

recognizing that, in the prevailing political and economic climate of the world "the prospects of this happening in the immediate future . . . appear negligible" (p. 242). Hopefully this pessimism will be overcome promptly after "the immediate future" in this country as well as in Western Europe. It is gratifying to commend this nontechnical, broadening perspective on the state of comparative research on poverty and inequality to interested readers.

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Research Techniques for Clinical Social Workers. By Tony Tripodi and Irwin Epstein. New York: Columbia University Press, 1980. Pp. viii+225. \$15.00.

Social work practice is undergoing a remarkable transformation. It began slowly in the mid-sixties, gradually gained momentum in the seventies, and has vigorously surged forward in recent years. The transformation is focused on the relationship between practice and research. The earlier dichotomous view of these as two distinct and relatively unrelated areas of professional activity is giving way to more integrated perspectives. It is not uncommon to find reference to the "scientific practitioner,"¹ "clinical scientist,"² "clinician-researcher,"³ or "empirical practice."⁴ If this transformation continues to unfold, the practitioner of the eighties will indeed be a new breed of social worker.

This transformation has undoubtedly been stimulated by developments in the social work literature. Unsettling reports of evaluation studies,⁵ admonitions for accountability,⁶ and disenchantment with the division of labor within the profession separating researcher from practitioner have led many to conclude that "enough is enough."⁷ While the transformation has been stimulated by such irritants, more recently it has been facilitated by creative contributions to the practice literature. These contributions make it possible to teach and learn scientific practice. The work of Bloom, Thomas, Briar, Reid, Fischer, Jayaratne and Levy, and Grinnell⁸ are illustrative of such contributions. Joining these contributions is the work of Tripodi and Epstein.

Tripodi and Epstein's perspective illustrates the key assumptions in this new view. Its pragmatic thrust places value on practice that is effective, efficient, and accountable. A rational, problem-solving process is proposed as the means to these pragmatic objectives. Intervention is to be based on knowledge obtained and tested through research methods. To the extent possible, this knowledge base is to be empirically grounded, objective, eclectic, and open to critical discussion. And, knowledge-based practice is seen as driven by skepticism as well as by the ongoing search for new and better methods. From such a perspective research and practice are seen as not only compatible but fundamentally related.

Tripodi and Epstein have sought to link research concepts and techniques with the essentials of clinical practice. Research procedures are presented as practice tools relevant for obtaining information regarding diagnostic assessment, treatment implementation, and evaluation. These three phases of the problem-solving process are seen as reflecting critical areas of decision making in clinical practice, and the various research techniques presented are viewed as useful means for informing those decisions. The authors do not attempt an exhaustive presentation of research methods, but focus on those they consider easily learned and readily applied. The discussion includes a consideration of the use of research interviewing, questionnaires, available instruments, systematic observation, content analysis, client self-monitoring forms, rating scales,

survey and time-series designs. Basic techniques of data analysis are considered. Principles for review of the research literature are discussed, especially from the perspective of facilitating selection of treatment techniques. The book is organized into three parts corresponding to each of the three phases of the problem-solving process. The chapters in each part present various research techniques considered most useful for informing the decisions to be made at that stage. Each chapter provides principles for implementing the research techniques under discussion, practice examples, a research exercise, and a brief bibliography.

This book complements Epstein and Tripodi's earlier volume, *Research Techniques for Program Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation*. That work presents research techniques useful for administrative practice. The recent volume does the same for clinical practice. It is intended as an introductory research text for graduate level clinical students and as a supplementary text for practice courses.

This work is an important contribution. Tripodi and Epstein clearly illustrate how clinical practitioners can use research concepts and techniques to strengthen their work with individual clients. Through their discussion of techniques and use of examples they demonstrate how knowledge gained through work with one client can be used to support subsequent intervention with additional clients. The social worker's role as researcher is presented as facilitating the worker's role as practitioner. This is a refreshing perspective.

The style of presentation makes this book suitable for the inexperienced. It makes no assumptions regarding previous practice or research knowledge. The clinical intervention process is presented in its most general and unembellished form. Research concepts and techniques are discussed plainly and simply. The reader is not presented with controversial perspectives (although the knowledgeable reader will frequently encounter explanations, definitions, and perspectives about which alternative views readily come to mind). The examples provided are unsophisticated and the suggested exercises appear to be manageable for beginners. The text is generally unencumbered by references to the results of previous clinical research or to methodological contributions of social work's clinical researchers.

Tripodi and Epstein do not present a conventional research methods text. This is not a book written for those interested in preparing for scientific research in the usual sense. Research concepts and techniques are discussed as tools for enriching the information base of individual practitioners in their work with specific clients. How these concepts and techniques can be used to further the development and revision of theory or empirical laws is not addressed. Neither the research process nor the function of that process in scientific inquiry are directly considered.

The authors anticipate the most serious criticism that could be leveled against this book. To the knowledgeable researcher or practitioner the presentation may appear simplistic, and consequently, misleading, especially for the novice. Tripodi and Epstein argue that oversimplification has not been the intent but rather that the book has been written for research consumers without extensive research training. Their objective has been to link some basic research concepts and techniques with some of the fundamentals of clinical practice. This volume is a valuable addition to the literature supporting the teaching and learning of scientific practice. However, as a book linking research and practice it should not be expected that it can stand alone as either a research methods or practice text.

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Notes

1. Joel Fischer, "The Social Work Revolution," *Social Work* (May 1981), pp. 199-207.
2. Scott Briar, "Clinical Scientists in Social Work: Where Are They?" (paper presented at the University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration Alumni Conference, Chicago, May 1974).
3. Srinika Jayaratne and Rona L. Levy, *Empirical Clinical Practice* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1979).
4. *Ibid.*
5. Joel Fischer, *The Effectiveness of Social Casework* (Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1976).
6. Scott Briar, "Effective Social Work Intervention in Direct Practice: Implications for Education," in *Facing the Challenge*, ed. Scott Briar et al. (New York: CSWE, 1973).
7. William J. Reid, "Needed: A New Science for Clinical Social Work," in Fischer, *The Effectiveness of Social Casework*, p. 265.
8. Martin Bloom, *The Paradox of Helping: Introduction to the Philosophy of Scientific Practice* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1975); Edwin J. Thomas, "The BESDA Model for Effective Practice," *Social Work Research and Abstracts* 13 (Summer 1977): 12-16; Scott Briar, "Incorporating Research into Education for Clinical Practice in Social Work: Toward a Clinical Science in Social Work," in *Sourcebook on Research Utilization*, ed. A. Rubin and A. Rosenblatt (New York: Council on Social Work Education, 1979); William J. Reid, *The Task-centered System* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978); Joel Fischer, *Effective Casework Practice: An Eclectic Approach* (New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., 1978); Jayaratne and Levy; and Richard M. Grinnell, Jr., *Social Work Research and Evaluation* (Itasca, Ill.: F. E. Peacock Publishers, 1981).

Discovery and Development in Social Work Education. Proceedings of the XIXth International Congress of Schools of Social Work, Jerusalem, Israel. Vienna: International Association of Schools of Social Work, 1981. Pp. 171.

With the passing of three years since the 19th International Congress of Schools of Social Work, held in Jerusalem, Israel, in August 1978, this lucid, well-organized report will serve as a useful reminder for those who attended and as a resource document for those who did not. This was the Fiftieth Anniversary of the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), founded in 1928 when there were 111 schools of social work in the world. Now there are nearly 500 schools in seventy countries. This biennial congress affords participants an unusual opportunity to scrutinize the major issues and significant changes in social work education as seen from international perspectives. These were addressed by the major speakers in challenging and realistic terms. The editor, Katherine A. Kendall, acknowledges the omission of twenty commentaries and contributed papers from different regions used in the small discussion groups. Moreover, there is no reference to the excellent one-day research seminar preceding the congress which was concluded with an inspiring and provocative address by Eileen Blackey on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Paul Baerwald School of Social Work, Hebrew University, one of the sites of the congress. Fortunately, the report does include a concise and informative history of the IASSW, noting the valuable contributions by leaders such as Dr. Rene Sand, Dr. Alice Salomon, Dr. Jan DeJongh, Dame Eileen Younghusband and others. Thus, in one short monograph there will be found a compendium of information and professional papers that still have import for today's world.