

A Dedication to Linda Grobman, MSW, ACSW, LSW

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Telling the story of Linda May Grobman, MSW, ACSW, LSW, would be very similar to a chapter out of *Connections* (Burke, 1978). There are multiple and complex pathways to an accurate description of her astonishing work. Keeping these complex pathways in mind, I doubt that I can do her justice or accurately describe her extraordinary talents. There are many divergent streams of relationships that reveal the importance of Linda to the *Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics* and, more importantly, to the profession as a whole.

In addition to being a social worker, Linda is a writer and an entrepreneur who started her own publishing company. I first met Linda May Grobman at the annual conference of the Association of Baccalaureate Social Work Program Directors (BPD). As owner of White Hat Publications, she had a booth displaying all of White Hat's material. I was immediately attracted to *The New Social Worker*. Our profession really needs this magazine. It was well-written, thoughtful, and most importantly, it includes topics of great interest to entry-level social workers and the professors who teach them.

Linda Grobman is a trailblazer. Today, social workers cannot remember the technology phobia that once permeated our profession. *The New Social Worker* trailblazed the integration of internet technology with social work practice. Although laughable



by today's standards, the first volume of *The New Social Worker* included an article titled "Commonly asked questions about electronic communication and computer networking" (Marson, Cogswell & Smith, 1994). Another example was the internet protocol known as UnCover. UnCover was a cutting-edge technology for seeking out the best references for research and practice (Marson, 1999). Although UnCover seemed miraculous, *in a very short time* new technologies made it obsolete. If you google "UnCover," you will discover—nothing. The only record of it is in *The New Social Worker*.

At the beginning of the 21st century, the profession was preoccupied with the ethics of technology. *The New Social Worker* led the way (Marson, 2000). A dominant theme of concern was the transmission of encrypted client information. *The New Social Worker* published "Addressing NASW Standard 1.07m Privacy and Confidentiality" (Marson & Bishop, 2008). In less than three months, the information in this article became obsolete. Back in those days, this critical information was not online or, if it was, it was not easily accessible. The only useful source of good and accurate information included magazines like *The New Social Worker*—or more accurately, Linda Grobman.

During this same time period, the BPD board of directors mandated that the Committee on Information Technology and Distance Education (CITSWE) establish a system to provide BPD members with technological information that could serve across the entire generalist curriculum. The members decided to divide themselves into nine subcommittees, each representing a curriculum area of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

During the first meeting of the Subcommittee on Values and Ethics, a discussion ensued regarding strategies to offer current information about values and ethics to the BPD membership. After much discussion, it was decided that a scholarly and applied journal should be developed. Because no social work journals exclusively addressed the topic of values and ethics, there was an immediate and enthusiastic response among the entire membership. Since that day, two additional journals that address social work values and ethics have emerged.

Searching for a corporate sponsor and/or a publisher took at least three years. The story is funny and provides insight into how capitalists are so incredibly ignorant of the basic workings of capitalism. Two major publishers and several social work organizations passed up a chance to widen their exposure through an enormous amount of free advertising. Why? Although it seems strange today, an online scholarly/practice journal was held under great suspicion. I actually lost friends because of my advocacy of an online journal! I was accused of proposing something unethical! On her own, Linda Grobman had the insight and courage to volunteer to accept *The Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics* as a publication under White Hat. The for-profit publication world has changed its vision of online journals. Today, of course, online journals are commonplace. In fact, online journals probably outnumber paper journals. Linda Grobman was a clear leader in the arena of online publications. She commented:

I was excited to get involved with *The Journal of Social Work Values and Ethics* as its first publisher. It was a unique and innovative new journal, first in terms of its specific emphasis on social work values and ethics—filling a gap in the social work literature—and second as one of the first free, online academic social work journals—making it easily accessible around the world.

The organizations that turned down the journal can be compared to the publishers who rejected J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series. JSWVE has more

than 11,000 subscribers. A number of our articles have had over 40,000 hits on their own merit. These publication titans turned away a significant increase in additional unsolicited traffic flow that would increase sales because they lacked the insight that is a normal part of Linda's daily vision of reality.

Over the course of my life, I have spent a great deal of time in the classroom where I experienced being a student, a teacher, and a learner. It doesn't make any difference what role I was playing, I have had some stunning learning experiences. However, none can compare to what I have learned from the quiet and unassuming Linda Grobman! What a wonderful person and fantastic role model she is!

As a token of appreciation from the Policy and Editorial Boards, we presented Linda Grobman with this commemorative clock on which is engraved:

*There would be no Journal of Social Work
Values and Ethics without you.*

The JSWVE Board 2020



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