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Global Citizenship: A Model for Teaching Universal Human Rights in Social Work Education

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Abstract

There appears to be general agreement among Canadian and American social work educators regarding the need to instill a global perspective in our students in order to better prepare them for leadership in the 21st century. While Canadian schools of social work have long included content on universal human rights in their curriculum, this content is still largely lacking in the U.S. This paper will present “global citizenship” as a useful model for integrating this crucial content into social work education. It encourages students to make a professional commitment to human rights literacy (knowledge), empathy (concern), and responsibility (action).

Introduction

The profession of social work has a long and distinguished history of advocating for social justice and human rights. The apparent shift to a more global perspective currently underway in social work education is actually not a new trend. International cooperation and collaboration among social workers was very common throughout the 20th century. For example, the first International Conference on Social Work was held in London in 1928. Yet, the rapidly expanding network of global communication (made so readily accessible by the media, internet, mobile phones, etc.) and a deepening awareness of our interrelatedness has resulted in a renewed emphasis on the need to understand the world beyond our own national borders.

A “global” or “international” perspective is now a required component of social work education in both the U. S. and Canada. A fairly recent addition to the core curriculum in the U.S. is the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) mandate for inclusion of content on the “global interconnectedness of oppression” and “international issues of social welfare policy and social service delivery” (CSWE, 2001). While the relevant scholarly literature has grown rapidly in the past decade (e.g., Healy, 2001; Mapp, 2008), social work in the U.S. is still regarded as highly insular (Ramanathan & Link, 2004). Expanding the boundaries of “American-centered” social work is crucial to effective practice in the global era and provides a unique opportunity to fulfill

the additional CSWE Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards' mandate of "preparing social workers to recognize the global context of social work practice."

Canadian schools of social work have preceded the U.S. in addressing global content, particularly in the area of human rights. There is a well-established tradition of teaching a global perspective and formalizing content on human rights into the curriculum, with some schools teaching entire courses focused on human rights (J. Coates, personal communication, June 20, 2008). Therefore, while social work education in the U.S. and Canada share many similarities, it appears that there are also some distinct differences. The model of "global citizenship" presented in this paper, while addressing a serious gap in the U.S. social work curriculum, can be a useful supplement to existing content in Canadian courses.

Another significant difference related to social work education between the U.S. and Canada pertains to each country's domestic approach to human rights. The Canadian Human Rights Commission "administers the Canadian Human Rights Act and is responsible for ensuring [Federal] compliance with the Employment Equity Act" (chrc-ccdep.ca). The United States does not have a separate commission with similar jurisdiction, although the U.S. Department of State houses a Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (state.gov), with the stated purpose of promoting democracy and human rights globally. The establishment of a U.S. Human Rights Commission would be one way to monitor the government's compliance with international human rights treaties (Shattuck, 2008).

The profession of social work around the world is taking steps to develop a more uniform approach for a global perspective. The International Federation of Social Workers and the International Association of Schools of Social Work have jointly adapted a new "international definition of social work" (Hare, 2004). Ahmadi (2003) examines how globalization processes are weakening the conditions that support the modern national welfare state and argues that, if economic and political ideologies are transcending national boundaries, then social welfare policy and social work practice must do so as well if we are to maintain our professional mission. Major factors which shape the debate about the globalization of social work are Westernization, localization, and indigenization (Gray & Fook, 2004). They write, "While noting a shared discourse in social work arising from its historical development and ongoing international exchanges, we draw attention to the wide disparities in values and practices in diverse multicultural contexts" (p. 640).

It is clear that social work students, including our future educators, need to develop a broad global perspective. Ensuring the inclusion of this content can be a daunting task, however, since many faculty members do not have expertise in this area. Anecdotal data collected by the author suggests that U.S. faculty recognize the importance of global content and have a desire to include it in their courses, yet they report feeling overwhelmed by the amount of information involved. Even well-informed faculty members are bewildered by the sheer complexity and enormity of the world's problems, especially the injustices experienced by the most impoverished, oppressed, and vulnerable people. Many faculty members report that conveying the necessary content on domestic social problems is an all-consuming task. As a result, students may learn very little about the rest of the world or the interrelatedness of global problems; or, if content is included, it may be reduced to simplistic stereotypes or vague generalizations.

This dilemma persists despite an abundance of readily available information in the scholarly literature and reputable web-based resources. What is needed is a way to make the foreign more familiar. Given the immense amount of information available on international social work, focusing on universal human rights as codified by the United Nations (see below) provides a unique opportunity to confront this curricular challenge, since it provides a useful organizing framework for understanding the vast and perplexing array of global problems facing social workers today. There is an extensive literature available on the broad spectrum of human rights (e.g., Brysk, 2002; Donnelly, 2002; Forsythe, 2000; Ignatieff, 2001), including specific applications to social work practice (e.g., Ife, 2001; Reichert, 2003, 2006, 2007). On the other hand, Dominelli (2007) reports a dearth of articles on human rights in "major" social work journals.

An equally crucial component of a global perspective is not only teaching about problems, but assisting students to overcome a pervasive sense of pessimism through also identifying successful solutions. While billions of people around the world face intense social, political, and economic problems, there are many effective programs that offer realistic solutions. For example, despite serious setbacks and ongoing crises, progress is occurring in many countries toward the Millennium Development Goals and improved social indicators (United National Development Programme, 2008). In terms of social work practice, linking human rights and social justice (a core value of the social work profession) to the application of a social development model fosters empowerment, as opposed to a focus on individual pathology (Healy, 2001; Mapp, 2008).

Learning about human rights is a major step toward acquiring a truly global perspective. While this focus is important for all social work students, it may be particularly valuable in the U.S. where students may tend toward xenophobia and take their extreme economic privilege for granted. It is equally important for students to reflect upon and understand how they live in a society that protects their rights (if oftentimes imperfectly). They enjoy freedoms that most other people throughout the world can only imagine. Landorf and Pineda (2007) reference a study conducted in the U.S. in 1997 that found "that only eight percent of adults and four percent of young people are aware of and can name the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (p. 324). More recently, McFarland and Mathews (2005) reviewed polling data on American attitudes toward human rights. They report strong national support for international human rights that nonetheless consistently ranks below domestic self-interest, changes with current events, and decreases as the cost of expending resources increases. Americans most committed to the principles of universal human rights are described as "globalists," who are more educated, empathetic, and optimistic as well as less ethnocentric and authoritarian.

"Globalization" is a word that can be fraught with definitional problems. Ramanathan and Link (2004) suggest that "international" be used to refer to specific interactions between two or more countries, while "global" denotes connections that pertain to the entire world. Since the words are frequently used interchangeably, and the intention here is to focus on larger worldwide patterns, "global" is preferable, but the original language used by other authors will be preserved. Another difficulty with a "global" or "international" perspective is that it may imply the imposition of Western values on economically developing countries or cultures (Skegg, 2005). In

turn, the notion of “global citizenship” has been criticized as being “too abstract to be valuable in driving curriculum policy and active citizenship for students” (Davies, 2006, p. 5).

In sum, a focus on universal human rights provides a useful and manageable framework for helping students to relate to actual people and communities throughout the world. As a result, the learning process becomes more personal and pertinent. The model of global citizenship presented in this paper offers specific knowledge, values, and skills regarding universal human rights that are germane to social work practice. While students clearly need to acquire expertise regarding their own country, domestic social and economic issues in the U.S. and Canada are clearly linked to global human rights. Harkavy (2006) states this well in exhorting institutions of higher education to focus on “solving universal problems that are manifested in their local communities” (p. 33).

Universal Human Rights

The topic of universal human rights is both supremely simple and exceedingly complex. There are many avenues that can be pursued in teaching this topic, which is open to intense controversy. If students are to engage in a critical analysis of human rights, they must be minimally informed about some basic underlying premises. An in-depth discussion is obviously beyond the scope of this paper. There is an immense scholarly literature that examines the long-standing and unresolved theoretical debates regarding the moral, ethical, legal, historical, social, and political factors influencing the nature, origin, and justification of human rights (e.g., Arat, 2006; Bagaric & Allen, 2006; Bentley, 2005; Donnelly, 2007, 2008; Evans, 2003; Goodhart, 2008; Grover, 2007; Sorrell & Landman, 2006; Winston, 2007).

Human rights are typically defined as universal and indivisible. As such, all humans are entitled to basic rights by virtue of their humanity, and all human should receive all rights. These rights apply regardless of one's nationality, culture, political or economic system, religion, or any other grouping. They should apply to all nations, and a particular country should not determine which rights are granted (Mapp, 2008, p. 17). According to the Canadian Encyclopedia, “Human rights differ from civil liberties, which refer to a narrow class of fundamental freedoms based on traditional Western values, such as freedom of religion and expression.” Furthermore, human rights often require governmental intervention to protect them, while civil liberties require governmental restriction to preserve them.

These principles of universality and indivisibility are codified in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). This declaration addresses three categories of rights (Mapp, 2008; Reichert, 2007). First, political and civil rights, referred to as “negative rights,” pertain to governments refraining from abuse of power against individuals (e.g., right to due process and freedom of speech). Second, economic, social, and cultural rights, referred to as “positive rights,” require governments to take action to protect freedoms and ensure an adequate standard of living (e.g., right to food, education, medical care, etc.). Third, “collective rights” involves solidarity among nations to create an international order that fosters rights and freedoms. Mapp (2008) further notes that, “A declaration does not impose on a ratifying government any obligation to fulfill the principles contained within the document; that is the purpose of a covenant, convention, or treaty” (p. 19).

Subsequent human rights documents have been produced by the U.N. within a larger framework of debate about these principles. For example, the disagreement between the U.S. and the former USSR was substantial enough that two international covenants were required, splitting political and civil rights from social and economic rights. The U.S. ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, since this was viewed as in accordance with the U.S. Constitution, but has not ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, since this was seen to violate the dominate American value of individual responsibility. The USSR ratified both covenants (Mapp, 2008).

While human rights imply universality, countries around the world differ in the relative importance that they place on various rights, and how they should be culturally implemented. While "universalism" implies uniform standards that apply to everyone, regardless of culture, "cultural relativism" refers to the "view that all cultures are equal and universal values become secondary ... to the local culture" (Reichert, 2006, p. 104). This view is problematic, however, since "... the power to define cultural, religious, and legal norms controls the outcome." Reichert (2007) contends that social workers must engage in a careful "balancing act" between universalism and cultural relativism and pursue a critical analysis of both in deciding how to interpret human rights.

The UDHR has been criticized as containing an implicit Western cultural bias that emphasizes the individual over society. Many Asian and African countries, in contrast, place more importance on cultural harmony than individual autonomy. As an example, China is frequently criticized by the U.S. government for human rights violations, while the perceived authoritarianism of the Chinese government could be regarded as placing societal economic needs above individual political rights. The controversy surrounding the ruling by the European Court of Human Rights that prohibits the wearing of Islamic headscarves (Marshall, 2008) may be seen as actually placing cultural values above individual choice. Ife and Fiske (2006) argue that the principle of universality does not equal "sameness" and that rights can be implemented in culturally appropriate ways as long as a certain model of "desirable citizen" is not used as a rationale to deny rights.

There is a long-standing gap between the idealism of universal human rights and the reality of continued inequality. Bagaric and Dimopoulos (2005) note that the past century witnessed a proliferation of human rights discourse, laws, and instruments, yet these outcomes are largely ineffectual in that the rights detailed have bypassed most of the world's population. Douzinas (2006) observes that, paradoxically, "the triumph of humanitarianism [has been] drowned in human disaster" (p. 355). According to the UN Office of the High Commission for Human Rights, responsibility for monitoring human rights abuses rests with the Human Rights Council (formerly the Human Rights Commission), an inter-governmental body within the UN created by the General Assembly in 2006. There are significant loopholes in monitoring (Stewart, 2008), and the UN has no real authority to enforce compliance. Therefore, governmental agencies, such as the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, or non-governmental organizations, such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, can provide valuable oversight. Policzer (2006) points out that "the international community has increasingly broadened the definition of human rights violations to include both states and nonstate groups engaged in armed conflict" (p. 215), such as terrorist activity, which grossly complicates monitoring and

accountability. He argues for a new paradigm of international structure that moves beyond "state-based architecture."

Finally, critical content should include a review of the history of the evolution of human rights. In the "West," the roots of this perspective can be traced to ancient origins in Greek and Roman philosophy. These ideals were subsequently articulated throughout European history, particularly during the Enlightenment and the Age of Revolution. They were reaffirmed following the devastation of two world wars and the Holocaust, through the codification of the UDHR and subsequent UN covenants. In a review of the history of human rights, Lauren (2008) observes that concurrent, complex, confusing and contradictory forces (such as gender, religion, technology, and human atrocities) have both promoted and abused the ideals of human rights.

Social work and human rights

Human rights lie at the very heart of social work, a distinctly value-based profession. Social work is also an action-oriented profession. The International Federation of Social Workers (2000) defines the profession as "promoting social change, problem-solving in human relationships, and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being" and that "human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work." According to Reichert (2006), in the U.S., both the Council on Social Work Education and the National Association of Social Workers call for social work education to include content on human rights.

The linkages between social work and human rights are explicit. Mapp (2008) notes that "a lack of social development creates situations in which violations of human rights can thrive" (p. 23) and specifies three pivotal, interrelated barriers to human freedom: poverty, discrimination, and lack of education. She examines five global problems (forced labor, child welfare, war and conflict, AIDS, and women's issues) and identifies concrete steps that social workers can take and resources that we can employ to address these problems and lower the barriers for people worldwide. Reichert (2006) cautions that social workers often perceive human rights in legalistic terms; subsequently, practitioners may fail to see how human rights are closely linked to social work policies and practices. She provides a comprehensive resource book of exercises to assist students in connecting human rights principles with social work practice. She proposes six primary interventions: challenging oppression, empowerment, strengths perspective, ethnic-sensitive practice, feminist practice, and cultural competence.

Canadian and American students can both claim a strong tie to the UDHR. John P. Humphrey, a national hero in Canada, "... a human rights expert and professor of international law, was appointed as the first director of the human rights division of the UN Secretariat and was the principle drafter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (Feldstein, 2005, p. 184). Eleanor Roosevelt, a highly respected progressive activist, humanitarian, and first lady of the U.S. during the Great Depression and World War II, was Chairperson of the UN Commission on Human Rights. Her leadership was crucial to the successful ratification of this international treaty (America.gov).

Lundy and van Wormer (2007) provide a useful cultural analysis by contrasting social work in the U.S. and Canada. They state that the "discrepancy between social work practice and social

work values is greater in the USA than Canada” (p. 728). Canadian social workers attend more to structural forces, while American social workers emphasize personal skills training. U.S. cultural values are characterized by individualism and moralism, which are often at odds and result, for example, in the lack of universal health care in the U.S. (the only industrialized country without this standard) and the highest level of prison incarceration in the world. Canada, in contrast, “viewed universal social programs as a fundamental right of citizenship” (p. 731), although these programs are currently facing serious challenges. Recent effort to integrate the U.S. and Canada, as evidenced in trade agreements and joint militarization, is leading to a more conservative shift in Canada and the redistribution of public funds away from human services. The NASW Code of Ethics does not specifically address human rights, while the CASW Code of Ethics does (including reference to the UDHR). In particular, “the USA has ratified only that portion of the document that is consistent with the U.S. constitution, in other words, the recognition of political and civil rights [but not economic rights]” (p. 736). Unlike Canada, the U.S. is not a signatory of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Political Rights. Thus, Canadian social workers can use human rights as a means to advocate for both social and economic justice.

Hodge (2006) points out the particular relevance of religious freedom in contemporary times. Article 18 of the UDHR can be succinctly summarized as the right to choose one’s beliefs, to change one’s beliefs, and to express one’s beliefs. Hodge refers to religious persecution as a “global crisis,” with fully one-third of the world’s population living under regimes that restrict religious freedom, and the added problem that religious persecution (as expressed by hatred, intolerance, and discrimination) is steadily increasing throughout the world. Perhaps surprisingly, he reports that the most persecuted religious group in the world is Christians, for several reasons. First, there is currently a major demographic shift from the “West” (“global north”) to Africa, Asia, and Latin America (“global south”). Second, since “the Christian ethos tends to foster democratization and respect for human rights,” authoritarian regimes tend to suppress adherents. Third, in Western secular societies, promoting cultural tolerance through uniformity may diminish religious expression. He concludes that social workers can pursue several strategies to defend religious freedom, from being informed and informing others of this pattern to organizing international divestment campaigns. In particular, social work educators can integrate content on religious freedom into the curriculum.

Global citizenship

“Global citizenship” is a very broad term which is often used synonymously with “multiculturalism” and “globalization.” It implies a moral and ethical responsibility toward human rights, economic fairness, social justice, and environmental sustainability (Demaine, 2005). It is the ideal that a “citizen” has a responsibility to his or her community and an obligation to the welfare of others members of the community, be it local, national, or global. The idea of citizenship is a useful idea to help social work educators make the vague and abstract “global” more immediate and real for our students (i.e., “citizenship” is more person-centered than the frequently used “perspective”). Global citizenship has been applied at the individual or national level; for example, it is a formal component of the English school system (Demaine, 2005). Yet, this concept is rarely, if ever, encountered in the social work literature.

The idea of being a “global citizen” shifts the perspective onto a particular student and peer group as active players in making the world a more just and humane place. It elicits an individual imperative to care for all people, especially children, since we are one human family. Using this approach enhances the possibility of shifting the perspective from “them, there” to “us, here” and assisting students to see our connection to all people. This shift is made easier in the contemporary university classroom in Canada and the U.S. given the easy accessibility of technology and information via the internet. Faculty and students can readily explore the “virtual reality” through websites displaying text, photographs, and videos of people and places throughout the world.

A linkage between global citizenship and universal human rights makes the world a more manageable and personal place. The model presented here narrows the focus down to three essential aspects: literacy, empathy, and responsibility. First, literacy pertains to acquiring a fundamental knowledge of universal human rights; second, empathy refers to developing a sense of concern for the rights of other people; and, third, responsibility addresses taking action. Responsibility encourages students to identify ways that they can apply their abstract knowledge of human rights and empathetic concern for other people into concrete, practical action in their personal and professional lives. This final step can overcome inertia and discouragement and culminate in the awareness that “one person can make a difference” toward creating a better world, through both individual and communal effort.

Human Rights Literacy

All of the documents which comprise the United Nations Agreements on Human Rights are readily available via the internet. As discussed below, familiarity with these documents should be part of every student’s higher education, particularly in social work. In addition, students should have basic knowledge of the philosophical underpinning, historical development, and contemporary debates of these fundamental principles. Basic knowledge of the underlying premises of human rights and familiarity with the specific documents outlining these rights is known as “human rights literacy.”

2008 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the ratification of the UDHR. It was the first document of its kind, the first international statement to use the term “human rights,” and the first to assert that all humans shared certain fundamental rights. It was ratified in 1948 without any dissenting votes. It has been adapted as the charter for the Human Rights Movement (hrweb.org) and is the basis for international law. It is a very straight forward document, only about six pages long. It contains a preamble and thirty articles that serve as a universal standard for all people and all nations. For example, Article One states: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act toward one another in a spirit of brotherhood.” It has been translated into more than 360 languages. The full text is easily accessible via the United Nations website.

The historical importance of this document cannot be overstated. All people, especially social work students, should be minimally informed about human rights and the UDHR. Following the passage of this landmark resolution 217 A (III) on December 10, 1948, the General Assembly called upon all member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and “... to cause it to be

disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories” (un.org).

The UN has produced several subsequent guiding documents on human rights. In addition to the Charter of the United Nations (1945), which addresses human rights, and UDHR (1948), seven additional treaties have been ratified. These include: Convention against Genocide (1948); Conventions on the Amelioration of the Condition of the Wounded and Sick in Armed Forces in the Field (1949) (also known as the Geneva Convention); International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966); International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (1976); Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979); Convention against Torture (1985); and, Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The “International Bill of Human Rights” was formulated in 1966 and consists of the UDHR, ICESCR, and ICCPR. The World Health Organization adopted a General Comment on the Right to Health in 2000, which affirm health as a human right. Further, the WHO General Comment states that this right extends not only to health care but to the determinants of health, such as clean water, adequate sanitation, safe food, housing and working conditions, and access to education and information, including sexual and reproductive health (who.org).

Human Rights Empathy

It is not sufficient that students become merely literate on human rights. Knowledge is a necessary precursor to taking it another step, which is to actually engender concern for the rights of others. It is empathy which bridges knowledge and action. There is a solid literature on human rights empathy. Hunt (2007) argues that human rights are based on our ability to empathize or relate to other people, especially if they are not like us. Thus, empathy requires a delicate balance of recognizing our sameness and respecting our differences.

Sometimes called “empathy education,” empathy can be taught. Essentially the ability to “put oneself in someone else’s experience,” it is an integral component of effective helping. Social work education has a long-standing tradition of teaching empathy toward clients. There are many credible web-based resources available that explore empathy and its implications for human rights. For example, Sugden (2004) discusses the banning of head scarves in Turkey by the European Court of Human Rights and the social and educational implications for the rights of Muslim women in a country that identifies itself as politically secular and democratic (HumanRightsWatch.org).

Students can be helped to develop empathy through reading non-scholarly books as well as viewing films and video clips on the internet. For example, there have been many fascinating first-person accounts written by individuals who have lived through warfare, genocide, torture, and other traumatic experiences. The Media That Matters Film Festival and the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival both highlight films from around the world that explore the issue of human rights. Students can explore the internet and identify projects sponsored by governmental and non-governmental agencies that provide actual on-the-ground solutions around the world. They can be encouraged to self-reflect on the unique privileges of pursuing

a higher education, freely expressing their opinions, and engaging in an open discussion of human rights.

Human Rights Responsibility

The ultimate goal of human rights education is that students will make a connection between knowledge (literacy), concern (empathy), and action (responsibility). Classroom discussion can facilitate students choosing to pursue a long-term goal of becoming advocates and change agents at a local, national, and global level. Ife and Fiske (2006) note, "Rights and responsibilities belong together, and neither can be adequately discussed without reference to the other" (p. 297). While human rights are articulated on an individual level, the responsibility for protecting them is often perceived as a legal or governmental function.

Students should be encouraged to develop a self-perception that they can make a difference in the world. Community development is offered as one familiar social work approach that can foster human rights responsibility. Ife and Fiske (2006) emphasize the commonality between the two, and Meyer (2007) offers a model for infusing content on economic globalization into macro social work practice classes. The important point for social work education is for students to narrow the distance by making connections and taking action at the local, national, and global levels. Lyons (2006) demonstrates how local social work practice in the child care field can have cross-border and international implications. Other possible topics include immigration and asylum (e.g., Badar, 2004), healthcare (e.g., Waterston & Goldhagen, 2007), law enforcement (e.g., Merry, 2003), and human rights for women (e.g., Madhok & Raj, 2006).

Contemporary relevance of global citizenship

The theme of global citizenship, as expressed through human rights, is a pressing concern in the world today. In fact, many Americans have become inured of this topic, and social work students are probably no exception. The challenge is to make this need to be humane toward others experienced in a personal way that cuts through the desensitization and compassion fatigue which seems to underlie a pervasive sense of apathy. Even human rights abuses that occur under the auspices of the United States seem far removed from "reality." In the post 9/11 world, the need to understand human rights and to use the UDHR is particularly relevant.

A necessary precursor to making a personal and professional commitment to global citizenship is to acquire basic knowledge of physical and cultural geography. Americans are typically abysmally uninformed in this regard. The National Geographic Society website presents the results of a recent U.S. survey; students can take an on-line quiz to test their own geographic literacy. Oxfam International developed an interactive website for primary and secondary education which could still be useful at the university level, since it provides a very simple explanation of the social, political, and economic factors which influence the creation and application of maps (oxfam.org). Cartograms are an invaluable visual tool for depicting the world, not in terms of land mass, but in terms of social indicators, such as population, child mortality, and HIV/AIDS rates (e.g., Images of the Social and Economic World; Worldmapper). Having a greater understanding of the world, its people and its cultures can enhance empathy and engender a desire to take action on their behalf.

Conclusion

Global citizenship is the opportunity and obligation of every person, especially those who live in affluent democratic societies. Taking action to promote the rights of others (and to defend one's own rights) requires literacy and empathy. This paper has presented a model that social work educators, particularly in the U.S., can use to instill a commitment for human rights in our students. In turn, they can become not only citizens of the world, but leaders who determine the future of the profession in the 21st century.

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