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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL

Knowledge, Practice and Challenges in Social Work and Welfare Education

The contributors to this issue of the Journal have provided a diverse though fascinating range of ideas and issues. They cover the complexity of transition from student to worker, mentoring of new academics, multi-disciplinary projects for students and supervisors, the nature of welfare work in a post-fordist environment, and the competencies of welfare members of review tribunals.

In the first article Brenda Clare has 'unpacked' the complexity of the transition from student social worker to beginning social worker. The stories of these new graduates as they reflect on their learning and their first employment as practitioners challenges educators to, in Brenda's words, develop authentic 'partnership between field and academic settings and which places the *student-as-person* central'.

The paper by Cec Craft, Debbie Murray, Della Rowley, Martin Ryan and Sandy Taylor is a 'warts-and-all' analysis of a mentoring program for new social work academics. It provides an example of mentoring program in which new social work academics face the twin dilemmas of the pressure to publish and provide a quality education to students. The collaborative approach is further demonstrated through this paper as it has allowed all the writers to participate and contribute as one 'voice'. The group-mentoring program went through a number of phases and the key elements of the process outlined. This case study has enormous potential for other social work and welfare schools to adopt and implement a mentoring program for their new staff.

The multi-disciplinary student learning project at the University of Newcastle is an example of social work education moving beyond the traditional forms of student learning. Ros Giles, Jeni Leprince and Jill Gibbons argue that multi-disciplinary learning mirrors the experience of practitioners in health and welfare settings. The project while still in its early stages has been successful in providing social work students with the opportunity to practice their group work skills, broaden their knowledge of patient needs, increase their knowledge and understanding of other professionals, and provide a context for critical thinking skills in practice.

Jane Thompson and Yvonne Thomas' paper further develops the issue of multi-disciplinary learning. Their focus is on the supervisors in rural and remote communities. The needs of allied health professionals who supervise students are often ignored, as their small numbers do not warrant specific disciplinary workshops in their localities. This paper describes and analyses a workshop model for interdisciplinary approach to supervision.

John McCormack and Belinda Johnson's paper on the implications for welfare work in a 'post-fordist welfare state' is fascinating. While they warn the reader that the sample size is not random, they have provided a very valuable paper on the issues confronting workers. The rapid change in how welfare is produced has seen workers put under enormous strain and stress. For some workers this increase in work has seen an increase in job satisfaction whilst for other workers job stress and job enlargement has seen a negative impact upon their personal lives. The factors that impinge on this dichotomy are carefully analysed and presented.

Phillip Swain has provided a paper on the competencies of welfare members in administrative review tribunals. The study indicated that welfare members not only brought valuable knowledge in skills to the review process but in particular it was their ability to use their framework to use the responses to make sense of individuals complex lives and situation.

Peter Camilleri

Learning, Doing and Becoming: The Reflections of New Practitioners

Brenda Clare

Introduction

This paper, based on my PhD study into professional identity, is an exploration of the learning experiences of a number of newly qualified social workers. It considers how their social work education assisted these practitioners to develop a sense of *self-as-social-worker* at the outset of their career and looks at the subsequent impact on their professional identity of their agency experiences as *beginner-practitioners* in the first few months after qualification. In particular, the paper considers the significance of field placements as learning experiences and reflects on the extent to which practitioners felt that their agency-based training equipped them to operate as qualified practitioners.

Themes for Reflection

The paper reports on research conversations held with 17 social work students, from a single cohort, who completed their training in 1999. I met twice with each of the students, first during the final two weeks of their training and then approximately eight months after they left the course. Our conversations were informed by several themes developed out of earlier research interviews with 20 qualified practitioners with whom I met as part of the first stage in my study. All interviews were taped, transcribed and returned to participants for comment. The early 'shaping' conceptions of *identity* and *learning* gained from conversations with qualified practitioners were abstracted through the process of interpreting/analysing transcripts for codes, themes, metaphors and metathemes (Ely 1997). My interpretations were then 'tested' for relevance and resonance with the practitioners, all but two of who participated in three focus groups, in the course of which the themes were further refined. Similarly, the interviews with social work students were transcribed and returned to participants. In addition, I provided them with the themes and metaphors that resonated for me during their initial interviews to maximise the transparency of my thinking prior to our second interviews.

Early Themes

Despite their diversity, in background, training, and practice experience, these practitioners were consistent in their criticisms of their qualifying courses. A significant theme was the absence of integration in teaching between university and field settings. Practitioners reported that they experienced two parallel but separate learning experiences; at university they were provided with theories and models and participated in skills-development laboratories – their *academic* learning – whilst their *practical* learning happened on placement where they had access to role models and an opportunity to 'try themselves out' as workers.

A second theme related to their initial preoccupation in practice settings, before and after qualifying, with becoming accepted; with following procedures; and with gaining a sense of *proficiency in role*. Only after this sense of personal/professional credibility

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was achieved (Jones 1991) were they able to reflect on or to incorporate formal theories into their practice. Finally, these practitioners reported their view that, before and after training, there was insufficient recognition of them as individuals, or of the inevitable anxiety associated with learning. As students and as early practitioners, they experienced an expectation of *competence without feelings* that significantly challenged their emerging professional identity.

The Learning Journey

These themes provided the framework for my research conversations with the social work students. Conversations were further guided by the metaphor of *the learning journey,* a significant metatheme that emerged from my earlier interviews (Ely 1997), in which, in contrast to my initial, naive, formulation of professional identity, practitioners emphasised the fluid evolution of their sense of *self-as-social-worker.* Subsequent investigation of the literature confirmed the significance of this metaphor to the formulation of identity (England 1986; Pithouse 1987; Christie and Weeks 1998; Crotty 1998; Evans 1999). As Eraut (1985) notes, reflecting on students' learning journey is important in order to gain a fuller understanding of how and why people subsequently learn to apply, modify or disregard that initial learning after qualifying. He argues that such an understanding provides an essential basis for planning and evaluating professional training.

Research Conversations with Students

On each occasion that I met with a student we reflected both backward and forward (Patford 2000) in order to obtain an understanding of the students' learning/life journey (Addison 1992) at a significant transition point on that journey. As Burr (1995) notes:

> For each of us...a multitude of discourses is constantly at work constructing and producing our identity. Our identity therefore originates not from inside the person, but from the social realm, where people swim in a sea of language and other signs, a sea that is invisible to us because it is the very medium of our existence as social beings. (p.49)

The students were all facing the challenge of relocating to a new social realm in which they would be exposed to a range of new discourses – personal, professional and institutional – as they made the transition from student to qualified practitioner. My goal was to explore with them their 'personalised' discourses at either side of that transition. At our first meeting I asked students to reflect on their learning from *within* the learning situation. In our second conversation, I asked them to *reflect back on* the learning from the more distant post-qualified perspective (Schön 1987; Eraut 1994; Cranton 1996). In essence, the conversations were 'collaborative exercises' (Holstein and Gubrium 1995) in which the students and I reflected on their stories as they related to, shaped and developed my research interests. The structure of conversations was very loose, with my later conversations reflecting the 'learning' gained from earlier discussions. In line with Addison's (1992) analysis of hermeneutic research, I was very present as a participant in the conversations as we engaged in:

> the circular movement of hermeneutic research from understanding to interpretation to deeper understanding to more comprehensive interpretation (p.118)

Impressions at the End of the Course

Feeling Prepared for Qualified Practice

At our first meeting three different preoccupations emerged. One group of students reflected back on their journey towards a social work qualification, which in some cases extended considerably beyond their formal training. They expressed a sense of grief and loss and an absence of future direction. Student 1 remarked of the course:

> It's been something I want to do and enjoy doing. It's been a focus for me, and I sort of wonder what I do now that the course is finished and I get a job. (Student 1: Meeting 1)

A second group reflected forwards with some anxiety, aware of their 'beginner' status and of their limited practice experience, for example Student 4, who noted:

> Well, the piece of paper gives me permission to go and *do*, so, according to someone's standards, I must...I don't know...I can be a social worker and practise. The piece of paper's *very* meaningful and very important, but there's more to it for me, there's just a little bit more to it. It's still the lack of *experience*, you know. I just wish I could turn the clock a few more years and, oh yes, I'd just love to be *comfortable* in doing what I'm doing, not worrying that my lack of experience will interfere with my decisions. (Student 4: Meeting 1)

This mood was countered by a sense of achievement and an awareness of new horizons in a third group who reflected on the transition with a sense of readiness and optimism, aware that they had more to learn, but with a sense of achievement and a belief in their ability. Student 2 epitomises the second mood with her remark:

> For me, personally, I feel, within myself, that a lot of things in my life have really come away, a lot of fetters have been broken or whatever, and therefore, I just feel as if I'm going to be freer, *freer* as a person, which will help me and, I feel, will enable me to work within the role as a social worker. (Student 2: Meeting 1)

Reflecting Back

Coping with Context

A recurring theme in the second interviews with students was their concern about what was, and whether they were doing, real social work. Some students were concerned that organisational constraints were preventing them from doing the real social work about which they learned at university, as indicated by Student 4 who stated:

> it's so far *removed* from what I thought social work would *be*; from all the theories of helping and working with voluntary clients and all the models and themes and stuff...I thought I could use myself. I thought I could put it together with my learning and I thought this would be the package; this would be *enough*...I'm still in the process of adjusting these ideas to reality. That's as simple as it is. All the things you think you would be doing, like the 'how can I help you' stuff, the *real* social work stuff (Student 4: Meeting 2)

It is interesting to note that Student 4 had completed a placement in this agency. However, there were significant differences in her experiences and organisational perspective as student and as qualified practitioner. As a student, she learned about the client population of the agency and had opportunities to 'practice' as a worker, with a primary focus on her face-to-face intervention skills. However, her workload was appropriately restricted, and her access to guidance and supervision was good. She also identified predominantly with one team within the organisation and was perceived, and saw herself, as 'visitor' within that team. As a qualified worker, however, she was 'on her own' with a full caseload and therefore much busier and independently responsible for her work. She was also exposed more directly to the practice norms of the broader organisation, of which she was now a 'full member' (Pithouse 1987). Consequently, she was more directly aware of, and involved in, both the emotionally taxing work and the fraught and under-resourced work setting.

It is questionable that any student can ever be completely equipped for the *hot action* of practice after qualifying (Eraut 1994). However, it seems that, for this student, neither her placement nor her university teaching had sufficiently prepared her. Indeed, it appears that in both settings she had been shielded from the tensions that she was subsequently required to manage and she had acquired a perception of *real* social work that resulted in a sense of professional incongruity (Jones 1991).

This feeling of unpreparedness for organisational membership and professional responsibility was one expressed by several other students from a number of different organisational settings. Student 13 illustrated the problem thus:

> I think the course was a bit romantic really - or social work education generally is a bit romantic - in that you're going to be helping people, you're going to be doing all these things, and they touch a little bit on involuntary clients, but not really on issues of self care. I don't really think *enough* as to maybe what we need, because your clients don't always like you, they don't always want to be there, and while we're sort of told that, we're not really. I think workshops or something about how to deal with these issues would be really helpful...we're not really given the *skills* as to how to deal with these issues. (Student 13: Meeting 2)

Addressing Ideology

Student 3 also experienced a sense of professional incongruity for a somewhat different reason, which was also shared by other students who worked in 'counselling' settings. In her case, her sense of *real* social work was associated with macro level, community-focused interventions aimed at people suffering from sociopolitical and economic oppression. She commented:

> I know that what I'm doing is good work, and I know that I'm learning a lot, and I enjoy it and a lot of clients I see are *desperate* and I feel good about what I do. It's just in terms of being a *social worker* it seems a wee bit - I feel a bit guilty I suppose...I don't know why I feel guilty. Maybe it's because it's something that I struggled with throughout the course in the sense that I felt I knew that I really wanted to do more of the counselling side of social work, but felt guilty because the community development, social action side of social work was really plugged as the *best*. That's the ideal; that's good; that's *real* social work; that's where you should be targeting, otherwise you're wasting your time. (Student 3: Meeting 2)

The comments of Students 3 and 4 reflect the influence on their professional identity of received theoretical frameworks and ideological perspectives. In both cases there was a disjunction between general, decontextualised frames of reference and their lived experience. However, their identity as practitioners was reliant on abstract and/or under-informed notions of their *profession's* identity. Their inability to match this view of *pure* social work with their practice was a hindrance to the development of an integrated and personalised professional persona. As Student 9 noted when reflecting on her professional identity:

> Yes, it's a real struggle as to what is social work, and when people *ask* you what do social workers do. From service to service, they do very different things, and we don't really have a strong sense of identity I don't think, which is a disadvantage in a work situation, because other professions have a *very* strong identity, and they have a very strong idea of what they do and what they're there for, and social work's still struggling with that a lot. It's a bit like we're trying to keep up with other professions but we don't really know who we are ourselves. (Student 9: Meeting 2)

Placements as Sites of Learning

At the end of their course, all students indicated that their placements were an important element in their development of a sense of professional identity. For the most part, they saw university as the place where they acquired 'propositional knowledge' about *social work* and 'technical' knowledge – know what – about *social working*. They reported that it was on their field placements that they acquired 'practical knowledge' – know how – and learned how to *behave* as social workers (Eraut 1985, p.120), and where they began to develop a sense of belonging in a *practice community* and where they learned to operationalise and personalise practice values and ideologies.

Readiness to Learn

The dimensions of practice learning identified by students were multiple and complex. They learned about *doing* social work and about *being* a social worker, with varying degrees of success. In part, the quality of learning depended on how ready the student felt for the experience. As the quotes below illustrate, that readiness was not necessarily linked to chronological age or previous work experience; it appears, rather, to be an indication of the students' self-belief and sense of optimism and of their ability to contain the anxiety about being a learner and entering into new situations (Salzberger-Wittenberg 1983; Raab 1997; Aymer and Okitipi 2000). Some students felt very ready for agency-based learning. Student 7, who was entering the workforce for the first time, commented about her first placement:

> (It was) the first time I've ever done *anything* like that, let alone actually work. I mean I've had part-time jobs when I was at school...but the first social work kind of experience. I loved it. I thought it was great. I liked actually doing things, learning things. (Student 7: Meeting 1)

For other students, however, the placement experience was a source of anxiety, ranging from a sense of nervous anticipation to considerable fear. Student 15 was typically aware of the newness of the experience when he stated:

> When I originally arrived at the placement I was really quite apprehensive, quite nervous because I hadn't done any practical work before. It was all theory and

> we'd only had one semester of theory at that. In a lot of ways I think I was thrown in at the deep end...I was really anxious to see what this social work *thing* was all about. (Student 15: Meeting 1)

Student 17 reported a much higher level of anxiety, noting:

> I had *no* social work experience at all...I felt as if I shouldn't be there and I felt as though I had no right doing as I was doing. It was really difficult. And I had no professional identity whatsoever, and that was one of the main things I struggled with, because in a role like that you really have to be able to acknowledge the power and all the other sorts of things that are related to it, and I just couldn't. I felt like I was too young. I felt like I didn't know anything. I had a *really* difficult time. (Student 17: Meeting 1)

The Importance of the Supervisor

The fears expressed by these students highlight the importance of placement supervisors, as guides and teachers, mentors and protectors, in students' learning journeys (Barker 1982; Reynolds 1985). Most students were very aware of their progress over their two placements. Several commented on their greater level of 'practice awareness' and their increased trust in their own ability on their second placement. Most noted their increased capacity in their second placement to see themselves as *learner-practitioners* rather than *students*. Student 15's comment illustrates this point when he distinguished between *learning-by-watching* on his first placement and *learning-by-doing* on his second:

> The difference between the two pracs for me was I felt much more a student in the first one, and a bit more as a worker in the second one. I was very much following people around, looking at what they were doing, trying to take everything in whereas, the next one, I was more on my own to do my own thing, and speaking up. So I learnt to speak up and I wasn't being told, 'well this is what you have to do'. It was more my own learning. (Student 15: Meeting 1)

They reported consistently the importance of their supervisors in helping them to make this transition, highlighting in particular the importance of their supervisors' ability to model and articulate 'good practice' and to provide a safe learning environment.

Supervisors as Positive Role Models

A number of students reflected on their supervisors' clarity of role definition and their commitment as advocates for social work as a profession, commenting on how important this was for them as they began to develop a sense of their own professional identity. Student 9 described her second supervisor thus:

> She was excellent. She was very well organised, and very professional in her approach, very aware of ethical issues and a very strong advocate for the social work profession. (Student 9: Meeting 1)

The Importance of Dialogue

Students also commented on the importance of their supervisors' ability to engage in an informed dialogue about practice and to critique their own and the students' interventions. Student 17 illustrates this quality when, speaking of her second placement:

> I did lots of reading and observing and I also facilitated groups, and my supervisor would sit back and give me feedback after everything I did. And she didn't just tell me what I did...She *made* me understand...She was *amazing.* (Student 17: Meeting 1)

Student 10 also noted his supervisor's ability to articulate and critique his own and the student's practice, and in particular his ability to ground *theory* in *practice,* thus making relevant and accessible otherwise abstract notions and facilitating the transfer of learning (Gardiner 1985; Harris 1985; Gould and Taylor 1996; Evans 1999; Aymer and Okitipi 2000; Meihls and Moffat 2000). He commented:

> (supervision) was very much to do with ethical issues, reflection, self-reflection as a worker, and practice issues, and *theoretical* issues. So we covered the whole grounds. It was really good. He was excellent like that...And the 'why'...and I think that's where the learning came in is the why, because I'm a very questioning person, and I was constantly 'why, why, why', and he welcomed that. Some people don't always welcome that because it deconstructs - it's very challenging, but he *wants* to be challenged, and that was really good, because I wanted to be challenged back. (Student 10: Meeting 1)

Learning and Assessment 'Dependency'
Students reported feelings of anxiety and frustration at their inability to achieve results comparable to their supervisor despite 'imitating' her/his practice or applying the 'agency approved' model of intervention or theoretical framework. A number of them reported that in the face of their lack of success they limited their learning demands. Two reasons were cited for this decision. Some students were protective of their supervisors, whom they perceived to be overworked and under considerable stress. These responses could be equated to that of 'parentified' children in abusive families, where the children's own needs are suspended in order to maintain the position of their parents. Other students kept silent because of their awareness of their *learning* and *assessment dependency* on their supervisors. Student 3's attitude reflects that of several students who reported their awareness of the 'learning threat' they posed to their supervisors. She reported:

> I think they were threatened by - I don't think necessarily by me but by my questioning. When I wanted to know what model of practice they were using they were uncomfortable...they didn't really *know* what they were using...I guess I wanted to know more about their experience and learn more from them and I really found I had to just learn by observing rather than them being critically reflective around practice, and me being able to join in on that. I found that, perhaps, they didn't want to do that. (Student 3: Meeting 1)

She remarked that her reticence in 'challenging' for learning was because:

> I didn't want to get off-side with people, and I don't know whether that's because they were assessing me, my practice, or because they could be referees when I'm applying for jobs, or whether it was just my desire not to upset them, offend them, or not have them think badly about me. (Student 3: Meeting 1)

Other students remained silent, and often confused, uncertain and feeling deskilled, because of their fears of appearing incompetent. Student 14 voiced this commonly held fear of exposure. She commented:

> *I* was the biggest obstacle really. I mean my own feeling of insecurity; my fear of being exposed publicly as not being competent. (Student 14: Meeting 1)

These fears significantly shaped Student 14's learning experience on her placement where she was unable to accommodate the dual roles of *learner* and *practitioner*. She experienced a continuous sense of anxiety about her performance and of frustration about her inability to communicate her need for guidance because of her fear that her supervisor would consider her to be incompetent.

Supervisors as Educators

For those students who managed the identity transition from student to learner practitioner, their supervisors played a crucial role. Students appreciated their capacity to challenge for work and whilst 'containing' and helping the student to manage their performance anxiety (Barker 1982; Reynolds 1985; Obholzer and Roberts 1994), as Student 15's comment exemplifies:

> We had very open communication. I couldn't get away with anything. She was very perceptive about when I was apprehensive about things; very supportive of that; challenged my apprehension in very gentle ways; gentle confrontation. It was very helpful. I really had to face a lot of my own stuff and analyse why I reacted to things in certain ways and where my apprehension was coming from. (Student 15: Meeting 1)

These supervisors were able to *name* their intervention skills and their guiding frameworks for understanding social work as *occupation* and as *contextualised activity* in such a way that they offered maps or guidelines for students (Smale 1996) - frameworks upon which they could build (Crotty 1998) - whilst encouraging the students to 'learn for themselves' through taking informed 'practice risks'. In so doing they provided Reynolds'(1985) *vestibule to learning*:

> (a) place to get rid of hindrances to growth, to gain glimpses of what a professional life is like and how one must change to enter it; a place to live through the struggle between wish for change and fear of it, to find where one stands in relation to the authority of expertness and the authority of administrative responsibility. (p.214)

Learning from other Workers

Not all students experienced positive learning relationships with their supervisors. Several reported learning what *not* to do as a worker from their observations of their supervisors' practice, as Student 9's comment illustrates:

> I was just *so* horrified, because I thought, 'what am I going to learn from this person?' I was really quite worried, because I went in with these really huge expectations about how I was going to learn so much, and I felt like I had a stronger social work base than what *this* person did, so I wrote a big list of all the habits of hers I wasn't going to pick up, and then, at the end of my placement, I noticed that I *was* starting to pick up some of the same ways of practicing that she was, which was really disconcerting. (Student 9: Meeting 1)

However, even when supervisors failed to meet their learning needs, student learned from other people in their placement organisations. Indeed, as Pithouse (1987) notes,

collegial relationships were a significant source of learning and professional socialisation for all of the students. For some, particularly those students becoming 'full-time workers' for the first time, the learning was about joining an established work force. In some cases, their initial preoccupation with becoming a *worker* reduced their capacity to focus on the issue of becoming a *social worker*. Student 13 reports:

> I think at first working – just working – was my preoccupation, and I didn't really think about being a social worker for a few months, and that was when I started getting a grip on what I was doing, learnt more about what it was about for me and where I wanted to go with it. (Student 13: Meeting 2)

Being a member of a team was significant for several students. In this setting they learned the day-to-day skills of the job and were privy to the 'practice wisdom' (Scott 1990) of their colleagues and had opportunities to observe and discuss a range of different styles and professional perspectives. Student 6 said of her first placement:

> I was left in the care of everyone in the team...and they really were quite outstanding, in all different professions...that's a real strength in that agency, so in some ways I learnt to value the professional knowledge of others there...then there was lots of social workers, young and old, so that was really good. (Student 6: Meeting 1)

Doing the Job

Fundamental to the learning of all students was the *doing* of the job. They learned about the need to own their authority as workers and about the paradox of being both powerful and powerless in their relationships (Moore 1985). Most of all, they learned about themselves; about their fears and anxieties, their strengths and passions. They learned these things from their successes and from their mistakes; from tasks undertaken and completed and relationships successfully negotiated and terminated. As Student 11 commented:

> My first placement was working with the aged, and in that placement everything was seen to be easy...I hadn't had any experience in the field and didn't know if I could be a social worker. So a lot of it - I had a *lot* of client contact, doing menial - meals on wheels type stuff - but it was really important to me that I could relate to people and that I *could* do these sort of things and, yes, I started to think that I could do (it)...If I went back now, obviously, I'd approach it a lot differently, but, at the same time, it was good to have a lot of client contact and really get to develop a style and see what I could do. (Student 11: Meeting 1)

The feedback received from clients was crucial to students' belief in their capacity as practitioners. Student 7 reported:

> I got lots of good feedback from the clients I think...not just verbally, not just: 'you did a great job', but just *them* interacting with me, just talking, sitting somewhere and just talking, just *forming* some kind of relationship. It's kind of - in a way, if they *let* you do that, you have this feeling you're getting somewhere, you're helping in some way. (Student 7: Meeting 1)

For all of the students it was the contextualised minutiae of day-to-day, lived interaction with their clients and colleagues that significantly shaped their sense of what it was to

be a social worker, although, as noted above, not necessarily what it was to *practise social work.*

Lessons to be Learned

So, what lessons can we glean from the students' stories of the learning journeys?

The most important lesson, perhaps, is that placement with an experienced practitioner will not, per se, adequately prepare students to enter the qualified work force. The multidimensionality of students' learning needs must first be more fully recognised. They are learning to be members of complex organisations and to manage themselves strategically in fraught and fluid environments (Healy 2000). They are learning how to respond to and to intervene in often poorly defined, and intractable problem situations. These capacities require the development of many types of knowledge: propositional, technical, action-based, ethical and emotional. As practice-learners, students need to develop a capacity for 'decision-thinking' and an ability to make principled and timely action-judgements under conditions of hot action (Eraut 1994). They are not, as the 'foundational' social work literature (Usher and Bryant 1989) continues to assert, merely learning how to *apply* theory and ideologies in a practice setting (Coulshed 1986; Ife 1997; Healy 2000).

In order to assist students with the many dimensions of their learning, placement supervisors have to be equipped and resourced as teachers. Opportunities to observe, copy and adapt other workers' practice to 'personal style' are insufficient; students need to develop a language of practice and the skills of critical reflection. They need also to develop their emotional, tacit and intuitive skills as well as their use of explicit, codified knowledge.

The successful development of these qualities requires of supervisors a multi-dimensional teaching perspective that incorporates and 'works' personal responses and seeks to articulate the implicit. It also requires of them a capacity to move between the action-demands of particular tasks and situations and generalised frameworks for understanding and guiding action decisions. Supervisors must be sufficiently confident in their own 'practice mastery' (Reynolds 1985) to be able to model, articulate and critique their own and their students' work. They are also required to be *continuing learners* willing to accept the 'new' ways of knowing brought to their agencies by students (Raab 1997; Falzon 1998).

Field supervisors cannot fulfil these practice requirements alone, however well prepared they are. The responsibility is one that requires active partnership between field and academic settings and which places the *student-as-person* central. For this partnership to be achieved, however, practical, action-focused learning will need to become a central focus in training institutions. This will require a change from the current privileging of propositional knowledge over the many other ways of knowing (Hartman 1990; Scott 1990; Reissman 1993). It will also require a shift in emphasis from the contextual understandings about *social work* as the foundation of practice to personal frameworks as the building blocks for *becoming a social worker* and, as Evans (1999) argues, a focus on 'building social workers from the inside out' (p.8). Both academic and field institutions must become 'practice settings' which provide students with 'the opportunity to observe professional role models, the involvement in a community of practice and the opportunity to learn within a developing relationship.' (Evans 1999, p.8)

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Breaking into the Game: A Mentoring Program in Research, Writing and Publication for Social Work Academics

Cec Craft, Debbie Murray, Della Rowley, Martin Ryan, Sandy Taylor

The Context

Success in academia is a matter of 'publish or perish'. Research and publication are of crucial importance for the appointment, retention and promotion of social work educators in Australian universities. There are two main pathways into academia in social work schools: one through successful postgraduate study, in particular, through the completion of a doctorate and, the other through success in practice. The first pathway leads directly into academia and provides academics with knowledge, skills and experience in research. The second pathway is based upon knowledge and skill of specific practice areas. Academics entering the university via this pathway may have little formal research experience, requiring a gradual change in role from social work practitioner to educator/academic.

In the last decade, research activities have become as important as undergraduate teaching for the survival of social work schools. This can be a particularly harsh reality to face for a practitioner who follows the practice pathway into academia with limited postgraduate and research experience. While the type of activities that may have attracted these practitioners into social work education remain important, to ignore research and publication imperatives can be perilous.

There are a number of barriers for practice-based academics becoming competitive in the field of research. The most obvious is limited formal research and publication experience and the lack of confidence that comes from learning new knowledge and skills in an environment where their possession is taken for granted. In this context the task of becoming a competitive researcher, publisher and 'gainer of grants' can appear daunting and overwhelming.

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Tension also exists between the competing demands of undergraduate teaching and research activities. While accepting the importance of developing new knowledges in social work practice, most educators are keenly aware of the need to ensure that social work graduates have fully grasped the knowledge, skills and values that are essential for ethical, competent practice. Balancing hours spent in the preparation of teaching materials and responding to students' needs with the time it takes a beginning researcher to complete a successful piece of research can be emotionally draining and fraught with difficulty.

Gender may also provide a potential barrier to success in research activities within this context. Although women generally hold their own in writing on social work education in Australia (Ryan and Martyn 1997), research and publication may be more difficult for them as they are more likely to have heavy teaching duties, are primarily involved in field education, work part time and/or are on short term contracts (Sowers, Hoag and Harrison 1991; Fook, Cleak and Lindsay 1993).

Reliance on an informal support system for academics who have not established themselves as successful researchers appears limited within the university structure. More experienced academics are often struggling to balance their research interests with the supervision of higher degree students, teaching and administrative duties. The competition for research grants is challenging for all but a few very successful researchers and there is little room to have less experienced researchers on the team. Given these barriers how do inexperienced social work researchers 'break into the game' of research and peer-reviewed publication. One possible solution is to give them access to an academic mentor or a mentoring program. This paper presents and discusses an innovative group mentoring program in research, writing and publication implemented by staff of the social work discipline at the University of Tasmania. The authors of this article are the protégés and the mentor who were involved in this program.

The idea for the mentoring program was sparked by a presentation by the School of Nursing at the University of Tasmania. A group of female staff described concerns about their research profile and outlined their engagement of a mentor from a mainland university. Inspired by this presentation, the School of Social Work established a formal mentoring program for their staff.

At this time (1997), the Tasmanian School of Social Work was small with limited resources and a poor research record. The organisational context was one common to many schools of social work in Australia. The amalgamation of the Tasmanian Institute of Technology with the University of Tasmania meant a change in focus from professional education to an increased emphasis on research activities. The School's situation in the Faculty of Arts meant that its members had a number of distinct areas of difference in pedagogy from their colleagues. The social work course included a number of practice subjects, had two semesters of fieldwork and was subject to professional accreditation requirements. For staff, the tensions between a commitment to graduating competent professionals and the demands from the University for research output had not been easily resolved. Staff were teaching more hours per week than their university colleagues in other disciplines and spent a considerable amount of time providing supervision and consultative services to the field.

It had been recognised, however, that the incorporation of research along with the teaching and administrative activities of academics was imperative for the advancement of individual careers, as well as the survival of social work in the University context. The

necessity for this change was underscored by: staff appraisal mechanisms requiring at least two outcomes per annum in the research area, success in research having a high status in terms of promotion, and a proportion of school funding being tied to research output in the form of publications.

Mentoring

Goodwyn (1997) traces the origins of the term 'mentor' to Homer's story of Ulysses. When Ulysses was going away he put Mentor in charge of everything, including his son Telemachus. He wanted to ensure that Telemachus was not neglected, but instead should be developed and educated by a close relationship with an appropriately experienced and caring role model. Goodwyn (1997) writes:

> There is a long tradition, across cultures, of such positive and caring relationships, and there has been much renewed interest in this whole dimension of human activity in recent years. (p.138)

There are a number of common threads in more recent definitions of mentoring. It involves a helping relationship between two or more individuals who are at different stages in their careers. The mentor (the senior, more professionally advanced of the two) is involved in fostering the development and facilitation of the advancement of the mentee or protégé (the more junior professional). The mentor provides support and guidance above and beyond the expectations of their position (Collins 1993).

Mentorship has been adopted and studied in the field of business and the corporate world (Phillips 1977; Clutterbuck 1985; Kram 1985) where the goal has been on the career and psychosocial development and advancement of individuals. It is seen in these fields as:

> a new and highly effective means of identifying and developing high-flyers; to others it is a means of speeding and facilitating the induction of young people in general; it can also be seen as an effective door into middle and senior management for women subject to discrimination; finally to some it is viewed as a dangerous process that can amplify favouritism and exclusive networks within the corporation. (Clutterbuck 1985, p.1)

Mentoring has also been used for professional development within education, nursing and social work. In education it has been used in school-based teacher preparation (Caldwell and Carter 1993; Tomlinson 1995; Brooks and Sikes 1997; Goodwyn 1997), whilst in nursing, mentoring appears to have excited considerable interest and enthusiasm as a concept and an ideal (James and Proctor 1992; Roberts 1997).

While mentorship has been used and explored to an extent in social work, there has been some confusion because the term mentorship is used synonymously with supervision in some contexts (Taibbi 1983; Collins 1993). In a study of 430 social workers, Collins (1994) found that mentorship could be an important factor in facilitating the career development of both protégés and mentors.

In academia, mentoring can be one means of supporting faculty at a number of educational levels (York, Henley and Gamble 1988) and a career-helper/mentor can be valuable for advancement in professional development (Rawlins and Rawlins 1983). In terms of women and mentors in academia, it has been found that the lack of a mentor may lower the proportion of women advanced beyond the entry level (Robbins 1989).

The literature reports two specific examples of mentoring programs for social work academics, specifically designed to assist them with writing and publication (Berger 1990; Padgett and Begun 1996). Berger's article reports on his 'Getting Published' program. He worked individually with staff on preparing manuscripts with highly successful outcomes in terms of journal publications, conference presentations and successful grant applications.

Padgett and Begun (1996) report on the development of a writers' guild among junior faculty. The program had the specific aim of overcoming writing barriers amongst staff. Like Berger (1990), the authors report positive outcomes, both expected and unexpected. The expected results included journal publications, conference presentations and successful grant applications. It also reduced staff isolation and sustained productivity. Amongst the unexpected results was that the guild garnered resources that would not have been available to individual faculty members and was cited in faculty recruitment literature as a unique facet of the school. In contrast to Berger's approach, this program was run on a group basis.

The mentoring program at the University of Tasmania was developed with the aim of breaking down barriers to participation in research. It was a program that involved an external mentor, had a specific focus on research, writing and publication and was a group rather than an individualised program.

The Protégés

The staff who participated in the Tasmanian School of Social Work's mentoring program were all women and included tenured and contract, full and part-time staff. There was limited consistent research and publication experience among them although all participants had been involved in consultancy work such as program evaluation and had presented papers at national conferences. Two were PhD students, although one was in the early stages of her project. Two members had coursework Masters degrees. Only one of the four women had been an academic for more than two years and all were experienced practitioners.

All members of the mentoring group were committed to resolving the tensions between professional education and research within the academic context. They acknowledged the need to become active participants in a research culture and were excited about contributing to the knowledge base of social work. All were committed to changing the way that they prioritised their time and to acquiring new knowledge and skills.

The Mentor

An experienced academic who was accepted by all members was approached and agreed to take the position of mentor for a six month period. He had the requisite knowledge and skills, was on staff at a mainland university but had the advantage of prior knowledge and experience of the Tasmanian context. He was involved in community life and had commitments to activities other than work at the University. The protégés had met the mentor previously in a different context and all felt that they respected his achievements as an academic and trusted that he would be supportive.

A number of issues emerged as significant in the selection of the mentor. He lived and worked outside of Tasmania, which had both positive and negative outcomes for the mentoring program. On the positive side, distance meant that the protégés became more

self-reliant and independent, developed solutions to problems and shared their existing knowledge and skills. It also meant that there were no organisational conflicts of interest between themselves and the mentor. On the negative side, the distance meant that the mentor was unavailable to help resolve immediate problems or to provide a leadership role to maintain the momentum of the group.

It seemed ironic that a male was chosen to mentor four women. It could be argued that the selection of a male mentor minimised the importance of using successful female academics as role models. However the fact that the mentor was known to the group, had worked in the same organisational context and was trusted by all members outweighed the potential negative impact of gender.

The Program

The mentoring program was conducted in the form of four day-long meetings in Launceston which were held from August 1997 to mid-year 1998. Three of these were held at the University and one at a protégé's home.

The group decided to use the mentoring program to focus on three collaborative projects:

1) A study consisting of indepth interviews with a small sample of international students in the University of Tasmania's social work program;
2) A survey of Australian schools of social work re the needs of international students; and
3) An ARC Large Grant application to gain experience of applying for external grants.

Although the nature of the meetings varied depending on the needs of the members of the group, three significant, interdependent themes emerged that were common to all. The first related to the lack of knowledge and skills in research. The mentor had a clear role of providing formal input on particular aspects of research methodology e.g. designing questionnaires and interview schedules, analysing qualitative data and reviewing drafts of work completed. The mentor also guided the development of an ethics committee application and provided advice on writing and publication.

The second theme related to the need for a change in the culture of the group. This involved promoting the importance of research and stressing the need to balance research activities with teaching duties. An example of the struggle inherent in this change was that the informal research meetings gradually become dominated by discussion of teaching issues and student matters. The demands of teaching meant that weeks passed with seemingly little progress in the projects. The mentor was important in getting the group back on track. He motivated the group to refocus on its initial aims and encouraged members to problem solve and develop strategies to address the tension between teaching and research.

The third theme related to the general lack of confidence about the research process and the sense of being overwhelmed by the 'long haul' between beginning a project and submitting a paper for publication. There was frustration that progress seemed slow and by the third meeting with the mentor the group appeared to have 'fallen in a hole'. A number of reasons were identified for this including:

1) The honeymoon period was over after the initial burst of enthusiasm;

2) There had been less facilitating and coordination of the process by one of the protégés who had emerged as an informal leader but had become involved in school administration;
3) Some individual members were aware of pressure to 'get the job done' because their contracts were nearing review;
4) Group dynamics had been neglected and protégés' frustrations and doubts were not dealt with.

The mentor played an important part in the process of addressing these frustrations by facilitating positive, honest sharing in each meeting. A process called 'mind dumps' was developed to allow ventilation of feelings and expressions of doubt about the process.

Discussion

Outcomes from this mentoring program were generally very positive in terms of the projects undertaken by the group. By the final meeting in June 1998, two of the three projects were well under way and were ready for review prior to their submissions to journals. The grant application did not go ahead as the group decided to write up their experiences of mentoring and present two papers to a national social work conference.

Six months later, the conference papers had been presented and three papers had been submitted for publication. A firm foundation had been established for a research culture within the School and although there were some changes in staff, the School now had a strong commitment to social work research. The protégés identified a positive change in their perceptions of themselves as researchers. One of the four protégés became an active researcher at a high profile mainland university, and two members found pathways into higher degree study.

When reflecting on the implementation of the mentoring program the group identified a number of key factors that had contributed to its success. These included the importance of resolving issues around the completion of tasks, of maintaining confidence and motivation and balancing the demands of teaching and research.

Although the program was successful a number of issues were identified. The first relates to who should provide mentoring for inexperienced researchers. Discrete programs such as the one described in this article are time limited. There was no room for ongoing support and in hindsight it seems clear that three of the four protégés would have benefited from a longer program. The difficulty of expecting senior members to adopt this role was mentioned earlier and has been documented by Roberts (1997). She found in her study of Australian nursing academics that there was an absence of mentoring by senior colleagues. This was attributed to lack of time, competitiveness and territoriality.

Secondly, mentoring programs do not eliminate underlying structural and contextual issues such as staffing cuts, the generally lower status of women in social work schools and the barriers that are placed in their way as they attempt to advance themselves in academia. It is important to ensure that the development of a research culture does not result in oppressive working hours and more stress for academic staff.

Although aspects of this program may have been unique, many of the experiences may have relevance and applicability to similar academic settings in social work schools. A number of recommendations for future programs were formulated and collated according to group process and research tasks.

In terms of process:

- Encourage participants to identify specific barriers to research and writing and seek to find realistic, practical, achievable solutions to these;
- Deconstruct the 'mystification demons' about research and writing/publication;
- Validate and process the emotions within the group and provide opportunities for the expression of thoughts and feelings;
- Formalise coordination and leadership to ensure that these roles are legitimised and the day to day running of the group is assured;
- Make the mentoring program responsive to the group's changing needs; be flexible and renegotiate, if necessary; and
- Value group effort, collaboration and mutual support as highly (if not higher) than individual achievements.

In terms of the task:

- Spend time planning the whole research project from the proposal through to the structure of the paper before breaking the project down into tasks;
- Break tasks down into small sections that are congruent with the overall plan;
- Delegate tasks to allow for skill sharing;
- Prepare daily priority lists of tasks rather than waiting for blocks of time to work on research and writing. In this way the problems of getting the elusive block of time and losing touch with the research and its data are circumvented; and
- Ensure that access to knowledge and skills in research methods are shared on an 'as needed' basis.

In conclusion, we think that this group mentoring program provides a useful model for developing research, writing and publication activities among academics. It has the potential to provide a model for a culture of collaboration and cooperation in research activities by emphasising both individual work and, at the same time, collaborative effort, backed by the support of a mentor. It also enables protégés to achieve more as members of a collaborative group than they could achieve on their own. Although this program was designed to meet the needs of beginning researchers, it is potentially applicable to all academics who have limited experience of establishing ongoing research projects alongside the demands of a full teaching load.

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Multidisciplinary Student Learning: A Model for Structural Change

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Introduction

At the John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle, Australia, a multidisciplinary learning unit (MDLU) inspired by the program in Linkoping, Sweden was established in 2000. The unit has nvolved students from the University of Newcastle studying social work, medicine, occupational therapy, speech pathology, nutrition and dietetics, and nursing. It is located in an eight bed Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) unit of this large teaching hospital. Social workers have been instrumental in the planning of the unit and in facilitating the student group.

The aims of the multidisciplinary learning (MDL) project have been to develop collaborative, patient-oriented team skills in students from professions working in health services, to relate these skills to good outcomes in holistic patient care, and to enhance students' understanding of the relationship between health, disease and social conditions. The structured learning program promotes teamwork, as well as an understanding and valuing of the competencies and skills of their own and other health related professions. To date, the outcomes of the learning unit have exceeded expectations in terms of student learning and patient satisfaction. Social workers have specifically addressed such issues as interdisciplinary rivalry, consent issues for patients and students, political agendas about aged care resourcing, ethical dilemmas as well as contributing to the setting of students learning goals and outcomes. Plans are to extend the unit to include students from physiotherapy, psychology and law.

The role of interdisciplinary education is discussed in terms of its growing significance in experience or problem-based models of education, particularly in the development of students' critical thinking skills, as well as its role in achieving longer-term structural change in health service provision:

> We can no longer be content with disciplines and fields of knowledge that only attempt to dissect complex, adaptive systems into discrete and manageable parts. Post mechanistic thinking is creative and process oriented and searches for new, more integrative ways of knowing the world. (Albrecht, Higginbotham and Freeman 2001, p.70)

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A Multidisciplinary Approach to Health Care

Failures in communication between different professional or occupational groups have caused unnecessary suffering, even death, to clients of health and social services (Mackay, Soothill and Webb 1995). Structural and cultural factors are major barriers to collaboration between the health professions in service provision (Taylor 1997). These factors include differences in power and status between professions, in gender and pay, in values and theoretical perspectives, and in difference in focus – whether on cure or care, or on the degree to which the recipient of service is seen to be self-determining. Professional groups may not only be ignorant of other disciplines but also have a tendency to stereotype and patronise them (Patford 2001). Barriers and walls between disciplines and professional identities are of no particular interest to patients who are more interested in whether their needs are being met:

> finely nuanced professional distinctions hold little interest for clients who are more interested in the overall package of care. (Greenwell quoted in Patford 2001, p.76)

Professional jealousies and ways in which professionals use information about patients may impact on the level of care a patient receives. For instance, patients may well be irritated by the number of different professionals who take their case history, or on the other hand be dismayed that some of the personal information they have shared with one professional has been passed on to others. They are likely to be confused about whom to ask for what and the varying advice they may receive from a number of different professionals. They may experience a cohesive professional team as efficient or they may experience it as controlling (Teram 1991). A multidisciplinary approach to service provision aims to provide a more holistic model of care, overcoming unproductive professional boundaries and enabling a more efficient use of resources.

Social Work Education in Newcastle, Australia

The Department of Social Work at the University of Newcastle has a four-year, full-time undergraduate program in social work using an experiential model of education. Experience-based learning focuses on process rather than content and, therefore, is relevant to a world in which content knowledge can become obsolete in the time that a course takes to complete (Gibbons and Gray 2002). The experiential learning model of the University of Newcastle prioritises field learning as the location of the richest learning possibilities and teaches an integrated program in which theory and practice are not separated and the methods of social work (casework, groupwork, community work, policy and research) are studied concurrently in the context of practice examples. The experience-based model focuses on facilitating students' development of independent learning skills that will support them in lifetime learning and social work practice. Paramount among these skills is critical thinking.

Critical thinking underlies many aspects of social work practice (Gibbons 2001). It is required in the challenging of values, assumptions and beliefs underlying knowledge, theories, practice and research. It questions and makes judgments about the relevance and validity of information. It underlies good clinical decision making by considering a range of options, examines the possible outcomes of each for the range of people involved and uses this awareness on which to base a judgment about the action to be taken. It is required for the exploration and resolution of ethical dilemmas. It also requires creativity and lateral thinking in problem solving.

Critical thinking is vital in good practice decision-making in social work and the health care professions. Yet in an evaluation of a targeted critical thinking program within the social work program at the University of Newcastle (Gibbons 2001), most students at the end of the program did not associate critical thinking with practice decision-making. Rather than recognise the role of critical thinking in assessment, considering options for and making decisions about intervention and ethical reasoning, they continued to perceive critical thinking in its traditional sense - its application to reading and other information, such as the critical appraisal of research. In developing awareness of and maximising critical thinking skills in clinical practice, there are many more opportunities in field learning and in interaction with other professional groups who have different assumptions and perspectives.

Multidisciplinary Learning

Multidisciplinary learning can assist students in understanding the relationship between health, disease and social conditions and a fuller understanding of the difference between impairment, activity and participation. It can allow for a focus on complexity and the need for collaboration and a pooling of knowledge in the more challenging issues encountered in health care. It encourages students from different disciplines to work together, to interact in the interests of patient care, rather than simply working alongside each other. At best it promotes deeper, more meaningful as well as more practical learning. Multidisciplinary learning has been defined as:

> The process by which a group of students from the health related occupations with different educational backgrounds, learn together during certain periods of their education, with interaction as an important goal, to collaborate in providing promotive, curative, rehabilitative and other health related services. (World Health Organisation 1988)

Funnell (1995) noted five factors which maximise the effectiveness of shared learning:

(i) Working on a common task;
(ii) Learners perceiving themselves as equals;
(iii) Using experiential teaching methods;
(iv) Facilitating groups which members have wanted to join and which are supported in their learning; and
(v) Having teachers who are familiar with interdisciplinary working and learning. These factors indicate a complementary relationship between multidisciplinary learning, small group learning and problem or experience based models of learning.

Advantages of Multidisciplinary Learning

The advantages of a multidisciplinary approach to learning which we have identified are:

1. Develop student awareness of knowledge and skills of other professions

Previous studies have indicated that members of multidisciplinary health teams do not understand each others' roles and tend to work alongside rather than work together (Davies 2000). As patient needs become more complex and professional expertise more

indepth, there is considerable advantage for patient outcomes if health professionals can integrate their own knowledge with that of other professionals in order to gain more holistic understandings of and to plan more coordinated interventions for patients.

2. Prepare students for teamwork

It seems reasonable to suppose that the most appropriate time for preparing professionals to work together is in their undergraduate education. Carpenter (1995) claims that if students were given more responsibility to care for patients, their learning would become more meaningful, reflective, practical and problem-based. It would seem reasonable that this undergraduate learning should include the capacity to work with other professional groups in a constructive, patient centred approach.

3. Develop critical thinking skills

A multidisciplinary context provides an environment in which a wide range of critical thinking skills can be cultivated (Paul 1995). The diversity of professional training backgrounds in a multidisciplinary group can be a richer source for challenging beliefs and assumptions and considering the perspectives of others, than a single disciplinary group. Functioning successfully in a multidisciplinary group requires students to develop a degree of intellectual humility, to suspend judgment, avoid generalisations and oversimplification, and to be creative in generating and assessing possible solutions to problems they encounter. This will involve students in dialogical thinking and reasoning, comparing perspectives, interpretations and theories and developing confidence in reason as opposed to the blind faith of following possibly unquestioned norms of their profession. Students will also need to develop a degree of intellectual courage, to put forward and argue their views to other students. Of particular relevance is the capacity of a multidisciplinary setting to encourage students to develop insight into the sociocentricity of their culture and their profession.

4. Stimulate awareness of the need for structural change within health services

By beginning at the stage of education, multidisciplinary learning aims to break down the tribal culture of professional groups in health care (Beattie 1995). The challenge to traditional professional boundaries and status occurs in developing a climate of mutual respect for each others' special knowledge and building interprofessional collaboration in the face of the increasingly managerialist culture in health services. Introducing students during their education to multidisciplinary practice encourages changes that have the potential to reduce duplication of services, minimise readmission rates through improvements in discharge planning and break down barriers between community and hospital. Further, social work's distinctively social justice and strengths perspectives challenge other professions to consider value and ethical issues such as confidentiality, consent, self determination; and the empowerment of patients and families.

The Challenges of Multidisciplinary Learning

In any field-learning environment it is essential that the education needs of students do not take priority over the needs of patients. This was addressed in Newcastle by providing patients and their families with information about the role of student learning in the GEM Unit so that they could decline to participate in the program if they so wished. Students on the Unit are in the second or later clinical placements and are under the supervision of a field educator from their own discipline, in addition to the Unit

Coordinator. This is to ensure professional accountability for the standard of care provided to patients on the Unit.

There are a number of difficulties noted in the literature on multidisciplinary learning. It may not be suitable for students before they have developed a professional identity:

> The targeting of undergraduate students is controversial. Since they have yet to develop a sense of professional identity, these students may resist pressures to trust and share. (Patford 2001, p.73).

Because of this, the MDLU has taken only students in the third or later years of their university programs. There is also the risk that multidisciplinary learning groups, left unchallenged, may reinforce rather than challenge professional hierarchies. It is of concern that in recent years the Linkoping program moved to designating the medical students as the 'natural leaders of the team' (Wahlstrom and Sanden 1998, p.230). Hugman (1991) observed that those groups in health and social services with more power had no vested interest in sharing it. This is an issue which is being closely monitored in the Newcastle program. Further, it may be difficult to foster a cooperative multidisciplinary environment in organisations whose economic rationalist management styles increasingly encourage competition between professional groups and service areas for scarce resources (Mackay, Soothill and Webb 1995).

Unlike social work education at the University of Newcastle, other student programs may not give the same degree of emphasis to critical thinking as a core skill. Encouraging students to question social and professional norms may be a new experience and students who are unfamiliar with a critical approach may be less confident or become defensive. These two issues highlight the need for staff training in the skills required. Not all practitioners may have the level of skill in group facilitation, problem-based learning or conflict management, required for successfully coordinating a multidisciplinary student program. Further, issues which have emerged in the student groups in the Newcastle program have demanded that staff be competent in and confident with critical thinking and reflection, particularly in relation to dealing with ethics and values. A high turnover of nurse tutor staff at Linkoping indicated that the supervisor role was very stressful and demanded a high level of skill (Wahlstrom and Sanden 1998).

The Linkoping Model

The multidisciplinary unit developed by the John Hunter Hospital and the University of Newcastle was inspired by the program commenced in 1996 by the Faculty of Health Sciences and the University Hospital in Linkoping, Sweden. In Linkoping, students from nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, social welfare, 'biomedical analysis' and medicine, staffed an eight bed orthopaedic ward for two weeks. Initially working three shifts, they had a generalist role, undertaking all the daily aspects of patient care, including bathing and serving meals. Patients on the ward were elderly people who had had orthopaedic surgery and were ready to go home. After a period of time Linkoping discontinued the shiftwork program as learning opportunities for students on the night shift were found to be limited. Students were supervised by a nurse tutor who was always on the ward, a registrar and consultant. Evaluation of the Linkoping program noted the vital roles of the supervisors, the need for them to be highly skilled, committed to their teaching role, and able to deal with conflict (Wahlstrom and Sanden 1998).

The Multidisciplinary Learning Unit in Newcastle

The Multidisciplinary Learning Unit at the John Hunter Hospital, located in the Geriatric Evaluation and Management (GEM) Unit, has included students from social work, nursing, occupational therapy, medicine, nutrition and dietetics, medicine, and speech pathology. Physiotherapy is to be included when the course commences at the University of Newcastle in 2002. The Unit was established after two years of planning by a working party comprising university and hospital staff from each of the disciplines. The main planning tasks involved developing learning goals for the Unit and for each discipline, writing student handbooks, effecting timetable changes within each discipline to allow for students to be on the unit at the same time, and resolving industrial issues. Ethical issues concerning the impact on patient care and patient consent to participate in the unit were acknowledged and addressed. Working party discussions also concerned the power dynamics of a major teaching hospital and the potential for the process to model or to challenge traditional hierarchies.

Initially the MDLU developed an eight-week program. This was reduced to four weeks due to difficulties in aligning field practice timetables across the various disciplines. The four-week programs are now repeated three times in each academic semester and involve a varied combination of senior students from social work, nursing, medicine, speech pathology, nutrition and occupational therapy. Each student has a profession-specific supervisor and there is an administrative assistant employed part-time to assist with the practicalities of timetabling. On a weekly basis the students all attend ward rounds and handovers. The student group are allocated one common patient per week to undertake an assessment and present as a multidisciplinary care presentation to their supervisors. The students are involved in ongoing patient care within their discipline according to their particular level of professional competence.

Differences Between the Newcastle and Linkoping Models

There are a number of differences from the Linkoping model. Students do not engage in general patient care tasks unless they are part of their discipline's usual practice. Students are on the unit from 9.00am to 5.00pm. There is no shiftwork. Patients on the GEM unit are usually diverse, with complex medical conditions and social circumstances. As a group, the students all attend site visits to relevant aged care and rehabilitation agencies. They have weekly combined education sessions on relevant topics such as dementia, legalities of aged care, and sexuality. They then finish each week of the program with a group reflective session. This session was initially facilitated by the social work supervisor but is now shared among supervisors from any of the professions.

Students by Profession and Gender

A total of 22 students (18 female and four male) have participated in six groups of students who have undertaken the Multidisciplinary Learning Unit up to June 2001. It is interesting to note that three of the four male students were in medicine, reinforcing gender profiles of the various professions.

Table 1: Students by profession and gender

Student Profession	Female	Male
Social Work	4	
Speech Pathology	4	
Occupational Therapy	2	
Nutrition and Dietetics	1	
Nursing	4	1
Medical	3	3

Reflective Group Time

The timetable is designed to allow the students ample time to participate as a team in activities and consultation with other health professionals. Part of the learning and assessment process for the students involves a weekly case-study presentation of a selected client in the ward. The session immediately following the case presentation is allocated as 'reflective time' and the group is facilitated by a social worker. This one-hour session has remained an integral part of the students' timetable from the commencement of the program.

The aims of reflective time are to facilitate discussion and interaction between students, discuss and review the weekly case-study presentation, address the needs and gaps in the program, explore the dynamics of working in a multidisciplinary team, and reflect on the ethical and social issues of the specific group of patients with whom they are working. Reflective time ensures that there is a designated time each week to explore students' learning experiences. It focuses on processes including students' professional development, the exploration of professional roles and identities and their direct experience of the group process. Students' group work skills and ability to work as a team are examined. The time is also used to evaluate the Multidisciplinary Learning Unit timetable and creates an identity for the Multidisciplinary Learning Unit within an acute care hospital.

The reflective group sessions have encountered several challenges. The most noticeable of these was the difficulty experienced by students with their profession-specific university timetables. The membership, especially of the first group, which ran for eight weeks, changed so frequently from week to week that forming a bond of trust and confidence between the group members became very difficult. Some students felt they were discriminated against, as they were not able to attend all sessions. This was rectified later by restricting the groups to four-week blocks which fell more easily within the university timetables. The development of personal relationships among some students made others in the group uncomfortable and unwelcome which also acted as a deterrent to forming a cohesive group.

Students from different disciplines placed different values on the group sessions, the female students finding the opportunity to discuss the issues of the week in a group setting more beneficial than the male students. One male student referred to the session as an 'afternoon nap time' which was confronting to the rest of the group who had found the session useful.

At times the group was unable to remain focused on its tasks and members became easily tired and fatigued. The reflective session followed the study presentation on the timetable. The challenge of the client assessment and presentation to the professional supervisors was daunting to some students who were mentally exhausted by the end of the day. At times, the students felt 'under the microscope' because of the attention the MDLU drew from the media, the University and the teaching hospital. The first group experienced the challenge of meeting with the Minister of Health and of participating in a video made for educational purposes by the Area Health Service. Finally, it was not considered in the interests of the unit as a whole that a social worker was most often in the role of facilitator. The social worker was usually the clinical supervisor of the social work student participating in the MDLU. To avoid a potential conflict of interest, the role of facilitator was rotated through the supervisors of all student groups represented.

The development of critical thinking in the unit as a whole and in the reflective group time has been evidenced in the issues raised by students in the reflective groups. Students began to recognise and question traditional boundaries and hierarchies in the health system and their impact on patient care. They discussed the lack of resources for aged care and the lack of interest of professional groups in aged care issues leading to aged care being a low status professional field. Usually this was the first hospital placement for social work students and they were deeply disturbed by the ethical issues of privacy and confidentiality in a hospital ward setting. They were particularly concerned about patients' loss of dignity, privacy and power on ward rounds and took this up with the consultant. They questioned the relationship between mental competency and the capacity to give consent, which is required for the participation of patients in the GEM Unit.

The reflective group time provided an alternative method of learning for the students. The professional courses at the University of Newcastle from which the students are drawn, teach in a problem-based, small group environment. However, not all have emphasised critical thinking, self-awareness and the examination of group dynamics. The reflective group gave students the opportunity to extend their interpersonal and communication skills. Finally, most students in the Unit were in their twenties and this was often their first field experience in aged care. Most had had little experience of death and dying and therefore struggled with and needed support in their personal responses to this.

Evaluation

From its commencement in February 2000 to June 2001, 22 students have participated in the Multidisciplinary Learning Unit. The University of Newcastle provided a Teaching and Development Grant to support the quantitative evaluation of the Unit.

The Aging Semantic Differential Scale (Rosencranz and McNevin 1969) and Readiness for Interprofessional Learning Scale (Parsell and Bligh 1999) were administered to students before and after their MDLU experience. Results of the evaluations undertaken to date must be regarded with caution because of the small numbers. However, the trend from the RILP scale would appear to indicate that, in comparison with their cohort, the MDLU students experience enhanced learning about working in a multidisciplinary team. They viewed teamwork skills as essential and considered other professions' input as essential to patient care.

Additionally, the performance of each student was assessed by supervisors from their own discipline, using discipline specific assessments as established by the respective discipline at the University of Newcastle and their professional accrediting bodies. The case presentations and the reflective group time were used to give qualitative feedback to students and to the MDLU working party on student learning and the development of team skills.

Advantages for Social Work

There are a number of advantages for social work students learning in a multidisciplinary setting. First, it provides a context in which experience-based learning and critical thinking can be strongly pursued. Secondly, students seemed to gain a greater understanding of professional roles by working with student peers than by observing the role of practising professionals. As one final year social work student stated:

> This placement is different from any other placement, even when I have worked with other professionals. It has given me a lot of insight into the other disciplines.

Thirdly, they had the opportunity to practise their teamwork skills which had previously been developed by working in groups of social work students. This gave them the opportunity to expand their skills by including a greater diversity of values, perspectives and theoretical frameworks. Fourthly, the Unit gave social work students a broader understanding of patient needs.

Despite the efforts of the social work curriculum to encourage a wide perspective, students tend to develop a psychosocial view of their patients' issues, and can often be dismissive of 'the medical model'. The multidisciplinary learning approach encourages them to value other perspectives. The multidisciplinary unit aims to promote greater equity between professionals at a stage where students share a similar status in the hospital system. Finally, the multidisciplinary unit assists students to further their understanding of the interaction between health, disease, rehabilitation, the individual and society.

Conclusion

Multidisciplinary education is becoming increasingly of interest in experience or problem-based models of education, because it mirrors practice in most contemporary health and welfare settings. It offers unique opportunities to develop students' critical thinking skills, as well as having the potential to achieve longer-term structural change in health service provision. From the outset, dealing with issues of power and influence between the professions working in health care was a goal of the multidisciplinary unit. This was an ongoing theme in the reflective sessions and one that needed to be confronted. It would have been unfortunate to revert to the choice made at Linkoping that the preeminence of the doctors and medical students needed to be accepted! At the same time, social work students have had the opportunity to realise the strengths and limitations of their own profession and to move away from a need to idealise their profession above others.

The Multidisciplinary Learning Unit at the John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle, has not been without problems. Managing the complexities of timetabling the clinical placements of such a range of disciplines and ensuring that the unit is sufficiently

resourced with staff to meet the standards of the individual discipline groups for field education supervision have been particular challenges. Positive initial outcomes for both patients and students, however, have indicated that the program is worth pursuing.

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The Production of Welfare in a Post-Fordist Welfare State?

John McCormack and Belinda Johnson

Introduction

The nature and organisation of paid work changes continuously. The emergence over the last two hundred years of different types of goods and services has continually created new work tasks for workers and required different skills. These work changes are extensive, and this type of product and occupational change is forecast to continue (DEET 1995; DEWRSB 2000). Technological advancement and new production processes not only change the way we work but can also affect the social or family lives of workers. For example, people working longer, more intense and non-standard hours, from different or multiple work sites, or workers entering, and re-entering, the workforce at different ages and social status, such as married women, students, and so on, can affect individual and family interaction expressively and instrumentally. Economists and industrial relations commentators are taking a keen interest in these workplace transformations and are undertaking research to explore and understand the impacts of these industrial and social changes on the economy, the firm and the individual worker (EPAC 1996; Campbell and Burgess 2001; Probert and Murphy 2001).

Apart from some recent exceptions (McDonald 1999), welfare as a service industry is often neglected in this type of specific occupational research. The Industries Commission (1995) report, which tended to focus primarily on issues of funding and tax concessions for community social welfare organizations, did point out the increasing complexity of welfare work and the critical importance of trained personnel for the sector. However, this report conveys no real sense or feeling of the daily workplace experience of that non-government sector's estimated one hundred thousand workers. We, however, like many other welfare workers, are interested in the day-to-day effect of these changes affecting welfare workers and, most importantly, how these changes may ultimately affect service users. Front-line welfare workers are key intermediaries in service delivery and use, yet we read or hear very little about their own personal job experience and perceptions. This sort of information could also be of interest to welfare students in terms of enhanced preparation for the changing world of welfare work, and tertiary educators as context indicators for teaching practise skills.

Related Literature and Theoretical Considerations

The 'production of welfare' perspective used here, as described by the first half of the title of this paper, derives to some extent from the original Davies and Knapp model

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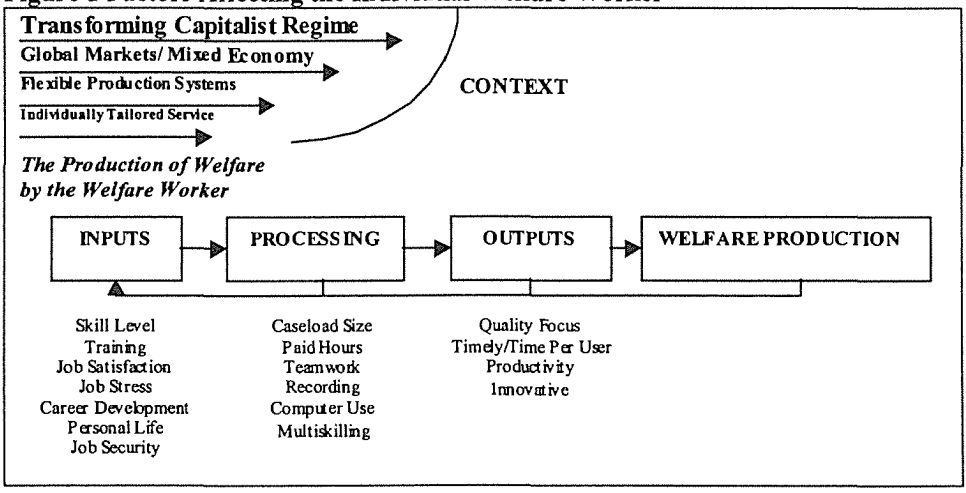
(1981). They developed this perspective to attempt to measure quality of care for older people in nursing homes. By focusing on inputs and outputs they were able to identify some key factors that were associated with higher quality care. Their production of welfare model continues to be the basis of the research perspective used at the PSSRU in Kent in the United Kingdom, one of the leading centres for aged care in the world.

However, whereas labour is usually seen as an input to production, our focus here is on the inputs and environmental effects on labour itself. While ultimately we want to know how labour affects service user outcomes, at this stage of the research we merely try to see whether job characteristics have changed, and how this is perceived by the workers themselves in their production of a welfare service. Figure 1 applies some of the occupational job characteristics to a schematic representation of the derived model we have used.

Figure 1 Factors Affecting the Individual Welfare Worker



We have characterised the input of labour as an intermediate product or production system in itself, with human capital and various environmental job characteristics influencing how and what the workers can do in their day-to-day practice. Different factors of production, such as job characteristics, are seen as relevant to different parts of the process, but the parts are interactive. Thus, a timely and high quality approach to the service user might be difficult if the worker is already under stress due to a high caseload. Similarly, a creative or innovative service approach may be restricted if the worker is not continuously upskilled.

The second part of the title of this paper, which you will note ends with a question mark, in fact asks whether the production of welfare is being reconstructed according to the characteristics of the production methods used in post-fordist environments. These environments, defined here primarily in terms of occupational relations and work design, typically emphasise greater flexibility and job enrichment in how workers organise and carry out their work (production), and greater choices and innovation in the services they can provide to service users (consumption). While 'Fordism' might be most easily defined in the minds-eye as the assembly-line production method used by the automotive pioneer Henry Ford, where workers repeatedly performed a limited number of tasks, and consumers could have 'any colour Ford, so long as it was black', post-fordism is a far more complex and contested construct. Although Jessop (1994)

argues that there are 'massive disparities' in its use, for our purposes here it refers, in an ideal-typical perspective, to highly skilled workers using flexible production methods which provide specialised goods for segmented markets (Jary and Jary 1991; Giddens 1993).

Workers in this post-fordist environment are referred to as 'polyvalent' staff, i.e. systematically trained, job-rotated, autonomous and multiskilled, and are assumed to have more quality of working life and maintenance of employability under this work design regime, compared to the previous deskilling division of labour in fordist production systems. This type of application of post-fordism is still emerging in welfare state literature, predominantly as a framework to explore changes in social policy, such as occurred under Thatcherism in the United Kingdom (Loader and Burrows 1994). However, there are some similar policy and practice changes occurring locally which directly impact on welfare workers, and thus seem worthy of further investigation.

In the Australian welfare state new technologies for service design and delivery, such as aged care 'packages', attendant care budget-holding by the person with disability, and case management for the long-term unemployed person, are put forward as examples of a more individualised, differentiated and flexible approach to welfare provision. Similarly, changing nomenclature, such as the official adoption of the term 'customer' by Centrelink (previously the Department of Social Security), and explicit mission statements by welfare departments concerning benchmarking and quality service, further claim new directions in how welfare is produced and delivered (Department of Health & Community Services 1999). These claims however are far from validated in terms of positive outcomes for either workers or service users.

Regardless of this, a more flexible welfare production approach is of interest because it contrasts with the previous 'one-size-fits-all' system of institutionalisation and limited service options, and possibly reflects, in conjunction with new employment relations requirements such as multiskilling, contract employment, and performance measures, a transforming welfare state. At the same time however, the pervasive spread of targeting and increasing emphasis on throughput indicates that there are still many traditional, standardised features of the welfare state intact.

Nevertheless, this possible transformation of welfare could be seen as not dissimilar to changes in other industry sectors where manufacturing for example, is seen as moving beyond fordist mass production, with a rigid division of labour and minimum worker autonomy, to flexible specialisation, and individual tailoring of high quality products, via semi-autonomous and self-directed work groups which are multiskilled and functionally flexible (Piore and Sabel 1984; Mathews 1989; Giddens 1993). Even unions support this flexibility and want to develop a new workplace culture based on flexibility, cooperation, democracy and the win/win principle of mutual benefits (ACTU 1995). (Appendix 1 contrasts some of these characteristics.) This 'post-fordist' theoretical perspective then enables us to begin to explore whether these sorts of changes are occurring more generally in the production of welfare.

Research Questions and Methodology

We wanted to know whether there are observable changes in the production of welfare at the level of the individual welfare worker, and whether these accord with the literature on these changes in other industries. By taking some of the key work design features of the post-fordist literature and applying them to welfare settings, we

attempted to see how far the key features of post-fordism are being reproduced as part of welfare restructuring.

As a preliminary route into researching this direct welfare work experience under changing conditions, we distributed, via word-of-mouth and professional contacts, a questionnaire to front line practitioners in a range of health and welfare agencies, concerning changing job characteristics. Its aim was to try and identify whether there have been work changes for welfare workers recently (i.e. over the last two or so years), and what areas of work these changes have occurred in.

The questionnaire contained 28 job characteristics and respondents were requested to grade the amount of change in each, ranging from 'No Change' to 'Some' or 'Large' increase/decrease. These grades were then scored on a five-point scale with a high score (five) representing a large increase and a low score (one) for a large decrease. A score of three meant 'no change'. Fifty-eight welfare workers (75% social workers) employed in a range of health and welfare agencies in Melbourne completed the questionnaire in the period up to 1999. Data analysis consists in the main of descriptive statistics to highlight basic change in work tasks. Some inferential statistical techniques are then tentatively used to further explore work task relationships. Within the sample size, the ratio of independent to dependent variables meets the minimum requirements as specified for exploratory multivariate analysis (Tabachnick and Fidell 1996). The authors warn against any further generalisations from the findings.

This study then is clearly exploratory only and limited by the non-representative sample. It was constructed as a pilot study for the development of a more substantive, larger scale investigation. Further, we did not obtain enough respondents to disaggregate work change by organization type, which could be useful in further investigation, as the rate of change appears to vary according to this variable. Workers whose job function is more tightly defined, for example those performing predominantly high volume assessments, and also workers in hospital settings, reported more intensification of their work tasks.

Figure 2 Years of Welfare Work Experience

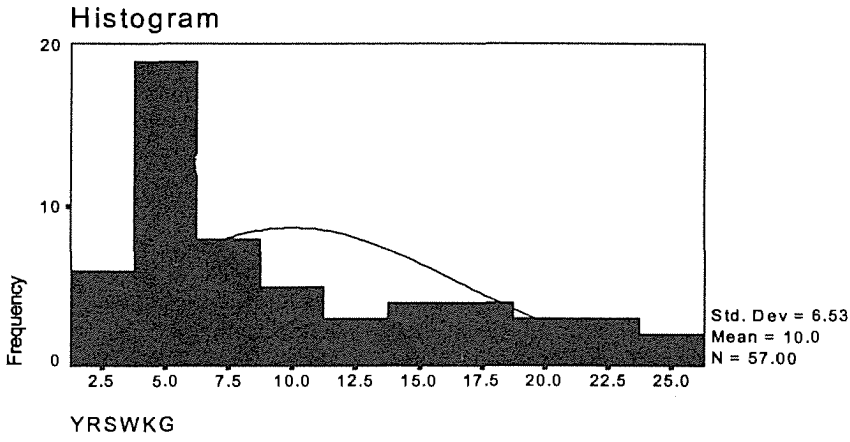


Figure 2 provides a pictorial representation of the wide distribution of work experience of the sample, ranging from two years up to twenty-five years (median 7.5; mode 5 years). The skewed nature of the sample further detracts from the ability of the study to

generalise to the larger welfare worker population. However, the modal five years experience may not be so unexpected because the majority of the sample were full-time, direct service workers. Also, we did not explore differences between new recruits and experienced workers due to the spread of years worked and the small sample size, however, with a larger sample this may be worth investigating.

Findings and Discussion

Table 1 shows the change perceived by workers against all the job characteristics surveyed. As can be seen from the table, characteristics where a substantial number of respondents reported a 'large' increase include *computer use, job complexity and job stress*. 'Large' decreases were reported by a considerable number of respondents for *number of co-workers, security of employment, and job satisfaction*. If one aggregates all increases and all decreases separately, there are many job characteristics on which 60% or more of respondents perceived an increase - *unpaid & after hours work, wages, caseload size & recording, computer use, skill development, multiskilling, job complexity, productivity, and job impact on personal life*. Using 40% of respondents as the marker for aggregated decreases, characteristics such as *number of co-workers, security of employment and job satisfaction* are again identified. Overall, the table illustrates clearly that welfare workers have perceived considerable change in their jobs in the recent past.

Table 1: Workers Perceptions of Changes in Job Characteristics (%)*

JOB CHARACTERISTIC	LARGE** INCREASE	SOME INCREASE	NO CHANGE	SOME DECREASE	LARGE DECREASE
Paid Hours of Work	5	26	50	12	-
Unpaid Hours of Work	28	33	28	5	3
After Hours Work	22	40	24	7	2
Flexibility of Work Hrs	10	35	45	9	1
Sick Days	-	9	81	3	5
TIL/Other Leave	10	16	62	5	5
Wages/Hourly Rate	3	57	29	7	2
Number of Co-workers	12	16	29	28	12
Task or Caseload Size	38	46	9	5	2
Case/Task Recording	26	38	16	17	2
Computer Use	41	45	10	3	-
Skill Development	19	47	24	9	-
Working in Teams	19	29	35	10	5
Multiskilling	29	40	21	9	2
Training-on/off the Job	9	35	36	17	3
Job complexity	43	31	16	5	3
Job Autonomy	26	21	35	17	-
Career Development	10	47	26	10	5
Can be Creative/Innovate	21	37	26	16	-
Accountability	22	38	33	5	-
Your Job Commitment	21	16	33	22	7
Security of Employment	2	9	26	37	26
Job Satisfaction	12	33	14	29	12
Impact on Personal Life	35	43	10	10	2
Job Stress	45	41	7	3	2
Your Productivity/Output	26	48	14	10	-

JOB CHARACTERISTIC	LARGE** INCREASE	SOME INCREASE	NO CHANGE	SOME DECREASE	LARGE DECREASE
The Organisation's Output	24	43	16	10	2
Focus on Quality	19	33	22	17	5

*Missing values not reported here. ** A 'Large" increase / decrease is ≥ 25%

Additional Comments

Some workers included additional comments on the questionnaire that often gave reasons as to their individual scoring. For example, some people had changed jobs in this period, some small agencies had received extra funds, casemix was specifically highlighted by a few workers as increasing job pressure, one worker reported loss of benefits through part-time work, two workers said nothing is ever done about caseloads, and a few workers expressed concern over less recognition being given to the difficult job they are doing. These comments provide a valuable context for the work changes described by respondents and would be important to follow-up in trying to further understand the complexities of particular organizations and settings.

Analysis

Working with our 'scanning' data, a correlation analysis was carried out to see whether there was any substantial association between the job characteristics. Using a cut-off point of .4 as an indicator of reasonable to good association, the following significant ($p<.05$, two-tailed) relationships emerged: *Skill Development,* which was the characteristic most frequently meeting these criteria, was significantly associated with *job commitment (r = .55), multiskilling (.48), organisational productivity (.44), own productivity (.43), job satisfaction (.46), working in teams (.49),* and *training (.45).* These positive relationships indicate that an increase in skill development was associated with an increase in all these other job characteristics.

Various other individual sets of job characteristics met the cut off for a 'good' and significant association, such as *caseload size / after hours work (.45), autonomy / job commitment (.45),* and so on. However, *job satisfaction* and *job stress* were the next most frequent job characteristics where the association was established with a number of other variables, some of which could be related to fordist (eg, *caseload size*) and post-fordist (eg, *skills, innovation, autonomy)* job design. Table 2 lists these:

Table 2: Job Characteristics Correlated* with Job Stress and Job Satisfaction

JOB STRESS	JOB SATISFACTION
Job impact on personal life (.67)	Job commitment (.55)
Caseload size (.65)	Career development (.52)
Computer use (.43)	Skill development (.46)
Unpaid hours (.41)	Can be innovative/creative (.45)
	Job autonomy (.42)

*All significant <.05

As can be seen from the table, an increase in job stress was strongly associated with an increase in *job impact on personal life* and an increase in *caseload size.* The correlation between *job stress* and *job satisfaction,* as expected, reveals a negative relationship, however, it is a weak association (-.18), and not significant. These two job characteristics however have interesting distributions among the respondents, as can be seen from Figures 3 and 4.

Figure 3: Distribution of Change in Job Stress

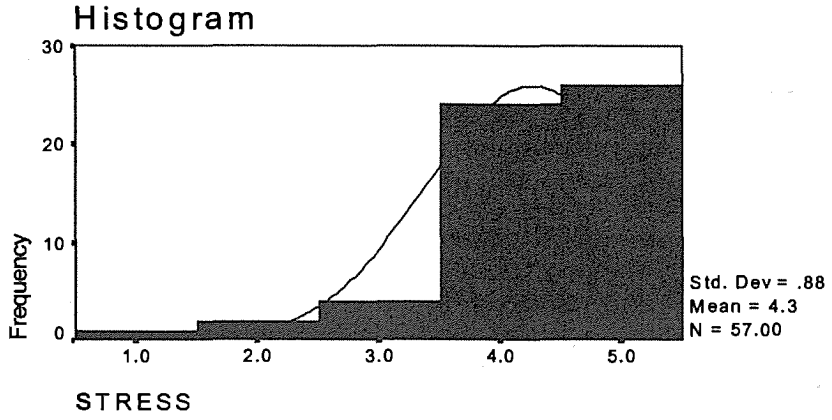
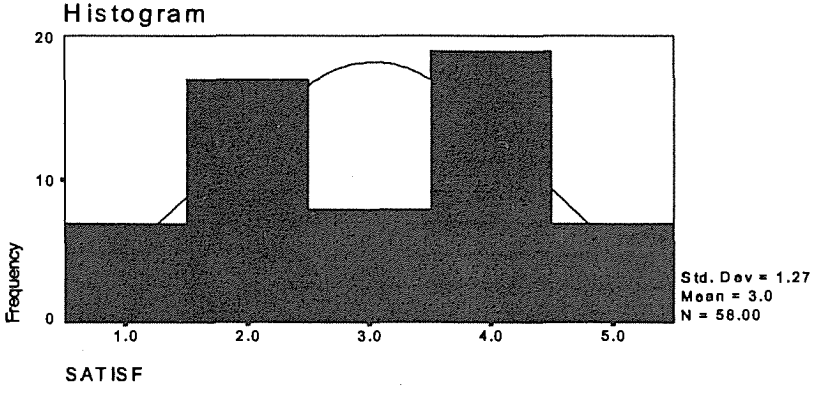


Figure 3 graphically shows the high percentage of the sample that recorded 'some' (category 4) or a 'large' (category 5) increase in job stress. From Table 1 above, this represents 86% of respondents. Job satisfaction, on the other hand, has a somewhat different distribution as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Distribution of Change in Job Satisfaction



Experience of change in job satisfaction over the last two years has a bi-modal distribution whereby substantial numbers of respondents had some decrease in job satisfaction while, simultaneously, a sizeable proportion of respondents had some increase in this job characteristic. This is a somewhat unexpected observation given the large increase in job stress shown above.

Following the emergence of job stress and job satisfaction as potential fordist/post-fordist dependent variables, and their different distributions, cross-tabulations with other job characteristics were performed. While some expected relationships were present, such as an increase in career development showing a majority of these respondents also recording an increase in job satisfaction, this was not always the case. The cross-tabulations also showed that there were some workers who said their job satisfaction had increased yet at the same time they had experienced an increase in job characteristics, such as caseload size, less co-workers, and even more insecure tenure, which one might assume would work against job satisfaction.

Similarly, on job stress, there were some workers who said their stress had increased yet they had experienced increased job security, and an increased number of co-workers. Overall, when job stress and job satisfaction were cross-tabulated, 40% who reported an increase in job stress reported a decrease in job satisfaction. However, another 35% of respondents who reported an increase in job stress also reported an increase in job satisfaction. Obviously, an increase in job stress does not necessarily mean a decrease in job satisfaction - these appear to be complex constructs that require further research to explore their seeming multi-dimensionality.

Returning to the 'ideal-typical' post-fordist job characteristics, the findings again followed the somewhat confusing pattern above. That is, we found there were some workers who had experienced an increase in multiskilling, teamwork, a quality focus, job autonomy, and innovative practice, who also recorded an increase in both job stress and job satisfaction. That is, an increase in post-fordist job characteristics could be associated with an increase in both job stress and job satisfaction. To further investigate, a number of other tentative data reduction techniques were carried out to try and unravel the relationship between these job characteristics for different workers.

An exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation was undertaken to see if there were any underlying constructs that could represent this large number of individual job characteristics. Ten factors with eigenvalues greater than one emerged, but the first two factors explained most (52%) of the variance in the distribution. Table 3 lists the items that loaded on these two factors, using the accepted cut-off of .4, and they reflect what might be called positive and negative job change characteristics.

Table 3: Job Characteristic Factor Loadings

Factor 1 Positive Change	Factor 2 Negative Change
Can be innovative (.76)	Caseload size (.79)
Job complexity (.71)	Unpaid work hours (.76)
Job commitment (.70)	After hours work (.74)
Focus on quality (.63)	Personal life impact (.63)
Job autonomy (.62)	Computer use (.49)
Skill development (.40)	

The characteristics which comprise the negative change factor seem quite plausible, although with post-fordist job design and its quality focus and technologically advanced products one might expect increased computer use for example, to be a positive work change experience. It may be however that the increased computer use is an imposition associated with increased caseload and the computer work is more like laborious data entry rather than a service enhancement for the worker. Thus, some identified job characteristics, like the larger satisfaction and stress constructs, again do not simply accord with the theoretically defined post-fordist approach. The positive change factors, on the other hand, do seem to be a better fit.

To take this a little further in trying to determine which of the positive and negative change characteristics which emerged here best contribute to job satisfaction or job stress, the factor items were regressed on those two dependent variables. The job characteristics which were statistically significant in estimating an increase in either job satisfaction or stress are listed below.

Regression analysis of job satisfaction:

Job Characteristic	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Probability
Quality Focus	.46	.11	.0001
Career Development	.35	.13	.0093
Skill Development	.36	.16	.0475

n=54, R^2 .66, Adj R^2 .61, SE .79, DW 1.6.

Regression analysis of job stress:

Job Characteristic	Regression Coefficient	Standard Error	Probability
Impact on personal life	.44	.08	.0000
Caseload	.39	.11	.0006

n=53, R^2 .55, Adj R^2 .52, SE .54, DW 2.34.

Thus in these estimated models, if workers perceive that their work has changed to a more post-fordist approach with a quality focus and career and skill development, we can estimate with some confidence that they will report an increase in job satisfaction. Similarly, where workers report an increasing impact of their job on their personal life, or an increase in the fordist characteristic of increasing caseload size, we can again estimate with reasonable confidence that they will report an increase in job stress. These particular job characteristics, in this instance, appear to differentiate workers more clearly in terms of the impact of work change. They potentially reduce the massive amount of job change, as shown in Table 1, to some key characteristics or questions through which we may assess the impact of the work design component of labour process at a welfare worksite. Further application of this approach is required however, to identify any other influencing factors, as indicated by the unexplained variance.

Conclusion

This analysis has shown quite clearly that there is substantial change in the production of welfare as perceived by welfare workers. This change is affecting workers in both similar and dissimilar ways. The increase in job stress and job enlargement is pervasive as workers' caseloads increase, with a corresponding increase in accountability and computer use, which results in work having a greater impact on their personal lives. One sub-group of these workers is also experiencing a decrease in job satisfaction that, one might presume, puts them at risk of job exit. If remedial action is not taken, this sort of occupational wastage can be a cost to the organization, the worker and the service user. From this analysis, managers and human resource personnel need to pay particular attention to these factors of production, especially caseload size. The Karpin Report (1995) on management competency reinforces this approach. Workers also may need to be more conscious of these factors in the context of negotiating new employment.

The other group of workers to emerge in this analysis were those who, despite work intensification, perceived a simultaneous increase in job satisfaction. The factors which differentiated these workers from the other group were a sense that their job had a quality focus to it as well as a career future for them, and this was bolstered by the perception that their skills were continuously being developed. These specific work attributes indicate job satisfaction (and possibly lower turnover) emerges from more than just a feeling of being in a socially useful job. This view contrasts with the other group above, where one can envisage the dissatisfied workers feeling they are being pushed ever harder into a corner. Unfortunately, this research could not compare

organisational setting for these groups of workers. As stated, it would be interesting to see if structural change, such as the introduction of casemix in hospitals, or the volatility brought about in local government through contracting services, differentiates workers' job perceptions.

In terms of the post-fordist exploration, those ideal-typical job design features associated with it were more likely to be perceived by workers in this analysis as positive workplace change, whereas fordist type job characteristics were more likely to be associated with negative workplace change. This general finding concurs with the proposition explained earlier that post-fordist job design includes job enrichment. On the other hand, a considerable number of the initially proposed post-fordist characteristics, such as multiskilling, flexible hours, working in teams, and so on, are not retained in the final regression analysis which raises questions as to the capability or completeness of the post-fordist job design scenario for welfare work analysis. This discrepancy accords somewhat with the considerable contestation of the post-fordist concept throughout, for example, Loader and Burrows' (1994) book on the topic.

By the same token however, those editors believe that the notion of post-fordism is still worth exploring because we lack adequate theorisation in conceptualising the myriad changes currently occurring in the welfare state. While this research did not directly address overall welfare state changes, the analysis at job design level in some ways reflects these larger changes and thus makes some contribution to the discussion in this area. Consequently, more in-depth work along the lines of this research may be worthwhile. Also, there are other interesting and important observations contained in Table 1 above, such as the large proportion of respondents reporting increased wages, and less secure employment, which deserve more analysis, particularly in terms of the development of new employment relations regimes.

This study could be seen to have some implications for welfare students as well, in that they need to be aware of the complexity and pressure in the daily work experience of welfare workers in terms of controlling job stress and preventing occupational wastage. Similarly, an awareness of the job characteristics which are associated with job satisfaction would be beneficial not only for developing their skill base, and hence effectiveness with service users, but even in terms of seeking out employers who offer ongoing skill and career development.

** We express our thanks to all those welfare workers who assisted in this research.

APPENDIX 1

(1) Fordist Compared to Post-Fordist Work Organization Characteristics

Mass Production/Mass Consumption	Small Batch Production for Niche Markets
Bureaucratic Work Rules; Hierarchical	Deregulated; Self-Directed Work Groups
Fragmented Tasks; Division of Labour	Job rotation; Multiskilled; Polyvalent
Authoritarian, Low Trust, Adversarial	Autonomous; Participative Decisions
Centralised Management (mgt)	Decentralised Co-mgt/Self-mgt

(2) Post-Fordist Occupational Shifts and Worker Requirements

Greater Flexibility	↑ Adaptiveness
More Complex Tasks	↑ Technical Skills
More Use of Teams	↑ Interpersonal Skills
Greater Autonomy	↑ Responsibility
Increased Quality Focus	↑ Client Service Mentality

*Source: Derived from EPAC (1996)

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But What Are They Good At? The Competencies of Welfare Members in Administrative Review Tribunals

Phillip Swain

Introduction

The research on which this paper is based had its genesis in the perception that the role of the non-legal welfare member in multi-member administrative review tribunals (such as social security, immigration, refugee and guardianship tribunals) is poorly defined. While that role is generally supported by members of other disciplines, cost-saving imperatives and perceived inefficiencies are, at least in part, driving pressures for change in administrative review structures. In this context the contribution of all members, but perhaps especially welfare members, needs clarification. What is it that welfare members bring to processes of administrative review? Do welfare members play a role which cannot be met by other members in dealing with certain types of applicants or hearing situations?

The research was also influenced by the socio-political context of the 1990s. The Administrative Review Council (ARC) in its 1995 *Better Decisions* report noted widespread support for multi-member, multi-disciplinary panels as enabling 'a diversity of backgrounds, perspectives and expertise to be brought to bear in the decision-making process' (p.32). The ARC argued that such hearings enable decision-making responsibility to be shared, are more suited to the assessing of the credibility and character of applicants, are appropriate for resolution of significant or complex matters, and increase equity and consistency of decision-making (ch.3, paras 3.50-3.52). The ARC concluded that, despite the additional costs involved, multi-member review tribunals were often preferable to single member (and, so, single discipline) panels, depending on 'the circumstances of individual cases' and relevant statutory objectives (p.34; see also Allars 1993, pp.23-35).

In Australia, as elsewhere, there is general agreement that tribunals have 'a significant, distinct and independent position in our system of justice and administration.' (New Zealand Legislation Advisory Committee 1988, para 48, quoted in Bayne 1990, p.493; see also McMillan and Todd 1994). In consequence of their relative accessibility, speed, informality, and cheapness (Genn 1993, p.395; Leyland, Woods and Haiden 1994, p.8) - they will continue to be important components (alongside the courts) of the system of justice.

Nevertheless, there has been growing recognition that the 'tribunalisation', (Teague 1992, p.24) characteristic of the Australian administrative review system in past decades, is ripe for rationalisation. As with any social organisation, in examining the tribunal system 'it is important to take account of the political and administrative environment in which (a tribunal) is operating' (Carney and Tait 1995, p.448). In both the

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Federal Social Security Appeals Tribunal (SSAT) and the Victorian Mental Health Review Board (MHRB), the two jurisdictions of focus in the research, important rights and entitlement issues are involved. There is also broad community interest in the efficient allocation of financial and community resources, compounded by Federal and State government philosophies which emphasise economic rationalism, corporatism and accountability. The perception was that some tribunals were becoming too formal (Creyke 1997, pp.21-2), and issues of cost, formality and delay had been well noted by previous research (Access to Justice Advisory Committee 1994).

This paper examines one aspect of the ongoing debates - the composition of administrative review tribunals, and in particular the contribution to such tribunals of welfare, community or lay members, as they are variously titled. Are these members mere 'wings' (Harris 1983; Leyland, Woods and Haiden 1984, pp.78-80; Wikeley and Young 1992) or 'bookends' (Disney 1992a, p.127), as they are sometimes described? Are they more than just supports for their more influential fellow members? And, if there is a place for such members, how can schools of social work ensure that graduates have the necessary skills and insights?

The Historical Composition of Tribunals

Many administrative review tribunals include a 'welfare', 'lay' or 'community' member, often a social worker by primary discipline. In multi-member tribunals these members sit alongside legal members and, in some jurisdictions, specialist medical or psychiatrist members (in, for example, the Intellectual Disability Review Panel (Vic), the Guardianship and Administration Board (Vic) and the Federal Veterans Review Board), or alongside members representing particular disciplines or bodies of knowledge (psychologist members in the Victorian Intellectual Disability Panel) or bringing particular life experiences (the Veteran's Review Board includes members with service experience in the Australian defence forces). The multi-member panel has 'almost mystical proportions in many kinds of judicial forums as...best representing a check on individual bias and idiosyncrasy' (Fulbrook 1978, p.203).

Nevertheless there remain reservations. Some have expressed concern that these forums have become dominated by 'over judicialisation and increasing legalism' (Leyland et al 1994, p.79), to the exclusion of other frameworks of thinking. Disney (1992b, p.10) argued that all legal institutions tend over time 'to become encrusted and suffocated by excessive formality, delay and cost', and that when lawyers dominate they set the criteria for tribunal processes and techniques of analysis, to which other members are expected to conform. Others argue that non-legal members are marginalised by the dominant hegemony of the law (Rodopoulos 1992a, pp.146-147; Rodopoulos 1992b, pp.11-12; Mulvaney 1992, pp.68-71) leaving limited scope for non-legal participation and expertise (Thawley 1997, p.75).

A Non-Legal 'Specialist'?

The non-lawyer, non-medical specialist member of administrative review tribunals tends to be loosely homogenised into the variously titled 'lay', 'welfare' or 'community' member, with little distinction on discipline or experience being drawn. The contribution of these members to tribunal decision-making is broadly supported, but usually with vague and generalised rationales. They are seen as being valuable to decision-making, but no-one seems very sure why.

Wikeley and Young (1992) examined the role of the lay (non-legal) members in social security appeals in the United Kingdom. They noted the lack of role clarity, and the limited participation by lay members who seemed to be 'floundering in a conceptual fog' and 'effectively sidelined by the increasing legalisation' of the process (p.140). In Australia, Huck (1992) examined the views of a cross-section of Social Security Appeal Tribunal (SSAT) members as to their respective roles, concluding that the role of non-legal members was generally poorly defined and their presence in hearings largely unarticulated. She argued that the core skills and knowledge of members were not peculiar to any one discipline, although 'the differences between member types...(still) play an important part in maintaining the style, culture and competency of the tribunal' (p.50). Melita (1992) argued that the skill and knowledge requirements of tribunal members included specialist knowledge in the area of decision making; conceptual, analytical and investigative skills; judgement and decision-making skills; communication skills; capacity to resolve conflict; and the capacity to be independent. However she concluded that, given mutual understanding between members as to the goals and tasks of tribunals, 'the distinction between legal and non-legal members disappears' (p.92). Others have noted the benefit from diverse membership making a wider range of expertise and experience available (Pearce 1981; Disney 1985; Sayers and Webb 1990; Logan 1991; Balmford 1992; Genn 1993; O'Connor 1993; Disney 1994; Katzen, 1995; Kendall 1995; Ravech and Yule 1995; Smillie 1995; Smith 1995; Brennan 1996; Harsel 1997).

But the question remained - what is that expertise?

The Research Process and Rationale

In the research on which this paper is based two jurisdictions were utilised to consider the particular contribution of welfare members to multi-disciplinary administrative review processes, these being the Federal SSAT and the Victorian MHRB. The research incorporated two principal components. A detailed questionnaire was sent to members of the two jurisdictions, across all disciplines and categories of membership. This questionnaire sought responses to such issues as:

- the skills necessary for members, regardless of discipline, to best contribute to decision-making in a multidisciplinary setting;
- the particular skills and understandings which welfare members bring;
- the loss to the hearing process were welfare membership to cease.

In 1997 a questionnaire was distributed to all 280 and 57 members at that time of the SSAT and MHRB respectively, across all categories of membership (legal, medical, welfare, and executive). In all, 45% of SSAT members and 53% of MHRB members (46% of the total membership) participated in the research. This response rate compares favourably with response rates in other comparable recent research (Cooney 1995). The spread of responses in this research across the several membership categories of the SSAT and MHRB, the overall response rate (46%), and the fact that over 44% of each category of membership responded, provided a solid basis from which valid generalisations and conclusions could be drawn.

In addition, hearings in both the SSAT (across the several Registries in Australia) and MHRB were observed, to determine how members interact and participate in what Carney and Tait (1990, p.100) suggest is 'a ceremonial event with a set of rules, rituals and symbols' In all 101 SSAT hearings across seven Registries, and 25 MHRB hearings

in Victoria, were observed. After discounting a small number of SSAT hearings from the research, 94 SSAT and 25 MHRB hearings were analysed in all, spread proportionately across the various Australian registries of the SSAT according to the respective numbers of hearings in each State. In addition in the SSAT 74 pre-hearing and 66 post-hearing discussions (which would usually not involve any persons except those empanelled as members of the hearing) were observed.

The focus of observation was an examination of the relative contributions of the various categories of members - who focuses upon what, in hearings? The observation process included some quantitative documentation (the time taken for hearings, the membership composition and gender of hearing panels, whether interpreters or legal advisers were used, and the like), but more particularly analysis of member participation in hearings against a series of some 16 issues or considerations typical of hearings. The categorisation of issues included such areas as clarification of the facts of the case, of the documents supplied or needing to be located, of the relevant law, of the applicant's case and anticipated behaviour in the hearing, and of outcome options. From observation of member participation against these issue categories, it was then possible to 'map' relative hearing participation by the discipline, gender and formal role (whether presiding over the hearing or not) of the several members. Similar analysis of the effect of the discipline and gender of the presiding member on participation hearings, and in pre- and post-hearing discussions in the SSAT, also occurred. It was not possible to undertake as detailed an analysis of the MHRB as there the presiding member is always the legal member, although the impact of the gender of the presiding legal member on participation of other members was able to be analysed.

Perceptions and Performance - the Research Findings

What do tribunal members perceive as valuable in their welfare member colleagues? What would be lost without such members? The picture from the majority of responses in this research was that the loss would be considerable. There was general support for the view that, although legal and medical/psychiatrist members were seen as having more easily defined skills, welfare members nonetheless bring a variety of skills and experiences to hearings which other members do not have and which they could not readily develop.

Respondents argued that all members needed oral and writing skills; ability to work within a team; analytical and conceptual skills; ability to understand and interpret relevant law; and understanding of the principles of administrative law. However, in addition welfare members were perceived as bringing particular other attributes and skills: mention was made of the capacity of the welfare member to draw attention to the breadth of issues rather than the often narrow legal issues alone; to bring knowledge of and experience in personal/family and community issues and resources; and skill in dealing with people in stressful situations:

> (Welfare) members generally focus the tribunal on non-legalistic issues in the sense that they don't focus on the technicalities but on the facts, the events which led the person to this point, and the other issues which may or may not affect the decision...eg. personal factors. (executive member)

> Welfare Members are more likely to want to know **why** something happened or why someone has acted the way they have - other disciplines are more likely to merely want to know **whether** something happened. (legal member)

Several respondents argued that they expected the welfare member to take note of non-verbal or behavioural indicators as to an applicant's disposition, concerns, or level of understanding, and to bring these to the attention of other panel members:

> I expect an ability to 'pick up cues' because of their training...and thereby perhaps get a more rounded picture of the case. (legal member)

They were perceived as having particular skills where a discretion had to be exercised (what, for instance, is a 'marriage-like' relationship? What constitutes 'special circumstances'?) or to make an assessment regarding personal or family behaviour. They were seen as skilled in dealing with sensitive or personal issues in the hearing, or where inarticulate, aggressive or distressed applicants were involved:

> (Welfare members) have the ability to deal with personal matters... to ask intimate questions in the least offensive way. (legal member)

The involvement of welfare members enabled a broader focus and so a better decision-making outcome:

> Different skills, knowledge and experience lead to better methods of reaching decisions and to better decisions. (legal member)

> (A multi-disciplinary process) avoids the risk of a tribunal drifting into a one-sided or narrow view over time...(it brings) a broader spread of ideas...experience and training. (medical/psychiatrist member)

Whilst the individual skills of welfare members varied, they were seen as particularly important for applicant comfort with the hearing process - using their interpersonal skills to assist applicants to tell their stories in their own words.

How were the perceived strengths and skills of welfare members reflected in tribunal participation? Here, the strong suggestion from patterns of involvement in the observed SSAT and MHRB hearings is that it was **the role** (and, in particular, whether the member was presiding or not) within the hearing process - rather than the primary discipline or gender of members - which determined relative levels of participation. It was, on the other hand, difficult to claim that particular issues arising in hearings were the sole province of the welfare member. Members of all disciplines seek information across all issue areas. This supports the earlier finding by Huck (1992) that with experience in tribunal processes there is a blurring of the expected boundaries of skill and interest between the several disciplines. Notwithstanding this capacity for diverse questioning, this research has clearly shown that members bring different frameworks of understanding to and are expected to *use differently* the responses to issues raised in hearings. A particular question may be asked by any of the members of a hearing panel, but each member will hear and use differently the response, reflecting their particular discipline, framework and skills. It is not so much who *asks* the questions but rather how members *use* the responses that determines the outcome. This research has shown that tribunal members clearly see their welfare/community member colleagues as using the information obtained from applicants in quite different ways to other members.

And What of Social Work Curricula?

What does this research suggest about social work education? Clearly, welfare members of administrative review tribunals are valued by their colleagues of other disciplines for their capacity to:

- undertake assessment and understand applicant behaviour;
- attend to non-verbal cues as to applicant understanding and comprehension, and to bring their conclusions in these regards to the attention of other panel members;
- assess the importance of familial, social and environmental influences on behaviour;
- develop rapport with applicants;
- ensure that applicants were heard and understood by the panel, and in turn ensure that tribunal questioning and explanation were comprehensible to applicants;
- bring particular knowledge of practice and resources in specific fields (for example, disability, domestic violence, child welfare etc.) to the tribunal's attention.

It was thus their interpersonal skills which colleagues valued in their welfare member fellows. Whilst the consensus in this research was that a social work qualification was not essential for effective participation as a welfare member of an administrative review tribunal, most respondents felt that some tertiary qualification was critical in order to deal with the complexity of issues involved in decision-making. Welfare members bring valued contributions arising from a variety of formal training, from experience and employment. Training in social work and experience as a social worker was seen as but one useful benchmark for welfare members. It was, nonetheless, for many participants in this research, a guide to the minimum level of tertiary education and practical experience required for effective tribunal participation, and for dealing with often complex legislation. Participants also regarded a social work qualification as valuable in tribunal decision-making, where the capacity to reach a conclusion and to elucidate a rationale for it, is vital:

> It is not the qualifications that are essential - it is the relevant knowledge and expertise. This is commonly found in persons with social work qualifications, but is not limited to social workers. (executive member)

However, **all** members require skills in order to effectively participate in tribunal decision-making. Participants in this research identified the following skills:

- communication skills, including both oral skills and the ability to write articulately and coherently;
- analytical and decision-making skills;
- an understanding of natural justice or procedural fairness requirements and their applicability to decision-making in administrative review hearing processes;
- the ability to understand, to interpret and to maintain awareness of changes in the relevant legislation;
- interviewing and questioning skills;
- interpersonal skills, including the capacity to negotiate and work cooperatively with colleagues ;and
- the ability to be open, impartial and fair.

The strong perception of respondents was that the skills noted above were essential for *all* members, regardless of their primary discipline. Without them, the processes of

hearing and decision-making would be made more difficult and community confidence in the whole process would be diminished.

These conclusions suggest that components within social work curricula which develops interpersonal skills and the understanding of behaviour in its context, knowledge of community resources, understanding of the legal process and how it operates in practice, and allows exploration of ethical issues, are all likely to be significant in preparation of the graduate social worker for tribunal practice.

Conclusions

Involvement of social work graduates in decision-making in administrative review tribunals, such as those referred to above, is an important area of practice that has developed greatly since the 1980s. Notwithstanding the tendency at both Federal and State levels in Australia to question the necessity for multi-member tribunals, it is likely that welfare members will continue to contribute to decision-making at these levels.

This research has shown that welfare members are not mere 'wings' or bookends to the central legal member, as earlier analyses had suggested. Welfare members bring necessary skills and understandings which other members are unable to replicate readily, and without which tribunals would be less able to meet their statutory objectives, and particularly the obligations to be be fair, just and informal, as is incumbent upon many administrative review processes. The importance of a non-legal frame of reference to tribunal decision-making is generally uncontested, and this research drew a similar response. However, given questions of efficiency and the most effective use of scarce resources, and the primacy of legal perspectives in both policy-making and service delivery within the judicial system, a continued role for non-legal perspectives in tribunal decision-making is by no means assured.

To be able to continue to stake a claim for an ongoing role, welfare members will need to demonstrate the interpersonal skills and frameworks of understanding, the legal knowledge and the ethical awareness which is perceived as their unique and valued contribution to tribunal decision-making. Social work schools, having an interest in the career prospects and paths of their graduates, need to ensure that curriculum content allows the development of such valued skills and insights.

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Bridging the Creek: Training Interdisciplinary Fieldwork Supervisors in Rural Areas

Jane Thomson and Yvonne Thomas

Introduction

This paper discusses a series of interdisciplinary fieldwork supervision workshops that were developed and delivered in 2000/2001 in a number of centres in Queensland. Workshops were held in Townsville, Mt Isa and Cairns (two). While held in relatively large provincial cities, all workshops attracted participants from small rural and remote towns in the region. The workshops targeted supervisors of James Cook University (JCU) students in rural areas.

The workshops were developed as part of a collaborative project between the fieldwork coordinator from the occupational therapy discipline within the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, and the field education coordinator from the School of Social Work and Community Welfare at James Cook University. These Schools exist within separate faculties that are physically located on opposing sides of the creek, which runs through the JCU Townsville campus. In the local context, the physical landmark of the creek represents the ontological divide between the social sciences and the natural sciences, hence the title of this paper. This collaborative project challenged this divide in relation to the way supervision skills are delivered to the professions that, with very different epistemological foundations, contribute to the allied health field.

Within accredited professional education programs, fieldwork experiences are a requirement for graduation and include block placements away from the university. The role of the supervisor working in the placement setting is therefore critical to effective learning for professional practice. The approach developed drew on the experience of the University of Sydney *Building Interdisciplinary Teamwork Skills Project*, (O'Sullivan and Bolger 2000) which had been developed in order to assist students when undertaking rural placements from a range of allied health disciplines. This JCU project is unique in its application to the supervision needs of practitioners.

Participants in the workshops included professionals from the disciplines of occupational therapy, social work, nursing, speech pathology, physiotherapy, pharmacy, orthoptics, dietetics, dental hygiene, podiatry, hospital science, psychology, counselling. This diversity demonstrates the positive benefits of interdisciplinary interaction, which were embodied in this project.

The Theoretical Rationale for the Project

There are always discipline specific issues in relation to supervision. However the strength of this project lay in its scope for collaboration between the disciplines of

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occupational therapy and social work. Apart from program specific requirements that fieldwork supervisors fulfil, the majority of skills and the underlying theories relevant to supervision cross the range of disciplines.

This project aimed to assist supervisors to develop skills in teaching, learning and assessment (Cooper and Briggs 2000). Learning in professional practice and models of supervision have developed out of a number of disciplines. These foundation models are based on theories that are not discipline specific and have continued to inform generic adult learning (Schon 1983; 1987). These include knowledge of the experiential learning cycle (Kolb 1984) and issues in relation to how learners acquire competence (Benner 1984). The project also aimed to increase the supervisors' ability to reflect on their own performance (Fook 1999) and to enhance the students' reflective skills (Ellis 2000). Theoretical principles, which inform an interdisciplinary approach to supervision, stress the importance of the roles performed by supervisors. These include those of teacher, evaluator, counsellor, colleague, expert, and manager (Hunter and Blair 1999; Hawkins and Shohet 2000).

The supervisor needs a range of skills and knowledge, together with the flexibility to switch from one role to another, as the situation requires. Beddoe (2000) lists generic qualities needed by supervisors as including genuineness, capacity for growth, courage, sense of humour, respect and professional expertise. Clearly, such roles and qualities are not discipline specific. Rather they relate to the ability of supervisors to assist students to develop skills as critical and reflective professionals. The importance of the relationship in supervision generally has been identified. It is within this relationship that a supervisor can encourage the skills, which are common to the disciplines.

These concepts informed the way the authors approached the planning of the project for which a James Cook University (Teaching and Learning Development) grant was obtained. This funded the project comprehensively. The $6,000 grant covered travel costs, catering for the day workshops, preparation of written materials, and free attendance by participants. A total of four workshops were held over a period of seven months. Health professionals from a range of disciplines were invited to attend workshops in Townsville, Mt Isa and Cairns.

The first workshop, held in Townsville in late 2000, was presented as part of the Northern Region Rural Allied Health Conference. It was anticipated that a number of rural practitioners would be attending the conference and therefore would be attracted to the workshop. This speculation was borne out with an attendance of 16 people.

The Rural Health Training Unit and the Mt Isa Centre promoted the second workshop, held in Mt Isa in March 2001, actively for Remote and Rural Health. The invitation was sent to all known allied health practitioners listed on the Rural Allied Health database and to those listed on the Occupational Therapy and Social Work/Community Welfare (JCU) fieldwork databases. This workshop attracted 21 people.

Owing to the demand, two workshops were held in Cairns in April and May 2001 attracting 32 practitioners in total. These workshops attracted practitioners from rural communities in the region, including two participants from Thursday Island along with a number of Cairns based supervisors.

In total 73 people attended these four workshops. Of these four were male and 69 were female. This gender ratio reflects the composition of the professions from which

participants came. Most health and human service professions are predominantly female with pharmacy and psychology having a more even gender balance. Although the facilitators noted this factor, the relevance of gender in the supervision relationship is not the subject of this paper.

The Workshop Model

In rural and remote areas, many allied health professionals work as sole practitioners in their disciplines. No single discipline is represented in sufficient numbers to justify disciplinary specific workshops in these areas. This forces professionals seeking supervision training to travel distances to join with peers in urban locations. Alternatively, and in our view more proactively, taking an interdisciplinary approach to supervision in rural areas promotes the common issues for rural practitioners of varying professions. In addition, the model encourages networking and local support for supervisors.

There are other issues involved in working in rural areas that make supervision of students particularly challenging - high workloads and lack of cover for absences (Fitzgerald, Hornsby and Hudson 2000). In addition all allied health and human service professionals have to manage multiple competing demands as they undertake field supervision. These include managing clients' needs and crises, and increased administrative responsibilities, as well the requirement to ensure continuing professional development and ongoing competence.

In accordance with the theoretical underpinnings of the project outlined above, the aim of the workshop schedule was to promote reflection on supervisory practice, develop personal philosophies for supervision and to enhance skills with theoretical models that support supervisory practice. It was a stated expectation of each workshop that the participants' own knowledge and experience would be an important learning resource for the workshop and discussion of issues was encouraged. Many of the participants were senior clinicians who were experienced in supervision and were therefore not looking for basic skills. Rather, they identified that they were seeking a deeper knowledge and understanding of the supervision process.

Principles relating to adult learning theory, experiential learning and reflective practice formed the basis of the theoretical framework of the workshops. These principles were also utilised in the planning of the sessions. Both facilitators modelled a commitment to processes that recognised the knowledge and experience of the participants. Every effort was made to focus on areas that were identified as important to those in attendance.

Participant Feedback on the Workshops

The proposed learning outcomes of the workshop were:

- To provide an opportunity to review principles of adult learning as applicable to field education and supervision, through information sharing and activities.

- To explore supervision in the health professions through group exercises and readings.

- To assist participants to develop advanced skills in supervision through discussion and use of individual and group exercises.

The workshop manual included a tear out evaluation sheet which participants were requested to complete at the end of the day. The evaluation format presented five questions. Participants were asked to identify the effectiveness of the workshop in relation to the stated learning outcomes, and their own needs. Open-ended questions, on the evaluation sheet were used to encourage feedback on those aspects of the workshop that were most valuable, and suggestions for improvements. An opportunity to grade the effectiveness of the workshop using a modified Likert scale was provided. Participants' responses were grouped under themes that are presented in the results section that follows. Reviewing the comments of participants, both quantitatively and qualitatively (Neuman 1997) derived the themes.

While the formats of all workshops were similar, there were differences in the size of groups, the participants and therefore dynamics. Given the interactive approach encouraged by the facilitators, the size of groups affected the amount of material presented didactically, with less covered in the larger groups. As facilitators, we continued to develop successive workshops in the light of earlier feedback. While each workshop was unique, the evaluation results presented in this paper have been analysed collectively.

Feedback Analysis

Of the 73 participants, 54 completed feedback forms for analysis. This represents a response rate of 74%. Both authors read participants' written comments separately, and derived meanings were compared. From this three themes were identified and are discussed below. Specific feedback about the preferred aspects of the workshop (Question 4) gave a useful overview of how this model of interdisciplinary supervision training was seen as useful to the participants.

Forty-seven participants (87%) stated that they had found very useful, the interdisciplinary/group discussion and sharing of ideas and experience. Fifteen (27%) valued the use of role-plays as a tool of improving skills in supervision, and ten (18.5%) found beneficial the openness of the workshop format and the relaxed atmosphere. Nine (16%) valued the presentation of philosophies of supervision and frameworks for supervision to be particularly useful. Eight people (15%) found that the opportunities for networking provided by the workshop particularly met their needs. Other positives, recorded in lower numbers, were information on learning styles and the positive aspects of the advanced nature of the course.

The table below shows a selection of the most important comments we collected.

Question	Numbers of Responses	Themes
1. How well did the workshop meet the stated learning outcomes?	Very Well 23 Well 20 Not Well 0	***Development of skill in supervision*** 'obtained strategies for dealing with struggling students' 'gained knowledge and information which I can use in my situation' ***Gained knowledge of adult learning principles*** 'reiterated what I already knew about adult learning principles' 'more time could have been spent on adult learning principles'

Question	Numbers of Responses	Themes
		Sharing experiences across disciplines 'group contribution enhanced outcomes' 'sharing of experiences across disciplines increased my knowledge of supervision' 'time was the enemy'
2. How well did the workshop meet your needs?	Very Well 15 Well 11 Not Well 0	'exceeded expectations' ***Gained insight and reflection on supervisory practice*** 'exposing issues rather than practical "this is what you should do"' 'gained more insight' 'reflection was good' 'refocused philosophy of supervision' ***Gained strategies for supervision*** 'I now have a large range of ideas and techniques I can try in my work' 'complemented my basic skills and knowledge' 'would have liked more strategies and information on styles ***Gained confidence*** 'reassured me of the power of supervision and my responsibility as a supervisor' ? Networking
3. Overall the workshop was...	Poor 0 Good 13 Excellent 21	
4. The things I liked were.....	Interdisciplinary groups (*47 responses*) Role plays (*15 responses*) Relaxed atmosphere and openness (*10 responses*) Philosophy and framework for supervision (*9 responses*) Networking (*8 responses*) Learning Style (*4 responses*)	***Interdisciplinary sharing*** 'sharing of ideas' 'participants and facilitators were from a variety of background and could offer different experiences' 'interaction with other practitioners and hearing about their experiences' ***Role plays*** 'role plays and feedback from others was good' ***Relaxed atmosphere and openness*** 'interactive, plenty of opportunity to give personal views and share experiences' ***Philosophy and framework for supervision*** 'sharing of philosophies' ***Networking*** 'opportunity to net work with other workers'
5. Improvements suggested	None suggested (*18 responses*) Suggestions (*36 responses*)	***Length of workshop*** 'maybe two days – expand out topics and add others' 'held more often – covering specific areas' ***Separating staff and student supervision*** 'Split the group into student and staff issues'

Question	Numbers of Responses	Themes
		Size of the group 'smaller groups so possible to do more practical sessions' 'smaller groups spending more time on learning theory' 'the group was too big' ***Practical resources and skill*** 'more specific examples' 'more time to practise skills'

*Not all participants answered every questions therefore number of responses does not directly correspond to the number of feedback sheets received.

Discussion of Themes: How Participants Valued the Workshops

Three major themes emerged from the evaluations of the workshops. These were:

1. Sharing of knowledge leading to the building of effective networks.
2. Gaining specific supervision skills.
3. Reflection on supervision practice, leading to a deeper level of understanding of the professional roles

These themes are discussed below.

Sharing of knowledge leading to the building of effective networks
The most significant and consistently recurring theme was the value of sharing of knowledge and experience across disciplines. It was recognised by the facilitators that each discipline brought a unique perspective to the workshop and therefore would relate to the workshop material in different ways. There was an open acknowledgment that in some disciplines, supervision involved a greater emphasis on teaching specific professional tasks (for example pharmacy). Other disciplines focused less on formal task acquisition and more on developing awareness of the process (craft) of professional intervention. Both aspects of supervision were valued and addressed in workshops. Sharing different perspectives on the disciplines appeared to be particularly beneficial, and brought about increased understanding of the unique roles of the different professions. This aspect of interdisciplinary training has not been widely explored previously. However these results suggest that opportunities to explore supervision from the perspectives of different disciplines gives participants an opportunity to reflect on the range of skills involved.

Gaining specific supervision skills
Participants felt that the workshops gave them the opportunity to increase supervisory skills. They frequently commented on the value of role-play to develop skills. They appreciated feedback from other supervisors, and practised supervision skills in this safe environment. Supervisors frequently supervise 'behind closed doors', in a one to one relationship. This makes learning and accountability difficult. Introducing role plays into the workshops countered this problem by providing opportunities for open critique of the application of skills.

Developing skills and therefore confidence in supervision may increase the likelihood that rural practitioners will feel able to supervise more fieldwork students. Increasing undergraduate rural fieldwork opportunities may result in attraction of graduates to rural positions.

Reflection on supervision practice, leading to a deeper level of understanding of the professional roles

Because of the lack of a well-developed human services infrastructure in rural areas, allied health practitioners are often thrust into positions of greater autonomy and authority earlier than their city counterparts. In contrast, in urban areas, more defined career structures enable clinicians to build their skills and knowledge more gradually with support from more senior clinicians. The workshop provided an opportunity for participants to explore these additional responsibilities and the multifaceted roles they perform.

A recurring theme was that those attending the workshops developed their own insights and reflections on their supervisory practice, with participants becoming more conscious of their own philosophies of supervision. The workshops assisted them to become clearer about their existing positive and negative experiences of supervision. Gaining new knowledge with additional theories assisted them to develop new ways of approaching supervision.

Specific Recommendations for Future Work in this Area

Has this paper demonstrated that the model evaluated holds promise for further developments in relation to interdisciplinary fieldwork supervision? The authors believe it has. The following three recommendations form the basis of a way forward for further work in this area, which the authors intend to pursue in an ongoing collaboration.

The benefit of the interdisciplinary workshop model for supervisors of students

Evidence of the effectiveness of the interdisciplinary model of supervision is to be found in evaluation of the workshops. The emergence of this theme from the feedback indicates that participants appreciate that many of the issues in supervision are common to different disciplines. Participants felt supported by the knowledge that disciplines can share experiences to assist in management of student learning. Specifically in rural areas where there may be very small numbers of practitioners in any one discipline, the promotion of commonalities among different disciplines ensures greater support for the range of allied health staff in a regional or rural centre. Further study of the continuation of these supervision support relationships would be beneficial to the ongoing evaluation of the interdisciplinary approach to supervision training.

Separating staff and student issues in workshops

Despite many common issues, there are sufficient differences for supervisors of staff and students to warrant separating supervisors' workshops on the basis of the type of supervision in which they are engaged. In staff supervision, the primary responsibility is enhancing service provision. Supervisors are therefore accountable to employing bodies to optimise a supervisee's performance in their work role. Supervision of students, however, relates to effective completion of a learning experience. This places demands to supervisors in relation to the university's expectations (organisation of the placement, monitoring of the student's performance, managing assessment requirements).

The main focus for these workshops was on supervision of students from James Cook University. As field staff in professional programs, our concern was to assist in the ongoing professional development of our supervisors, in the interests of quality field programs. Supervisors in our workshops demonstrated a high degree of motivation and enthusiasm for improving their supervision skills. They freely discussed the benefits they gained from workshops in relation to their abilities to provide effective supervision of both students and staff. In the light of our experience conducting these workshops, it is our conviction that these issues are more effectively dealt with in a designated student supervision workshop framework.

Further workshop offerings focusing on staff issues will be of benefit, and, in light of our workshop feedback, would be enthusiastically embraced. Practitioners working in rural areas are called upon to manage complex demands earlier in their careers. The shortage of qualified personnel and positions with each discipline provides opportunities for accelerated promotion for less experienced staff. Supervision training and the networks that result will enhance their ability to manage these demands and improve their effectiveness. Receiving comprehensive training and support in supervisory roles could increase job satisfaction and may assist in retention of staff in rural areas.

Focusing on specific issues at greater depth

Workshop participants' feedback suggested a need for more detailed input around specific student supervision issues. These issues included skills in assessment of students' performance, managing placements where students are marginal or failing, more input in relation to supervision issues around students' learning styles and theories of adult learning, dealing with difficult people and practical skills training.

It is our conviction that supervisors would benefit from longer workshops, which enable them to engage in deeper level learning in relation to the various aspects of supervision skills. The underlying assumption here is that supervisors need advanced skills training which can be offered in longer workshops. There are several universities offering supervision courses, for which practitioners can obtain continuing professional development points and can use in relation to Masters degree enrolments. It is our intention in the light of the experience gained during these workshops, to develop a postgraduate JCU subject specialising in supervision in the rural context. The added benefit of this development would be in relation to the cross-faculty collaboration it would afford, strengthening further the bridge across the creek.

Implications for Social Work and Welfare Education

Ife (1997) alerts social workers and welfare workers to the fact that they run the risk of being marginalised and the important identity of the disciplines obscured within a generic understanding of the role of the human service worker. It is important that new initiatives such as the one outlined in this paper promote the integrity of social work's unique contribution within its approach. However, the reality of the health and human services fields is that the professions work closely and collaboratively in achieving the optimal outcomes for individuals, families and communities. The experience of the authors during this project was that a mutually respectful collaboration between professionals of differing disciplines enriches each.

Conclusion

In this paper, we have provided a rationale and evidence for the interdisciplinary approach. We have situated it within the framework of useful theoretical approaches to supervision and reflective practice. We have reported feedback from participants in the workshops we conducted by way of a thematic analysis, and have developed three major recommendations for the future conduct of this work.

The approach we have evaluated in this paper does not replace the need for introductory, discipline specific field work supervisors' training. Rather, it provides a deeper level of learning, focusing less on procedure and rules, and encouraging reflection, risk taking and innovation in supervision. As stated previously, the experience of this project leads the authors to the view that further workshops are warranted and would be highly valued by participants, leading to improved supervision practice in rural and remote areas.

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COMING EVENTS

The **2002 Conference for the Australian Association of Social Work Welfare Educators** (AASWWE) ***Working Across Borders*** is to be held in conjunction with the **AASW - Western Australia State Branch Conference** which will take place at the **Novotel Hotel, Perth, Western Australia.**

AASWWE Conference:	September 29 - October 1, 2002
AASW (WA) State Conference:	October 1 - October 2, 2002

Aimed at involving practitioners, academics and hybrids and including a diverse array of interests, there will be a particular focus on the relationship between knowing and doing, theory and practice, research and policy.

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Further conference information will be available on the AASWWE website:

http://www.aaswwe.asn.au/

or from the Curtin University of Technology website:

http://socialwork.curtin.edu.au/

Other Conferences of Interest

1. **IFSW Asia and Pacific Conference**
   Peace, Justice and Social Work (A Vision for the 21st Century)
   July 7-11, 2003, Nagasaki, Japan

The **17th Asia-Pacific Social Work Conference** will be arranged as a platform for social workers from the region and beyond to reflect on social work's contribution to peace, based on the core values of social justice and well-being in a diversified world. Sub-themes will focus on social work and its relation to human rights, social inclusion, change, culture, information technology and other topics.

The expected deadline for abstracts is December 15, 2002.

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web: http:/www.17apswc.jp/eng.html

2. 4th International Conference on Social Work in Health and Mental Health
Sharing Experiences and Knowledge - How Social Work Can Contribute to Building a Compassionate World
May 23-27, 2004, Quebec, Quebec, Canada

The event in Quebec is the 4th in a successful series of conferences (Jerusalem 1995, Melbourne 1998, Tampere Finland 2001) and will provide an opportunity to reflect on how social work can contribute to a world valuing compassion and solidarity.

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3. Global Social Work 2004 - Joint World Conference of IFSW and IASSW
Reclaiming Civil Society
October 2 - 6, 2004, Adelaide, South Australia

With unprecedented global transformations occurring in our social institutions, economies and technologies, **Global Social Work 2004** looks to challenge and support social workers to provide leadership for the active re-engagement of citizens in participating communities, locally, nationally and globally.

The Australian Association of Social Workers (AASW) and the Australian Association of Social Work and Welfare Educators (AASWWE) will host the conference.

Congress Secretariat: ICMS Pty Ltd
84 Queensbridge Street, Southbank, Victoria, 3004,
AUSTRALIA
tel: (61) 3 9682 0244 fax: (61) 3 9682 0288
email: ifsw@icms.com.au
web: www.icms.com.au/ifsw

4. **Women in Welfare Education (WIWE) Conference**
Speaking Through The Walls
September 28-29, 2002, Fremantle Arts Centre and Museum
1 Finnerty Street, Fremantle, Western Australia

Held in conjunction with the Perth AASWWE Conference, the **WIWE Conference 2002** will be held at the Fremantle Arts Centre, one of Western Australia's foremost historical sites and at one stage of its history, a women's asylum. The infamous walls that surround the centre previously housed women who were at that time deemed socially 'difficult' and mentally 'unwell'. The conference theme *Speaking Through The Walls* is a metaphor for women's ongoing need to retell, explore and celebrate our stories of power and resistance to the walls of oppression that we continue to encounter in educational institutions and sites of welfare practice.

For further information and/or to submit an abstract, please contact the WIWE Conference Collective:

Jo Dillon	Angela Barns	Emma White
(08) 9266 7082	(08) 9366 4449	(93) 9266 7982

or post to:

Curtin University of Technology
GPO Box U1987, Perth, 6845

web: http://www.aaswwe.asn.au/conf0004.htm

CALL FOR PAPERS

Advances in Social Work and Welfare Education

The Journal aims to have an issue published by the mid-2003 and is keen to receive submissions.

The journal aims to showcase material which is of relevance to social work and welfare educators nationally and, where applicable, to link this with international concerns. Papers which present innovative or challenging approaches to current educational philosophy and methodology are particularly encouraged. The material should be original and professionally presented. However, a diversity of styles is welcomed, and reports on research from a variety of perspectives and research designs are particularly sought.

Submissions from students and field educators are particularly encouraged, as are research or discussion papers which focus on field education and practice teaching.

Submissions are anonymously reviewed by two readers of a panel of national reviewers. Reviewers are asked to offer constructive feedback to authors.

Three copies of papers should be sent to:

The Co-Editor
Advances in Social Work and Welfare Education
School of Social Work and Social Policy
La Trobe University
Victoria 3086
AUSTRALIA

(For further information, please contact Martin Ryan on (03) 9479-2562 or on email on martin.ryan@latrobe.edu.au)

EDITORIAL POLICY

Advances in Social Work & Welfare Education is the journal of the Australian Association for Social Work and Welfare Education (AASWWE), which is published twice yearly. The journal is managed by an editorial committee comprising national and international membership appointed by the Executive of AASWWE. Submissions are anonymously reviewed by two readers of a panel of national and international reviewers. Reviewers are asked to offer constructive feedback to authors.

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If Conference Papers are submitted then *only an Abstract* of the paper must appear in the published Conference Proceedings.

Articles submitted for publication are read by at least two reviewers (who are not informed of the identity of the author). Articles may be accepted, returned for the revision, or rejected. The editorial committee may make minor alterations to articles on their own initiative. The decision of the editorial committee is final.

Please send all manuscripts to: The Co-Editor, Advances in Social Work & Welfare Education, School of Social Work and Social Policy, La Trobe University, Victoria, 3086, Australia.

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REVIEW AND PUBLICATION PROCESS

The following is a summary of the review and publication process of the Journal.

1. Once a paper is received, the editorial committee decides on which reviewers the paper will be sent to - this is not just a random choice. Reviewers are selected because of their knowledge and interest in the topic to be reviewed. The name of the author is not disclosed to the reviewers.
2. The article is returned to the editors with reviewers' comments attached. All reviewers review papers on a voluntary basis, as a service to their profession. Authors should allow three months from the time the article is received by **Advances in Social Work &Welfare Education** before expecting to receive reviewers' comments.
3. In a number of cases, both reviewers will recommend publication be considered after some revision or only minor changes. In others, both will recommend more major revision before publication could be considered. This may involve changing the length, clarifying expression, improving structure, changing some content or improving focus. This is quite a common occurrence and should not to be seen as failure. In other cases, a paper will be rejected outright or major revisions recommended i.e. a total rewrite. Reviewers all follow guidelines drawn up by the editorial committee.
4. Occasionally, reviewers will disagree on the outcome, for example, one will recommend publication, the other a rewrite or revision, or one may recommend rejection. In this case, a third opinion is sought, in conjunction with the editors.
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7. Once an article is accepted for publication, the editorial committee has the job of proofreading, editing and deciding the appropriate journal edition for publication, position, layout, etc. The editors are also interested in improving the clarity of unclear or woolly writing and may rewrite sentences and sections to improve clarity or expression.
8. Finally, the article is sent to the printer.
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   (b) A detachable separate cover sheet to ensure anonymous reviews. This should contain the title of the article, word length, the author's name and address, sufficient information for a brief biographical note, which includes the author's highest qualification, current position and email address (if applicable) and any personal acknowledgements.
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6. Spelling should conform to the usage of the Macquarie Dictionary and abbreviations should be kept to a minimum. Where appropriate spell all words with -ise, -isation, -ising (not -ize, etc.). the modern tendency to use single quotation marks rather than double is recommended. Frequent or lengthy quotations should be indented. No quotation marks are then necessary.
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Manuscripts that do not comply with style and format requirements, or which are not neat and legible, will be returned without review.

Authors seeking assistance with preparation of articles for submission to **Advances in Social Work & Welfare Education** are invited to contact any member of the editorial committee (listed on the front cover of the Journal).

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