

Editorial

This issue on Gerontological Trends and Issues in Social Welfare is a departure from the standard format of the CJA/RCV, marking the first time the Journal/La Revue has had a special issue. The call for papers produced an enthusiastic response reflective of the wide scope of the theme. All manuscripts underwent the normal anonymous review process.

Articles in this issue report on studies from coast to coast. Methodologies represented include quantitative survey research, qualitative analyses, case studies and theoretical conceptualization.

Despite the diversity in topic and approach, a common theme can be identified: the older person as citizen. The first three articles focus on the older adult as a contributor to society, the last three address structural and attitudinal limitations and barriers in current social programs that block or impede civil rights of older Canadians and their opportunities for maximum participation.

The lead article by Vienneau and Ouellette investigates leadership characteristics in senior citizen's clubs. Neysmith uses a case study approach to analyse the impact of a senior's advocacy group on government and to examine factors that influence that impact. Both articles provide insight into the function of seniors as community leaders.

Gladstone's paper moves the focus to consideration of the importance of older people in the family context. In a qualitative study he identifies patterns of increased contributions that grandmothers make and also indicates the types of problems that could lead to reduction of contact between grandmothers and their grandchildren after the divorce of the child's parents. The author emphasizes the need for practitioners working with families to broaden their perspective to deal with such factors. Clearly there are legislative and policy issues that arise from the concept of the family as a system and the attention to the needs and rights of all generations.

MacLean and his associates consider the literature on racism in Canada and test the theory of institutional racism in terms of differential access to health and social services for elderly people from certain ethnic groups. The authors challenge researchers to investigate further the equality of access to service by various cultural groups within Canada.

Hodge systematically examines features of public housing projects for the elderly in nine small communities and reflects on the impact of social housing policy in facilitating or hindering participation of the elderly in community life, in establishing design standards sensitive to their social and physical needs and the importance of involving the elderly themselves in setting such standards.

In the final article Harbison and Melanson address issues in institutional long term care, rejecting the traditional medical model with its overemphasis on physical care and advocating the need for a biopsychosocial model.

They identify barriers in the political-economy of long term care that hinder the development of such an approach and exhort key professionals in the field to collaborate in the creation of an institutional climate and structure that considers the needs of residents from a holistic and ecological perspective.

Typically, the reviewers of these papers have highlighted the importance of the issues addressed and noted that they had been heretofore under-represented in Canadian gerontological research. Content of this issue suggests directions for further research and development and should stimulate more comprehensive examination of current policy and practice.

Lilian M. Wells
Issue Editor

CALL FOR PAPERS

A special edition of the *Canadian Journal of Aging*, to be published in the Spring of 1988, will be on:

“Francophone Research in Gerontology in Canada”

This issue will feature two types of articles: 1) reports of activities in the different disciplinary domains of gerontology, and 2) original articles which report results of new research.

Papers may be submitted to either of the two co-editors for this issue listed below. All manuscripts will undergo the customary review process for the *Canadian Journal on Aging*. Manuscripts should be submitted no later than December 1, 1987.

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