

# 14th Annual Social Work Day

Thursday, 16 May 2024

## 20<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry

**Theme: Qualitative Inquiry in the Present Tense:  
Writing a New History**



*Photos from Social Work Day at the Illini Union*

**"All are Welcome"**

**Social Work Day: Energy and Ideas**

Social Work Day is the great social work get-together. Social workers from throughout the world come together to share ideas and draw energy from each other. All methods and topics are welcome. We are particularly interested in papers

that build on the work of Norman Denzin, the founder of the International Congress and a long-time promoter of qualitative social work research. Denzin died in August 2023.

Denzin and social work share a vision and values: a vision of true democracy and the values of human equality, justice, care, hope, and self-determination. We'd like to see an emphasis on this vision and set of values in the 2024 Social Work Day program. Recent scholarship on Jane Addams' contributions to American pragmatism is a great source of ideas about social work's vision and values that complement Denzin's thought. Below is a list of references to get you started.

We'd also like presenters to submit their papers to the special issue of *Qualitative Social Work*. The papers are due on April 30, 2024. The theme of the special issue is *The Power of the Birkenstocks: Critical Social Work and the Denzin A/effect*. Denzin wore Birkenstock sandals, a black short-sleeved shirt, and khaki cargo shorts all year round. He was a powerful presence.

Being part of Social Work Day and the main conference means being with like-minded colleagues to draw upon good energy and generative ideas and go back to your homes and work refreshed and ready to begin again.

## Call for Ideas

### Plenary Session on The Shared Vision and Values of Norman Denzin and Qualitative Social Work Research

In response to global concerns about the rise of the right, we social workers are seeking language and strategies that promote policies and civic discourse that serve the common good. In this plenary, we will share ideas about the vision and values that we have in common with Norman Denzin. These values of human equality, dignity, worth, justice, care, hope, and self-determination. Please email Jane Gilgun at [jgilgun@umn.edu](mailto:jgilgun@umn.edu) with suggestions.

## Suggestions for 2024

Previous participants had suggestions for sessions at Social Work Day. They are

**Speed Consultations:** A take-off on speed dating, seasoned researchers will meet with new and experienced researchers who would like consultation on their work. Like speed dating, each meeting will last 15 minutes, and participants will then move on. The last part of the session will be sharing of experiences.

**A Methodological Track:** Sessions that focus on methods and methodologies typically have larger audiences than those that focus on substantive issues. So, we will make an effort to create a methodological track. In addition, we will encourage each presenter in other sessions to emphasize their methods and methodologies.

**Qualitative Inquiry, Advocacy, and Social Activism:** Many qualitative researchers become advocates and social activists because in our we seek to understand the lived experiences of others who often experience assaults against their dignity, worth, and self-determination. Our in-depth understandings move us to action.

**Roundtable:** Tenure and Qualitative Researchers

**Roundtable:** Constructive responses to challenges in doing qualitative research, such as funding opportunities; IRBs, poor teaching of qualitative research, and lack of mentoring

**Panel/Workshop/Roundtable:** creativity in social work research/arts-based social work research

**Workshop:** Teaching Qualitative Research

**Workshop:** Funding for Qualitative Research;

If any of these click with you, see if you can organize a panel, workshop, or roundtable. You may also chose to write a paper that will become part of a session with a shared theme. If you want to organize a panel, you can check with colleagues by sending a message to the various social work lists. If you don't know how to access the list, please email Social Work Day's organizer, Jane Gilgun, at [jgilgun@umn.edu](mailto:jgilgun@umn.edu).

Other topics are welcome.

## More on Social Work Day

This year's Social Work Day is once again on Thursday where we will be together in one place to share our research. For the following two days, the main conference is on. At the main conference, we will mingle with scholars from about 200 countries and scores of disciplines and be exposed to an amazing variety of ways to do and to present qualitative research

Graduate students, new professors, practitioners, and seasoned professors mingle at Social Work Day. The networking possibilities are endless. If you want to discuss ideas and topics, feel free to contact Jane Gilgun at [jgilgun@umn.edu](mailto:jgilgun@umn.edu). Jane is the convener of the conference and is a professor emerita, School of Social Work, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, USA. If you have additional ideas about sessions, initiatives, publicity, fund-raising, or any other relevant topics, please

contact Jane. She will let you know if others have similar interests and will connect you to other researchers with similar interests.

There will be a celebration of the work of Norman Denzin during the main conference.

### **Staying in Urbana**

Of special note are the cheap rates of staying in University housing—\$40 or less per day. The restaurant food is international and also delicious and cheap, with lots of free food at least four times at receptions and barbeques.

To get a sense of what Social Work Day is like, take a look at the video of Social Work Day. This is the link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWqtSp6CAGo&t=37s>. We have several other videos on YouTube, such as the celebration of Roy Ruckdeschel and Ian Shaw as they stepped down as co-editors of *Qualitative Social Work* and the welcoming of Karen Staller as the new editor. Other videos are on intervention research, reflexivity and qualitative social work research, and the effects of funding on a homeless shelter in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

Once again, please feel free to contact Jane Gilgun at [jgilgun@umn.edu](mailto:jgilgun@umn.edu) for further information and to share ideas for the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Social Work Day, an international event.

### **Sources of ideas for social work's vision for democracy and the values of justice, care, dignity, worth and self-determination**

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### Call for Papers for Special Issue

**The Power of the Birkenstocks: Critical Social Work and the Denzin A/effect**

Submission deadline: April 30, 2024

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We invite researchers and practitioners to submit papers to *Qualitative Social Work (QSW)* for a special issue that seeks to reconnect us to our basic commitment to social justice through honoring the inspiration of Norman K. Denzin.

In the wake of Norman K. Denzin's death in August 2023, the world lost a pioneer in the field of critical qualitative inquiry. Denzin was a bold and ground-breaking scholar, with a personality sized to match. Being a man of visionary spirit, he initiated and stewarded various academic spaces, places where the personal met the professional and the academic, where imagination, creativity and rigorousness could live together. All of those spaces—the International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry (ICQI) that took place in Urbana-Champaign annually since 2005, the qualitative research handbooks he edited, such as *Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* and *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies* that soon became a cornerstone of the academic qualitative community, and the journals he edited *Qualitative Inquiry* and *Cultural Studies---Critical Methodologies*—offered a home for critical interdisciplinary and politically situated discourse and for radical and innovative scholarship.

It is not surprising then, that when the first issue of *QSW* was published in 2002, the lead article was written by Norman Denzin. This first issue was rapidly followed by a special issue on Critical Social Work, edited by Jan Fook (2003). The match between Denzin's school of qualitative research and critical social work was self-evident. Both challenged the hegemonic discourse, both aimed at creating new connections between the personal, the professional and the political, both were committed to social transformation.

During the last 20+ years the world has changed. Neo-liberal ideologies and regimes have strengthened, welfare states have become narrow and hollow, and the academia and the profession have had to face extreme pressures to become the servant of the hegemony, rather than its contending critic. In times like these, critical social work is more important than ever. Its core tenets—centering around issues of power, positionality, subjectivity in a value-based, antioppressive, de-colonializing and liberatory inquiry—are crucial for our world.

We wish to encourage social work scholars to return to the rich library Denzin left us with and to rediscover what we have found there all along— a philosophy of researching and writing the world that is involved and committed. We seek main

papers, new voices, and/or response and commentary on critical social theory, critical pedagogy, critical action in social work practice and /or research. We are looking for emancipatory and liberatory contributions at the intersection of the humanities, arts, and social sciences. We expect these works to draw appropriate links to the scholarship and influences of Denzin. In short, we are looking to showcase the current state of critical social work and to honor the legacy of Noman K. Denzin's enormous contributions.

Submissions should be made through the regular *QSW* submission portal with a cover letter requesting consideration for the special issue.

Submission deadline: April 30, 2024\*  
Submission process: *QSW* see <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/qsw>  
Inquiries about the Special Issue: Karen M. Staller ([kstaller@umich.edu](mailto:kstaller@umich.edu))  
Michal Krumer-Nevo ([kmichal@bgu.ac.il](mailto:kmichal@bgu.ac.il))

\* We urge contributors to consider independently presenting their papers during Social Work Day at the 2024 International Congress of Qualitative Inquiry.

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