, writing LTE or commenting on posts or making public comments online or in public hearings and meetings.

Here are a few of the trackers they recommend:

1. [Gender Parity Index 2025](#) - report
2. [Democracy Watch Tracker](#) - now at 3300+ anti-Democracy legislative,

administrative, and regulatory actions

3. [TrumpTrackers](#) - a curated list of trackers on many relevant topics
4. [Project 2025 Tracker](#) - where are we with the fulfillment of this planned strategic takeover
5. [Litigation Tracker](#) - keeping track of the suits against and by the current Trump administration
6. [2025 Trump Executive Action Tracker](#)

Sources of Actions For You

weekly and biweekly emails (and social media accounts)

1. [Build Your Own ICE Watch Program](#) -this op-ed explains how to start an ICE Watch neighborhood program in your community. Click the link for the step-by-step guide
2. [Americans of Conscience](#) -website/Newsletter that researches and publishes a variety of actions (and occasionally something motivational) to carry on. Donations accepted but not required.
3. [Chop Wood, Carry Water](#) -one amazing activist hosts this Substack (TikTok, YouTube, Insta) site. Jess Craven is a concerned Democrat, so MANY, but not all, actions are politically related: political actions like calls, postcards, visits, house parties, webinars, fundraisers, and research. Many issues contain [GOOD NEWS](#) (which we could have included above).
4. [Social Activism 101](#) -laundry list of how-tos for Back to School!
5. [Breaking Down Barriers:: Anti-Oppressive Practice in Social Work](#) (site has ads)
6. Read more at Social Work Portal- <https://www.socialworkportal.com/social-anti-oppressive-practice/>

Ongoing: Our [How to Organize Against MAGA reading list](#)

Ongoing: Our [Framework for Analyzing Radical Policy Priorities](#)

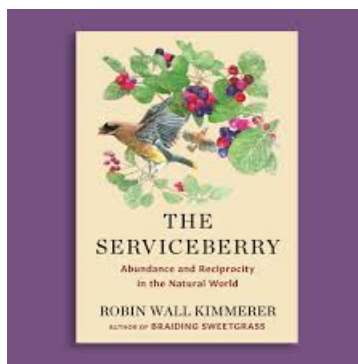
SETTING A MUCH-NEEDED EXAMPLE

An academic journal working to take responsibility for complicity is a rare-enough phenomenon. Here, *Affilia*, seeks to lay claim to its journalistic complicity in the genocide in Gaza.

From the Footnote: The [sic] members of the *Affilia* Editorial Board and governing board (WSW) collaboratively wrote this piece after numerous and ongoing conversations about critical feminism and the genocide in Gaza. As authors, we would like to acknowledge our positionality and privilege as feminists and scholars

who are primarily situated in the West and recognize that we cannot fully grasp the lived realities of Palestinians in Gaza. As non-Palestinian authors, we worked to build upon Palestinian feminism and the known experiences of Palestinian people while mindful of practices that rely upon the further extraction of Palestinian intellectual, emotional, and other forms of labor. The process of writing this piece has included opportunities to engage in mutual learning, dialogue, struggles, and growth that are integral to a critical feminist praxis

Check out the full article *Condemning Genocide and Confronting Affilia's Palestine Exception* by Diaz et al. (2025), [HERE](#).



Must-read: *The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World*. Robin Wall Kimmerer. On the back cover of this book is the statement "All flourishing is mutual." That serves as a good summary of the focus of the book - we must build a world of caring where people and planet are more important than profit. I did not expect that message when I began reading this book. I did think it would touch me as profoundly as it did. But Wall Kimmerer has written a beautiful treatise on how we should care for all living beings and how we should create a gift economy. She uses the examples of the many gifts nature gives to all animals. She says, "When an economic system actively destroys what we love, isn't it time for a different system?" (p. 18). **Recommended by R. Barbera, SWAA activist**

How SWAA Members Can Get Involved

CONNECT - If you are interested in connecting with other members and perhaps starting an affinity group or chapter in your area, email nsc@socialwelfareactionalliance.org. A SWAA steering committee member will reach out to you to discuss options.

WRITE - SWAA is always interested in opinion pieces or brief articles about radical social work. Email the above address with your ideas!

EDUCATE - Our education committee welcomes ideas for future webinars or #RadChat topics. If you have ideas for a panel, conversation, etc., we'd love to hear about them! Email nsc@socialwelfareactionalliance.org.

GUIDE - If you are interested in learning more about becoming a member of the national steering committee, reach out via email to learn more.

SHARE - Forward our Newsletter and Social Media posts to your colleagues and friends!

INVITE - Finally, you can ask your colleagues to join SWAA or your organization to sponsor our work. We will show our appreciation!



Consider [joining SWAA or renewing your membership](#) today!

Like public broadcasting, we exist thanks to the memberships and donations of people like you - people who we hope become members. Your membership dues help us fund technology, communication, outreach, and infrastructure efforts, including, but not limited to:

- Organizing a safe space to learn from radical social workers doing challenging work in advocacy and organizing across a variety of social issues
- Creating a networking, educational, and practice space to learn with like-hearted and like-minded folks wanting to improve the work conditions - we - and all of us - endure.
- Ensuring strong advocacy and political education efforts with our SWAA Chapters, including **Social Workers & Allies Against Solitary Confinement** (SWASC), **Social Workers Ending Poverty Together** (SWEPT), and **Social Worker Equity Campaign** (SWEC)
- Maintaining a large network of radical social workers across the country
- Developing materials for public use regarding radical social work and human service practice and teaching
- Reduced subscription rate for *The Journal of Progressive Human Services: Radical Thought and Praxis*
- This quarterly newsletter, *SWAA RadChatter*
- Supporting ongoing #RadChats and webinars
- Maintaining an updated website with videos and resources on radical social work

SWAAActivists - was this newsletter forwarded to you? Please consider liking our social media, attending our events, and becoming a SWAA member today.



Social Welfare Action Alliance

Contact: nsc@socialwelfareactionalliance.org

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