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Uncompromising in the Pursuit of Social Justice for All**

Sandra Edmonds Crewe, Annie Woodley Brown and Ruby Morton Gourdine

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Inabel Burns Lindsay

A Social Worker, Educator, and Administrator Uncompromising in the Pursuit of Social Justice for All

Sandra Edmonds Crewe
Annie Woodley Brown
Ruby Morton Gourdine
Howard University

Described as an activist, educator, researcher, and administrator, Inabel Burns Lindsay served as the first dean of the Howard University School of Social Work, and her extraordinary accomplishments have served as a beacon for generations of social work educators and practitioners. During her formative years as a social worker, she honed in on the importance of examining culture in delivering services in the public welfare system. As she built a school of social work, which she described as “second to none,” she served as a moral conscience for the profession and repeatedly demonstrated through her writings and actions an uncompromising pursuit of social justice for all, both inside and outside the profession. This article profiles the courage and leadership skills of this transformational leader and uses her struggle against racism and sexism to inform the current realities of the profession.

Keywords: *cultural competence; social justice; social work education; transformational leadership; social work pioneer*

Social work, like many professions, was compromised by the racial and gender inequalities that were prevalent during its formative years. Maturing as a profession and “taking its full share of responsibility in the achievement of a democratic society” (Lindsay, 1969, p. 23) required the tenacity of pioneers like Inabel Burns Lindsay, who worked relentlessly to promote social justice *for all*. Lindsay (1900–1983) started her pursuit for social justice at an early age and used this upbringing to become a stalwart in the struggle for social justice and racial equality. She served as the first dean of the Howard University School of Social Work, and her extraordinary accomplishments have served as a beacon for generations of social work educators and practitioners. White and Hampton (1995, p. 117) described Lindsay as “an activist, educator, researcher, and an administrator.” Lindsay was one of the first African American women to serve as an academic dean during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s as well as the only woman academic dean of a coeducational college in Washington, DC, during those decades (Howard University, 1957). Despite the major challenges that she faced, including racism, sexism, and ageism, Lindsay represented the moral conscience of social work education through her insistence that the profession police itself while serving others. This article chronicles the defining events of her early life, professional contributions, and challenges within the context of her life (see the time line in Table 1). It concludes with lessons learned that can be applied to contemporary leadership in schools of social work.

Table 1
Time Line: Important Events in the Life of Inabel Lindsay, African American's History and Women's History

1900	Birth year of Inabel Burns Lindsay: February 13, 1900.	The term <i>social worker</i> is coined by Simon L. Patten.
1903–1909	The Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy is established (the predecessor of University of the Chicago School of Social Work); a meeting leading to the Niagara Movement is held (1905); the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is founded (1909).	
1910–1919	The National Urban League is founded (1910); the Children's Bureau is created (1912); Carter G. Woodson founds the Association for the Study of Negro History and Life (1915); the first organization for social workers is established (1917, National Social Workers Exchange); 17 schools of social work in the United States and Canada develop uniform standards (one of two parent organizations of the Council on Social Work Education, 1919).	Lindsay is involved as a student with the Women's Suffragette Movement (1919).
1920–1929	The 19th Amendment to U.S. Constitution is ratified to protect the rights of all citizens to vote, regardless of sex; the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) is formed.	Inabel Burns (Lindsay) receives a bachelor's degree in education from Howard University (1920) and takes a summer fellowship with the Urban League in Cleveland (1921).
1930–1939	The American Public Welfare Association is established. Jane Addams becomes the co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize (1931); President Franklin Roosevelt proclaims the New Deal (1933); the Social Security Act is signed into law (1935); the U.S. Supreme Court upholds minimum-wage laws for women (1937).	Inabel Lindsay receives a master's degree from the University of Chicago and joins the faculty of Howard University. The MSW becomes the required degree for professional social work (1939).
1940–1949	Howard University creates a separate Division of Social Work and grants it independent status in 1940; World War II ends.	Dr. Lindsay writes "Negroes and the National Conference on Social Work" and chairs the American Association of School of Social Work (1942–1946); she writes "Social Work on Trial" (1946).
1950–1959	The McCarthy hearings; <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i> overturns legal school segregation at all levels (1954); the first year of the Montgomery Alabama Boycott (1955); the Southern Christian Leadership Association is formed (1957); The Voting Rights bill of 1957 is passed—the first major civil rights legislation in 75 years.	Dr. Lindsay receives a doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh (1952).
1960–1969	Civil rights sit-ins in Greensboro NC (1960); the March on Washington civil rights demonstration is held (1963); the Equal Pay Act is passed by Congress promising pay equity without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, or sex; "The Influence of Sociocultural Factors in the American Family Today (1963)," presented at the meeting of the American Public Welfare Association; the 24th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution forbids the use of the poll tax to prevent voting (1964); Title VII of the Civil Rights Act is	Lindsay is a delegate to the White House Conference on Civil Rights (1966); she delivers the Howard University Centennial Address, "One Hundred Years of Race Relations" (August 1967); she retires after 30 years of service to social work education.

(continued)

Table 1 (continued)

passed—prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin or sex (1965); Malcolm X is assassinated; the worst summer of racial disturbances in U.S. history, 40 riots and 100 disturbances (1966); Dr. Martin Luther King is assassinated (1968). *Weeks v. Southern Bell* triumphs over restrictive labor laws and company regulations on hours and conditions of women's work, thus opening many male-only jobs to women; the U.S. Supreme Court overturns state laws prohibiting prescriptions for the use of contraceptives by married couples (1965); the concept of Black power is adopted by the Congress of Racial Equality and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Council; the Black Panther Party is established.

Note: The time line is based on *Milestones in the Development of Social Work and Social Welfare* (Barker, 1999), *Events in African American History* (Gale CENGAGE Learning, 2008), and *Timeline of Legal History of Women* (National Women's History Project, 2002). In 1982, Howard University conferred an honorary PhD in humanities on Dr. Lindsay, and in 1985, and named the School of Social Work building in her honor. Dr. Lindsay died in September 1983 at the age of 83.

Formative Social Work Years: The Foundations of Social Consciousness

It is difficult to isolate any one experience that had a dramatic impact on Lindsay's desire to enter the field of social work, yet there are accounts of her early life that forecasted her lifelong fight for social justice. Matthews (1976) presented the importance of education in her family. Her maternal great-grandparents, Margaret and Louis Hartshorn, gained their freedom before the Emancipation Proclamation and migrated from Virginia to Missouri to start a new settlement. Although formally uneducated themselves, they sacrificed \$1 a month for their granddaughter, Lindsay's mother, to attend the county-consolidated schools. Lindsay's mother, Margaret Hawkins Burns, like many Black parents at that time, made great sacrifices for children to receive a good education. Matthews (1976) stated, "Maggie Burns worked as a domestic or at anything she could do, so that her children could have the opportunity for an education" (p. 26). Specific evidence of the sacrifice of Black parents lies in the literature documenting the establishment of schools by African Americans during the Progressive Era. Johnson and Staples (2005) described in detail the Reconstruction-era determination of Blacks to educate their children through self-sacrifice and building their own educational institutions. After attending a graduation ceremony with her husband at the new "colored" high school in St. Joseph, Missouri, Mrs. Burns persuaded him to move to the city to be near the school (Lindsay, 1980), where their children later graduated with honors. This early emphasis on education in the Burns household served as a precursor for Inabel Burns Lindsay's 30 years as an educator. As Lindsay (1980) stated, "[I] came from a family that never let you forget the supreme importance of education" (personal communication, n.d.).

As an eighth grader, Inabel Burns became the first Black child in her town to enter an essay contest. She exhibited early signs of social awareness by writing on the prevention of tuberculosis in response to her older brother's death from the rampant disease. However,

when the contest was judged, for the first time there were two winners, a White winner and Inabel, a Black winner, who was listed as second place. This early encounter with social injustice undoubtedly influenced her lifelong work to eradicate the injustices that her mother and others of that generation reluctantly accepted as something with which they had to cope during their lifetimes (Hawkins & Daniels, 1985). Showing her independence, she changed her name as a child from Ina Belle to Inabel to avoid having the same name as a neighboring White girl. Also, as a young girl, Inabel overcame a serious physical disability that kept her out of school for a period of years. These early encounters contributed to the development of a resilient woman who knew her own mind and would be able to appreciate and respect the sacrifices that her parents made for her to attend Howard University.

Inabel Burns arrived at Howard University at age 16. At Howard, she reinforced her talents and leadership skills and broadened her perspective on social causes to include the women's movement. In her oral memoir, she dated her interest in social work as beginning at Howard University (Lindsay, 1980).

I learned more about social work in a volunteer way at Howard as a student because I was in the women's movement, I was in the campus YWCA, I was an active leader in my class, on the editorial board of our yearbook. And when I'd write things they'd always have a social focus...or focus in that direction. Our yearbook, way back there in 1916, predicts that I am going to be a social worker. (p. 33)

Although social work was just in its infancy at that time, Inabel Burns had so distinguished herself, along with such peers as E. Franklin Frazier, that her peers connected her to this new profession. According to Platt (1991, p. 34), "At Howard, students were not simply vicarious participants in movements for social change who reacted and responded to the world around them, but also a critical part of these movements, direct participants who helped to shape their vision and militancy." Platt also noted that "the feminist movement at Howard was sufficiently strong to be able to send the only college delegation to march in a huge suffrage parade in Washington, DC" (p. 24). As a student activist, Inabel was vice president of the YWCA; basileus of Alpha Kappa Alpha, an African American women's sorority founded at Howard University; and founder of the Howard chapter of the Women's Suffrage League (Hawkins & Daniels, 1985). She would certainly have been influenced by the same currents of thought and intellectual ferment that informed the intellectual growth of E. Franklin Frazier who also studied at Howard University.

Inabel Burns received a bachelor of arts degree in education in 1920 with a major in mathematics. By the time graduation drew near, Inabel expressed her misgivings about teaching as her profession. Instead, encouraged by Edward C. Williams, Howard University's chief librarian, she accepted an Urban League fellowship to study in the field of social work. The Urban League, founded almost 100 years ago, is a national African American social service organization that has historically fought job and housing discrimination. Early in its history, it organized work councils, disseminated information on the status of Black America, and made an effort to increase the number of Blacks who were trained as professional social workers by providing fellowships for advanced study. According to Martin and Martin (1995), Inabel Burns was one of the few women who received the fellowship during that time. After graduating and receiving the Urban League fellowship, she attended the New York School of Social Work, where she completed one year of a two-year certificate program. It was here that she met E. Franklin Frazier, a fellow Howard graduate, who completed his studies the year she entered Howard. Meeting Frazier

there was fortuitous for her because many years later, it was he who called her to Howard to develop the social work department (Lindsay, 1980). Unfortunately, her mother's illness forced Inabel to return to Missouri and to begin her career as a teacher.

What could have been a setback proved to be an opportunity. As a teacher, her success with her combined fourth- and fifth-grade class of children with behavioral problems established her leadership skills, which she attributed to the use of her social work skills. Later, Inabel Lindsay stated how she used her social work training to instill pride and self-identity in children from deprived neighborhoods (Lindsay, 1980). Thus, integrating her social work knowledge into her teaching, she achieved success with students who had essentially been written off by the school system.

In 1925, Inabel Burns married Arnett Lindsay, and they lived in St. Louis. In deference to the times and the expectation that women would not work once they married, the couple agreed that she would give up her teaching job and reevaluate her situation after one year. Inabel Lindsay stated that she did not work during the first year of marriage because her husband had old-fashioned ideas about women working (Lindsay, 1980). Before the year was up, however, she was contacted by the Urban League with a request to repay her Urban League fellowship by being a research assistant for a survey in Springfield, Illinois, which was being conducted by the eminent sociologist Charles D. Johnson. At that time, many urban communities were experiencing racial riots that followed the reentry of African American World War I veterans who had served in Europe, where they glimpsed equality and were distressed by their return to a segregated America. It was thought that recommendations resulting from the study would help ease racial tensions in the community.

After the study was published in the local newspaper, Inabel Lindsay received numerous offers for employment as a social worker in St. Louis. She settled on the St. Louis Provident Association, the largest private social agency in St. Louis and a member of the Family Welfare Association of America (Matthews, 1976). This decision made it possible for her to be involved in the development of public welfare in St. Louis. When the St. Louis Relief Administration was organized in 1930, in response to the beginning of the Great Depression, the staff of private agencies (which formerly distributed funds on federal grants) was invited to come to staff the new agency. Inabel Lindsay saw this as an exciting venture, and she and several others went to the public agency and were instrumental in its growth (Matthews, 1976). She advanced in the ranks from senior caseworker to district supervisor. In 1935, with the passage of the Social Security Act, states were mandated to establish statewide relief services. Lindsay was already positioned to become a player in the development of public welfare in St. Louis. Her district, with "the beautiful offices" and the rigor of her organizational skills, became the showplace of welfare administration in St. Louis. Although Lindsay progressed in leadership, it was not without the usual display of racial discrimination in the public welfare system and professional organizations during the 1930s. For example, she complained that the Missouri Chapter of the American Association of Social Workers claimed to be an "all-embracing" professional organization, though practicing overt discrimination by always appointing a Black member to serve as the secretary (Matthews, 1976). This task fell to Lindsay from 1934 to 1937; she resented the racism inherent in the appointment and deliberately sabotaged this patronizing assignment through poor performance. According to Matthews (1976), the following July 8, 1937 communication from Frank Bruno, dean of the Washington University School of Business and Public Communication, to Marion Hathway, dean of the University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work, confirmed her defiance related to this position:

It has been the custom of the State Chapter of the American Association of Social Workers to elect a colored person as secretary and Mrs. Lindsay, because of her otherwise outstanding ability was chosen for that position....The minutes she read were deadly dull...because of the very omissions, and the whole experience left me with the impression of a sullen and dumb negro....My interpretation of her explanation is that she may have felt that the office was given to her in a patronizing manner and she resented it...a record which all who know her...said she was second to none among her own people...she had gathered together and welded into a coherent staff the available workers and showed ability as a teacher, supervisor, and administrator. (pp. 85-86)

In the midst of a distinguished social work career in St. Louis, marked by advocacy for clients and self, Lindsay left to complete her degree at the New York School of Social Work. Despite some resistance from her adviser, she completed her degree at the University of Chicago in one year and received her master's degree in 1937. Lindsay was recommended by university officials for a prestigious position as the director of social services in a psychiatric hospital in Chicago, but she had other plans for her career at that time. Having already begun to write and explore race and class as issues in the provision of human services, Lindsay refocused her energy on teaching, with the goal of ensuring the presence of African American professionals in social work to meet the needs of clients of African descent.

This formative professional period in St. Louis proved important to Lindsay in other ways. It was during this period that she met and worked with three social workers who would figure prominently in her efforts to build a school of social work at Howard University and desegregate the field placement agencies for African American students. These social workers would respond to her call as she had responded to Frazier's call to come to Howard and assist in the work of developing a school of social work. Alice Taylor (Davis), Ophelia Settles (Egypt), and Mary Huff (Diggs) were colleagues in St. Louis and worked beside Lindsay in an organization that emphasized supplemented employment opportunities, rather than handouts (Matthews, 1976). This work, along with her faculty status at Howard University, contributed to Lindsay being accused in later years of being a communist. Also during her early years as a social worker, Lindsay began publishing her ideas about social work practice in *Opportunity*, the Urban League's monthly publication that published both social commentary and literary pieces. One of her first published articles, "Some Unimportant People," emphasized her passion for social justice for individuals who were often ignored by social systems (Lindsay, 1927). Her passion for the profession and those whom it served was taking shape during the formative period of her professional social work practice.

Building an Institution "Second to None"

Lindsay's formative experiences prepared and perhaps destined her for the ultimate task of building a school of social work at her alma mater, Howard University. There were board of trustees actions as early as 1914 addressing the establishment of a social work program at Howard University (Logan, 1969). Years later, in 1930, Lucy Diggs Slowe, dean of women at Howard University, documented the interest of more than 30 women students in having a social work program (Howard University, 1987). It was under the leadership of E. Franklin Frazier, then-chairman of the Department of Sociology at Howard and former dean of the Atlanta University School of Social Work (now Clark-Atlanta University), that

the nucleus of a social work program began. Howard University's role in social work education at that time was paramount because Blacks were typically not allowed to attend majority institutions (Lindsay, 1969; Matthews, 1976). Even more telling was the establishment of the program under Frazier, who was controversial for "his uncompromising stance on racial justice" and whose "outlook and energy quickly brought him into conflict with both White racists and Black intellectuals ready to accommodate the status quo" (Chandler, 2001, p. 193). Returning to Howard, his alma mater, following his bitter departure from the Atlanta University School of Social Work, Frazier suggested the establishment of a radical program that was often at odds with the leadership in the social work community.

In 1937, Lindsay joined Frazier in the Department of Sociology as the second full-time faculty member in the Social Work Program and systematically approached building a school of social work grounded in social justice. During that time, Frazier had become increasingly disillusioned with the social work profession (Platt, 1991). For three decades, Lindsay focused on building and maturing an institution that emphasized the links between cultural awareness and effective practice. In 1939, the Board of Trustees of the university created a separate Division of Social Work in the Graduate School, and Inabel Lindsay was appointed acting dean. Lindsay's vision for the program is articulated by the following comment:

It is hoped that the Graduate Division of Social Work at Howard will provide studies of the influence of the factor of race, since little research as been done in that area. Likewise, there must be a particularization of information relative to the status of problems of the Negro in the United States. (quoted in Matthews, 1976, p. 106)

When social work at Howard University grew from a division to a school, Lindsay became the acting dean. She described how she helped the university look for a "man" dean because of its preference for a man and her lack of interest in administration (Lindsay, 1980). But the salary that the university offered did not attract the caliber of candidates that the university was interested in hiring. Lindsay noted that none of the men who headed national organizations (the ranks from which the university hoped to attract a candidate) would take the cut in pay required to accept the job at Howard "in spite of my canvassing the field carefully." She was acting dean when the School of Social Work came up for accreditation. Under no illusion of how she came to the deanship of the school, Lindsay acknowledged the following circumstances that contributed to her serving as dean in her oral history for the Schlesinger Library (1977). She stated that the Association of Schools of Social Work indicated that it would not accredit a school with an acting dean, and her title was promptly changed to dean by the university administration. With Lindsay already prepared and positioned for leadership, the circumstances ironically created the access that would normally have been denied her as a woman. An article entitled "Gentler Sex Play Integral Roles" documented that during that time, Howard University and surrounding universities had no women who were academic deans (Howard University, 1957); thus, Lindsay was among the first to crack the glass ceiling for women in academia.

The School of Social Work was granted independent status in 1940. Lindsay's vision for the school required a curriculum that reflected an understanding of the impact of racial, social, and cultural factors on human beings and their importance in shaping human behavior and that responded to the needs of all people, but especially Black people. Achieving these goals would require the pursuit of the highest standards of scholarship and skill (Howard University, 1957). Lindsay was insistent that this be done through an institution that was "second to none." She saw no conflict and insisted that there was no conflict in giving attention to persons of African descent and being the best school of social work.

Although focused on building an institution second to none, Lindsay also accepted the challenge of having the profession examine its position on race. In an article, "Negroes and the National Conference of Social Work," Lindsay (1941, p. 271), complained about the decision of the National Conference of Social Work to hold its 1942 meeting in New Orleans, where local hotels would not consider offering accommodations to African Americans.

Shall the National Conference of Social Work help to vitalize democracy by refusing to accept those practices which would keep democracy in America a hollow shell, or shall social workers contribute to undermining its foundation by tacit acceptance of race prejudice? Many social workers, both White and colored, fervently hope that the conference will not destroy the faith of those who believe that the ideal of democracy in action is best realized by a crusading uncompromising conference.

This publication gives an indication of her advocacy and insistence that the profession of social work should lead by example. Another example of her advocacy during this period is her article, "What the Current Housing Upheaval Means to Negroes" (Lindsay, 1947, p. 21), in which she stated,

The victory guns are now trained on the 80th Congress which will consider the fate of the Wagner-Ellender-Taft General Housing Bill. Nothing can stop their smashing drive except a strong counter-attack by organizations representing the interests of the people.... There is no housing emergency? Unless the people can make the 80th Congress feel the force of their demands above those who profit from their despair, there will not even be hope.

Her insistence on the critical examination of public policies in terms of their impact on the poor and disenfranchised is her trademark. One such example of this was her role along with her students in changing the policy of the Johns Hopkins Hospital regarding banning Blacks from eating in the lunch room. Matthews (1976) also cited Lindsay's activism in the nation's Capitol as she joined others in boycotting and desegregating the University's Women's Club, the National Theatre, and other government cafeterias. Lindsay was unrelenting in her insistence that right overtake wrong. Another example was her call for professional self-awareness in her 1946 address to the Tenth Annual Conference of the Middle Atlantic Conference of Social Work on Problems Among Negroes, in which she advocated for African American social workers to examine their responsibility and obligation to society. This address, "Social Work on Trial" (Lindsay, 1946), strongly urged [African American] social workers to recognize their unique ability to address the needs of special populations and simultaneously work for "One World" (p. 31). It emphasized the role of African American social workers as a link not only to their clients but also to the broader community. The following passage from the speech shows her passion about this issue:

Our subject thus becomes an expression of concern as to whether we as [African American] social workers have defined our responsibility accurately, whether we have met it adequately, and whether we see clearly the path ahead. In defining our obligation, there is little doubt that we should all agree that this or any other group of social workers of any minority must be concerned first with the broad issues facing all social workers. Only in such a framework can we fit special needs of specific groups. (I would go one step further and say that it is the obligation of any social workers to think *first* of the overall problems and need and only secondly of race.) This point of view is admittedly one in which all will not agree. (p. 16)

Could this have been an issue on which she and Frazier differed, given his staunch insistence that race matters in the distribution of resources in the United States? Clearly, Lindsay was a woman of controversy within her race with the convictions to act on her beliefs. Similarly, Frazier was equally vocal about his beliefs. The exploration of her relationship with Frazier is one that could yield important insights into her growth as a dean; however, no written materials have yet revealed specific encounters between the two. Yet the following account of her relationship in her oral memoir with the president of the university offers some added insights:

I don't think the president of the university,...Dr. Mordecai Johnson, ever really accepted me as a fully equipped and qualified administrator. He, so to speak, figuratively patted me on the head...now be a good girl. And he always addressed me as daughter. I wasn't ever to him Dean Lindsay or Dr. Lindsay, an efficient and able administrator. (Lindsay, 1980, p. 56)

Lindsay (1980) described gender as her major problem at Howard University. She described the university as “a predominantly male population where the idea of a woman being an executive was a little foreign and difficult for some men to take” (p. 56). As incredible as it seems, when she retired from Howard University in 1967, she was still the only female academic dean in Washington, DC-area universities. Despite the challenges of gender discrimination, her determination to achieve approval for a 2-year MSW degree was unshakable and resulted in the achievement of full accreditation, in 1943–1944, of the Master's Degree in Social Work Program. This accomplishment freed her to become more engaged in her personal development and continued activism and advocacy for the social work profession.

Activism and Advocacy

In 1952, Lindsay received a doctorate degree in social work from the University of Pittsburgh. Her dissertation was entitled, *The Contributions of Negroes to the Establishment of Welfare Services: 1865–1900, with Special Reference to the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia*. The following passage from her dissertation, repeated in a 1956 article, shows her passion about the inclusion of African Americans in the history of the profession:

At the same time that Jane Addams and Ellen Starr were embarking upon their great adventure at Hull House, a young woman, a contemporary of theirs, was employing the facilities of her new bride's home at Hampton, Virginia in the interest of underprivileged Negro children there. In 1889, Mrs. Janie Porter Barrett organized club groups of little girls whom she had found playing in the streets. (Lindsay, 1956, p. 23)

Almost 50 years later, Carlton-Laney (2001) reemphasized the critical role of women's clubs during the Progressive Era and their critical omission in the social work literature. She stated, “These organizations as well as similar ones, and their charismatic leadership provided the foundation and framework for social welfare service delivery in the African American community” (p. xiii). Similarly, Lindsay (1956) explained the importance of her dissertation research by writing, “Little attention has been given in historical studies to the development of welfare services, and studies of the Negro in America have followed the usual pattern of relegating consideration of welfare services to the historically unimportant” (p. 15).

Her dissertation was translated to her agenda for the Howard University School of Social Work to assume leadership in making public welfare culturally relevant by ensuring that there were workers (both Black and White) who were trained to address casework from a person-in-environment framework. Thus, under the leadership of Lindsay, the Howard University School of Social Work was, by design, an integrated and inclusive school of social work with a mission of producing culturally competent social workers of all races and ethnicities. Appreciating the urgency of change during that period, Lindsay targeted the desegregation of staff at public welfare offices. She insisted that racial disparities in the public welfare systems be eliminated by creating both field placement and job opportunities for Black social workers in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. She understood the importance of partnerships in achieving this agenda and actively engaged with numerous local and national organizations.

Lindsay held leadership positions in many of these organizations. The organizations included the American Association of Social Workers (a member for social work and human rights as well as of the executive committee), Family Welfare Association of America, the National Conference of Social Work (member of the committee of social action, nominating committee on professional education, and planning committee), the American Academy of Political and Social Science, the National Social Welfare Assembly (member of the executive board), Planned Parenthood Federation (member of the program advisory committee), and the American Association of University Professors. Lindsay also served on the Baker's Dozen Board of Directors, a community-based facility that is still operational at Howard University School of Social Work. Founded in 1944, Baker's Dozen was an organization comprised of 13 determined African American women members of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority who decided to commit themselves actively to seek solutions to the problem of juvenile delinquency, a pervasive issue during that time (see Howard University School of Social Work, 2004).

Activism was the signature of the second decade of Lindsay's leadership. As we previously mentioned, Lindsay was one of the members of the Howard faculty who was summoned to appear before Senator Joseph McCarthy's House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) to answer false accusations of communist activity. During this repressive period, many social work faculty members across the country "retreated from advocacy for social justice to focus on the development of professional technique and professionalization" (Andrews & Reisch, 1997, p. 35). Lindsay recalled that during her tenure as dean, she and Marion Hathaway (University of Pittsburgh) were the only professional social workers in leadership roles who dared to stand in a receiving line organized as a part of a reception for the Progressive Party's presidential candidate Henry Wallace (Andrews & Reisch, 1997; Reisch & Andrews, 1999). Lindsay's response to the accusations of communism is evidence of her unwavering commitment to social justice. Although she denied being a communist, years later Lindsay was on McCarthy's list of 30 communists on Howard's campus. Lindsay, like others, was called before the HUAC in the early 1950s. When she testified to an FBI agent for more than 2 hours about a number of organizations that she supported, she affirmed her support for the organizations and emphasized that she supported movements that advocated for equality and justice for all. According to Reisch and Andrews (1999), her candor and courage were *the exception* in the field of social work when faced with the McCarthyist attacks. The readings of her encounter with the FBI during the McCarthy era telegraph her personality. For example, she denied being a communist because "it was against her religion" (Kernan, 1970, p. B2), and she challenged the assertion that the Social Work Today organization was on the Attorney General's subversive list. When the FBI advised her that it

was on the HUAC's list, she replied "Oh, them! Everything's on their list! I wouldn't pay any attention to them" (Kernan, 1970, p. B2).

As Lindsay stood firm on attacks from outside, she was yet bracing to face internal challenges related to racial identity and the emergence of "Black Pride Movement" on the Howard University campus. For Lindsay, the mid-1940s through the mid-1950s was a time of activism that was a prelude to the civil rights legislation to come in the mid-1960s.

New Horizons: Internationalizing and Contextualizing Social Work

During Lindsay's first decade as dean, the Howard University School of Social Work became internationally recognized. In fact, the school hosted the 13th International Congress of Schools of Social Work in 1965. Lindsay was instrumental in establishing social welfare studies in Jamaica, Norway, and Sweden, and her work had taken her abroad six times, including a 1958 visit to Scandinavia for a U.S. State Department survey of social welfare programs for the aged (Kernan, 1970; Pearson, 1983). This and other international work added to the global mission of the school. This international focus fulfilled Lindsay's dream of working to eradicate injustice throughout the world and to broaden and contextualize her unique articulation of the person-in-environment framework to other cultures. A 1967 article firmly established her lifelong emphasis on the need for sociocultural practice. It laid the foundation for the Black Perspective, developed at the Howard University School of Social Work in the 1970s. The following quotation articulates her view of the importance of culture (Lindsay, 1969):

Understanding of the socio-cultural component in social change is essential if social workers are to cope with it most effectively. When we speak of culture, we are referring to the total life way of a people. It includes walking, talking, eating and dressing, as well as attitudes, standards, values, and beliefs. Culture is sometimes explained as the structures and processes designed by a society to meet and solve its problems. (p. 17)

Her emphasis on culture is considered by some to be the precursor of contemporary models of cultural competence.

Lindsay's membership and leadership in a plethora of local and national organizations served as a venue for infusing her position on culture. Lindsay was an adviser to the secretary of health, education, and welfare and a member or leader of such organizations as the Society for the Study of Social Problems, Administrative Women in Education, President's Task Force on Aging, Baltimore Civil Service Commission, State Merit Systems, President's Council on Juvenile Delinquency, and American Public Welfare Association.

As Lindsay approached retirement, she acknowledged the difficulty of intergroup conflict among African Americans. Observing the militancy of the period, she expressed hope for changes without violence and stated that one could get only "destruction from destruction" and that the lack of communication between groups was a "tragedy of our struggle" (Kernan, 1970, p. B2). Having worked for 30 years to build and nurture an institution that had grown to one of the 15th-largest schools of social work in the country (Pearson, 1983), Lindsay retired in 1967. As Matthews (1976) stated, "In spite of her effectiveness as an administrator, Dr. Lindsay felt stultified in administration. She did not have the time to write as she had wanted to do" (p. 224). Although three years from the mandatory age of retirement, Lindsay "made it clear that she was not retiring" (Matthews, 1976, p. 224). Consistent with her philosophy about life, retirement for her presented the opportunity to

take on new challenges, such as advocacy for the needs of older African Americans and calling attention to the “double jeopardy” of being Black and old in America in the 1960s (Crewe, 2005). She wrote *The Multiple Hazards of Age and Race: The Situation of Aged Blacks in the United States* (Lindsay, 1971). After her retirement, she remained tireless in her struggle for human rights. A 1970 *Washington Post* article (Kernan, 1970) described her singular dedication in its title “She Can’t Quit Helping People.” In that article, Kernan presented her conviction and fervent feelings about change as follows:

I keep trying to quit, she said softly, but I can’t give up now. There is always something. My big interest now is the National Council on Aging (she is secretary of the board). But I’d devote all of my time to home rule for the District if I could....Just seven years ago she and her husband, Arnett G. Lindsay, were reminded when apartment hunting on Columbia Road that even at this late date the District has a race problem. Rather than wait out the required “approval by the board” for their application to an all-White building, they moved instead to Harbour Square in Southwest. (p. B2)

In 1982, Howard University awarded Lindsay an honorary doctorate of humane letters degree, and in 1985, the building that houses the Howard University School of Social Work was named Inabel Burns Lindsay Hall. The 50th anniversary commemorative report of the School of Social Work stated that this was “a permanent acknowledgement of the outstanding contribution of a Black woman to our history and the field of education” (Howard University, 1987, p. 13). The report summarized Lindsay’s legacy by declaring,

She had pioneered the incorporation into the curriculum the knowledge of racial, social, and cultural factors and their impact on human behavior, and the thesis that problems of behavior were as much an outcome of social and economic inequities as of emotional dysfunction. Her battle against discrimination and injustice never ceased. (p. 29)

Conclusion

It was against the tapestry of discrimination that Inabel Burns Lindsay emerged as a leader in the field of social work education with the agenda of eradicating injustice. During her life, it appears that every stage made her more keenly aware of the continuing social ills that required advocacy by a broad sector to achieve positive outcomes. In their article on her in the *Encyclopedia of Social Work*, White and Hampton (1995) introduced Lindsay to us as an educator, activist, researcher, and administrator. This article confirms her accomplishments in these areas.

As an educator, Lindsay understood the importance of training social workers who were grounded in the culture of their clients and used this knowledge to effectuate change in the individual and the broader community. She described her social work pedagogy as the socio-cultural perspective, and it is embodied in the contemporary social work curricula as cultural competence, the strengths perspective, empowerment, and the ecological perspective. All these approaches give primacy to the importance of culture and environment in the delivery of effective services. As an educator, Lindsay grounded hundreds of Howard-educated social workers in the sociocultural perspective—the Howard tradition of social work practice.

As an activist, Lindsay challenged those who rejected her view of “One World.” She advocated for the profession of social work to assess its role in promulgating unjust policies to members of the profession who were Black. Similar to her contemporary, E. Franklin

Frazier, Lindsay insisted that social work reject any venue that relegated Black social workers to unequal conditions. She fought vehemently against policies that affirmed segregation in action or in deed. Her activism included working with Black social workers to ensure that they first remained true to their calling as social workers and second to the myriad of needs caused by social injustice. Lindsay's scholarship also became a part of her activism. For example, in one of her earliest writings, entitled "Some Unimportant People," Lindsay (1927) chastised the system for overlooking individuals who had been otherwise rejected by society. Lindsay's British contemporary Barbara Wootton shared this assessment of U.S. social work when she argued that as a matter of expediency, there is a need for a multidimensional approach to social problems (Johnson, 2008). There is probably no better evidence of Lindsay's activism than her being called before the HUAC during the McCarthy era. Lindsay was obviously a person of interest because she spoke out about matters of injustice and was a member of Social Work Today, an organization that was considered to be the training ground for lawyers and teachers who had taken positions in social work during the Great Depression (Kernan, 1970).

As a researcher, Lindsay collected evidence on areas of disparate treatment and outcomes of African Americans. She used her research to document the severity of certain problems and to gain a consensus to address the problems. Her research was extremely important as she sought to change the inequities of hiring practices and educational opportunities for African Americans. In addition, her vision of Howard University School of Social Work, as influenced by the Howard mission and by E. Franklin Frazier, was a social work program informed by culturally relevant research, rather than strictly anecdotal information.

As an administrator, Lindsay shepherded the social work program at Howard to a fully accredited program that offered a unique sociocultural perspective of social work born out of the experience of the oppression of Blacks. As an administrator, she displayed tenacity and provided the leadership needed to build the institution during a time of blatant racial and gender oppression. As an African American woman administrator, she led by example without the benefit of other African American women to serve as mentors for her deanship. She was indeed a pioneer who illuminated the pathway for the African American women who have followed in her footsteps and who serve as deans of schools of social work today.

Currently a growing number of women serve as deans and continue the exemplary leadership displayed by Lindsay. There are some clear lessons to be learned from her experiences as the founding dean of a school of social work "second to none." First, relationships are important. Lindsay benefited from her camaraderie with Frazier. Although much is not documented about their relationship during her deanship at Howard, there is evidence that their mutual time at the New York School of Social Work served as an important nexus to her becoming the founding dean of the Howard University School of Social Work. Also, her networks with other women in the field proved to be important in assembling her initial staff of conscientious and likeminded individuals about the importance of Howard having a school second to none.

Second, building an institution requires a person who is willing to accept setbacks and mold them into opportunities. From childhood, Lindsay experienced setbacks that could have destroyed her spirit, but she rallied to respond proactively with a more determined spirit. This unconquerable spirit was evident in her leadership role at Howard. Yes, she was most likely disrespected because of ageism, racism, and sexism. Yet she recognized the challenges and forged ahead and accomplished greatness in the face of incredible odds while holding to the highest of standards. Taking on a cause greater than herself allowed her the stamina needed to fight and become victorious in a plethora of battles.

The third lesson that can be learned from Lindsay's legacy is the pitfall of women becoming overly involved in "nurturing" an institution and sacrificing their scholarship in other areas, such as publications and funded research. Although Lindsay wrote a substantial number of articles, they were never assembled into a book or monograph with which she became identified that would institutionalize her work. No doubt if she could relive her experiences, she would do it the same way because of her transformational style of leadership that is more focused on helping followers reach their fullest potential than personal recognition. Transformational leaders focus on getting followers to "transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the team or organization" (Bass, 1985, p. 20). To achieve this goal, they emulate the desired behavior. Although the nurturing has extraordinary value, in the case of Lindsay and many women in the academy, it can result in decreased recognition of the person and increased recognition of the institution. Inabel Burns Lindsay was an icon who reflected the inextricable link between racial pride and gender pride for a generation of African American women who were forced by the evil twins of racism and sexism to the backroom of scholarship. Nevertheless, she gave hope to a generation of social workers and their clients. Her legacy is a beacon for future generations of women who will accept the call of leadership in the social work profession and continue her call for social justice in a variety of venues. Considering the span of her work and the inability of a single article to do justice to her legacy, this article has profiled her courage and accomplishments and called to the attention of the profession and its future leaders her life and leadership in the profession and her uncompromising devotion to social justice for all.

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Sandra Edmonds Crewe, PhD, is an associate professor in the School of Social Work, Howard University, 601 Howard Place, NW, Washington, DC 20059; e-mail: secrewe@howard.edu.

Annie Woodley Brown, DSW, is an associate professor in the School of Social Work, Howard University, 601 Howard Place, NW, Washington, DC 20059; e-mail: abrown@howard.edu.

Ruby Morton Gourdine, DSW, is a professor and director of field education in the School of Social Work, Howard University, 601 Howard Place, NW, Washington, DC 20059; e-mail: rgourdine@howard.edu.