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UNIVERSITY



ANZSWWER

# **ANZSWWER Symposium 2018**

***'Disruptive Social Work'***

*Flinders University, Bedford Park, South Australia*





## **1 | Critical Preparation for international mobility experiences: The social work contribution**

Author/s: Associate Professor Debra Miles<sup>1</sup>, Dr Peter Jones<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>James Cook University, <sup>2</sup>James Cook University

This presentation addresses the issue of criticality in student preparation for international mobility experiences. Our research findings, the existing literature and our own experience have identified a gap in the preparation of students. While most institutions have preparation processes in place for students embarking on international mobility trips, these most often focus on the practicalities of international travel, with some attention to cultural practices. Informed by social work ethics and principles, we 'disrupt' this approach by considering more profound issues such as the nature of culture, racism, privilege, imperialism and the importance of critical reflection as a process for intercultural learning.

The presentation will identify a distinctive social work contribution to the process of preparing inter-disciplinary student cohorts for intercultural learning in diverse settings. We argue that all students must be equipped to engage with complex concepts such as racism, imperialism and privilege especially as universities work to support the development of global citizens with the capacity to navigate complex and diverse socio-political landscapes.

An example of a critically oriented preparation process will be provided, illustrated with an eBook which has been developed as a resource for staff and students preparing for international study experiences.

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## **2 | Decolonising and De-Professionalising social work: Redefining who is the problem**

Author/s: Linda Briskman<sup>1</sup>, Lobna Yassine<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Western Sydney University, <sup>2</sup>University of Sydney

In its quest for professionalisation, social work has gained advantage by uncritically employing politics of the state. Recognition of collusion with the state resulted in social work proffering an apology to Indigenous stolen generations. Yet this moment of opportunity quickly dissipated with the unrelenting growth of social work, numerically and financially, continuing to be colonialist in nature, with social workers across various fields of practice actively embracing policies and practices of the state. Using a Foucault-influenced poststructural perspective, the paper argues for a critical turn in how social work defines problems and the benefits it reaps, using the example of Muslim communities and the Countering Violent Extremism policy and associated discourses.



### **3 | International Students and Social Work Education in Australia: Disruption or Distraction?**

Author/s: Rob Townsend

#### **Federation University Australia**

Social work students from overseas are increasing in significant numbers in Australian professional social work education. In some higher education institutions, the numbers of international social work students outnumber domestic students. Higher education institutions across all disciplines are being criticised for using international students as merely a source of 'cash' to overcome higher education policies and budgetary issues. This presentation will explore recent literature about the international student 'market' and recent research from FedUni about social work education. We will argue that international social work students in Australia provide an opportunity for both philosophical and pedagogical 'disruption' to social work education and the profession in the Australasian region in ways that will move the profession into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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### **4 | Social Work and the Post-Human**

Author/s: Professor Jim Ife

#### **Western Sydney University**

The 'Post-Human' turn has brought together scholarship from technology, biology, ecology, earth system science and the humanities, to focus a critical reflexivity on the idea of 'humanity', in a world of collapsing and transforming epistemologies and ontologies.

There are three strands of post-humanism: (i) the blurring of the boundary between the human and the mechanical/technological, (ii) the blurring of the boundary between the human and the 'natural world', and (iii) the erosion of the Enlightenment view of the human ideal, being destroyed by the very Modernity than created it. These three combine to represent a significant assault on the idea of the human that social workers, and many others, have taken for granted.

The implications for social work of this ontological challenge have barely been recognised or explored. They require a less anthropocentric redefinition of the 'social' and of 'community'. But it will be argued that social work is uniquely placed to practice in this different environment, and to contribute to a new social, economic and political order, because of social work's concern with relationships, interdependence, community and social work's ability to understand precarity as the new norm for humanity.

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## **5 | New scope in working with immigrant populations: A process of regaining control**

Author/s: Hagyun Kim

**Massey University, New Zealand**

In globalised context, immigration is one of the most noticeable aspect of social mobility. Millions of people cross international borders each year producing the challenge of finding ways of helping them to live harmoniously with local people in many countries. That concern co-exists with widely replicated findings that immigrants experience acculturative stresses and social exclusion. Recognising these challenges, social workers have positioned themselves at the frontline of efforts to enhance immigrants' quality of life. In particular, the quality of Asian immigrants' lives is vital to the prosperity of New Zealand where, at the 2013 Census, 12% of its residents identified as Asian. This grounded theory study explored how immigrants adjust to a new environment by analysing the experiences of 25 Korean immigrants in New Zealand. The findings suggest that settling in New Zealand is a stress-inducing phenomenon that disrupts their familiar routines and adversely impacts on well-being. In response, participants worked on *Regaining Control* over disrupted daily activities such as employment, self-care and leisure by behaving in Korean ways or New Zealand ways. The study helps social workers to gain clearer insight into the realities which Asian immigrants encounter; consequently, developing effective interventions for immigrants to fully participate in society.

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## **6 | Biologising parenting: A new form of eugenics in policy**

Author/s: Eileen Joy

**University of Auckland**

What can recent policy changes in child protection in New Zealand tell us about parenting, and why the fuss over children's brains? These changes are aimed at improving 'parenting' through evidence-based programs, specifically those that refer to 'brain development'. Evidence from 'science' is called upon to reinforce the idea that the early years can 'make or break' children, producing 'good', or 'bad' citizens. Monetary language is deployed, invoking the idea that poor parenting equals poor taxpayer 'returns'. These policies stand on the contradictory idea that our brains are most plastic in the early years, and so if we are to take action, it must be then; yet intervention is almost always aimed at parents, whose brains are, presumably, long past peak plasticity. Despite gender neutral policy language, women are ultimately placed as 'brain guardians' before, during and after pregnancy, thus becoming the focus of surveillance lest they produce 'poor returns/brains' in the form of defective brains. This focus on 'brains' recreates ideas about genetics that hark back to late 19th and early 20th century eugenics. This presentation will examine work in progress looking at how this science is being used in policy and practice in social work in Aotearoa/New Zealand.



## **7 | What is good social work practice? Identifying good social work practice through the lens of competency assessments for social work registration in Aotearoa New Zealand**

Author/s: Carole Adamson<sup>1</sup>, Jan Duke<sup>2</sup>

**<sup>1</sup>University of Auckland, <sup>2</sup>Social Workers Registration Board, NZ**

Social work is a profession under a public and political gaze often focused on unethical or poor practice, ineffective interventions or unsatisfactory outcomes. Examples of ‘good’ practice often escape such scrutiny. Our research project aimed to identify characteristics of good social work practice through the lens of practice studies submitted by social workers during the process of applying for social work competency and registration with the Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB). A literature review, textual analysis of the practice studies, and focus group interviews with competency assessors form the basis of this research.

Application for registration includes the completion of a written practice study that illustrates the competency of a social worker’s practice alongside the ten competency standards of the SWRB. Currently, only social workers whose practice studies fall below the competency standard receive any feedback, and practice studies that may contain evidence of ‘good practice’ are simply archived. Competency assessors were asked to nominate practice studies that in their view illustrated aspects of good social work practice. Ethics approval was received for the secondary use of these practice studies.

The presentation reports on preliminary findings from the research, providing a snapshot of current notions of ‘good social work practice’.

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## **8 | Working with grief and loss: Disrupting theory to make way for skills development**

Author/s: Dr Suzette Fox, Gregory Lewis

**Royal Brisbane & Women’s Hospital**

Assisting people deal with loss is a core part of social work practice. While training programs on grief and loss have proliferated in recent years, much of this content is therapeutic in nature and not always applicable to the contexts in which social workers operate. Alternatively, the content is predominantly theoretical rather than skills focused. In our work context, an acute hospital setting, loss is a pervasive theme in social workers’ day to day work but rarely involves ongoing therapeutic work. Instead, the practical skills required of staff are broaching conversations about loss, assessing the implications of the loss for the patient and family, and providing short term intervention such as crisis intervention or supporting patients undergoing significant transitions. In recognition of the need to contextualise grief and loss work to the organisational context, we outline a skills-based workshop for new graduates that, crucially, assists them to clarify their



purpose in engaging in grief and loss work in a hospital setting. Preliminary evaluations indicate that tailoring grief and loss training to the organisational context assists new graduates make more meaningful connections with their practice.

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## **9 | “It’s the groupwork that does my head in”: disrupting dominant discourse through multiple layers of knowledge, theory and action in groupwork education**

Author/s: Michele Jarldorn<sup>1</sup>, Michelle Brown<sup>1,2</sup>

**<sup>1</sup>Flinders University, <sup>2</sup>University of South Australia**

Using the layers of an onion as an analogy, we use this session to share with you our passion for teaching groupwork, the challenges we negotiate and the successes that sustain us. Through an ‘intense’ intensive, we model good groupwork practice as co-facilitators with strengths in both practice and theory, locating our work within the legacy of Jane Addams, the teachings of Paulo Freire, radical social work practice and a love of humanity. Students learn, practice, experience and reflect upon the joyful activity of *doing* groupwork as social workers, as service users and as allies in solidarity.

Through active, participatory learning, over 5 days we shift student perceptions of groupwork from something that ‘does their head in’ to the realisation that working with groups and communities is a vital component of radical social work in action. Informed by feminist understandings of the personal as political, we encourage students to appreciate groupwork as a vehicle for consciousness raising, challenging oppression and claiming human rights. Deploying Tuckman’s 5 Stages of Groupwork as a framework, we take students on a journey of experiential learning that explores diversity, challenges dominant understandings of oppressed groups, creating solidarity and enduring relationships between social work students.

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## **10 | Practice research enabler: Enabling research in a social work practice context**

Author/s: Dr Keith Miller

**Flinders University**

Social work practitioners are curious people but have become increasingly estranged from investigation and the research process. A false divide has developed wherein knowledge gained from practice is considered by some as inferior to knowledge constructed by academics. The concept of *phronesis*, as practical wisdom, can provide a link to give a legitimacy to practice research. Practice research is able to develop a collaborative relationship between practitioner and researcher, a true engagement with



equal partners. The academic can be seen as a *practice research enabler* who facilitates the knowledge which practitioners develop in a localised setting and situates it in a broader theoretical perspective. As a practice research enabler, a researcher brings academic expertise to supplement the practice expertise of the practitioner to develop new knowledge. In a series of examples, and using a critical discourse analysis approach, the author critically assesses his own practice to identify an unsuccessful, a partially successful and a successful example of being a practice research enabler.

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## **11 | Playing with Fire – Conscientisation in Social Work**

Author/s: Associate Professor Ksenija Napan

**Massey University, New Zealand**

This presentation focusses on disruptive social work teaching practice and explores ways how personal, professional, political and spiritual intersect in social work classes. Special emphasis will be put on a critique of neoliberal academia and increased corporatisation of knowledge. Issues related to performativity during fieldwork placement and exploration of the ethics of conscientisation of social work students will be addressed through examples from practice and a number of critical questions will be addressed:

What are the ways of preparing students for effective critical and radical social work practice?

How ethical is to support students to ‘lay low and play the game’ in order to get degrees or get into placement of their choice?

Are social work agencies prepared for challenges conscientized students may bring?

How can we ensure that students continue learning and being inspired and energised while encountering practices oriented predominantly towards social control?

What is the promise of community development and is social work profession strengthening it?

Is risk assessment preventing us from engaging in creative practices?

The presentation will be enriched with examples of subversive teaching which will be explored and critically reflected on.

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## **14 | Who said you can't: A voice for the vulnerable is what I hope to be...**

Author/s: Fiona Woollard

**University of South Australia**

As a woman with lived prison experience, I have experienced many barriers post-release restricting my future. Rather than give in or give up, I challenge this. I entered university 3 years ago to study social work. With just a little support I have done well academically, yet this almost came undone as I awaited my DCSI clearances to go onto placement.



I knew that the clearances would prove difficult to attain, which is why I submitted the paperwork very early. Six months later, with no clearance paperwork received, it looked like I would have to put my future on hold—again. The situation felt so difficult, I almost gave up.

Seeds of Affinity (Seeds) stepped up to the challenge alongside me. A unique community group that has supported me, and enables me to pay that support forward to other women, Seeds created a placement where I can put my academic knowledge into practice. Supported by social workers who think outside the box, this placement challenges the rigid requirements that constrained my ability to flourish. In this presentation, I will share my experience with Seeds, who provide opportunities unavailable in mainstream society, opportunities which see a future beyond bars and cages.

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## **15 | Moving beyond a structured approach to professional development for new graduate social workers in a hospital setting: Implementing a bottom up approach to learning**

Author/s: Phoebe Webber

### **Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital**

Opportunities for professional development and ongoing learning are crucial for new graduate social workers employed in hospital settings. While some allied health disciplines have set curriculums for new graduates, this form of structured learning is less common in social work. In response to this gap, a group of new graduate social workers working in a large metropolitan hospital developed their own learning support program. Drawing on principles of peer supervision, the group provides a supportive environment for sharing experiences and knowledge, along with providing opportunities for critical reflection and professional development. An innovative feature of the program is that members identify their learning needs and then source appropriate training to address these needs. This 'bottom up' approach to learning ensures that training is tailored to the needs of the group to effectively address their ongoing professional and personal development. The program remains fluid in its structure and set up to allow the program to grow and mould to the specific needs of its members. Initial evaluations of the program have been very positive with perceived enhancements across a number of critical social work skill and knowledge areas.



## **16 | A Janus Perspective on Australian Social Work Education: Embracing the future of field education in the neoliberal university**

Author/s: Karen McDavitt

### **Cowan University**

Field education (FE) in social work is at a critical stage (Ledger, Hillman, Harreveld & de Warren, 2017). The confluence of multiple stakeholders in the social work FE landscape has resulted in a diversity of compelling demands and expectations on those whose role it is to source suitable FE placements. Higher education providers in Australia operate within the context of political and regulatory requirements which, in recent years, have seen changes to funding and increasing student numbers. This has placed demands on universities to implement cost saving measures, which impact ultimately on the resourcing of programs. At the same time, the human services field has been under increasing pressure due to changes in government policy, with the marketisation of welfare resulting in a reduction of funding to traditional agencies and, in some cases, funding has ceased. This provides for an uncertain future where agency staff are increasingly unwilling to host students due to their heavy workload or unstable job security.

The current socio-political-economic environment shows little sign of changing, therefore sustainable solutions need to be identified. Drawn from the first stages of a PhD exploring possible solutions and positive outcomes, this paper will explore and analyse these compelling demands.

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## **17 | Exploring the possibility of acting as a bridge: Sexuality of people with physical disabilities**

Author/s: Etsuko Sakairi

### **University of Auckland**

When it comes to issues of sexuality, how do people with physical disabilities expect health and social welfare professionals to intervene, and what do health and social welfare professionals think they can do? In this presentation, the researcher will present one of the findings from her data drawn from the gathering of opinions regarding sexuality of people with physical disabilities in Japan: the differences in expectations between the two groups above. Although the types of disability are various, it was found that, often, people with disabilities either could not share their sexual concerns with their health and social welfare professionals or their concerns were not treated as a serious matter. On the other hand, health and social welfare professionals in the study reported that they think there are no ways for them to assist sexuality-related needs if people with disabilities do not express their concerns to them. In this complicated circumstance, the researcher poses the question of how a social worker can be a bridge between these groups.



## **19 | A social work response to television programming in Australia**

Author/s: Dr Mim Fox, Dr Jioji Ravulo

### **University of Wollongong**

In an age of both free to air and streaming television services, social work relevant content in a narrative form is readily accessible to us as social work educators, to our students, and likewise to our clients. What is the impact of this content on the viewer, how does it affect an understanding of social justice, diversity or dispossession, and how does this align more broadly with the representation of social work as a helping profession in modern day Australia? Through a thematic analysis of popular Australian television programming, this paper will overview an opportunity to locate connecting points between the programs and social work themes or issues, social work interventions, and social work fields of practice. By questioning our understanding of the themes that emerge across different genres including drama and comedy, we challenge ourselves and our profession by asking what is the potential social work response to the representation of these themes, and our representation of the social work profession in popular media. Furthermore by utilising a social work lens we potentially explore how this analysis feeds into social work education teaching and learning practices, educational philosophy, and its impact on creating critically responsive and engaging social workers.

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## **20 | What does a compassionate response require? Challenging the neoliberal university from a social work standpoint**

Author/s: Professor Donna McAuliffe

### **Griffith University**

Social work has a value base that is firmly grounded in the principles of respect for persons, social justice, and professional integrity (AASW Code of Ethics 2010). To this end, social work education must provide an exemplary role model that gives students opportunity to witness and engage in meaningful ways with peers, academic, and field educators, that demonstrates congruence with this value base. Shifts in higher education towards efficiency, self-reliance, competition and an increasingly fast-paced environment in many ways mirror what has been happening in social and human services over past decades. The concern within contemporary Universities for outcomes over good process, standardisation of responses at the expense of individual needs, and the inevitable automation of information and services with minimal human interaction, all result in experiences that can (and do) alienate students. There is significant risk that the neoliberal university sends students a message that the compelling demands of practice should be navigated in a similarly detached way. Drawing on ethical theory, this paper provides three case scenarios of what can happen when the question ‘what does a compassionate response require?’ is asked in situations where Universities impose seemingly rigid policies and protocols, and what role social work educators can play in challenging some of the structures that stand in the way of compassionate responses to identified student needs.



## **21 | Course review and opportunity for innovation. Creating enduring degrees for the future**

Author/s: Therese Jones-Mutton, Katherine Herbert, Dr Barbara Hill, Melinda Lews

### **Charles Sturt University**

In Australia there is an increasing pressure from industry for university graduates to “hit the ground running”. The transition from study to workforce is a critical process and one that is made more challenging in the online teaching space. How can education providers ensure that their graduates endure when entering working life? University core business is about critical thinking, knowledge- and skills development as well as the successful application of gained knowledge. In order to maintain currency it is essential that these areas are informed by industry. In this presentation the authors will share their experience of a course review process that utilised strategies derived from Indigenous pedagogy, utilising narratives in the curriculum to provide a framework for connecting subjects and filter knowledge to form a professional perspective. Knowledge that is informed by principles of Indigenous and cultural competence, social justice, human rights, sustainability, ethical practice and lifelong learning. It will also consider the delicate balance of maintaining educational integrity with the demands from industry.

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## **22 | Sluts, Social Workers, and Structure: Exploring the impact of social work students’ personal values on professional practice and academic institutional responsibility to challenge unhelpful beliefs**

Author/s: Kylie Henman

### **Western Sydney University**

It is well established that sexual assault victims, an already vulnerable group, risk secondary victimisation when engaging with service providers. There is a wealth of literature in Australian social work education curricula about the impact of, and extent to which, personal values can perpetuate and exacerbate inequality. The aim of the qualitative research was to explore the personal values of social work students prior to graduation. Furthermore, the institutional responsibility to challenge unhelpful values, and gatekeep when necessary, was examined. Interviews, conducted by the author, were undertaken with Bachelor of Social Work students studying at Western Sydney University. Not surprisingly, themes of consent, power imbalances and inequalities surfaced throughout the findings. All participants described their desire to practice in an anti-oppressive manner. However, none of the participants reflected on their upcoming positions of authority, nor how their values might play a role in contributing to oppressive practice. It is widely accepted that unquestioned values in this field can negatively influence decision making. It is therefore reasonable to question in which ways students can be better supported to develop an awareness around the importance of critical reflexivity in their work. Additionally, universities, missing opportunities to challenge soon to be social workers,



are responsible for the reinvigoration of education. Recommendations include rethinking how the practical units within the Bachelor of Social Work are developed and implemented.

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## **23 | Utilising anti-oppressive perspectives to work collaboratively with Indigenous communities across Oceania**

Author/s: Associate Professor Jioji Ravulo

### **University of Wollongong**

Issues that may occur in certain communities are generally perceived as being a problem of the community itself. Mainstream, populist and conservative viewpoints within society may perceive such problematic communities to be made up of individuals and families that need to change to fit into societal expectations and standards. In turn, neo-liberal discourses deter the ability for collective approaches to be developed in and across the community; further relegating issues as being the responsibility of such problematic individuals and groups. A lack of responsive resources ensues, further perpetuating such groups to become marginalised, vilified and seen as the other.

This paper will highlight the possible way in which anti-oppressive perspectives can be utilised in creating pro-social responses with Indigenous communities across Oceania. Rather than seeing such matters as being purely the responsibility of Indigenous people alone, the need to create a shared, and collaborative approach can better assist, and promote scope for everyone to contribute towards possible solutions. In essence, the role of decolonising social work education, practice, policy and research within a local context can further disrupt dominant rhetoric to better support marginalised communities across the region. By understanding how we contribute to structural, cultural and personal oppression, we assist professions like social work to maintain professional, and inter-professional relevance across complex and diverse societies.

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## **25 | Disrupting social work 'identity': A Queer eye**

Author/s: Darren de Warren

### **CQ University**

This paper draws on Queer Theory to disrupt the pervasive phenomenon of 'identity' in the European diaspora. Texts that present the social work profession approach the complex task of teaching social work identity to students from many inter-cultural societies; field education orbits the goal of facilitating students' experience of social work identity; and in many human and health service contexts - especially those comprising multi-disciplinary settings - articulating a social work identity appears to create perennial angst. In the late twentieth century, Queer theorists



launched a critique of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered 'identity making' that emerged from the counter-cultural revolutions of the 1960s,70s and onwards. Queer theorists raised consciousness about the dark side of identity such as its prescriptive nature; the reliance of 'otherness' and social exclusions to create identities; the reliance on social relations in which an identity is immersed to give them meaning, value and status; and in the most extreme cases – the violence that some identities can sometimes evoke. This paper disrupts the concept of identity and argues that as Australian social work is a profession of the Post-Modern Age identity making is a mirage to be treated with caution.

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## **27 | The role of the Liaison: Reflection of Practice**

Author/s: Dr Anne Carrington, Tracey Dickinson, Dr Jo Mensinga, Dr Vinnitta Mosby, Sally Watson

### **James Cook University**

Field Education is recognised as a fundamental learning space for Social Work students to link theory to practice. The AASW provides Field Education guidelines (ASWEAS, 2012) that inform requirements, roles & responsibilities, location of placements and evaluation. The liaison role is identified as critical to field education and is clearly articulated in the ASWEAS standards (2012), yet there is limited literature expanding on the performance or evaluation of the liaison role.

A group of James Cook University social work academics met to discuss their interpretation of the liaison role. Using Fook and Gardner's Critical Reflection Model (2007), the group explored critical questions on the diverse approaches to the liaison role in context of objective assessment and standardised grading, and our individual capacity to manage expectations regarding a uniform approach.

The presentation recognises current Tertiary Education challenges, considers opportunities offered by the learning of alternate approaches from others and questions the importance of consistency in field education. The researchers suggest that beyond the identified core responsibilities of liaison in the guidelines, approaching the role with a different emphasis that reflects personal practice frameworks mirrors community based social work and meets the current complex needs of the University environment.

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## **30 | Technician Education and the Rise of the Social Work Robots?**

Author/s: Christine Morley<sup>1</sup>, Phillip Ablett<sup>2</sup>

**<sup>1</sup>Queensland University of Technology, <sup>2</sup>University of the Sunshine Coast**

We have all heard stories of social work students whose partners shoulder extra responsibilities while they are on placement, or those who are parents worrying about who will look after their children. But what do we really know about the experience of these students on placement? The social work student population is diverse and includes a high proportion of mature age people with partners, children and family responsibilities. What support do they want and what sacrifices do they and their families make in order to embark on field placement? What influence does family have and how could this effect student learning?

This presentation is based on the preliminary findings of doctoral research into social work student experience of juggling multiple roles and responsibilities with field placement. Sixteen qualifying Master of Social Work students from four Australian universities were interviewed at two points in their first placement. Early analysis of results indicates that family has a strong influence on student motivation and persistence in placement. Decisions about when to begin, where to go and how to keep going are swayed by family. At the same time, a student's experience in the field may have an impact on family relationships.

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## **31 | Resisting and challenging the marketisation of welfare and education through collaboration not competition in field education: A case study of collaboration and cooperation between multiple Queensland Universities and the Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women**

Author/s: Joanne Bidgood<sup>1</sup>, Phyllis Chee<sup>2</sup>, Belinda Edwards<sup>3</sup>, Fotina Hardy<sup>4</sup>, Vikki Watkins<sup>5</sup>

**<sup>1</sup>University of Queensland, <sup>2</sup>Griffith University, <sup>3</sup>Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women (Brisbane Region), <sup>4</sup>Queensland University, <sup>5</sup>Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women (South-East Region)**

The marketisation of the welfare sector, along with the higher education sector has brought many challenges, not least being increased competition for scarce resources, a focus on individual responsibility, and a discourse of blame. Within this context, this presentation provides insight into a creative and innovative collaboration between multiple universities and two Child Safety regions in Brisbane and South East Queensland that have worked together to build a model of student field education that is focused on building capacity. Through the provision of collaboratively structured and supported field education placements for social work and human services students, the program has provided meaningful and robust learning opportunities for



students. One outcome is that students are able to seamlessly transition into paid employment within the sector if desired, constituting an important workforce strategy for Child Safety. The program challenges the marketization of both sectors by working collaboratively, and rejecting a discourse of competition. Ultimately the focus is on preparing graduates to effectively work with complexity and build the capacity of the child and family sector to best meet the needs of service users. This presentation discusses how the program has developed, outcomes and challenges, highlighting the importance of resisting a discourse of competition, through joint leadership and collaboration.

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## **32 | Why we need to disrupt ourselves in this major time of disruption in education**

Author/s: Paul Harris, Melanie Hemy

### **Griffith University**

As the education landscape is in a state of rapid transformation with, as McCowan (2017) proposes, the 'biggest changes to universities since the change to Monasteries' are we doing enough to engage effectively with these developments?

Traditional approaches to teaching have given way to new modes of delivery in education and the impact of wider engagement, especially of 'non-traditional' students, has resulted in challenges to social work education at a time when industry expectations of student readiness are also changing. Heightened demand for graduates who are 'work ready' translates into expectations that social work students are well prepared for placement.

The nature and scale of these changes is so significant that they require us to rethink our traditional approaches to teaching within social work and human services education, to in effect, disrupt ourselves. To this end a group of social work and human service educators has sought to commence this disruption with a focus on a key period in students' transition and university experiences, and their employability. The 2YP project aims to develop a responsive, collaborative approach to teaching second year courses that reflects the modern learning environment whilst ensuring there is a 'joined-up', effective education experience for students. This challenges the traditional approach of teaching in subject-based 'silos' to reflect a focus on better preparing students for placement and building meta-competencies for employment.

This presentation will present the work of the 2YP Project to date, including the development of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Community of Practice and Specialised Teaching Teams.

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### **33 | New Settings: The relational aspect of on-line social work education**

Author/s: Peter Young, Donna McAuliffe

#### **Griffith University**

Growing numbers of social work graduates in Australia have studied as off-campus students, rather than attending classes. This trend is likely to continue, as students seek more flexible study options in order to balance work and carer responsibilities alongside study. The quality of the education received through online study will in part be impacted by the quality of relationships formed both between student and teacher, and within the student cohort – the community of learners.

This presentation will examine findings from focus groups held with graduating Master of Social Work students who completed their degrees as off-campus students. Our interviews highlight a number of behaviours of teaching staff that can enhance the quality of relationships with students. These behaviours might happen intuitively and unconsciously in a face to face classroom, but may not automatically occur in an on-line context. Themes such as responsiveness, connectedness, and authenticity were important. The discussions also highlighted the increased risks of ruptures in relationship going unnoticed and therefore unrepaired in the online environment. We end by discussing how on-line educators might replicate the process of fostering safety in an on-line learning environment.

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### **34 | The Video Essay for Social Work Education: Disrupting the supremacy of language**

Author/s: Dr Sonia M. Tascón

#### **Western Sydney University**

Over the last few years, I have brought my knowledge and work in visual communication to social work students. One of these initiatives has been the use of the video essay for education. While initial reactions have been uncertainty and anxiety, those who engaged with the possibility (the first year I only gave the video essay as a possibility) have displayed astonishing results, and have gone on to use these skills in their work practices. Arising from a book I recently completed and about to be published (Routledge), in this presentation I want to outline the possibilities, uses, and critical issues that need to be considered with this, and other, visual modes of communicating knowledge. I will use some of my theoretical knowledge in semiology to help the audience understand the difference between written and oral modes of communication (language-based) and visual modes (embodied), as well as attempting to deepen an understanding of visual communication and its various uses in Social Work, for education, research, and even direct practice. Videos are now able to be used as forms of evidence in various legal and service



platforms, not to mention the various ways in which people are being given a voice through visual images; a good critical understanding of visual images is required. The theoretical and practical application of visual images in social work is, I believe, a form of epistemological disruption, as much of the profession's ways of communicating has centred on language (written and oral) and there has been power in this. The digital era has begun to shift this, and opened up possibilities of new, more embodied, ways of communicating, and Social Work would do well to embrace them.

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## **35 | Human Development Pedagogy: Increasing Social Work's Involvement**

Author/s: Dr Emma Tseris

### **University of Sydney**

Content on human development is a requirement within all social work programs in Australia. This presentation will argue that a critical engagement with some of the assumptions underpinning human development theorisations is aligned with social work values, and represents an opportunity for social work educators and researchers that has at times been under-explored. For example, the notion of universal life stages that underpins most human development theories can be critiqued for perpetuating Eurocentric, heterosexist, and ableist ideals while marginalising other ways of being. Furthermore, ideas about linear developmental progression are often imbued with notions of individualism rather than a socio-cultural framework of analysis, and the gendered assumptions within attachment theory have often been minimised. Although social workers must be able to grasp mainstream theories of human development, the presentation will explore the hazards of applying human development content in the absence of a broader power analysis that accounts for classed, racialised, and gendered inequalities. To conclude, there will be a discussion about how human development curricula can be constructed in order to both assess for knowledge of content, as well as encourage a critical awareness of the social justice implications of conventional human development theorisations.

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## **36 | Enduring Purpose – From where does the power for innovation and disruption emerge?**

Author/s: Karen McDavitt, Lauren Oberski

### **Edith Cowan University**

The centrality of field education to the experience and preparation of student social workers (Cleak, Houghton Loughton & Williams, 2015; Hemy, Boddy, Chee & Sauvage, 2016) is paramount when considering matching with host agencies. The model of placement allocation that Field Education staff at Edith Cowan University (ECU) had relied on was no longer efficient, whilst increasing numbers had become difficult to manage. ECU introduced the SONIA management tool



amidst great disruption to students, host agencies and university staff. The prospect of a technological intervention to streamline process, including the matching of students to host agencies was met with concern, and there was fear of the automation of what is fundamentally a relational procedure. However, the results have been incredibly positive, resulting in an awareness that technology does not have to determine the practice of the field education team; on the contrary given the appropriate technology, the technology can be manipulated to ensure a better, more efficient, and methodical process that provides record management, communication, and data resource. This presentation details the disruption that, instead of automating the field education matching process, created an enduring purpose for the field education staff.

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### **37 | In the firing line: Grandparent carers at risk of family violence and implications for education and practice**

Author/s: Susan Gair, Lyn Munns, Ines Zuchowski

#### **James Cook University**

Grandparents increasingly are taking on a carer role for grandchildren. Underlying factors for children being placed in kinship care with grandparents include that parents are unable to care for their children, family breakdown, parental imprisonment, parental drug, alcohol and other addictions and a context of domestic and family violence. Disproportionate numbers of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are evident in child protection services in all Australian States. Presented here are specific findings from a recent qualitative study on optimising grandparent-grandchild relationships after child safety concerns where grandparent carers felt threatened and at risk of violence from adult children. We conclude, drawing on participants' recommendations, that heightened attention needs to be directed towards safety planning for grandparent carers at risk of family violence. Yet even with the safety risks, many grandparents strongly recommended that workers focus on restoring family relationships, potentially through more integrated child protection and family violence service provision. Raising student, graduate and practitioner awareness of the complex, interrelated issues revealed in these findings aligns well with the new AASW Family Violence curriculum best practice guidelines (AASW, 2018).

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### **39 | Equipping students with a critical tool with which to interrogate the world and its ethical dimensions for social work practitioners**

Author/s: Louise Townend<sup>1</sup>, Charity Sims-Jenkins<sup>2</sup>

#### **<sup>1</sup>Flinders University, <sup>2</sup>Self Advocacy Resource Unit, Victoria**

Neoliberalist values have transformed the context in which social work is practiced. Managerialism, the commodification of human services, the primacy of the individual over the



collective and of the market over civil structures mean that graduates need tools of critical analysis to guide their practice if they are to remain faithful to the core commitment of social work to ethically just practice.

Carol Bacchi's 'What's the Problem Represented to be?' method of critical discourse analysis has been taught to MSW students at Flinders University for the past 3 semesters as part of the 'Integrity in Social Work Practice' topic, as a deliberately disruptive analytic tool and as an aid to their development of critically reflexive practice.

We reflect on the teaching of this tool and on its utilisation by a student in developing their own critical social work practice and formation of a social work identity. We also draw on our own application of the WPR approach to the Code of Ethics (AASW 2010) to illustrate how, through interrogation of what is written and what is left 'silent', alternative possibilities can be imagined.

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## **40 | Harnessing Critical Language Awareness to promote 'voice' in immigrant clients: An emerging priority for social workers**

Author/s: Mapfumo Clement Chihota

**Federation University, Australia**

Social workers across the world are increasingly working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (Castles, 2003; Nash, Wong & Trlin, 2006). With recent statistics indicating a surge in cross-border and transcontinental human mobility, (UN DESA, 2017), this pattern is beginning to typify contemporary social work practice (Castles, 2003; Dominelli, 2009). A serious cause for concern – warranting reconsideration of some of the assumptions, approaches and priorities of social work – is the 'twofold' disadvantage faced by migrants who have limited mastery of their 'host languages' (Blommaert, 2005, 2007). Like other 'at-risk' populations, such migrants are structurally (and socioeconomically) disadvantaged. However, unlike other at-risk populations, they lack the language resources needed to 'voice' their needs or risks, or to affirm their identities, cultures, worldviews and aspirations (Palmer, 2007; Dominelli, 2009). This paper focuses on this 'additional' layer of disadvantage. Applying Critical Language Awareness (CLA) tools (particularly, concepts borrowed from Blommaert 2005, 2007) the paper unpacks the condition of 'voicelessness,' and shows how voicelessness both translates into (and reinforces) systemic disadvantage. A secondary aim of the paper is to reiterate the call for the increased application of CLA in social work education and practice (Chihota, 2017). The paper ends with a reflection on how social workers could harness CLA to deepen their insights into 'client voicelessness,' and to respond more effectively to this form of adversity



## **41 | Disrupting teaching and re-thinking the use of filming for teaching interpersonal skills to develop student led learning**

Author/s: Mark Lunch

### **Griffith University**

For some time Filming has been used as a teaching tool to support the development of interpersonal skills in social work. (Tompsett, 2016). However, take up has been limited by accessibility and technical skills to utilize the equipment and therefore focused on summative activities. The development of accessible technology, including smart phones, has made filming a much more available option for teaching. This presentation will present the experience of incorporating regular filming into Masters of Social Work courses. This experience is supported by a review of the teaching pedagogy in utilizing filming and the associated technology. The focus of the teaching review has been to support an ontological shift (Smith et al 2016) from a pedagogy that situates the teacher as the sage on the stage (King, 1993) to one of Androgynous, a student centred learning approach that facilitates students taking a more active, central role in directing their learning (Smith et al 2016).

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## **42 | Stepping up to the challenge: Social work with asylum seekers and refugees**

Author/s: Dr Kim Robinson<sup>1</sup>, Dr Shepard Masocha<sup>2</sup>

### **<sup>1</sup>Deakin University, <sup>2</sup>University of South Australia**

The daily stories about refugees and asylum seekers impact on students, services and educators in social work. Competing discourses confront us as we struggle with how to meet the challenges facing new arrivals in the context of international discord, and political and social divisions of deepening inequality. Social workers continue to be well placed to tackle the challenges and promote human rights and social justice to work effectively directly with service users, in organisations and in communities (Masocha and Robinson, 2017). As social work educators, we reflect on the challenges of ensuring curricula includes migration theory, policy and legislation, practice skills, and the experiences of service users (Robinson and Masocha, 2016). We draw on our experience of including this content into our existing UG and PG programs, and how we utilise critical perspectives to inform practice and critique social work as it engages with the sector at different levels. Critical theory, anti-oppressive practice, human rights and social justice are just some of the key narratives in this field of practice. Compliance regimes, KPI's and gagging orders are also the experience of social workers. This paper will briefly highlight key debates, and how these intersect with the 'doing' of social work in this sector, and how we as educators can best equip students for the future.

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## **43 | “We don’t get to retire.” Parent carers’ perspectives, viewed through the lens of life course theory**

Author/s: Pam Joseph

**University of Sydney**

Australian service systems across health, education, disability and community services reflect stage theories of development in both policy and practice. For families in which one or more children require ongoing high-level care, however, these assumptions may be at best a poor fit and, at worst, actively serve to exclude families from participation. This presentation draws on data produced during a doctoral research project with foundations in complexity and life course theories and critical postmodern feminism. Twenty-one mothers and six fathers, with children between two and 42 years of age, participated in semi-structured interviews about their relationships with complex service systems and their understandings of their own identities within or outside those systems. The study illustrated the diverse and often non-linear life trajectories of these families, exposing features of service systems that could either benefit or hinder the development of effective parent-provider relationships. The study’s findings supported the creation of new service models more able to respond effectively to both parents and children whose life paths were different from those of their peers. Importantly, it also demonstrated opportunities for social workers to disrupt traditional relationships between parents and providers within the constraints of existing service models.

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## **44 | Filled education and challenges of linking theory to practice**

Author/s: Dr Nada Eltaiba

**Doha Institute for Graduate Studies**

Social work is an international profession and similarly the social work education. Field education has been the core of social work teaching as it provides social work students with their initial steps into a professional world. Field education is important in preparing social work students to apply experiences to the role of social work. It has been considered an important opportunity for social work students to link theory to practice.

The purpose of this study was to examine the challenges students from the Social Work program at Qatar University encountered in linking theory to practice during their placements at various agencies. The study utilized a phenomenological approach. Data was collected using five focus groups of students who completed their placement. The research findings indicated that there were some challenges relating to applying theoretical frameworks, the exposure to culture, applying ethics and responding to ethical problems.

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## **45 | Lengthy unpaid work integrated learning (WIL) in Social Work: Exploring the gendered impacts on student wellbeing**

Author/s: Dr Lisa Hodge<sup>1</sup>, Shelley Turner<sup>2</sup>, Dr Nicole Oke<sup>1</sup>

**<sup>1</sup>Victoria University, <sup>2</sup>Monash University**

A plethora of unpaid and paid work-integrated learning (WIL) initiatives are currently being implemented across Australian universities in response to increasing pressure to support students to develop 'job-readiness' in their transition from university to professional practice. All courses at Victoria University (VU) must now include aspects of WIL in the curriculum. The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) mandates the completion of at least 1,000 hours of WIL or field placement for qualification. Yet recent Australian research has demonstrated that students experience significant levels of financial and other stress during lengthy, unpaid placements. Moreover, these studies indicate that the majority of students negatively impacted are female, from low socio-economic backgrounds, have additional responsibilities such as employment or caring for children, and have the most difficulty meeting such educational requirements. Notably, VU is characterised by students from low socio-economic and disadvantaged backgrounds, with the majority of social work students being female and from the Western Region of Melbourne. In this paper, we present preliminary findings and their potential implications for the AASW and other Australian social work programs. This study builds on existing research by examining the gendered impacts on student wellbeing of social work student placements

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## **46 | Challenges and opportunities in developing social work field education in a real world setting: promoting cultural confidence and competency by using a student hub placement model**

Author/s: Brett Davies, Sandra Young

**Queensland Health**

Changes in population mean that social workers are increasingly providing services for a diverse multicultural consumer base. In the health context, social workers require knowledge of evidence informed practice and skill sets relevant to consumers from diverse cultural and spiritual communities. Student field placements have the potential to generate learning experiences that can enable both students and staff to build and integrate culturally relevant and evidence informed practices and through this transform service delivery.

To explore this potential within Queensland Health (QH), Logan Social Work Department partnered with the QH Social Work and Welfare State-wide Clinical Education Program and Griffith University to establish a student hub field placement model. The model focused on enhancing cultural competence and confidence through an evidence informed project integrated



with clinical work. The aim of this placement and subsequent research study was to assess the value of the student hub placement model in promoting and integrating cultural competence, knowledge and attitudes for working with a diverse multicultural client base. Embedding this activity in real, local and culturally relevant health issues engaged students in a transformative process of meaning making, enabling development of professional capability in evidence and culturally informed practice.

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## **47 | Interspecies intersectionality: Subversive social work for all family members**

Author/s: Melissa Laing

### **RMIT University**

In contemporary neoliberal practice environments, subversion offers one way in which social workers can practice ethically and in line with their values. Subversive social work entails intentionally small-scale practice behaviours of caring resistance that social workers engage in to support vulnerable groups, using practices that are aligned with their own ethics, but falling outside the professional, procedural, or even legal boundaries of their roles. Social workers aim to be intersectional, but if excluding the species oppression of nonhuman others, we fall short of this aspiration.

I have conducted a survey and in-depth interviews with social workers whose practice involves women experiencing, or at risk of homelessness with a companion animal, across a sample of Victorian homelessness and family violence services, in order to investigate how they are working creatively to resist the systemic anthropocentrism of the human services.

In this presentation, I present preliminary findings where social workers are practicing subversively and intersectionally in the area of companion-animal friendly practice, and suggest the implications for social work educators to prepare students for Subversive social work, particularly in an interspecies context.

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## **48 | University-industry collaborations: are community voices the missing piece of the puzzle?**

Author/s: Rachel Goff, Kimberlea Cooper

### **Federation University**

University-industry research collaborations aim to bridge the gap between social work theory and practice. By working together, it is more likely that new social work knowledge will be developed and applied in compelling and meaningful ways. However, in designing research



through university-industry collaborations, it is important to ensure that the traditionally privileged voices of academics and practitioners do not overpower those who hold contextual knowledge – community members themselves.

It is suggested that truly collaborative research has the potential to recognise multiple types of expertise and use it to create innovative service and practice responses. Such collaborations indicate a commitment to transforming the service system in response to the lived experience of community members who utilise such services.

This presentation will demonstrate how social work doctoral research currently in progress through the Central Highlands Children and Youth Area Partnership can capture the voices of academics, practitioners and community members. From the two examples provided, it will be evident that such collaborations have the capacity to disrupt how we privilege knowledge, and create new knowledge more likely to lead to transformational and enduring change.

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## **49 | Program logic distortion? On the use of program logical models in human services program evaluation**

Author/s: Susan Evans

### **Western Sydney University**

The discipline and practice of human service program evaluation often involves the use of program logic models. Program logic models are minimalist, often “one page” versions of program theory, lubricating an opportunity to measure outcomes while disregarding the nature of agency, and specific relations, in a program context. This paper will report on results from a national survey with 63 evaluators in community health and welfare organisations to learn about common evaluation design strategies. After briefly describing how the study was conducted, attention will focus on what the findings imply about service learning cultures; growing best practice ‘evidence’; and the potential to take the rug out from under neoliberalism.

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## **50 | The critical importance of social workers being able to correctly identify the aggressor in a Family Violence context: how to do this and the consequences of not getting it right**

Author/s: Christine Craik<sup>1</sup>, Abbey Newman<sup>2</sup>

### **<sup>1</sup>AASW and RMIT University, <sup>2</sup>Womens Health West**

In recent times, there has been a national focus on family violence and the ways in which workers identify and respond to victims/survivors and perpetrators. In Victoria, since the Royal



Commission into Family Violence, there has been an enormous increase in demand for specialist services and a need to up-skill workers in all areas of practice.

The AASW has responded to this demand with the rolling out of Family Violence credentialing and work around the content of family violence courses in social work programs across Universities.

Identifying and responding to family violence is complex and specialist work. When responding to a family in crisis or when working with all family members (including children), being able to identify the aggressor in the situation is of critical importance and also requires specialist training.

Current research demonstrates that not only are workers often unable to identify the presence of family violence, they often misidentify the aggressor and in the process of this, are unintentionally colluding with the perpetrators. This misidentification leads to increased risk, silencing of victim/survivors and systems abuse.

This session will focus on the above and recommendations for ways forward in training and practice for social workers in this space.

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## **51 | Examining the diversity of placement experiences in the contemporary environment: A focus on context, content, approach and relationships**

Author/s: Dr Sevi Vassos, Dr James Lucas

### **Deakin University**

Profound changes in the managerial mandates and fiscal pressures on the higher education and health/human service sectors have culminated in a shortage of direct service placements with onsite, individual social work supervision. As a consequence, and particularly in the last decade, field education has become increasingly diverse in its conceptualisation and complex in its delivery, and this impact on the students' experience of placement. This paper reports on the findings from the first-wave of a larger two-year study (2018-2019) on the diversity of contemporary placement experiences. Sixty Bachelor of Social Work students completed an online survey with a view to examining how students experienced the contexts, relationships, pedagogical approaches, and learning content across different placements.

Preliminary findings suggest three key elements influencing the quality of the students' experience irrespective of the placement:

- (1) organisational commitment to professional learning,
- (2) practice teaching and learning structures, and



(3) the nature of relationships on placement.

The systemic use of collective approaches in practice teaching and learning appears to create the impetus for a level of consistency in the way that above key elements are organised to support quality placement experiences.

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## 52 | Thinking Outside the Neo-Liberal Box: Students in the Gaps

Author/s: Liz Upham

### Queensland University of Technology

In a neo-liberal context, funding to community organisations has become tighter and governed by increased demands for specific outcomes and outputs. Funding is essentially ‘packaged’ into neat boxes of service delivery for specific target groups and delivered in narrow areas. Within this context community organisations are often not able to undertake innovative practice, programs and projects as they are too busy applying for, implementing and reporting on their prescribed packets of service delivery. This has led to a general decline in community development and other areas of macro practice.

Universities and students sit outside the realms of funding, and are powerful agents for working ‘outside the box’ to implement innovative projects and programs which would otherwise not happen. Can students make a real difference to social work practice on the ground?

This workshop will examine two case studies where students on placement have been able to “give legs” to innovative community development projects in *new settings*. Both projects are in their infancy – one involves eight students working on a project to connect and support international students; the second involves 14 students working alongside Outside Hours School Care programs in 8 locations to increase service delivery capacity.

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## 53 | Integration, Inclusion and Cohesion: Experiences and Expectations of Migrants from India in New Zealand

Author/s: Dr Elias Martis

### Te Wānanga o Aotearoa, New Zealand

Migrants’ adaptation, acculturation and settlement into the new society is a complex and multi-dimensional process involving migrants themselves, communities and multiple institutions. A compelling demand arising from the promulgation of New Zealand government’s ‘Migrant Settlement and Integration Strategy’ is that migrants (including refugees) and their communities should be enabled to participate in the country’s civic life and that they become useful members of these larger communities. This goes beyond the settlement outcomes alone and imposes a newer responsibility on social workers and professionals who work with migrants and refugees to work towards this goal of promoting their integration, inclusion, cohesion and civic



participation in the host society. This presentation is based on the finding of a doctoral study of migrants from India who migrated to New Zealand, and presents strategies and frameworks for the guidance of social workers and other professionals, not only for migrants' successful settlement, but for the emerging need of their integration, inclusion and civic participation in the new country. This ethnographic study interviewed 20 skilled migrants from India who immigrated to New Zealand since 1995.

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## **54 | Talking social justice, practising individualism how the tensions generated by neoliberalism are left to be resolved by social workers at the individual level**

Author/s: Louise Townend

### **Flinders University**

The rise of neoliberalism in recent years has exacerbated the injustices to which social work addresses itself, and has created tensions in the field of social work practice and in the institutions responsible for the education of future social workers. While the causes of the injustices which social work seeks to address are largely structural, it will be argued that these tensions are left to be resolved at the individual level.

Neoliberalism has resulted in the commodification of tertiary education characterised by the casualisation of the workforce, and by universities becoming reliant on student fees. This has led to an increase in student numbers, especially full-fee paying International students, increasing the demands placed on educators. At the same time, student social workers must navigate an increasingly complex world and meet increasingly demanding standards of professionalism, whilst working amongst people who are themselves casualties of neoliberalism.

Drawing on 25 years' experience teaching social work and on a critical analysis of the Code of Ethics (AASW 2010), it will be argued that a responsabilising discourse makes individuals answerable for upholding the commitment to social justice, and that achieving socially just change in this way is unlikely, unsustainable, and unfair.

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## **56 | From the education to career: Develop mental process of cultural competence**

Author/s: Yayoi Ide

### **University of Auckland**

Cultural competence practice (CCP) is a core element of social work, consisting of three components: knowledge, attitude and skill. These components are often used for a foundation in



education. However, the framework of CCP has mostly been developed from theoretical aspects with a paucity of actual practice-informed empirical data. This paper reports research which has investigated the development of three components from education to career and the utilisation of these effectively in practice.

Social work students and practitioners were interviewed about their educational and practicum training experiences of developing CCP and their experience as their career developed. A framework for identifying the components of CCP at different stages of the journey: educational, transitional and career from student to practitioner has been developed. The framework shows that the participants establish the fundamental knowledge (biculturalism and multiculturalism) and attitude (self-awareness: professional attitudes) which lead to develop their practice wisdom (skill component) for practice. Self-awareness is a significant element of CCP that has three different types (T1: cultural identification, T2: cultural self-awareness, T3: critical self-awareness) found in this research. These types are not a sequential process; the participants persistently processed and developed for reflective skills throughout their education and career.

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## 57 | Placement as a Transformative Experience

Author/s: Alannah Buller

### **Barwon Health and Deakin University**

The AASW mandates that placement is included in every social work degree in order to provide students with real world experience that supports the development of professional identity. I was informed that placement would be challenging, test my resolve and determine if this was the correct path for me. However, I was not prepared for how the placement experience would shape me as a person. Upon starting placement I was fact driven, and narrow-minded in my worldview, I believed in black and white concepts of right and wrong. Placement shook the foundations of my values and ethics and opened my eyes to the nuances and complexities of both the profession and my own life. Undertaking placement created the space to reflect upon my values, ethics, and unconscious biases. I anticipated the impact placement would have on me as a professional, but I did not realise that placement would turn my life upside down because it changed my mindset, it shifted my values and ethics, and helped me develop a new vision and purpose for my future. This presentation will track my transformational journey, and identify how this this can be relevant for future social work students' placement preparation.



## **59 | Going beyond the binary of the on-off site supervision divide in field education**

Author/s: Ronnie Egan, Linette Hawkins, Judy Williams, Christina David

### **<sup>1</sup>RMIT University**

This presentation builds on research into the experiences of key stakeholders engaged with the RMIT offsite supervision (OSS) model; students, off site supervisors, task supervisors and the RMIT field education team. The research highlighted the importance of clarity about the different roles and relationships, effective and timely communication across stakeholders, increased support and capacity building for task supervisors, and the benefits and limitations of the model. Most student participants reported good to excellent supervision and acknowledged the merits in external group supervision such as supervisor objectivity, a space for critical reflection and praxis, and opportunities for professional socialisation. However, some students indicated that given the choice they would still nominate on-site supervision as a preference even if they had no prior experience of this traditional approach. This presentation will examine this paradox of OSS in order to provide a deeper understanding of the pedagogical factors which lead to quality and transformative field education experiences, regardless of how social work supervision is provided. In an environment of shrinking traditional placements, investigating alternative models which go beyond the binary on/off site divide provides ways of challenging student perceptions about the “ideal” placement experience.

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## **60 | Professionalisation of Social Work Students – Disrupting the Influence of the Hidden Curriculum of Social Work Education**

Author/s: Eleesa Johnstone

### **Queensland University of Technology**

Students graduating from social work programs in Australia are expected to demonstrate a sense of identity as a professional social worker. However, conceptualising identity formation as an evidenced competency implies that it is a smooth uncomplicated process of socialisation achieved through compliance with a prescribed set of benchmarks that fit neatly with contemporary practice. It also could be argued, legitimises the impacts of political, regulatory and managerialist pressures that influence how social workers and students develop and enact their professional identities. As such we should be more concerned than ever about processes of professional identity formation and impacts on future social workers practice. Deconstructing simplistic views of how students demonstrate a professional social worker identity and reconstructing identity development through concepts of the hidden curriculum allows educators to better prepare students for their future professional roles. In doing so, we acknowledge the deeply contextualized nature of practice learning and the complex and interactive processes of identity development. We can prepare and support students more purposefully for how to engage with,



challenge or resist processes of professionalisation particularly in sites of practice learning characterized by hierarchical competition and struggles for power, control and attainment of a professional status.

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## **61 | How an innovative model of social work field education can be disruptive social work practice**

Author/s: Scott Gartshore

### **University of New England**

Social work in New South Wales Public Schools is largely absent, yet holds strong potential to address many of the complex factors affecting children and young people's education. To develop this field of practice, the University of New England (UNE) has been implementing an innovative field education program in rural and disadvantaged schools. The new Department of Education and Communities (DEC) focus on wellbeing has provided a fertile ground to implement a social work offering in schools, at the same time UNE has required growth in placement opportunities. Matching these complementary needs, the Social Work in Schools (SWiS) program has grown from 1 school in 2010 to over 25 schools in 2018.

1. Collaborating with school well-being staff introduces teachers to some of the distinctive elements of social work, while simultaneously social work students gain a unique perspective of youth and adolescent development.
2. SWiS field placement students offer a range of individual and group psychosocial activities to support vulnerable children and young people, increasing their engagement in school and learning potential.
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of the SWiS program a multi-component research program underpins it, including policy development and analysis, school engagement, and SWiS student activities and outcomes.

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## **62 | Teaching intersectionality in social work: Moving beyond the silos**

Author/s: Christina David, Sharlene Nipperess

### **RMIT University**

This paper explores the challenge of embedding an intersectional approach in the social work curriculum in order to prepare students for critical practice in a complex and uncertain world. Our interest has been prompted by our research into the service experiences of people from refugee backgrounds living with a disability. This preliminary research has demonstrated that knowledge and practice at the intersection of disability and ethnicity is often siloed - services for people with a disability often neglect the specific and complex issues faced by people from refugee backgrounds and likewise settlement services are often ill-equipped to respond to the particular



needs of refugees living with a disability. This research has provoked us to examine the often siloed nature of social work education and the way in which this can reflect not only siloed scholarship but also the service system. We argue that embedding intersectional perspectives across social work programs will enable social work education to address emerging social issues in more agile and nuanced ways. We suggest this can be developed through stronger cross-disciplinary collaborations within and across institutions, with service user and advocacy groups and through aligned pedagogical strategies.

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## **63 | Beyond 500 hours: Building resilience in students on Field Education Placements**

Author/s: Lana Ngo

### **Women's & Children's Health Network, SA Health**

SA Health has developed a strong fieldwork program in conjunction with the two local universities. Field placement can be a rewarding and memorable part of a student's experience; similarly, it can also be the most thought-provoking, personally challenging and demanding experience. My role as the Clinical Placement Coordinator (CPC) at Women's & Children's Health Network based in the community health setting meant I was in regular contact with students and was able to observe them on placement. I noticed their excitement, energy, and drive to help clients and their passion to learn at the beginning and also note that often by the middle of placement, students were starting to question their area of work, their concerns for their client group and their view of the world. Drawing on my 16 years' experience in the field, my observations of students and conversations with other Field Supervisors led to my belief that students, particularly those working with complex cases and traumatised clients, may benefit from learning opportunities specifically designed to develop their knowledge and their resilience. Ultimately my goal as Clinical Placement Coordinator was to offer students a deeper connection and understanding about the importance of managing worker wellbeing and the strategies to manage and sustain this throughout their social work career. This presentation will describe the ways that SA Health as an organisation, has attempted to provide these extra learning opportunities for students, to increase their self-awareness and help build resilience in dealing with challenging situations.

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## **64 | Self-care – a compelling demand for social workers**

Author/s: Lesley McGregor

### **Queensland University of Technology**

Over the past 40 years, neoliberalism has infiltrated practice domains of social work. The dominant discourse values individual responsibility over community development. Privatization



and managerialism result in austerity-driven funding shortfalls with the consequent expectation of competition and justification for all funds allocated towards working with disadvantaged and vulnerable population groups. Social workers often practise at the coal-face of extreme hardship and observe the negative impacts of these policies and practices.

In these stressful working conditions, exacerbated by frustrations over lack of agency in their practice, the chances for social workers to experience burnout, secondary trauma and compassion fatigue are greatly increased. Self-care is a well-known approach across multiple disciplines to ameliorate and counter the effects of stressful work conditions. Yet self-care is not a mandatory requirement for social workers and is not included explicitly as part of the AASW Practice Standards.

This presentation aims to discuss how social workers perceive self-care and what factors they identify as influencing their practice of self-care. Is self-care a value or a skill? Should social workers commit to self-care as a professional, mandated requirement for practice? Or is yoga and mindfulness enough?

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## **65 | Challenging dominant perspectives that assume older people are given more choice and control by putting plans in place to prepare for issues that can arise with ageing and end of life**

Author/s: Francis Duffy

### **The University of Sydney**

With the ageing populations around the globe, social workers are increasingly being employed to work with older people and have a vital role to play in the aged care sector.

In recent years there has been a strong movement to increase the opportunity for older people to have more choice and control in relation to planning for ageing and end of life. This movement appears to align well with social work values and theories, including ideas about empowerment, improving quality of life in later years and having more choice and control. This presentation asserts that planning ahead for ageing and end of life issues, is a problematic undertaking and social workers need to take a considered and even cautious approach when participating in this movement.



## **66 | Developing and maintaining resilience in social work practitioners**

Author/s: Clarissa Hitchcock

### **Southern Cross University**

Social work practitioners are called on to be resilient in an increasingly complex human service environment. This paper analyses an individualised construction of resilience. Drawing on a systematic literature review, it examines the conceptualisation of resilience and its applicability to social work education and social workers. The concept of resilience is topical in policy and academic fields, generating considerable research and debate in terms of origin, definition and application to diverse contexts. Although discrepancy exists amongst writers regarding the beginning of resiliency research, childhood resilience is considered to be one of the most extensively researched areas. With a comparable focus on thriving through adversity, research has extended into the health and welfare sector, attempting to understand what makes a 'resilient' practitioner. Fitting with the conference themes of 'compelling demands' and 'enduring purpose', this presentation will engage the audience in a critical discussion of this concept. Has resilience research assisted social work educators to understand how best to support and prepare social work students to manage the increasingly complex and demanding nature of social work practice, setting the foundations for them to thrive and maintain sustained commitment to the rewarding practice of social work?

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## **67 | Human service and higher education research reforms: An opportunity for policy and practice innovation and disruption**

Author/s: Dr Christina Sadowski

### **Federation University Australia**

Both the human services and higher education sectors are undergoing rapid and complex change, with the implementation of significant reform agendas. The presentation will commence by contextualising human services and higher education reform. Within the state of Victoria (where this presenter is based), visions for service reform directions have been articulated across a range of inquiry findings and policy documents, with a focus on using novel approaches to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people. Reform in research in higher education is of similar pace and scope to that in human services. Policy responses focus on shifts in how research performance is measured, how research at universities is funded, and research training of higher degree by research (HDR) students, with emphasis on engagement and impact.

This presentation will argue that these reform agendas intersect to present opportunities for human service/social work practitioners, policy makers and academics to work collaboratively to lead innovation. Central to this intersection is the potential for participatory research approaches which elucidate the insights of those with relevant lived experience to inform, shape and disrupt practice and policy, and to spark innovation.



## **69 | Developing quality child protection student placements in South Australia**

Author/s: Jessica Pellegrino

### **University of South Australia**

A partnership between the Department of Child Protection (DCP) and two state universities, UniSA and Flinders University, is helping to provide students with high quality placements in child protection and to create a prospective employer of choice for social workers in South Australia.

DCP's partnership with the field education teams at both universities has been critical in ensuring it provides stimulating placements for students who are motivated and interested in working in child protection and to ensure that these students are supported and challenged to become quality practitioners.

The department would like to become a preferred placement (and future employer) choice for students and has developed positive, multiple worksite placement that focus on learning and developing competent statutory practitioners who have a strong understanding of the accountability associated with child protection work.

In this presentation, we will discuss the model used by DCP that has now been implemented, at least in part, by other agencies. The key elements of the model are a clearly written student policy, central organisation of placements, ensuring student – agency fit, initial orientation, ongoing supervision and knowledge development, scaffolded placement opportunities for first and second students, learning circles, direction and support from senior staff and ongoing evaluation.

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## **70 | Responding to growing diversity in the social work graduate cohort: a scoping review**

Author/s: Lana Battaglia

### **Monash University**

With increasing student mobility to western host-universities, new social workers are more likely to enter the field in an unfamiliar context. Larger numbers of international students entering social work programs has widened discussion on diversity within the profession; partly due to the reported challenges in educating diverse students within a discipline founded on western values. This paper presents findings from a scoping review, examining 53 research articles on the transition to social work practice. The review investigated whether current knowledge appropriately informs education and support for a diversifying profession. Findings suggest, the literature does not reflect the current cohort of new graduates' needs, or experiences, when entering practice. Rather, a trend exists for study samples, mostly derived from western contexts,



to be categorised as homogenously 'white'. Additionally, knowledge assumes that practice is transitioned to within the same site as graduation, by social workers native to the educational and practice context. Clarity on the experiences of international graduates transitioning to practice is required, with recognition of the multiple ways transitioning is actualised; with the use of more culturally-inclusive research methods. The complexity involved when transitioning to practice therefore requires examination, in a climate where the social work profession internationally diversifies.

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## **71 | The Marketization for the Disability Sector - negotiating the policy/ practice nexus and harnessing the opportunities for social work**

**Author/s: Brooke Kooymans**

### **Griffith University**

Major disability reforms are underway across Australia and we are experiencing a seismic change in disability policy with the introduction and roll out of new national schemes such as the NDIS and the marketization of the disability sector. These reforms have the potential to disrupt and redefine service delivery and practice for front-line social workers who are charged with finding ways of balancing the competing demands of the evolving sector, while meeting the needs of the individuals/consumers.

Social workers are the leading allied health profession offering the most scope across the NDIS registration groups, mastering a dual role as both clinicians' and support coordinators'. With such important roles, social workers have an opportunity to thrive if they can negotiate this policy/practice nexus and operate in this emerging marketplace. A critical literature review undertaken, identified that policy and legislation directly impacts on service delivery and that policy drivers shape service priorities. This in turn influences and shapes front-line social worker responses and service delivery, and ultimately outcomes for the individual/consumer. Understanding how social workers negotiate this policy/practice nexus is important not only to enhance this area of service delivery, but also to contribute to education, training and workforce planning and the development of front line social work practitioners in this space.



## **72 | AGORA developing a campus based Community Development agency**

Author/s: Andrea Tschoner<sup>1</sup>, Sheila Yates<sup>2</sup>

**<sup>1</sup>Flinders University, <sup>2</sup>AGORA**

Is an on campus student placement model disruptive to our notions of field education, or adaptive to the changing context of social service provision and funding and University business imperatives?

In the past 10 years there has been a steady increase of international students into social work programs across Australia. This has created challenges with securing quality social work supervised placement for students who have English as a second language who arrive without deep local context knowledge and no Australian drivers licence. This presentation will explore the development of an on campus model of social work supervised placements that has a community development focus. Engaging in on and off campus community development activities as well as intensive support through Learning Circles the program aims to embed social work knowledge through practice and reflection.

This presentation will celebrate the exciting achievements and learning opportunities as well as explore the challenges faced in creating an on campus agency. Underpinning the workshop will be examples of activities students undertook to develop their social work identity and meet the topic learning outcomes aligned to the ASWEAS guidelines and the AASW Practice Standards.

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## **74 | Looking through the green lens; an ecological perspective for social work education in an era of climate change**

Author/s: Alex Skinner

**Queensland University of Technology**

In an era of climate change and environmental instability, we are faced with an ecological crisis on a global scale. Social workers, by virtue of their work with marginalised and dispossessed people, are in contact with those most disadvantaged by environmental degradation.

With the advent of peak oil, humanity faces a global challenge in transitioning to a low carbon economy. The scale of this challenge necessitates a host of multi-faceted, multi-level, multi-disciplinary responses. Social work educators have an important role to play in articulating the intersectionality of environment, economy and culture, at a grassroots level, as well as a policy level.

This workshop will explore social workers' role in a 'Just Transition' - that is, a transition to a sustainable economy that is *'well managed and contribute(s) to the goals of decent work for all,*



*social inclusion and the eradication of poverty*' (International Labour Organisation 2015). To do so we will borrow some principles from the permaculture (permanent agriculture) movement and examine their application in social work pedagogy. Some of the principles we will examine are 'use and value diversity' and 'use edges and value the marginal'. One practice commonly followed in permaculture design is that each plant must have three functions within the guild of plants, for example producing fruit, improving soil, and sheltering smaller plants. As social workers we can work between agencies and services, creating multiple niches where people may thrive. For example a parenting workshop from one organisation could be supported by free childcare from a group of childcare trainees, which would be beneficial to the trainees, the organisation, the participants and the children, while being less resource intensive.

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## **76 | Understanding and innovatively responding to complexity in practice**

Author/s: Dr Ros Darracott, Dr Danielle Davidson

### **Queensland University of Technology**

Complexity is a hot topic in both academia and the field. It is, however, a nebulous term without much agreement regarding what constitutes 'complex' and from who's perspective it is being defined. It is a term that is infused with power: it can open or shut doors to service access for service users; and increase or decrease access to resources and support for workers. The complexity of human experience interacts with the complexity of organisational service systems with managerialism and its privileging of simplification and technicist responses, as well as short-term unstable working environments, contributing to an ever-increasingly complex work environment. To better prepare students for engaging with and responding innovatively to complexity in all its guises we need greater understanding how complexity is understood, enacted, and responded to in the workplace. This paper reports on the preliminary findings of a pilot study exploring how recent graduates understand complexity and how to respond to it innovatively, and how they are socialised into this understanding in the workplace.

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## **77 | Taking the field on the journey too**

Author/s: Dr Deb Duthie, Dr Ros Darracott, Dr Fotina Hardy

### **Queensland University of Technology**

Over recent years Social Work and Human Services at QUT have been on a journey away from preparing students for cultural competence, towards preparing students to foster a sense of cultural safety with the people they work with – both colleagues and clients. This is a slow process, with the dominance of the cultural competence approach still being felt in the literature across disciplines and practice fields; and in the everyday vernacular of practice and the



professional body. Cultural safety has many advantages including its broad definition of culture which clearly moves it beyond ethnicity or any single facet of identity; its emphasis on cultural self-awareness; its assertion that the culture of another cannot be 'learned'; its critical awareness of power; and its foundation in Indigenous perspectives which assists in decentring western ways of knowing. Students are regularly exposed to the critiques of the cultural competence approach in class, yet on Field Placement are continually exposed to, and assessed on cultural competence as the desired end state, creating challenges for students. This paper will discuss and showcase some of the tools that have been developed to try and encourage the field to come on the journey towards cultural safety with us.

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## **78 | Unpacking complexity: A visual mapping approach**

Author/s: Dr Danille Davidson, Dr Ros Darracott

### **Queensland University of Technology**

A visual mapping approach is an increasingly recognised concept within social work practice, yet the dominant managerialist positioning of many organisations continues to promote simplistic understandings and responses. The challenge for social work educators is how to develop students' understanding of and capacity to respond to complexity in practice, without resorting to over-simplification. Complexity can be a challenging concept for students to break down and appreciate, due to their lack of practice experience and the multi-faceted nature of this concept. For some students appreciation of this concept may remain at an abstract level, or be diminished by the dominance of techniquist views, which may limit their future ability to work with the reality and messiness of practice. This paper will argue that using the visual technique of mapping complexity can assist students learning of this nebulous concept. Mapping enables students to see the various intersecting sources of complexity across multiple systems within a client's presentation more readily than in a written case study. In addition, it assists students to identify and formulate practice responses that appreciate the messiness of real world practice.

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## **79 | Critical social work in a climate of constraint: Exploring a change narrative for the profession**

Author/s: Dr Sonia Martin, Associate Professor John Douglass Whyte

### **RMIT University**

Debates about the challenges facing social work in effecting social change extend back to the professions' origins and have become colloquially expressed as a dichotomy between 'agents of change' and 'agents of control'. The capacity of the profession to meet its change mandate is influenced by the broader enveloping neoliberal context. An emphasis on the marketization of social services, small government and individual responsibility for welfare, demands more from



the profession to address social inequalities and disadvantage, while, simultaneously constraining its change role. A number of scholars have sought to 'rethink' the role of the profession in this context from a critical tradition. For example, Ife's 'Rethinking Social Work' (1997) and MacDonald's 'Challenging Social Work' (2006). Yet more than a decade later, the same debates continue and little appears changed.

This paper poses how social work's capacity for change may be understood as an outcome of four interrelated dynamics: the difficulties associated with challenging 'the system'; practitioner knowledge about how to advance change; formal educational contexts; and, shifting understandings of 'critical social work'. We explore these dynamics and propose a multi-lectic view of the forces shaping the profession, providing insights into the capacity of the profession to effect social change.

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## **80 | Child protection Practice – An (Un)intended Casualty of Reform**

Author/s: Anthony Kemp

**University of Tasmania**

Child protection services are ensnared in a cycle of crisis, followed by an inquiry, which routinely leads to a Government "fixing a broken system" reform. Whilst inquiries correctly explore systemic, organisational and managerial failings, they increasingly (re)confirm the centrality of quality applied practice in improving the safety and wellbeing of children, and a key enabler in supporting child protection departments to deliver quality outcomes.

However, there appears to be a significant disconnect between the now established critical role of applied practice in child protection, and the subsequent government led "reform" agenda. What emerges is a reform which, it is contended, paradoxically degrades practice and thus increases the likelihood of future errors. A major disjuncture between the promise of reform and the implementation realities therefore exists, and children's safety is further compromised.

My research is listening to, and exploring, the lived experiences of front line child protection practitioners engaged in a current reform, to assess the impacts on their ability to practice. Using Sieber's 1981 framework of "regression" and "conversion mechanisms" to potentially explain how good intentions result in poor outcomes, the research explores how we might ensure practice is not so perversely influenced by well intentioned focussing event reforms.



## **81 | Social justice theory and practice as an enduring purpose: A philosophical practice framework**

Author/s: David Hodgson, Lynelle Watts

### **Edith Cowan University**

Social work as a profession has an enduring concern with social justice, derived from a long engagement with people experiencing poverty, marginalisation, oppression, stigma, violence and discrimination. However, there is less engagement in the literature over the theoretical and philosophical foundations of social justice and what this engagement can offer social work. This presentation is based recent research by the presenters for a book on social justice theory and practice for social work (forthcoming). The authors present a proposal for a framework that brings practices of social work and various social justice philosophies and theories into dialogue with each other. The framework includes distributive theories of social justice, critical social science theories, democracy and participation, and, autonomy and human rights. Key ideas from each area are explained and the various limits and critiques outlined. Existing social work theories and practices will be linked, and the presentation will propose areas of social work practice that could be strengthened to increase the opportunities for inclusion and engagement with others about the social conditions under which we live.

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## **82 | Towards a curriculum framework for teaching and learning social justice**

Author/s: Lynelle Watts, David Hodgson

### **Edith Cowan University**

Social justice is a core social work value globally. The centrality of social justice to social work is articulated in social work codes of ethics, practice standards, and a wide range of social work theory, ethics, methods and practice texts. However, the conceptual and philosophical meaning of social justice is contested and often poorly explicated. Furthermore, the pathway that social work may take to achieve social justice is understandably diverse and variegated. This poses a challenge for educators and students trying to grasp in depth and with critical engagement the complexity associated with social justice theory and practice. Educators and students would benefit from a clearly integrated and developed curriculum that has a strong orientation towards social justice. The authors of this presentation have recently completed a book on social justice for social work (forthcoming). A component of the book deals with the question of how to create social work curriculums that specifically address the philosophical and practical aspirations of social justice for social work. This presentation will outline a social justice inspired curriculum framework that will support deeper engagement in teaching and learning for social justice practice.

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## **84 | The Kinship-Culture-Professional Balance: Implications for Aboriginal Social Workers in Central Australia**

Author/s: Jodie Satour

### **Deakin University**

This presentation is a celebration of the Aranda kinship system of Central Australia. A celebration of the relationship between intersecting generational stories and the telling of newly devised narratives centred on reconnection, reclamation, and belonging. These narratives work to provide a cultural light in the darkness of colonisation with the goal of empowering the community's spirit. The intersecting experiences of colonisation among Aranda peoples have caused a disruption to the transmission of cultural knowledge and truths. Kinship is the Heart of Australian Aboriginal societies and central to Aboriginal ways of knowing, being and doing. How contemporary Aboriginal societies still use the kinship system today and how it shapes Aboriginal workers' identities is still being understood. The Aranda people have devised new narratives of survival and resilience, particularly for the Aboriginal Social Workers who constantly balance their professional role with the community's cultural demands. These new narratives, along with their role in the kinship-culture-professional balance for Aboriginal Social Workers will be discussed. It is envisaged these narratives will provide opportunities for social workers to think about how they work with an intersectional framework alongside Aboriginal people and communities.

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## **85 | Diving Deep, cringing and finding my voice: An autoethnography**

Author/s: Bronwyn Charles

### **Griffith University**

This presentation describes my autoethnographic journey through feminism, sexism and communicating with men. Although I have always identified as a feminist, traditional feminist approaches did little to answer my question about how do I talk to men (whom I like) about their unconscious sexism and position of privilege. Although feminism addresses the impact of sexism on women's lives, it makes little contribution to addressing personal relationships between men and women. This led me through a journey of self-discovery and growth, one of the most difficult paths I have taken. My autoethnography was transformative and reflexive. Complexity that got deeper and deeper the more I explored my question, has changed how I understand my own traumas and how this has impacted on my relationships with men. Autoethnography allowed a deep exploration where other methods would not. This has ultimately led me to think about how these experiences relate to social work practice and social work education. As a supervisor how do I create a space to have raw and honest discussions about how privilege and power impact on day to day educative and practice experiences that integrates the personal.



## **86 | Social work's role in developing domestic violence curriculum across disciplines: Critical reflections from working with dentistry**

Author/s: Ann Carrington

### **James Cook University**

Educating health and human services practitioners on how to work in the space of domestic violence (DV) is one compelling demand for society, now and into the future. This paper considers the role social work can play in addressing this demand through the design and delivery of curriculum across disciplines. The author is involved in a project that collaboratively designed and delivers a scaffolded curriculum to teach dental undergraduates how to recognise, respond and refer appropriately to patients who are experiencing DV.

This paper results from the critically reflective process in which the author engaged throughout the project. With reflection focusing on questions such as: 'Why is social work important in teaching DV to Dentists?'; 'What does social work bring to the collaboration that is unique?'; 'How does a critical or feminist social work lens apply?' and 'What is social work's perspective on DV?' The insights gained through this reflective process, the collaborative project and the design and delivery of DV curriculum to dentistry undergraduates, is then examined in relation to the 'Family Violence Curriculum Best Practice Guide' (AASW, 2018) which affirms and validates the authors experience of curriculum development and what social work offers in this space across disciplines.

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## **87 | Developing a critical approach to 'outcome' measurement for social work**

Author/s: Dianne Cox

### **La Trobe University**

Social workers are increasingly exposed to technical practice. The language of evidence is now pervasive as are a number of data driven practices such as 'community indicators', 'program outcome indicators', and 'collective impact' frameworks. These measurement technologies provide a semblance of visibility, transparency, certainty and simplicity for democratic governments who need to be seen to be rational. However, the policy discourses underpinning the selection of indicators and data can constrain and control how social problems and their solutions are framed.

This paper reports on an interview and document based study that explored the development and use of community wellbeing indicators in Victoria. Analysis showed that the dominance of positivist epistemologies in a number of overlapping disciplines in the field meant that data driven, evidence-based practices were taken for granted and not exposed to any serious critique.



Acceptable knowledge in social work can be informed by both positivist and constructivist paradigms. Often caught up in the ropes of reporting outcomes, social workers need to develop critical skills to recognise the usefulness, limitations and risks of data driven practices and develop confidence in alternative evidence discourses based on a wider range of knowledge, to communicate effective and inclusive practice.

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## **88 | Assisting social work students to build Professional Identity Resilience**

Author/s: Natasha Long

### **La Trobe University**

Social work graduates face many challenges when they embark on their careers. They face pressures in the human service sector in relation to practices and expectations dominated by neo-liberal ideologies and high workloads. Graduates are also navigating challenges around professional status, role clarity, professional and organisational values misalignment, and the absence of other social workers, at a critical time in their professional identity development. These pressures can lead to the role and professional space of social workers seeming less clear. In addition, within this challenging context, graduates experience knocks to their social work professional identity that can leave them feeling uncertain about the profession. This paper draws on findings from a PhD study that utilised Grounded Theory to explore the experience of professional identity development with 12 Australian social work graduates over an 18-month period. A key finding related to the graduates' experiences of Professional Identity Resilience, that is, the ability to bounce back from challenges to their professional identity. This paper explores this concept and relevance to the new graduate experience of professional identity development, and the role social work educators can play in developing skills to promote the development of Professional Identity Resilience.

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## **89 | Responding to the compelling demands of child protection and domestic violence: a research/ practice partnership**

Author/s: Professor Sarah Wendt<sup>1</sup>, Dr Michelle Jones<sup>1</sup>, Dr Carmela Bastian<sup>1,2</sup>, Dr Charlie Murray<sup>2</sup>

### **<sup>1</sup>Flinders University, <sup>2</sup>Department of Child Protection**

Research continues to show that domestic and family violence (DFV) is commonly present in child protection work. The prevalence and seriousness of DFV means that child protection workers need safe, ethical ways to recognise and respond to this issue to minimise risk to children and adult victims exposed – as well as to support their wellbeing and long-term recovery. While it cannot be left to child protection practitioners to provide long-term support for victims or



perpetrators it is important that they can identify and respond to DFV in the context of CP work and work alongside specialist agencies to address this issues. This paper reports on a Living Lab Approach being trialled in South Australia to bring research and practice knowledge together to formulate (1) an organisational DFV policy and practice framework; and (2) partnerships and collaborations with specialist agencies. The Living Lab Approach allows research teams to directly learn from and immerse themselves in the lives of the people who will benefit from the research. This paper shares the journey of researchers and practitioners coming together to advocate for a stronger policy position for a child protection approach to DFV that ensures safety of children while recognising complex intersectional experience of women and families.

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## **91 | Caring for Justice in a Neoliberal University**

Author/s: Dorothee Hölscher

### **Griffith University**

This proposed presentation is based on a study on participatory parity in higher education in South Africa. Its purpose is to explore the nature of the relationship between social justice and care under conditions of neoliberalism. Using the lenses of Joan Tronto's democratic ethic of care and Nancy Fraser's work on social justice, I also reflect on my own practices as a social work lecturer in a university that had a high percentage of students who, by their own accounts, were poor. I argue that in this context, relationships between students and lecturers were vulnerable to replicating and reinforcing prevailing injustices. At the same time, care emerged as a subversive practice, apt to substitute some of the key conditions and processes at the root of the injustices afflicting the field. I conclude that a democratic ethic of care can be employed to further the ends of social justice against the odds of a neoliberal learning context. While the study's location may seem profoundly different from those found in Australian institutions of higher learning, I propose that nonetheless, its findings show up both fault lines and openings for socially just practice that will be relevant for social work educators at large.

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## **92 | Enhancing to educate and empower – MSW International Student Enhancement Program**

Author/s: Andrea Tschner

### **Flinders University**

Flinders University has one of the largest Social Work Field Education Programs in Australia. Almost 70% of students enrolled into the MSW program in 2018 are international students and there has been a **367% increase** in the number of international students requiring placement since 2012.



The growth in this complex student cohort has resulted in an increased 'reluctance' of social work agencies to accept international students. A lack of contextual understanding, low level of reflective and interpersonal skills as well as poor language skills have been identified as the main challenges amongst other transition issues for most first year international students.

The International Student Enhancement Program has been developed and run successfully over the last 2 ½ years specifically tailored at MSW international students for Field education placement readiness. It aims at increasing the students' capacity to meet the AASW Learning Practice Standards required to successfully pass Field Education placements. It not only focuses on providing enhancement content but has at its core participatory sessions focused on engagement, skills training and peer group support.

This presentation will demonstrate reciprocal learnings and challenges of engaging with international students in a non-compulsory program that has contributed positively to Field placement preparation.

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## **93 | Overseas Placements – Challenges and Complexities in Social Work Placements Located Outside of Australia**

Author/s: Libby Kirkbride, Mary Duncan, Dr Keith Miller

### **Flinders University**

Universities are increasingly being encouraged to pursue the internationalisation of their programs and international Work Integrated Learning (WIL) opportunities for students. At the same time student enrolments are increasing and local placement opportunities are under extreme stress. In response to these pressures the Social Work Discipline and Field Education program at Flinders University have pursued innovative ways of increasing valuable field placement opportunities for social work students through an International placement program and the development of a model to support students with the challenges associated with a placement located outside of Australia.

Flinders University social work students in the MSW (qualifying) and the BSW programs have completed placements in the Philippines, Singapore and India through New Colombo and Asia Bound funding from the federal government. Challenges and complexities addressed in planning and managing students undertaking an overseas placement include, culture shock, colonialism, privilege, risk management, reciprocity, cross cultural understanding and international social work. This presentation will focus on the identified challenges associated with students undertaking a field education placement in both the Philippines and India and it will discuss a model developed to prepare and support students on an overseas placement for pre departure, in-country and post placement support.



## **94 | Honouring the past and focusing on the future – the benefits of reviewing our history**

Author/s: Diana Carmody, Jenny Rose

### **The Children’s Hospital at Westmead**

The oldest social work (previously Almoner’s) department in NSW is based at the Children’s Hospital at Westmead, this year it is 85 years old. The department understands the importance of student placements, providing a minimum of ten placements per year. From these placements, two have been focused on researching and documenting the history of the department. For one placement the major output was a series of posters, for the other video-recordings with staff. These placements have provided significant benefits to the individual students, the social work department, other students on placement, the many students we have presented to about this in University lectures and our broader agency.

This presentation will include reflections from staff and students involved in this project and incorporate the wonderful artefacts developed by the students. These placements have assisted in locating significant documents that have encouraged us to critically reflect on our history. We have particularly focused on themes including:

- Family centred practice
- Advocacy
- Evolution of theory
- Tasks for the future
- The importance of social work within the health profession
- The impact of the social/political context on social work practice.

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## **95 | Legal Education in the Social Work Curriculum: A review of the literature**

Author/s: Gayle Hall

### **Edith Cowan University**

The theme for this presentation is new settings. The presenter is interested in what social work is contributing to the legal arena that is distinctive and how the social work curriculum prepare students to work ethically and creatively within this field? The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) requires each social work school to have a legal unit within their curriculum. The AASW however, does not provide much direction about the content of that curriculum. While there have been a number of texts on law and social work in Australia there has been little systematic inquiry into legal education in social work curriculum in the Australian context. The presenter is beginning to undertake research into this neglected area of social work by building on the work of Braye and Preston-Shoot (2006) in the United Kingdom. The research will



investigate how social work educators consider legal education and the topics covered in that education. It will also investigate whether the legal content of curriculums support international professional aims with regard to social work education on human rights and social justice. The presentation will discuss the themes in the literature from international research regarding legal education in social work.

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## **96 | Student Stressors – hearing the voices of students and supporting their journey**

Author/s: Jenny Rose

### **The Children’s Hospital at Westmead**

In recent years there has been an increasing body of evidence exploring the complexity of social work students’ lives as they complete the field education component of their degrees. The Children’s Hospital at Westmead offers approximately fifteen social work placements each year. The student body is diverse, with placements being available to all universities across NSW for students enrolled in a BSW or MSW on a first, second or final placement.

During the placement students attend a weekly student support group. For the past ten years, one session of the weekly student group has focused on stress management and self-care, during this time students individually document their individual stresses/worries, share with their peers and explore possible strategies to assist.

This presentation will present the data obtained from a thematic analysis of the collective concerns provided by students during the student stress management and self-care sessions. This data provides valuable insight from the student perspective which allows us to modify the processes used in our student education unit to better support our student cohort. This information has important implications for student learning in our setting and the learning is likely to be transferable/beneficial to other agencies.

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## **97 | “In a Galaxy Far, Far Away” – Diversity in an ever-changing modern world of “far away” placements**

Author/s: Ilektra Zabantias, Libby Kirkbride

### **Flinders University**

The Master of Social work degree at Flinders University has grown significantly in recent years resulting in a variety of interesting and innovative new developments and opportunities in field education.



Technological advances and access to online learning options have seen increasing numbers of students from distant locations engaging in social work education where in the past this may not have been possible. Technology has enabled individuals with varying personal circumstances and a variety of personal and practice experience to access social work education, enriching our profession and providing individuals with learning opportunities that were previously inaccessible.

Students can now engage in learning when they live in locations that did not previously have access. This has also created opportunities for innovative and diverse placements and resulted in unique ground breaking placement opportunities in a breadth of geographic locations.

Join us on our journey of exploration of this unique space as we showcase some interesting placements in fascinating locations in faraway places which include the diversity of the social work Universe outside of Adelaide

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## **100 | Creative Intersectionality – what happens when a non-government organisation, ten schools and three universities come together to support refugee communities?**

Author/s: Phyllis Chee<sup>1</sup>, Anna Spencer<sup>2</sup>, Liz Upham<sup>3</sup>

**<sup>1</sup>Griffith University, <sup>2</sup>Sunshine Coast University, <sup>3</sup>Queensland University of Technology**

This presentation examines key elements of a creative collaboration when a non-government organisation, ten schools and three universities come together to support refugee communities. In 2014, Access Community Services received funding to establish community hubs in two schools in Logan City. The hubs were focused on the needs of refugees and asylum seekers. Four years later, Access has ten hubs – five in Logan City and five in Ipswich City.

From mid-2018 this equates to forty student placements in an academic year. Inclusion of placement students as integral part of hubs' operation evolved from a process of working together to shape shared goals for good practice outcome and student learning. For students, the placements provide rich learning environments to understand macro issues associated with resettlement and refugee policy in Australia, develop community engagement and micro social work skills, and practice creatively in a context where schools, social work agencies and universities intersect. In re-thinking the role that universities' field education programs play, an innovative approach to supervision was developed that emphasized relationships, support for the work of the hubs and place-based learning for students, universities and hubs. Key learnings and implications for universities engagement in this collaborative space will be presented.



## **101 | Using Critical Discourse Analysis and Critical Race Theory as Pedagogical Tools in the Social Work Classroom for Critical Reflections on Racism**

Author/s: Alankaar Sharma

### **The University of Sydney**

Discussing oppression and diversity is a fundamental, and also challenging, aspect of social work education. Social work educators continually search for pedagogical tools that could help students critically reflect on their social location and become cognizant of the many ways in which forces of oppression and privilege permeate their everyday lives. In this presentation, I will argue and illustrate that Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Critical Race Theory (CRT) can be used in tandem to help social work students recognize and resist racism in their social environment. CDA is a theoretical framework that situates isolated, individual and/or everyday experiences within their larger sociopolitical context through analyzing texts (including written and spoken language, images, and videos). It helps recognize individual enactments of culture-wide discourses while scrutinizing issues of privilege and power that inform these contexts. CRT is a theoretical framework that mandates attention to racialized peoples and issues with the explicit purpose of unmasking and challenging racism. I will illustrate how CDA and CRT may be used together to help social work students develop a deeper awareness and understanding of their social, cultural and political contexts vis-à-vis racism by critically scrutinizing popular culture and media.

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## **103 | Practices effective for assisting young people avoid or exit homelessness: Listening to the experience of young service users**

Author/s: Associate Professor Lynne Keevers

### **University of Wollongong**

Despite recognition of youth homelessness in the policy environment and in the social work literature relatively little is known about the practices effective in assisting young people avoid or exit homelessness. Additionally, the voices of homeless young people are often absent or go unheard in policy discussions. The purpose of this paper is to investigate and articulate the perspectives and experiences of young people involved with a community-based organisation, who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Underpinned by a practice-based approach and employing both quantitative and qualitative data gathering methods, this study identifies the *practices* that young people perceive as having the most significant benefit and impact on their lives.

The study suggests there is a mismatch between the 'results' and performance measures developed by government funding agencies and the experiences and perspectives of young



people. The adult-oriented results currently expected by funding bodies overlook what matters most from the perspective of young service users and do not give sufficient weight to indicators of social justice and wellbeing or to relationships based on care, respect and persistence. Accordingly, a critical role for social workers is ensuring the voices of homeless young people are represented and heard in the policy process.

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## **104 | Discourse analysis on English language testing for Australian citizenship**

Author/s Megan Watts

### **Edith Cowan University**

The new citizenship requirements in Australia have an increased focus on English language competency and on 'Australian' values. This raises questions on what is motivating these new requirements, and how this is shaping conceptions of Australian identity. The dominance of the English language on the global stage can reinforce the hegemonic nature of the English language, which is becoming increasingly embedded in the image of an Australian citizen. This presentation will discuss the preliminary findings from a discourse analysis of media releases from newspapers, government statements and other grey materials on the recent changes to Australia's citizenship requirements, particularly English language testing. The analysis draws on a post-colonial conceptual framework to determine what forms of imperialism, eurocentrism and race are found in discourses of English language testing, and how this shapes our conceptions of citizenship and what it means to be Australian. Implications for how we understand diversity and working with diverse language groups are explored in light of English language testing and citizenship discourses in Australia.

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## **105 | Cross-fertilising Bush Adventure Therapy and Contemporary Green Perspectives within Social work Education: Describing the investigative and collaborative path taken and providing findings and recommendations to consider new settings**

Author/s: Amanda Smith<sup>1</sup>, Anita Pryor<sup>2</sup>, Jenny Boddy<sup>1</sup>, Ben Knowles<sup>2</sup>, Hilary Gallagher<sup>1</sup>, Pete Rae<sup>2</sup>, Sylvia Ramsay<sup>1</sup>, Donna McAuliffe<sup>1</sup>

### **<sup>1</sup>Griffith University, <sup>2</sup>Adventure Works Australia**

The School of Human Services and Social Work at Griffith University have partnered with international universities, institutions, associations and various professional identities to deeply investigate where the intersectionality of green social work and bush adventure therapy may fit within the professional and higher education curriculum of social work in a creative and dynamic



approach. These specific collaborations held over a 2-year period have focused on sharing understandings about essential green/environmental social work knowledges and skills and to embed bush adventure therapy and green perspective methods and content within social work courses. With increasing literature highlighting the importance of developing environmental and green social work practice and education (Dominelli, 2012; Gray et. al., 2013; Ramsay & Boddy, 2017) these investigations are both timely and critical. This presentation will describe the process of investigation and collaboration and provide findings and recommendations.

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## **106 | Practising social justice: The value of a practice-based studies and theorisations for social work**

Author/s: Associate Professor Lynne Keevers

### **University of Wollongong**

Practice-based studies comprise a diverse body of work that have developed explanations of social, cultural and material phenomena based on the notion of *practices*. Although the 'turn to practice' is prominent in fields such as healthcare, organisation studies and education, it is scarce in the social work literature.

For practitioners and researchers, practice theory invites a reframing of concepts central to social work, such as social justice. In the literature social justice is usually conceptualised as a desirable end-state, as claims to be achieved or as a set of principles. Yet, the practices of social justice themselves have been largely overlooked.

An orientation to practices warns against conceptualising social justice as a state that can be achieved once and for all. Instead, there are no definitive solutions, and struggles over recognition, redistribution, representation and belonging continue unabated. Social justice is recast as situated, practical, ongoing processes, made and remade in relations with one another rather than as theoretical and end-state oriented.

This paper presents a multi-dimensional framework of practitioners 'doing' social justice in the midst of a world of inequality. The argument is made that a shift towards practice offers a valuable means to investigate and re-think approaches and concepts within the changing domain of social work.



## **108 | Preparing students for value based case management in the quasi-market: are we setting them up?**

Author/s: Rohena Duncombe<sup>1</sup>, Monica Short<sup>1</sup>, Sue Trembath<sup>2</sup>, Louise Whitaker<sup>2</sup>, Greg Wiman<sup>1</sup>

**<sup>1</sup>Charles Sturt University, <sup>2</sup>Southern Cross University**

Case management is experiencing a major evolution that includes the isolation of its roles and the compartmentalisation of its functions. As educators it is challenging to keep track of these changes and to equip students for contemporary practice. This paper continues the conversations from the 2016 and 2017 ANZSWWER conferences. It reports the findings from a two year peer review into case management curricula in contemporary social work and welfare education in which five social work academics from three educational institutions undertook a co-operative inquiry. We investigated the tensions within the contemporary human and community services environment that are influencing the teaching of case management. The shifting and shifty nature of case management and personalisation approaches in the quasi-market emerged as key themes. In this presentation, similar to the previous two conference discussions, we continue reflecting on how our teaching practises equip students to deal credibly and courageously with the global and local trends that are currently influencing case management and we invite others to engage in this process with us.

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## **109 | Intersectionality: Many Trips down Diminishing and Diverse Rabbit Holes?**

Author/s: Virginia Mansel Lees

**La Trobe University**

In the brave new world social work will need to develop different ways of working to remain relevant. Moving from theorizing social problems, through to service delivery will no longer sustain our purpose or that of our clients and although we do so much more that is unique it is being dissipated by those with louder voices claiming the space that was once exclusively ours.

With many more social workers becoming individual contractors or being employed by contracted internal/overseas Organisations, working within an Agency with a specific client group will likely cease to exist apart from possibly those working in hospitals.

Disrupting this narrative will involve creating a wedge to insert our profession into the political system so that influence can be bought to bear on political parties to address the deepening inequality that has become entrenched and heralded as the new norm. To date we have issued press releases, given expert opinion on a broad range of topics, and still have not been able to make the change necessary for those in need. If anything we have been further marginalised which means a different paradigm must be developed.



Intersectionality will become integral to practice which may mean different alliances than those we have previously engaged with, a re-imagining of what social work is and how we do it within a more assertive manner as a way of being seen to make change as much as being heard.

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## **110 | The Yin and Yang of Social Work Field Education**

Author/s: Kerry Hoare, Azmiri Mian

### **Flinders University**

Studying a Master of Social Work (MSW) can be daunting for anyone, with the expectation that we must bare our souls, critically reflect on our values and be able to push through 1000 hours of unpaid work to ensure we meet the requirements of all the AASW Practice Standards. Not to mention the unrelenting assessments for the other topics, family, work, and maybe even sleep.

This is what a domestic student may experience in being admitted to the MSW program. Then what about the large cohort of Mainland China students who are admitted in to the MSW Program each semester at Flinders University? Research shows that international students can experience a range of challenges in managing life and study in a different cultural context (Artur 2017; McKenna et al 2017).

Despite having a range of resources and programs available to support the needs of these students, other factors begin to impact the students' wellbeing when they commence their first field placement (McKenna et al 2017). Students do not approach discipline staff with these issues until it is often too late (Heng 2018).

Anecdotally, feedback received from new students from Mainland China has brought to our attention an organically developed resource. MSW students in the latter semesters of the program have become a resource for newer students from Mainland China. This level of peer support can enable new students to more openly share concerns and challenges without judgement and tap into the wisdom of these more experienced students.

The MSW peer support for students from Mainland China will form the basis of the presentation, through their voices – what can we learn; how can we provide better support; how can we develop a sustainable 'peer to peer' model collaboratively that supports both learning outcomes and wellbeing outcomes for these students?



## **111 | Advancing Social Work Research: Pathways to Impact**

Author/s: Professor Mark Hughes<sup>1</sup>, professor Christine Bigby<sup>2</sup>, Professor Clare Tilbury<sup>3</sup>, Professor Mike Fisher<sup>4</sup>

**<sup>1</sup>Southern Cross University, <sup>2</sup>La Trobe University, <sup>3</sup>Griffith University, <sup>4</sup>University of Bedfordshire**

While social work is an important profession within the Australian human services industry, it has struggled to generate the research needed to transform our understanding of social issues and generate innovative and impactful solutions. The potential of social work knowledge production has been limited by narrow conceptualisations of research into practice, such as the evidence-based practice model, and a lack of differentiation about what makes social work research significant. This workshop will explore with participants the challenges facing Australian social work research, as well as the opportunities to build research capacity across the profession and to develop the infrastructure and networks needed for research to impact on policy, service delivery and quality of life. The workshop will overview the Australian Research Council project on Advancing Social Work Research and its emerging findings. Participants will discuss case studies of social work research impact, and will workshop strategies for increasing and sustaining engagement and impact. The workshop relates to the Symposium theme of Compelling Demands. A major shift is needed in the quality, depth, breadth and impact of social work research if we are to address the major social issues confronting disadvantaged communities and the human services industry in Australia over the coming decades.

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## **113 | Empowerment, connection and system improvement: the voice of children and young people in child protection**

Author/s: Isabella Daziani

### **Department for Child Protection**

The new South Australian *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* brings greater emphasis to supporting children and young people to have a voice throughout the child protection process. The theoretical and practical standards of capturing the voice of children and young people in case management decisions are well researched and understood. It is the application of these standards of consulting children and young people on departmental policies, programs and directions that is inconsistent and that can be improved upon.

This presentation will discuss how the voice of children and young people through evaluations can inform existing programs and services and influence future policy and program design. We will discuss recent evaluations of the DCP Volunteer Program and the Mt Barker Young People's Council – a regionally based, social-worker led initiative – where the views of children and young people were sought and how their views and experiences are informing future directions.



Consistent with research involving children's participation, findings have highlighted that children and young people want to be asked their opinion and be involved in decisions that affect them (see Finan et al., 2016). To do this, we are moving beyond discussing decision-making powers with children, and providing children with authentic opportunities to participate and have a voice of influence.

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## **114 | Systemic advocacy: are we doing it right and is it safe??**

Author/s: Dr Cate Hudson, Dr Helene De Antiss, Patricia Muncey

### **University of South Australia**

As educators it is time to reflect on the systemic advocacy knowledge and skills we currently teach students and to consider the effectiveness of these skills in a neoliberal environment. The questions that need answering are – what systemic advocacy knowledge and skills are needed for future practice, does current curriculum include the necessary knowledge and skills, as educators are we placing enough emphasis on the importance of systemic advocacy in practice, are we educating students to advocate at the macro level and manage the professional repercussions that may result from their advocacy work?

Advocacy is a fundamental function of social work practice. Social workers have clear ethical responsibilities to individuals, groups and communities to advocate for systemic and environmental change which ensures access and equity in order to uphold human rights and promote social justice. Within organisations their ethical responsibilities include advocating for conditions and policies that reflect the Code of Ethics and to advocate for resources that meet client and staff need (AASW, 2010). These ethical responsibilities are reflected in the AASW Practice Standards (2013) which outline performance measures such as 'Identify social systems and structures that preserve inequalities and injustices and advocate for change' (1.1.c) and 'Challenge systemic and policy injustices and recommend/develop new policies using methods such as: i. Social action ii. Advocacy iii. Research and evaluation' (5.3.c).

In the current and future context of practice there are potential challenges to the ability of social workers particularly at the 'grass roots level' to uphold their ethical responsibilities to advocate. For example the My Aged Care and National Disability Insurance scheme reforms have the potential to create significant problems given that the consumer driven model of care is based on the assumption that consumers will know how to independently navigate the system and access services (Laragy & Allen 2015). Recent media reports suggest that some consumers are not getting a service, or the correct service, to meet their needs. We also have anecdotal evidence to suggest that social workers are being criticised or performance managed as a result of their advocacy work on behalf of such clients.

The AASW ethical and professional practice standards place priority on the responsibilities of social workers to advocate in the work that they do. Given the changing context of practice, as



educators it is time to review our practices to ensure we are preparing new graduates to meet the challenges they will face.

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## **115 | Developing new opportunities for Social work practice through field placements in residential aged care settings**

Author/s: Janine Harrison, Natasha Triglau

### **Flinders University**

Australia's ageing population and the associated increase in residential aged care services is creating new opportunities for social work field placements in this relatively non-traditional setting. A team at Flinders University is working on expanding learning opportunities for students in residential aged care services in Adelaide, in collaboration with service providers and social workers who bring practice wisdom from the field. At present, the University has partnerships with at least 5 residential aged care organisations which offer placements across 24 sites. Within this complex field of practice, students have to navigate challenges such as deficit-focussed government funding structures, organisational cultures which are at times not congruent with social work values, and ethical issues that emerge from settings where residents may have limited autonomy and agency. The University has developed a learning program which disrupts students' thinking about older people and encourages them to grapple with the challenges around social work roles and identity in residential aged care. The program includes a two-day orientation workshop and ongoing learning circles for students, with topics such as sexuality and older people's sexual health. This presentation will explore some of the learning opportunities in this field, how students are being supported in their learning and examples of the work that is being undertaken by students.

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## **116 | 'Relationships with individuals' in social work practice: Social work's enduring purpose or not?**

Author/s: Dr Wendy Rollins

### **Victoria University**

Consensus exists in the social work literature that social worker - client relationships are central to social work identity and purpose. However, practice knowledge about what social workers actually do in contemporary practice in their work with clients is under researched. This presents a confronting problem for social work in a resource constrained neoliberal environment, and in a society where loneliness is being increasingly identified as a major social problem.

This workshop first reports the findings of a qualitative study that explored the theory and practice of social worker- client relationships with practising social workers, revealing insights about the relationship emphasis in the practice of social worker-client relationships. Social



workers apply a distinct practice approach that is heavily informed by social work's 'relationship' paradigm called Social Work Relationship Praxis (SWRP).

The workshop advances the concept of SWRP to invite participant views about the emphasis on relationship –informed approaches in their own practice. Questions that seek to identify and explore a) the relevance of SWRP for practice and b) the elevation of relationship thinking in social work education will be posed with regard to preparing students for practice in contemporary contexts.

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## **117 | New Settings: Developing child protection curriculum in schools of social work in Palestine**

Author/s: Associate Professor Susie Costello<sup>1</sup>, Teresia Kanyi<sup>2</sup>

**<sup>1</sup>RMIT University, <sup>2</sup>The University of Melbourne**

The presentation describes a 2016 to 2017 project aimed at developing child protection curriculum in schools of social work in Palestine. The project was delivered in the West Bank and Gaza, and to a delegation from Palestine in Melbourne. The presentation discusses the disruptive challenges and highlights in introducing rights and strength-based, child-focused, family-inclusive and trauma-informed child protection curriculum in the context of occupation, poverty and patriarchy. It emphasises the need for critical reflection for foreign educators in relation to culture, gender, human rights and anti-oppressive practice when teaching in in the Middle East and other collective cultures. The key outcome was Palestinian academics and practitioners' preference for Family Group Conferencing over traditional case management models of child protection.



# *New Voices*

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## **1 | The production of visual data as a power-sharing tool in social work research interviews**

Author/s: Pam Joseph

**University of Sydney**

From early in their undergraduate education, social workers develop skills, confidence and familiarity with interview techniques. The people we seek to interview may be less comfortable with this mode of interaction. A possible consequence, in the context of social work research, is underrepresentation of some groups of people on the basis of factors such as gender, confidence with spoken English, or individual communication preferences. In a study exploring parent carers' perspectives on their relationships with service systems, interviews included a low-tech visual data production method comprising a portable whiteboard, markers, and customized magnets. The design choice was made in an attempt to engage a diverse range of participants, share control over the tools of data production, and facilitate parents' communication of sensitive or complex concepts. Twenty-one mothers and six fathers, who cared for children between two and 42 years of age with ongoing high-level care needs, participated in semi-structured interviews about their relationships with service systems and their understandings of their own identities within or outside those systems. The optional visual data production tool was utilised by all but two parents. This presentation reflects on the experience of designing and implementing the data production tool, discusses the potential opportunities and limitations of incorporating this approach into traditional research methods, and suggests adaptations for use in different contexts.

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## **2 | The wellbeing of mothers: the role of the relational self-construal in social supports**

Author/s: Lauren Wills

**Monash University**

There is a substantial link between a mother's wellbeing and reduced health, social and behavioural outcomes for her child which is most often attributable to the impact of wellbeing on parenting practices. Parenting behaviour and relationships, rather than family structure, profoundly influence a child's wellbeing and long-term outcomes. Depression in mothers has a long-term impact on a child's emotional and behavioural development throughout the lifespan. Women typically report the lowest wellbeing when their child is four years of age, contrary to a support focus on the first 12 months post-partum.



The first days and months of motherhood can be particularly challenging for women. The reality of caring for an infant – which includes lack of sleep and the loss of personal time, space, sense of self, confidence and self-esteem – can have a strikingly adverse effect on maternal wellbeing and satisfaction in the parenting role.

Changes to the self-concept of new mothers have been simultaneously characterised as a continuation and amplification of existing parts, a process of fragmentation and refocus, and an increase in self-coherence with key others indicating a shift to a more relational self. The relational self refers to the degree to which we incorporate close others into our self-schema. Research into relational self-construal, gender and wellbeing suggests a relationship which may help to illuminate many of the processes by which mothers maintain and enhance their wellbeing.

This exploratory study aimed to examine the importance of a relational self-construal on maternal wellbeing during the preschool years. Eight mothers completed the Relational-Interdependent Self-construal Scale (RISC), the Relational Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) and the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). The 24 items from the three scales provided 192 pieces of data that were analysed. Family and close others were found to be incorporated into the self more than friends, despite strong connectedness to friends. The data suggested that RSE is a potential moderator between RISC and SWLS. The results indicate a need for support interventions to focus more on intimate relationships, in addition to the friendship support for mothers already provided in the community. Further studies are needed to extend and clarify these findings.

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### **3 | ‘Losing the plot?’ Reflections on the ethical and methodological challenges of ‘giving voice’ to young people in youth justice**

Author/s: Shelley Turner

#### **Monash University**

Holt and Pamment (2011, p.126) argue that: ‘it is the very interplay of ‘young-person-as-offender’ which presents some very particular and specific challenges to researchers who want to work with such populations.’ Indeed, as both ‘young people’ and ‘offenders’, youth justice clients represent two of the most denigrated and marginalised groups in our society (Holt and Pamment, 2011). While much is written and said *about* young offenders in the public discourse, rarely are their own voices and perspectives included. However, a small, but growing body of research is emerging – amid calls for more – that directly examines the views and lived experiences of justice-involved young people. Unfortunately, the literature offers very little guidance for researcher about how to manage the methodological, ethical and practical issues that inevitably arise in such research. This paper presents the author’s reflections on her experiences as a practitioner-researcher in youth justice, as she conducted her PhD research project that explored youth justice clients’ lived experiences of case management. It provides an overview of the key methodological, ethical and practical issues she faced while trying to ‘give voice’ to youth justice clients – and not ‘lose the plot’ while doing so. In particular, the paper focuses on how the researcher



attempted to redress the inherent power imbalances of the research context; and manage the challenges of data collection and analysis, in light of the prior interview experiences of young people in the criminal justice system, and their documented oral language and literacy skill deficits.

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## **4 | Urban heatwaves, gendered social vulnerabilities and cooling adaptation measures**

Author/s: Margarita Windisch

### **Monash University**

The research project aims to investigate if and how public cooling places, which are considered a primary heat preparedness mechanism in public health policy, are used by older women during heatwaves.

Heatwaves are considered the biggest natural hazard for humans in post-industrial societies, with major public health implications. Urban environments are deemed particularly vulnerable to heatwaves due to the Urban Heat Island effect. Climate change will increase the frequency, duration and intensity of heatwaves and combined with growing urbanisation will lead to even higher mortality rates.

The negative health impacts of heatwaves are not shared equally across society, but are concentrated among specific population groups, earning them the title of 'silent and invisible killers of silenced and invisible people'. Older people are significantly over represented in heatwave related excess mortality statistics internationally. The research project aims to explore how heatwave vulnerability is largely socially constructed with gender and systemic socio economic disadvantage - often associated with social isolation, poor quality housing and lack of cooling options - identified as major risk factors for this group. Deeply entrenched and systemic gender inequality leaves older women poorer and with reduced access to adequate and lifesaving adaptation measures, consequently leading to higher rates of heatwave related morbidity and mortality.

The process of 'denaturalising' heatwave disasters, allows for a deeper investigation into the factors contributing to unequal access to opportunities and unequal exposures to risks in heatwave mortality.

Public health interventions and protective measures play a crucial part in how well individuals and communities can build their adaptive capacity and resilience to heat. The research proposal aims to contribute to current knowledge and gain important insights on heat vulnerability for older people in urban environments. It hopes to investigate how the use of air-conditioning and public cool spaces as a key health adaptation strategy reflects the needs and opportunities for older vulnerable people.



The research will use the qualitative methodology of semi-structured interviews, guided by critical and emancipatory perspectives. By using particular qualitative methods, the researcher of this study will endeavour to investigate how the unearthed micro level experiences of research informants relate to, or are partly determined by, larger social forces and power structures in society. The data collected will be thematically analysed to better understand the multifaceted impact of heatwaves on the lives of research participants and offer directions for service delivery.

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## **5 | Reflections from a co-design convert: how a design mindset can influence social work practice**

Author/s: Rachel Goff

### **Federation University Australia**

The Victorian family services system is characterised by high referral rates, ongoing challenges to meet the needs of marginalised families and difficulty maintaining their engagement in services. These issues indicate that for many families, current service responses and engagement methods are not as effective as they could be. While the State Government has plans to implement a range of policy and service reforms to address these concerns, a transformation in social work practice must also accompany these changes.

Social workers have a wide ranging toolkit of skills, theoretical perspectives and practices that are traditional to the discipline as well as those that promote critical social work practice. However, there is a notable gap in the application of design thinking and creative engagement processes. These are likely to achieve more authentic collaboration and design stronger outcomes **with** (rather than for) families. Co-design is an innovative process that has gained traction in service and product design, but has had little application in social work research and even less in direct practice with marginalised communities.

This PhD uses a co-design methodology to explore the role of community and social connections for parents who receive an integrated family service, and works with them to collaboratively design a community-based support model prototype. By using a design framework and custom created tools, the researcher gathered deep insights from parents regarding what supports would be most useful for them, when those on offer do not meet their needs.

This presentation aims to achieve two things. Firstly, it will provide evidence and examples of the kind of social work practice that is most valued by parents who receive a service, as elicited by design tools. These insights challenge assumptions regarding vulnerability, engagement and participation. Second, the researcher will share reflections regarding the opportunities of integrating design thinking into practice. By moving toward more creative practice methods, social workers can be in a better position to advocate for collaborative system and service reform which meets the needs of their clients.

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## 6 | Professional identity formation in field education

Author/s: Eleesa Johnstone

### Queensland University of Technology

Professional supervision, mentoring, reflection and observation are considered essential factors for social work students on placement to develop a sense of identity as a social worker. This reductionist view assumes that identity formation is the result of a smooth, uncomplicated process of socialisation when in fact it is recognised as a complex process influenced by a range of competing explicit and implicit factors. The current service delivery context is impacted extensively by social, political and economic forces, all of which influence how students learn to construct their practice and shape an identity for practice. This study will investigate how students comprehend this process and acquire the capabilities and strategies to navigate complex and often ambiguous practice environments to develop professional competency. The outcomes of this research will be used to provide greater clarity about how identities are formed through field education and assist educators with alternative ways to address barriers inherent in professional identity formation.

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## 7 | Reading the Culture: International Students' Experience of Professional Learning During Social Work Field Placements

Author/s: Haidee Hicks

### Monash University

Global demand for access to higher education in Australia has resulted in an increasing cultural and linguistic diversity across all courses of study, including social work. Despite this significant change, there is limited evidence to suggest that social work educators have developed an understanding of the specific learning needs of international students. Arguably, social work pedagogies and curriculum have not yet responded to the diverse, multidimensional learning needs of international students in either the coursework or field education components of social work programs.

This qualitative research analyses international students' experience of professional learning in Victoria during their social work field placements. Between October 2014 and June 2016, sixteen international students were recruited from Master of Social Work programs in Victoria and each student participated in 2-3 interviews at key points during their social work field placements. Six key analytical categories have emerged from the data analysis and these include: transnational learning, professional supervision, professional socialisation, creating "fit" or assimilation, temporality and concepts of race.

In this symposium, however, I will be presenting an overview of the key findings and analysis within the specific categories of race and assimilation, including some of the key theoretical



concepts which have emerged from the data analysis. This will include case studies and examples of the ways in which international students have focused their professional learning on adapting to the social and cultural norms in their field placement agencies. I will also present an account of international students' experience of "racialised othering" during their field placement including a consideration of participants' racialised subjectivities.

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## **8 | Keep CA-Im and Carry On: video recording and using Conversation Analysis to investigate authentic social work interactions**

Author/s: Dr Justin Canty

### **Western Sydney University**

Social work is achieved in interaction. We could not accomplish social work without it. As a consequence, interpersonal communication and competence form the foundation of our understanding of what social work practice skills are. Social work knowledge has traditionally made use of linguistic and psychological concepts as tools to understand these skills and the interactional contexts in which social work is achieved. These are routinely used to make sense of how we do what we do in social work practice and for teaching practice skills, especially with relation to microskills.

Conversation Analysis (CA) is an empirical observational approach that focuses on detailed, moment-by-moment analysis of naturally-occurring interactions. Along with membership categorisation analysis (MCA), it is one of the analytic approaches with foundations in ethnomethodology (EM). CA focuses on the sequential organisation of features in talk through which the participants achieve actions, meaning, and shared understanding (Sacks, Schegloff, & Jefferson, 1974, Weiste & Peräkylä, 2014). EM, MCA, and CA have a substantial history in analysing professional interactions, including medical consultations, counselling, and psychotherapy (Antaki, 2011). Alongside foundational research on the features of professional communication as a type of institutional talk, EMCA analysis has been applied to addressing specific interaction problems and improving consultation skills training. This is made possible as a result of the use of naturally-occurring data, that is, recordings of authentic interactions.

To date, social work has rarely been a focus of investigation for EMCA studies. This is a strange omission given the core role of talk in social work practice. However, it is perhaps understandable when thinking about the challenges involved in making recordings of social work interactions. One of the major hurdles is related to recording sessions. Few of us enjoy reviewing video recordings of ourselves. Many practitioners will remember having to produce recordings for practice skills assessments and requests to record sessions may provoke feelings of embarrassment or fear.

In this presentation, I will propose a case to keep calm and videorecord authentic social work interactions as naturally-occurring data. This will include discussion of my particular interest in rapport and empathy as interactionally co-constructed features of social work interactions. My



aim is to outline the potential in EMCA for identifying good practice through microanalysis as a research direction for social work, the opportunities for improving practice, and the potential for augmenting practice skills education.