Sexuality and Social Work Conference 2016

Sexual Justice and Social Work in the United States: An Intersection of Social Justice, Microaggressions, and Sexual Literacy

George W. Turner, Lisa Meyers, Michelle G. Thompson, Michael Pelts

1. Between the academy and queerness: Microaggressions in SW education explored through the lens of queer theory (Turner, Pelts, Thompson)

2. Sexually silenced no more - adults with intellectual disabilities speak up: A call to action for social work to frame sexual voice as a social justice issue (Turner)

3. Sexual literacy is essential for social workers: Review of social work CEU opportunities related to sexuality (Turner, Meyers, Pelts)

A panel of US social work (SW) scholars will present three papers on the intersectionality within sexuality and SW research, practice, and education. The first paper, entitled “Between the academy and queerness: Microaggressions in SW education explored through the lens of queer theory,” examines the experiences of three emerging queer scholars in SW academia. Auto-ethnography narratives and concept mapping were used to qualitatively explore queer experiences in SW education. Seven interconnected themes emerged. Recommendations for SW education and queer scholars will be presented.

The second paper entitled “Sexually silenced no more - adults with intellectual disabilities speak up: A call to action for social work to frame sexual voice as a social justice issue” will discuss a qualitative case study designed to gain insight into the personal experiences and perceptions of adults with intellectual disabilities (ID) regarding their social-sexual lives. Through a social justice lens; themes of sexual self-advocacy, sexuality education, sexual script, sexual vocabulary, and sexual-relational support will be discussed. Recommendations will be presented for SW education to increase student competency around disability and sexuality as well as strategies for clinicians to improve their practice skills in these areas.

The third paper will be divided between two sections. The first section entitled, “Sexual literacy is essential for social workers: Part I - review of social work CEU opportunities related to sexuality” will review the current CEU approach to sexuality, offering a summative assessment of three major CEU providers in the United States: state NASW chapters, university SW programs, and national third–party providers and end with a brief discussion on the implications for teaching SW practice at the micro and macro level. The second section, entitled “Sexual literacy is essential for social workers: Part II - using a CEU model course to bridge the gap” will explore SW training and practice needs around client sexuality by outlining a detailed and conceptually focused description and rationale for an ideal CEU foundational sexuality program in order to advance future SW practice.

Keywords:
Sexual justice, sexual literacy, practice, research, education