

## Editorial

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This issue is published some two months after the very successful ANZSWWER symposium at Flinders University in Adelaide, the theme for which was 'Disruptive Social Work'. Keynote speakers reminded us of our past roles, present challenges and future imperatives, and the presentations ranged widely from critical analysis of the status of social work under the influence of neo-liberalism, to practice innovations designed to respond to changing times. The strengthening of consciousness regarding our core business as social work and welfare educators, researchers and practitioners is both necessary and welcome in the environments in which we work and live; social work identity itself, and the future scope of social work practice, are subject to debate on both sides of the Tasman.

The articles and practice reflections in this issue of *Advances* serve the same purpose. General journal issues are strengthened by the subject range of articles submitted to the editorial team. Some articles in this issue pick up on the critical edge of the symposium theme: Norah Hosken's focus on student poverty under the lens of classism, poverty and moves towards regulation combines critical analysis with a focus on the population forming the service user group for many of the readers of *Advances*. As the Editor's Choice for this issue, it serves as a timely reminder of the sensitivities that prevent social work education from ever being constructed as politically and socially innocent.

The call for critical awareness in social work education and practice is continued by Melissa Laing and Chris Maylea, and by Matt Rankine. Laing and Maylea's advocacy for small scale acts of subversion and caring resistance is outlined as the means for social workers and students to actively resist the imposition of organisational or political boundaries, and to thus regain or sustain their adherence to core social work values and ethics. Rankine urges us to maintain this critical lens through supervision: this practice, he argues, provides us with the opportunity and imperative to draw in the wider socio-political, structural and socio-cultural factors that allow us to view the wider context of managerialism and neoliberalism through the lens of social justice.

Social work and welfare education is the focus of many of the following articles, several of which focus on pedagogical approaches for strengthening our curriculum. The challenges of social work education for international students in Australasia is a topical one for our current tertiary environments, given the revenue imperatives imposed within the funding regimes of our institutions. The research outlined by Lana Battaglia, Catherine Flynn and Grace Brown explores the barriers and opportunities faced by international students in Australia; the practice reflection by Jinling Lin and Cherie Appleton in Aotearoa New

Zealand provides illustration of one strategy developed to assist Chinese students to make sense of Western social work education and practice environments.

In recognition of the move towards both online teaching and distance learning (pedagogical processes in themselves not being immured from the demands of the current tertiary environment), Melanie Hemy, Donna McAuliffe & Jane Fowler consider the possibilities and practicalities of mentoring of distance social work students in order to provide support and encourage retention. The theme of innovation in how and where students can develop understanding of social work and human services is underscored by Margot Rawsthorne, Thor Blomfield and Kayleigh Ellis, whose article addresses the pedagogical usefulness and relevance of organising community events within a community development context. Fresh approaches to learning are also mooted in the article by Belinda Johnson, Melissa Laing and Charlotte Williams: studio pedagogy sees collaborative groups using design thinking and co-design to approach real-world problems and their resolution, a learning process very compatible with social work identity and values, and applied within a field education context. Research by Kiri Wilder, Barbara Staniforth & John Fenaughty considers the value of group work within social work education. Peter Young's practice reflection advocates for the importance of the practitioner-teacher role, as a means of maintaining links with practice that can positively contribute to the teaching and learning process.

Three articles provide a focus on the social work profession and our practice. Natasha Long, Suzanne Hodgkin, Fiona Gardner and Jennifer Lehmann explore the importance of maintaining our social work identity in the practice environment, suggesting the metaphor of a hat as a means for practitioners to strengthen awareness of our role and purpose. Jennifer Martin, Lauren Paul and Melissa Robertson focus on the need for continuing professional development for accredited mental health social workers. Susan Collings, Elsbeth Neil & Amy Conley Wright provide a challenge to permanency planning for children through strengthening processes for direct contact between birth and adoptive parents.

This issue of *Advances* is rounded off by Donna McAuliffe's book review of the third edition of Chris Beckett, Andrew Maynard and Peter Jordan's *Values and Ethics in Social Work*, which serves to underscore the importance of our profession's values and ethical practice as a means of ensuring that we continue to disrupt and engage with the challenges of achieving social justice.

As the Editor for this second issue of 2018, I would like to give thanks to the many authors who have contributed their ideas, writing and passion for their topics, and I deeply appreciate the time and effort that has gone into the production of the articles, often re-written and re-designed in response to the exacting reviews from our ever-expanding team of reviewers. At the symposium, I put out a call for people to consider putting their name forward as reviewers: the process of peer review, critique and challenge is what keeps *Advances* as a robust academic contribution to our field. Presenters at the symposium are also invited to re-develop their stunning presentations as articles, either for the next general issue (we'll accept articles up until the end of the year), for consideration for the general issue of 2020, or for the special issue on online and distance education. For all guidelines and contact addresses, please see the ANZSWWER website.

As always, the final vote of thanks goes to the team who help produce this journal. As editor, I have recently been joined by Dr Mim Fox, and our role as co-editors is supported by the ANZSWWER executive team and the pool of reviewers. Sue Osborne magics all of the articles into copy-editing perfection, Inkahoots creates the final production format, and Jaclyn Watson, ANZSWWER administration, releases the issue on the website. The Informit team at the RMIT library ensure that access to the journal is attainable by those without ANZSWWER membership. A team effort, indeed.

**Carole Adamson**