

Editorial

Welcome to the first general issue of Transformative Social Work

Julie L. Drolet

Welcome to *Transformative Social Work*! We are excited to present our first general issue to our readers. This marks an important milestone in our journey, and I would like to extend my gratitude to everyone who has contributed to this publication. A heartfelt thank you to our contributors for sharing their work, to our reviewers for their thoughtful feedback, and to our Associate Editors and Editorial Board for their support. I would also like to acknowledge Kingsley Ibe, our Journal Manager, for his exceptional coordination in bringing this issue to publication. We are thrilled to share this work and look forward to our continuing conversation around transformative social work.

Transformative Social Work is a journal that explores transformative social work across diverse contexts. The 21st century presents numerous complex challenges, including environmental crises, the rise of authoritarian populism, and increasing poverty in many parts of the world. Traditional social work approaches have faced longstanding critiques, with many advocating for more transformative and holistic approaches (Fook & Jatlow, 2024; Hart, 2014; Pyles & Adam, 2016).

This journal invites contributions from a wide range of voices - from students to faculty, practitioners, administrators, and field educators – across different countries and contexts. We aim to stimulate critical thinking and the development of transformative perspectives in social work, including in research, education, field education, practice, policy, administration, and curriculum. Our goal is to engage with the complexity of societal issues and explore both the challenges and opportunities for transformative change. As highlighted by Jan Fook and Danielle Jatlow (2024) in their edited book *Transformative Social Work: Practices for Academic Settings*, there is a pressing need for social workers to reflect deeply on what transformative social work truly means. This includes considering core concepts, models, and strategies within academic settings.

Transformative Social Work is an approach that aims to create systemic change by addressing the root causes of social injustice and inequality. It goes beyond individual or community-level interventions, focusing on challenging and transforming oppressive structures, policies, and institutions. This approach is aligned with critical, anti-oppressive, and social justice-focused social work, and supports change toward a more equitable and inclusive society. Transformative social work practice involves challenging injustice and marginalization (Munford & Sanders, 2020).

In keeping with this important notion of transformation in social work, *Transformative Social Work* is a journal that invites contributions that promote new thinking on structural and systemic change, collective action, critical and reflective practice, intersectionality, anti-oppressive

frameworks, social justice, human rights, ecological and environmental justice, decolonial approaches, and lived-experience scholarship. We also welcome examples of transformative social work in action.

This issue features six papers on transformative social work research, education, and field education, contributed by scholars and practitioners from Canada, the United States, and Pakistan. Christa Sato, F. J. Espina, Ashley L. Landers, Alan McLuckie, and David Este explore a model of “transformative engagement,” inviting social work researchers to reflect on their interactions with ethnoculturally diverse research participants. The article advocates for rethinking traditional culturally sensitive research practices and calls for community-based strategies that promote meaningful, respectful, and transformative engagement.

Raazia Hassan Naqvi, Christine A. Walsh, and Muhammad Ibrar present research on sexual violence among domestic violence shelter residents in Punjab, Pakistan. In their article, “Sex is a taboo but sexual violence is common: An exploratory study of sexual violence among domestic violence shelter residents in Pakistan,” they discuss the intersections of gender, poverty, geography, and other factors, offering important implications for practice and policy.

The next article, “Intersectional homemaking: Bridging the social and material inequities of refugees living in climate precarity,” by Jill Hoselton and Julie Drolet, examines climate injustices faced by many refugees. The authors use the concept of intersectional homemaking as a framework to explore the impacts of climate injustice on refugees’ experiences of home/homemaking and resettlement.

Quan Huu Nguyen and Hieu Van Ngo consider the integration of Participatory Action Research (PAR) and Photovoice (PV) in social work research. In “Integrating participatory action research and photovoice as mixed methods: Synergies, tensions, and implications for social work,” the authors examine the intersections of these two approaches and discuss their implications for transformative social work research and practice.

Catherine de Boer, June Kirkland-Smith, and Jasmine O’Quinn examine the role of social work education in preparing students to address occupational stress injuries in practice. Their article argues that social work education must include strategies for preventing and mitigating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), secondary traumatic stress (STS), vicarious trauma (VT), compassion fatigue (CF), and burnout to foster resilience and sustainability in the profession.

John R. Gyourko, Jennifer Silver, and Johanna K. P. Greeson discuss the financial and psychosocial challenges faced by social work practicum students in the United States. Based on a cross-sectional online survey with 408 students from the Pennsylvania chapter of the National Association of Social Workers, their article highlights that students with part-time enrollment histories, those in unpaid field practicums, gender nonconforming respondents, and racialized students, reported significantly more challenges than did their peers. They also discuss the Payment for Placements (P4P) campaign and emphasize the need for greater inclusivity and diversity in social work education and practice.

Transformative social work positions social workers as agents of change, committed to dismantling oppressive systems and building more equitable, sustainable societies. The articles in this issue demonstrate how social work research, education, and field education can empower academics, students, and practitioners to challenge injustices and create lasting impact. We hope you enjoy reading it!

ORCID ID

Julie L. Drolet <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1520-3439>

References

- Fook, J., & Jatlow, D. (2024). *Transformative social work: Practices for academic settings*. Columbia University Press.
- Hart, T. (2014). *The integrative mind: Transformative education for a world on fire*. Rowman & Littlefield.
- Munford, R., & Sanders, J. (2020). Transformative practice: Social work practice with vulnerable young people. *European Journal of Social Work*, 24(4), 720–731.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13691457.2020.1819205>
- Pyles, L., & Adam, G. (2016). *Holistic engagement: Transformative social work education in the 21st century*. Oxford University Press.

Author biography

Julie L. Drolet is a Professor in the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Calgary in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. She is the Editor-in-Chief of the *Transformative Social Work Journal*. She serves as the Project Director of Transforming the Field Education Landscape (TFEL) partnership, a project that aims to better prepare the next generation of social workers in Canada through training and mentorship initiatives.