



KENDALL INSTITUTE

Katherine A. Kendall Institute for
International Social Work Education

International Social Work Leader Review

Dr. Doreen Elliot (1910–2018)

CSWE Commission on Global Social Work Education

Biography

Dr. Elliott was born in England and obtained her formal education in her native country. She earned her bachelor of arts, with honors, from Queen Mary University of London; a postgraduate certificate in education from the University of Hull, England, Institute of Education; her advance diploma in the educational rehabilitation of young people from the University of London, England, Institute of Education; and her doctoral degree from the University of Wales, United Kingdom, School of Social Work, University College Cardiff, UK. Dr. Elliott started her career in social work academia as a faculty member at the University of Wales. She spent 1986–1987 as a visiting associate professor for the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) and returned to UTA from 1988 to 1992 as an associate professor. From 1992 until her retirement in 2013 she held the position of professor. Besides her regular responsibilities as professor of social work, she always took additional duties. She served as acting associate dean and interim director (1992–1993), administrative intern in the Office of the Provost (1994–1995), and director and graduate advisor of the doctoral program (1993–1998). During this period (1995–1997) she led a curriculum planning team that established the joint doctoral program in comparative international social policy with the Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo León, Monterrey, Mexico. In 2004 she was awarded the title distinguished teaching professor. Dr. Elliott is now professor emerita at UTA. In 2018 she was inducted as a Social Work Leader, under the international social work category, by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW). In 2018 she passed away, after making astonishing contributions to the field of international social work for more than 38 years.

She was a renowned social work educator and scholar who made groundbreaking contributions to the theory and practice of international social work education and global development. Her enthusiasm and dedication led her to become an outstanding social worker, distinguished professor, gifted researcher and innovator, prolific writer, and a committed mentor and advisor. Throughout her career she strived to advance theories as well as practical strategies to expand the scope of international social work education. She left a legacy that continues to shape the role of international social work education as a subfield within social work. In general, her work spans five areas: (1) global social work, (2) social work education, (3) research and scholarship, (4) mentoring, and (5) service to the profession. The contributions on which this nomination rests cover a period of 27 years of service to the School of Social Work at UTA; local, regional, national, and international social service organizations; and the social work profession at large.

Dr. Elliott was an outstanding contributor and recognized leader in the field of international social work, which she served with astounding dedication. She was active with many national and international organizations and on many social work international board committees, but primarily served CSWE since becoming a member in 1988. She was the last chair of the CSWE International Commission, which evolved into the CSWE Commission on Global Social Work Education. She served as the first chair of this commission and provided timely leadership to a community of social work scholars who nurtured the growth of the Global Commission through its infancy. She served for 9 years (2004–2013) as one of the original members of the Katherine A. Kendall Institute of International Social Work Education Advisory Board, for which she was the expert on migration and immigration issues. Dr. Elliott contributed to numerous global panels and workshops during CSWE’s Annual Programs Meetings, the International Association of Schools of Social Work conferences, and the Joint World Conference for Social Work and Social Development. She offered strategic analysis and institutional knowledge to her roles at CSWE and while serving on the Kendall Institute Advisory Board. She also contributed greatly to the International Consortium of Social Development, becoming a member in 1992. She served from 1998 to 2003 as co-editor of the journal *Social Development Issues* and was honored in 2003 at the 13th International Symposium in Mumbai, India, for inspired and dedicated leadership as co-editor of the journal. Over the years Dr. Elliott served on more than 19 boards or organizations related to social work, including CSWE, NASW, and several international organizations. She has also presented widely at national and international meetings on social work, social development, refugees, and human migration.

Dr. Elliott’s contributions to social work education in general and international social work education in particular are outstanding. In 2007 she was awarded the Partners in Advancing Social Work Education award by the International Commission, which recognized her outstanding contributions to the field of international social work education. She has taught numerous social work classes, has served as chair of 15 doctoral students’ committees, and has been a member of more than 50 committees.

Dr. Elliott served as director of the doctoral program in the School of Social Work at UTA for 5 years (1993–1998). During that time she led the curriculum planning team that helped found the binational dual-degree doctoral program (PhD) in Social Work and Comparative International Social Policy between UTA and the Universidad Autónoma De Nuevo León in Monterrey, Mexico. This was the first PhD program in Mexico and Central America and contributed to a new model for cooperation in international social work education. Equal numbers of Mexican and U.S. students have graduated from the program. Dr. Elliott continued her interest in the program after leaving UTA, providing support to students from either country when they reached UTA, As Dr. Elliott wrote:

My favorite definition of education is that given by John Dewey: “education is that reconstruction or reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases ability to re-direct the course of subsequent experience.” This definition sees education as an interactive process. I believe the challenge to us as educators is to make education a relevant transforming and empowering experience which recognizes the

strengths of the individual student and the context in which they learn. I value the diverse experiences which our students bring to the classroom from varied cultures, career experiences and achievements in social work and in other careers, and in family responsibilities. (University of Texas at Arlington, n.d.)

Dr. Elliott has mentored students from the binational as well as the national PhD program at UTA. Over the years she has touched the lives of numerous students. Her nomination as an NASW Social Work Leader was initiated by several of her past students scattered across the globe, which is a great testament to her impact on their lives. Dr. Elliott's long-lasting influence on her students is evidenced by how many of them maintain contact with her and express gratitude for her mentoring and educational guidance. Dr. Elliott challenged them to pursue and reach higher goals. Many of the students she mentored have continued their professional social work careers in academia and have achieved high status positions, not only in the United States and Mexico, but also in Puerto Rico and other international settings. Dr. Elliott always went beyond her regular duties and responsibilities to ensure that the students she mentored had outstanding experiences in all aspects of their career. As one of her students wrote:

As a mentor, Dr. Elliott always challenged her students to contribute to the social work literature base through conference presentations and journal publications. ... Now that I am a faculty member at the Arizona State University School of Social Work, I regularly acknowledge how Dr. Elliott's influence on me as an instructor, a scholar, and a researcher has transcended my individual relationship with my mentor to reach additional beneficiaries both within academia and in practice. Her influence on me continues to produce multiple long-term effects, as I teach my own masters' students and mentor my own doctoral students according to her teaching philosophy. I developed two elective courses in global social work and applied policy analysis that draw on Dr. Elliott's work. I have now taught these courses to hundreds of MSW students since 2003 at the University of Southern California, the City University of New York, and Arizona State University.

Dr. Elliott has an excellent record of service to the social work profession at the local, state, national, and international levels. According to one of her colleagues, "for many outside UTA and her area of scholarship, this is where she is best known." At the university level Dr. Elliott participated in 47 School of Social Work committees and served on more than 16 UTA university committees. In the region she was involved with more than 11 organizations as a committee member and as an active member. At the state level she did a series of workshops for the [Protective Services Training Institute](#). At the national level she worked with numerous organizations and was a co-editor, a member of six editorial boards, and an editorial reviewer for seven journals. Additionally, for many years and in multiple roles, Dr. Elliott served the Council on Social Work Education, the International Consortium on Social Development, and the National Association of Social Workers. Her chairship of the CSWE International Commission

(2002–04) and the CSWE Commission of Global Social Work Education (2004–2006) stand out among many such leaderships.

Dr. Elliott is a well-recognized international expert and scholar on immigrant and refugee issues. Her research and scholarship have been especially significant in promoting international social work and in the field of social development and social work. She has published 11 books, 35 book chapters, and 43 journal articles and book reviews (see the list of Significant Publications at the end of this article). Her scholarship has a worldwide audience.

Dr. Elliott’s contributions to the field of social development are substantial. Although the social development approach became popular in the 1960s in the United States, it was generally seen as a macro theoretical guide. A major barrier to the acceptance of social development-based social work practice in the Global North was its lack of applicability to clinical practice. To remedy this, in the 1990s and early 2000s Dr. Elliott worked with Dr. Nazneen Mayadas to propose an integrative social development framework based on a systems approach to practice that linked micro and macro practice. Their contributions to an integrative social development framework attempted to harmonize social work philosophy in the Global South, with its emphasis on the macro perspective, and that in the Global North, which emphasized the micro perspective. The integrative social development perspective is based on four systems of intervention: social investment, economic participation, political empowerment, and human investment. Their theory not only shows that it is possible to link the two and bridge the micro–macro gap, but also that the linking brings about important new dimensions for clinical and direct practice. Moreover, they presented an operationalization of their theory and applied it to practice with immigrants and disaster. Their theory is known globally and continues to be recognized. Researchers more recently are working on applying this theory to the field of domestic violence and natural disasters.

In addition, Dr. Elliott co-authored several seminal articles on social development, a pivotal concept in the practice of social work in the Global South. She has also presented 73 times over the course of her career in national and international academic and nonacademic venues related to international social work, including serving as a keynote speaker.

Dr. Elliott has excelled in teaching, research, and service and has received awards in all three areas:

- The University of Texas Regents’ Outstanding Teacher Award (among the first cohort; 2009)
- CSWE Partners in Advancing International Social Work Education Award of the Global Commission of the Council on Social Work Education (2007)
- Lifetime Achievement Award from the Tarrant County Texas Chapter of NASW (2007)
- UTA Distinguished Teaching Professor; appointed to the Academy of Distinguished Teachers (2004)
- Certificate of Recognition presented by the Commissioners’ Court of Tarrant County, Texas, “For exemplary Contribution to Tarrant County Together: A Task Force on Poverty and Self-Sufficiency with the vision of Reducing the Impact of Poverty and creating opportunities for the Underserved in our Tarrant County community”

- Certificate of Appreciation for “Interest and Support in Behalf of American Red Cross toward the Effective Delivery of Red Cross Services to the Community” and American Red Cross, Dallas, Special Citation for Exceptional Volunteer Service

She has also been recognized under various Who’s Who categories:

- Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers (2004)
- Who's Who in the South and Southwest (1989, 1992, 1995)
- Who's Who of American Women (1994)
- The World Who's Who of Women (1991)
- Who's Who Among Human Service Professionals (1990)
- Who's Who in America (1992, 1994)

Significant Publications

The following are only a very few items from Dr. Elliott's prolific publication portfolio.

Books

Elliott, D., & Segal, U. A. (Eds.). (2012). *Refugees worldwide: Vol. 1. A global perspective*. Santa Barbara, CA.: Praeger Publishers.

Segal, U. A., & Elliott, D. (Eds.). (2012). *Refugees worldwide: Vol. 2. Refugee health*. Santa Barbara, CA.: Praeger Publishers.

Segal, U. A., & Elliott, D. (Eds.). (2012). *Refugees worldwide: Vol. 3. Refugee mental health*. Santa Barbara, CA.: Praeger Publishers.

Elliott, D., & Segal, U. A. (Eds.). (2012). *Refugees worldwide: Vol. 4. Law, policy, and programs*. Santa Barbara, CA.: Praeger Publishers.

Segal, U. A., Elliott, D., & Mayads, N. S. (2010). *Immigration worldwide*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Mayadas, N. S., Watts, T. D., & Elliott, D. (1997). *International handbook on social work theory and practice*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Watts, T. D., Elliott, D., & Mayadas, N. S. (1995). *International handbook on social work education*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Elliott, D., Mayadas, N. S., & Watts, T. D. (Eds.). (1990). *The world of social welfare: Social welfares services in an international context*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.

Book Chapters

Elliott, D., & Segal, U. A. (2012). International social work practice. In C. N. Dulmus & K. M. Sowers (Eds.), *Social work fields of practice* (pp. 291–332). Hoboken NJ: John Wiley and Sons.

Elliott, D., & Segal, U. A., (2012). *Immigration and refugees*. In M. Gray, J. Midgley, & S. A. Web (Eds.), *Handbook of social work* (pp. 564–578). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Elliott, D. (2012). Social development and social work practice. In L. M. Healy & R. J. Link (Eds.), *Handbook of international social work: Human rights, development and the global profession* (pp. 102–109). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

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- Elliott, D., Jordan, C., Ferreira, M. R., Hernández, S., & Díaz, H. (2003). The Joint Doctoral Program in Social Work and Comparative Social Policy: The University of Texas at Arlington and Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, Monterrey, México: A case study in international collaboration in doctoral education. In Y. Asamoah, L. M. Healy, & M. C. Hockenstad (Eds.), *Models of international collaboration in social work education*. Washington, DC: Council on Social Work Education.
- Mayadas, N. S., & Elliott, D. (2002). Social work's response to refugee issues: A global response. In P. K. Visvesvaran (Ed.), *Social work today: Present realities future prospects* (pp. 107–119). Chennai, India: Madras School of Social Work & Society for Education & Research.
- Mayadas, N. S., & Elliott, D. (2000). *International perspectives on social work practice*. In P. Allen-Meares & C. Garvin (Eds.), *The handbook of direct social work practice* (pp. 633–650). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.
- Mayadas, N. S., Smith, R., & Elliott, D. (2004). *Social group work in a global context*. In C. D. Garvin, M. Galinsky, L. M. Gutiérrez, & M. J. Galinsky (Eds.), *Handbook of social work with groups* (pp. 45–57). New York, NY: Guildford Press.

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