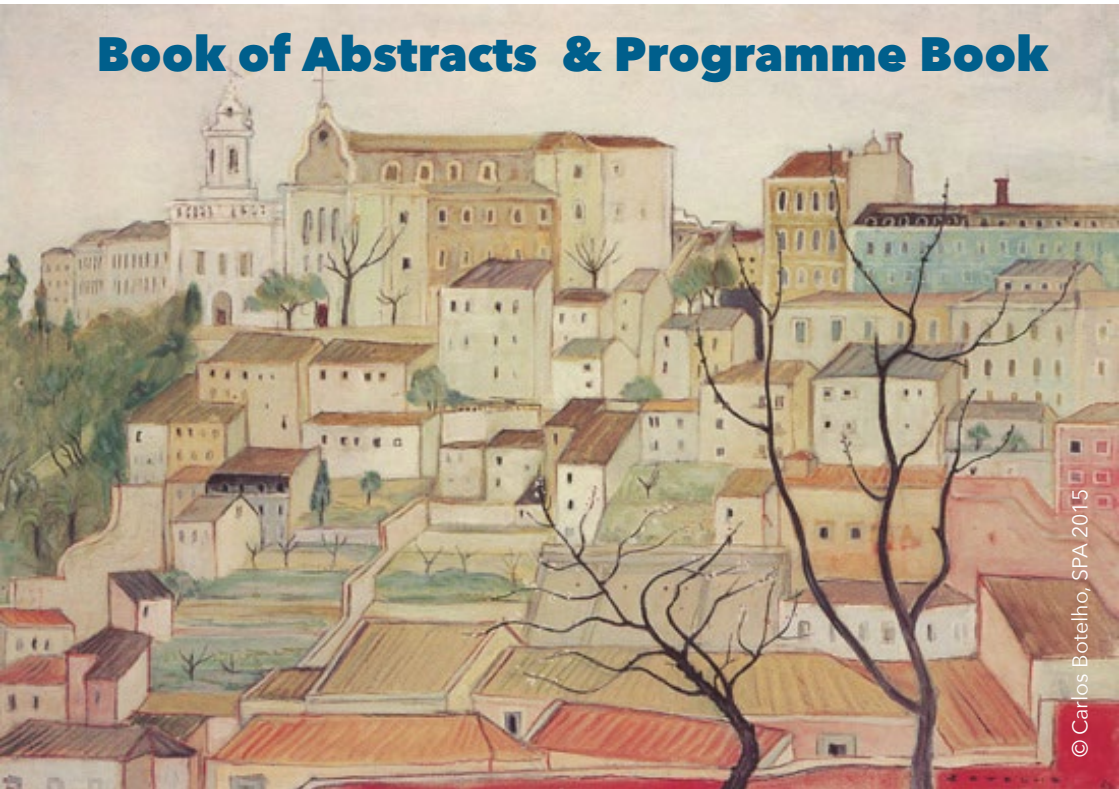


# 6th European Conference for Social Work Research

Reflective social work practices in contemporary societies:  
dialogues and new pathways between praxis and research

## Book of Abstracts & Programme Book



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Catholic University of Portugal  
Lisbon | 30 March - 1 April 2016



CATOLICA  
FACULDADE DE CIÊNCIAS HUMANAS

LISBOA



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EM DESENVOLVIMENTO HUMANO

PORTO



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## **6th EUROPEAN CONFERENCE FOR SOCIAL WORK RESEARCH**

Reflective social work practices in contemporary societies: dialogues and new pathways between praxis and research

### **Book of Abstracts & Program Book**

ECSWR 2016  
30 March - 1. April, Lisbon  
organised by European Social Work Research Association

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## CONTENTS

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW PANEL		pag. 4
OPENING SESSION		pag. 5
CONFERENCE PROGRAMME		pag. 15
ABSTRACTS		pag. 112
ACCEPTED POSTERS		pag. 643
PRE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME		pag. 648
LIST OF ECSWR 2016 PARTICIPANTS		pag. 652
LIST of ABSTRACTS   Please use the Adobe Reader <a href="#">Bookmarks</a>		
LIST of AUTHORS   Please use the Adobe Reader <a href="#">Find Resource</a>		

## INTERNATIONAL REVIEW PANEL

Adrienne Chambon	Helle Hansen	Michals Shamai
Aila-Leena Matthies	Henrique Joaquim	Michelle Novelle
Alessandro Sicora	Ian Shaw	Mieko Yoshihama
Alisoun Milne	Irene Carvalho	Mihai Iovu
Anna Meeuwisse	Janet Carter Anand,	Mikko Mäntysaari
Annamaria Campanini	Jarosław Przeperski	Mirja Satka
Anne Halvorsen	Jason Schaub	Monica Kjørstad
Anne Parpan-Blaser	Jean-Pierre Tabin,	Monika Vyslouzil
Barbra Teater	Jelka Zorn	Paula Sousa
Brian J. Taylor,	Jo Finch	Peter Raeymaeckers
Campbell Killick	Johan Boxstaens,	Peter Voll
Carla Pinto	Johanna Hefel	Rebecca Davis
Caroline McGregor	Johanna Hietamäki	Reima Ana Maglajlic
Charlotte Scott	John Gal	Rudy Van den Hoven
Chaya Possick	Jonas Ruškus	Samuel Keller
Christian Ghanem	Jorge Ferreira	Sara Serbati
Chu-Li Liu	Judith Metz	Sigrid James
Claudia Olivier	Juhila Kirsi	Silvia Fargion
Cristina Albuquerque	Karen Winter	Sissel Seim
Darejan Dvalishvili	Katarzyna Jagielska	Solveig Sagatun
Darja Završek,	Kate Leonard	Staffan Höjer
Didier Reynaert	Kate Nnadede	Stefan Königeter
Driessens Kristel	Kerstin Svensson	Stephen Briggs
Elena Allegri	Laimute Zalimiene	Stephen Webb
Elina Pekkarinen	Lars Uggerhøj	Suzu Braye
Elizabeth Frost	Lennart Nygren	Synnöve Karvinen-Niinikoski
Emilio Gomez Ciriano, F	Maja Andersen	Teresa Bertotti
iona Mcdermott	Maja Laklija	Tim Vanhove,
Florin Lazar	Maria Inês Amaro	Tony Evans
Francisco Branco	Maria Roth	Ulla Rantakeisu
Gašper Krstulović	Marja Kuip	Urban Nothdurfter
Guy Enosh	Marjo Kuronen	Vanda Soskolne
Hannele Forsberg	Mark Smith	Viviane Cree
Heidrun Schulze	Marketta Rajavaara	Vjollca Krasniqi
Helena Neves de Almeida	Mary Shannon	Wim Nieuwenboom

## OPENING SESSION

## OPENING WELCOME

Vice-Rector of Catholic University of Portugal, Professor Isabel Gil

Dear special guests

Dear conference participants and colleagues

Welcome to the 6th European Conference for Social Work Research of the European Social Work Research Association. This year, the conference is held at the initiative of the Catholic University of Portugal by School of Human Sciences and the Research Centre for Human Development and organized by a host committee including members of the academic staff of our university but also by colleagues from the ISCTE - University Institute of Lisbon and University of Coimbra. I am very grateful and honoured to have served as the chair of the local committee. In my own name and on behalf of the organising committee we would like to express our satisfaction at hosting this conference which has a programme that condenses, unequivocally, the dynamic, challenges and relevant contribution of social work research in the broader context of Human and Social Sciences in Europe.

Our conference is taking place in a country in which the institutionalisation of social work as academic training and a profession, took place in the socio-political context of the Estado Novo, a system of corporatist and authoritarian nature, which was averse to public intervention in the social sphere and, therefore, contradicted the notion of a welfare state, in institutionalisation across Europe and other world regions.

The first attempts to develop social work education in Portugal took place in 1928. It was not, however, until the first congress of the National Union (single-party state) in 1934, that proposals for the establishment of the Institute of Social Work were adopted. Following this, the first school was created in 1935, in Lisbon, at the initiative of the Catholic Church and under the franco-phone social work influence.

The 1960s represent a turning point in social work education in Portugal. Following the 1956 revision of public regulation of education in social work, with the introduction of a four-year curriculum, social work was recognised as higher education (1961) and a gradual reorientation of training was adopted, with a progressive introduction of curricular courses in social sciences and the classic methods in social work.

With the institutional, cultural and ideological transformations following the Carnation Revolution on April 25, 1974, a new phase of social work in Portugal was opened. Between the several dynamics of this period it is important to underline the academic and professional movement towards the integration of the social work education in the public university and the recognition of the university degree in social work. This movement, the most relevant academic and professional of social work in Portugal until today, achieving the recognition of the university degree in 1989, and is a major milestone of the academic and professional development of social work in our country. After that, in the last twenty five years the development of social work education in Portugal is characterised by its 'academisation' process, following a late and complex process, as evidenced by the history of the recognition of university level (1989), the very late introduction of the social work programmes in public education system (2000), the contradictory signals of the higher education policy with the creation of social work study cycles in polytechnic institutions in 2003, and the difficulty of establishing social work research as a field recognised and supported by the Portuguese scientific policy.

Our conference call was answered by around 700 abstracts authored by one or more persons. The review panel was integrated by 105 experts in Social Work research, from 26 different nationalities. Each abstract submitted had at least a double peer-blinded review. Moreover, almost all submissions were reviewed by peers from different nationalities and from other countries than the ones of the proposals. This complex and exigent process gives us confidence in the high scientific standard of the 250 oral presentations, 31 symposia & workshops and 25 posters accepted.

The Conference will have 525 participants from 41 countries across Europe and other regions of the world: a majority come from European Union countries (80% of the participants, including 40 participants from Portugal and other countries of Southern Europe), but also from the North America (39 researchers from United States and Canada), the Middle East and Asia (46 researchers), and Australia, which represents the highest number of researchers involved in ESWRA conferences and, for the first time, the conference programme formally includes pre-conference activities promoted for some ESWRA Special Interest Groups. All of this, and the expertise and of the keynote speakers composes, I'm confident, an interesting and stimulating programme.

Our 6th European Conference for Social Work Research is taking place on the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of Social Work Programme at Catholic University, the first Portuguese university which created the social work programme (1996), the first PhD programme in Social Work (2003) and the first research centre in Social Work hosted by a university (2003). Therefore, naturally, hosting this conference has a special meaning for us, but this event has, clearly, a strong relevance for social work in Portugal. First of all because it is a demonstration of the dimension, widespread nature, dynamics and quality of social work as academic discipline across Europe, a refutation of the parochialism that, often characterised and still characterises the vision and arguments of the Portuguese authorities at educational and scientific level. Secondly, because it contributes to put the Portuguese and Southern European Social Work on the map of social work research. And last, but not least, because it challenges the Portuguese social work to adopt an adequate strategy to consolidate its 'academisation' process and to contribute to the Portuguese society social development.

The organisation of one conference like this is only possible with the engagement and contribution of lot of people. Please let me dedicate a couple of minutes to thanking of all of them.

The entire organisational work on the conference was done by the team that I would like to thank for their invaluable contribution. My wonderful colleagues Isabel Santos, Ana Oliveira e Inês Guerra, from Catholic University; Inês Amaro from the ISCTE - University Institute of Lisbon, that from the start shared with me the enthusiasm of this adventure, and Cristina Albuquerque from the University of Coimbra. They must be credited with our deep recognition.

Thirty-two undergraduate, master and PhD students are volunteers at the conference. On behalf of all of us on the organising committee I would like to direct a warm thanks, as well as to the secretary Rosario Lopes all the other members of the staff of the School of Human Sciences and of the Catholic University.

I would like to say a special thanks to Mhairi Snowden, the ESWRA Administrator, her competence and dedication have been exceptional and a decisive contribution to the management of the conference.

I should also like to thank the unconditional support that the hosting committee received from the Vice-Rector of the University and the former Dean of the School of Human Sciences.

Our gratitude should also be expressed to all institutional stakeholders of

the conference: Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia (FCT), Municipality of Lisbon, School of Sociology and Public Policy - ISCTE / IUL, School of Psychology and Education Sciences - University of Coimbra.

I would like also to thank the young people of the Violinhos Orquest, from the Music Academy of Lisbon, the Coral and Ethnographic Group "Friends of Alentejo", Feijó - Almada and the Fado players. Their performances will enrich our opening ceremony and cultural programme.

I would also to thank to all members of the International Review Panel and to all our esteemed keynote speakers.

Finally, I would to say a special thanks to Professor Ian Shaw. For me and for my colleagues of the Hosting Committee it has been a privilege to work with you, sharing all your wisdom and determination. Unfortunately, you miss this yours Conference and, here, from Lisbon to York, we all wish your fast and safe recovery. The ESWRA still needs your engagement!

I and my colleagues are finishing a long and hard year. We did our job I think. Now this is your time. I hope this conference is a pleasant experience, abundant with knowledge sharing and opening avenues for the future for social work research.

**Prof. Francisco Branco,**  
*Chair of the Host Conference Committee*



## OPENING WELCOME

A warm welcome from ESWRA to everybody here at the conference and heartfelt thanks to the organizers of the conference who have poured such effort and competence and abilities into making it a success; a success which we see as important because of the relevance we ascribe to social work research and the role it can play in the struggle to address the current difficult circumstances. Nowadays our societies and Europe as a whole are facing new questions and issues, new inequalities, new and old phenomena which are perceived by the majority as threats. Certainly today we cannot avoid talking about terrorist attacks, the fear they engender and the climate they create, but also the phenomena connected to them. The flow of people moving and risking their lives to find safety from war or unlivable circumstances, the growing poverty which particularly affects families and children, the growing inequality, the struggle of young people to find their place / a role in society. And we have to consider the impact of these problems, the sense of hopelessness and helplessness which is gaining ground across whole segments of our societies.

Social services have an important part to play: At the end of the last century, in a debate in the journal social service review which focused on themes such as the social work profession, altruism and social control, Wakefield stated that:

A society that observes the ideal of justice is one in which people tend to feel satisfied and the social order tends to be maintained, whereas feelings of injustice lead to envy, anger, and, potentially, action that may not stay within the bounds of social civility. The sense of justice is thus a potent social control mechanism. This kind of social control is neither nefarious nor exploitative; the "control" is simply an effect of reducing injustice. In this sense social work and social interventions have a role to play; they need new knowledge to enable them to do so.

And here I would like to come back to social work research: I was recently at a conference organized by the general EC Directorate General on migration, and looking at the funded projects I saw how currently funds are clustered around projects studying macro social phenomena as well as public policies. Conversely, more in depth studies appear to be

less considered: those dealing with the micro processes and the concrete ways in which interventions not only enact, but also create those policies and transform them, and may render them effective or expose their limits. And this is exactly the space occupied by social work research: it provides systematic knowledge on how services are delivered, on the new approaches / strategies practitioners create / adopt to face their challenges, on the emergence of critical issues, and on the experiences and needs of those who are or might be users of those services.

The perspective offered by social work research looks at the processes and micro-processes thorough which social policies are implemented/created, putting at the forefront the knowledge and experiences of people who directly experience social issues, but also critically valuing the knowledge and experiences of frontline workers. In a sense / In fact, I think this is a major point: the connection of social work research to the level of delivery of services and its attention to an inside perspective, both involving people to whom services are directed and practitioners who put their efforts and energies and feelings to address people's concrete needs.

The passion that many of us have put into creating and/or adhering to Eswra, in affirming the importance of a specific organization for social work research has to do with the importance that we ascribe to developing social work research. We think that there is room to develop quality and innovative methods, as well as to better think their connection to front line practice, which is certainly a two-way connection. On the other hand we have to work on the funding institutions, we need to work on SWR so as to gain wider recognition and better funding.

Eswra was created two years ago and I would like to describe briefly what we have already done both in supporting social work research and in planning this conference. We certainly cannot underestimate the importance of creating an infrastructure for the organization which has to be in tune with the goals of the association. For this we are indebted to Elaine Sharland, who will be stepping down this year from her role as secretary, and who has drawn on her deep competences as a social work scholar in translating the ideas which animate Eswra into a structure / an organisation. But what we are developing at the moment are the special interest groups whose work has been visible in the pre-conference events and will be again during the conference, as well as the new projects the association is working on; we are also certainly working on dissemination. The special issue and the project of

a social work series illustrate this point.

I think it is important to remark here that ESWRA is also working in the direction of developing recognition and funding for social work research. The presence of Mr. Philippe Keraudren of the EC at the closing ceremony is just an example of how we are trying to connect with relevant bodies with whom to negotiate for social work research. And as Mr. Keraudren has reminded us, negotiating and gaining visibility at a European level, or failing to do so, may have a huge impact at the level of individual countries, and on how in each country social work research is valued.

And here I want to take this opportunity also to tell you all how much eswra needs the contributions of its members and of social work scholars, and to thank all of you who have already participated and are active in the organization, its website and committees, and in the special interest groups. And at the same time I extend a warm invitation to all of you who are not yet members, to consider becoming part of the association, on the one hand to enjoy the resulting benefits / advantages, and on the other to contribute to its growth.

Ian Shaw (in his last book, aptly and inspiringly titled *Social Work Science*, published by Chicago University Press) devotes an entire chapter to the Social work science community. He opens up questions such as: What are we talking about when we speak of collaboration or of a social work science community? Who belongs in this community? Is its membership based on who you are or what you do, your sense of identity, or where you work? How do we know if specific social work program faculty, social work practitioners, contract researchers, or service users are part of such a community? Those are questions have certainly yet to be answered: but what we can see here at this conference is an effort to concretely address the issue. Ian Shaw is now stepping down from the ESWRA board and this is the right time to acknowledge that the conference as well as the association would not have happened if not for the ideas, projects, determination and generosity that Ian Shaw contributed over the years.

Well, I wish everybody a very interesting and stimulating time here in Lisbon at the conference.

**Prof. Silvia Fargion,**  
*Chair European Social Work research Association*

## VALUING THE WORK OF SSH TODAY: THE EXPECTED CONTRIBUTION OF ESWRA

How can we "value" the work of Social sciences and the Humanities (SSH) in Europe today? On the one hand, there are obvious examples in front of our eyes and in our newspapers: terrorism of course, but also migration, unemployment, tax evasion, wars and crises at the door of Europe, growth models, the future of Europe, and so on. On the other hand, there are less "fashionable" items that SSH can address because SSH alone can analyse all the various forms of organised and non-so organised violence, exploitation and indifference.

Isn't "social work" in this latter category? As ESWRA defines itself, "ESWRA's vision is to take forward the development, practice and utilization of social work research to enhance knowledge about individual and social problems, and to promote just and equitable societies". Is that an objective that we should abandon? Certainly not if we continue to live in democratic societies whose foundation is still, at least until it may become democratically contested, to be as just and as equitable as possible. If we want to live by democratic standards, it is thus obvious that the works of ESWRA is necessary and, given the current difficulties of our social policies, even more and more necessary.

I have been struck by the fact that ESWRA was founded in 2014 only and that it already has over 250 members from 21 countries. The existence of ESWRA is important because it says to the public, to the policy makers that there are serious people thinking serious things and that these people represent the SSH communities. The voice of specialists like you must be heard, your analyses must reach the public domain at large. There is actually now an excellent opportunity for ESWRA to respond to the current public consultation on the social pillar of the EU which will form the basis for the social policy of the EU for the next few years. By contributing, ESWRA will signal to EU policy makers that SSH scientists are involved in the world they live in and not only neutral observers.

Some may rightly ask: are you trying to push SSH academics you on the slippery road of engagement which sometimes had obscured the vigilance and the objectivity of SSH and of other sciences? The argument is rather to say that science should not be separate from public discourses, or else

that democratic debates should not develop without organised exchanges and take up of SSH, even if we know that, eventually, the necessary political arrangements of our democracies may discard the conclusions of science. Organising the exchanges between science and policy is therefore essential and this is a new and delicate task for most of the SSH scholars.

Of course, the critical dimension of SSH and its active stance towards complexity and nuances may have difficulties to be accepted by all in our changing democracies. Nevertheless, rather than leave the battlefield of public ideas, the SSH, which by far are still publicly funded, have to enter this field with courage and the intelligence of what a democratic debate means, and make their claims for rationality and evidence based debates in democracies.

This is what ESWRA was set up for and this is the task that will grow for ESWRA in the near and distant future.

**Philippe Keraudren**  
*E. Commission - DG Research & Innovation*

## CONFERENCE PROGRAMME



8.30a.m. 8.00 p.m.	<b>Registration</b>
9.00 a.m. 2.45 p.m.	<b>Pre Conference Activities</b> Doctoral Studies in Social Work SIG Event Social Work, History and Research SIG Event Practice Research in Social Work SIG Event
3.00 p.m.	<b>Opening Session</b> Prof. Francisco Branco, Chair of the Host Conference Committee Prof. Isabel Gil, Vice-Rector - Catholic University of Portugal Prof. Silvia Fargion, ESWRA Chair Orquestra "Os Violinhos" - Academia de Música de Lisboa
4.00 p.m.	<b>Keynote:</b> Karen Healy, Imagination, evidence and context: Achieving change through social work research Chair: Inês Amaro
5.00 p.m.	Coffee-Break
5.30 p.m.	Parallel Sessions 1
7:00 p.m.	ESWRA General Assembly
8.15 p.m.	<b>Welcome Reception</b> Grupo Coral e Etnográfico "Amigos do Alentejo", Feijó - Almada

8.00a.m.	<b>Writing for Publication:</b> A Short Workshop run by the editors of European Journal of Social Work, Journal of Social Work Practice, and Transnational Social Review
9.00 a.m.	<b>Keynote: Fernanda Rodrigues,</b> The "mindfulness" of austerity policies: Unhiding shadows and lights for Social Work Chair: Francisco Branco
10.00 a.m.	Parallel Sessions 2
11.30 a.m.	Coffee-Break
12.00 a.m.	Parallel Sessions 3
1.30 p.m.	Lunch
	Poster Session
2.45 p.m.	Parallel Sessions 4
4.15 p.m.	Parallel Sessions 5
5.45 p.m.	Coffee-Break
6.15 p.m.	<b>Keynote: Marc-Henry Soulet,</b> Social work between uncertainty and prudence Chair: Cristina Albuquerque
8.15 p.m.	<b>Conference Dinner</b> Including ESWRA Awards for Outstanding Publications Fado performance with Catarina Mettelo e Martins Maio accompanied by M <sup>o</sup> ises Canita (guitar) and Tiago Fins (viola)

Friday | April 1st, 2016

## Special Interest Groups

8.00a.m.	Special Interest Groups
9.00 a.m.	<u>Keynote: Fergus McNeill</u> , Distant Voices: Research, reflexivity and art Chair: Elaine Sharland
10.00 a.m.	Coffee-Break
10.30 a.m.	Parallel Sessions 6
12.00 a.m.	Parallel Sessions 7
1.30 p.m.	Lunch  Poster Session
2.45 p.m.	Parallel Sessions 8
4.15 p.m.	<u>Closing Session</u> Chair: Silvia Fargion, ESWRA Chair Nelson Ribeiro, Head of School of Human Sciences - UCP Inge Bryderup, Presentation of the 7th ESWRA Conference, Aalborg, Denmark Philippe Keraudren, E. Commission - DG Research & Innovation

Social Work, History and Research | Room: Exhibition Room  
Conveners: Stefan Köngeter & John Gal

Critical Realism & Social Work Research | Room: Timor  
Conveners: Monica Kjørstad & Elina Pekkarinen

PhD students SIG | Room: Sociedade Científica  
Conveners: Sofia Dedotsi, Jon Symonds

Sexuality Studies in Social Work | Room: 427  
Convener: Paul Willis, Ateret Gewirtz-Meydan

Decisions, Assessment and Risk | Room: Brasil  
Convener: Brian Taylor

Social Work Practice Research | Room: 421  
Conveners: Mirja Satka & Lars Uggerhøj

Social Work with Children and Families across Europe | Room: Descobrimentos  
Conveners: Silvia Fargion; Michelle Lefevre; Karen Winter & Gillian Ruch

Social Work and Extreme Events | Room: Expansão Missionária  
Convener: Reima Ana Maglajlic

Research on Social Work Education | Room: 422  
Convener: Kirsteen Laidlaw

Gerontological Social Work | Room: 424  
Conveners: Marjaana Seppänen & Mo Ray

Social Work Research on Integration Policies with Migrants and Refugees | Room: 421 (School of Human Sciences)  
Conveners: Emilio Jose Gomez Ciriano, Hugh McLaughlin, Esther Mercado García

Service User Participation | Room 422 (School of Human Sciences)  
Convener: Jean Pierre Wilken

Art-based Methods in Social Work | Room 423 (School of Human Sciences)  
Convener: Ephrat Huss

## Parallel Sessions at a Glance

Room	424	Exhibition	422	421	427
<b>PARALLEL SESSIONS 1</b> Wednesday, March 30th 5.30 - 7.00 p.m.	<b>OP 1.1.</b> Social Work Research Agenda	<b>OP 1.2.</b> Research on Child Welfare and Social Work	<b>OP 1.3.</b> Research on Child Welfare and Social Work	<b>OP 1.4.</b> Research on Family and Social Work	<b>OP 1.5.</b> Research on Adult Care and Social Work
<b>PARALLEL SESSIONS 2</b> Thursday, March 31th 10.00 - 11.30 a.m.	<i>OP 2.1.</i> <i>Research on Political Conflict , Trauma and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 2.2.</i> <i>Research on Policy Advocacy and Empowerment in Social Work</i>	<i>OP 2.3.</i> <i>Comparative Research in Social Work</i>	<i>OP 2.4.</i> <i>Research on Social Crisis, Welfare Reconfiguration and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 2.5.</i> <i>Research on Human Rights, Social Justice and Ethical Issues in Social Work</i>
<b>PARALLEL SESSIONS 3</b> Thursday, March 31th 12.00 - 1.30 p.m.	<b>SYMPOSIUM 1</b> Counter-Narra- tive in Social Work: Critical Research and Practice	<b>SYMPOSIUM 2</b> A research agenda for social work in contemporary societies	<b>SYMPOSIUM 3</b> Innovations in Social Work Research	<b>SYMPOSIUM 4</b> Transnational Social Work - A Border- Crossing Agenda for Practice & Research	<b>SYMPOSIUM 5</b> Exploring variations in everyday life parenting in contemporary societies in Norway
<i>PARALLEL SESSIONS 4</i> <i>Thursday, March 31th</i> <i>2.45 - 4.15 p.m.</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 9</i> <i>Arts based methods as new pathways within social work research</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 10</i> <i>Lived citizenship on the edge of society</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 11</i> <i>Using a disability lens to achieve social justice for older care users</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 12</i> <i>Politicization in and of social work: beyond the existing order?</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 13</i> <i>Where Knowledge, Social Work and Social Policy Meet: A Cross-National Perspective...</i>
<i>PARALLEL SESSIONS 5</i> <i>Thursday, March 31th</i> <i>4.15 - 5.45 p.m.</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 14</i> <i>The Capability Approach: What can it offer social work ?</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 15</i> <i>Active welfare policy: social work dilemmas and implications for vulnerable clients</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 16</i> <i>Using a disability lens to achieve social justice for older care users. Practices and policy change</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 17</i> <i>Empirical ethics in social work: possibilities and challenges</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 18</i> <i>Talking and Listening to Children in Everyday Social Work Practice...</i>
<b>PARALLEL SESSIONS 6</b> Friday, April 1st 10.30 - 12.00	<b>OP 6.1.</b> Reflexivity and Practice Research in Social Work	<b>OP 6.2.</b> Research on Social Work Education	<b>OP 6.3.</b> Politics, Ethics and Methods in Social Work Research	<b>OP 6.4.</b> Research on Violence and Social Work	<b>OP 6.5.</b> Research on Social Entrepreneurship, Social Innovation and Social Work
<i>PARALLEL SESSIONS 7</i> <i>Friday, April 1st</i> <i>12.00 - 1.30 p.m.</i>	<i>OP 7.1.</i> <i>Research on Social Work Education</i>	<i>OP 7.2.</i> <i>Politics, Ethics and Methods in Social Work Research</i>	<i>OP 7.3.</i> <i>Research on Social Work Education</i>	<i>OP 7.4.</i> <i>Research on Family, Gender and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 7.5.</i> <i>Social Work, History and Research</i>
<i>PARALLEL SESSIONS 8</i> <i>Friday, April 1st</i> <i>2.45 - 4.15 p.m.</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 22</i> <i>Lived citizenship on the edge of society II</i>	<i>WORKSHOP 7</i> <i>How to Apply Realist Evaluation Combining Epidemiology and Effectiveness Research</i>	<i>OP 8.1.</i> <i>Research on Human Rights, Social Justice and Ethical Issues in Social Work</i>	<i>OP 8.2.</i> <i>Research on Social Crisis, Welfare Reconfiguration and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 8.3.</i> <i>Research on Social Work Practice</i>

## Parallel Sessions at a Glance

Room	Descobrimentos	Timor	Expansão Missionária	Brasil	Sociedade Científica
<b>PARALLEL SESSIONS 1</b> Wednesday, March 30th 5.30 - 7.00 p.m.	<b>OP 1.6.</b> Research on Child Welfare and Social Work	<b>OP 1.7.</b> Social Work, History and Research	<b>OP 1.8.</b> Research on Family and Social Work	<b>OP 1.9.</b> Sexuality Studies in Social Work	<b>WORKSHOP 1</b> Volunteers and professionals acting and reflecting on new ways to support people that cope with loneliness
<b>PARALLEL SESSIONS 2</b> Thursday, March 31th 10.00 - 11.30 a.m.	<i>OP 2.6.</i> <i>Reflexivity and Practice Research in Social Work</i>	<i>OP 2.7.</i> <i>Social Work, History and Research</i>	<i>OP 2.8.</i> <i>Social Work Research Agenda</i>	<i>OP 2.9.</i> <i>Research on Health, Disability and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 2.10</i> <i>Research on Social Work Profession</i>
<b>PARALLEL SESSIONS 3</b> Thursday, March 31th 12.00 - 1.30 p.m.	<b>SYMPOSIUM 6</b> Research as a developmental strategy for Social Work Education in the public uni- versity	<b>SYMPOSIUM 7</b> Migration as social challenge - new forms of social work research?	<b>SYMPOSIUM 8</b> Political social work: Social workers' praxis for social change	<b>WORKSHOP 2</b> Research on Social Work in Ecosocial Transition of Societies	<b>WORKSHOP 3</b> Dialectics in Critical Realism-Ideas for the Development of Theory and Practice in Social Work
<i>PARALLEL SESSIONS 4</i> <i>Thursday, March 31th</i> <i>2.45 - 4.15 p.m.</i>	<i>WORKSHOP 4</i> <i>Researching social work up close: using discourse, narrative and conversation analysis ...</i>	<i>WORKSHOP 5</i> <i>Social Work Action and a Community Anti-Incinerator Campaign</i>	<i>WORKSHOP 6</i> <i>What can we learn from observing and grading skills in child and family social work?</i>	<i>OP 4.1.</i> <i>Research on Mental Health and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 4.2.</i> <i>Research on Social Workers Burnout</i>
<i>PARALLEL SESSIONS 5</i> <i>Thursday, March 31th</i> <i>4.15 - 5.45 p.m.</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 19</i> <i>Views on Human Beings in Social Work - Historical and Present Trends ...</i>	<i>OP 5.1</i> <i>Research on Social Work Practice</i>	<i>OP 5.2.</i> <i>Research on Youth and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 5.3.</i> <i>Research on End of Life, Suicide, Severe Illness and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 5.4.</i> <i>Research on Human Rights, Social Justice and Ethical Issues in Social Work</i>
<b>PARALLEL SESSIONS 6</b> Friday, April 1st 10.30 - 12.00	<b>OP 6.6.</b> Politics, Ethics and Methods in Social Work Research	<b>OP 6.7.</b> Research on Child Welfare and Social Work	<b>OP 6.8.</b> Research on Social Crisis, Welfare Reconfiguration and Social Work	<b>OP 6.9.</b> Research on Social Work Practice: Decision Making, Assessment and Risk	<b>OP 6.10.</b> Research on Migrants, Refugees and Social Work
<i>PARALLEL SESSIONS 7</i> <i>Friday, April 1st</i> <i>12.00 - 1.30 p.m.</i>	<i>OP 7.6.</i> <i>Research on Mental Health and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 7.7.</i> <i>Research on Child Welfare and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 7.8.</i> <i>Research on Caregiving, Informal Support and Social Work</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 20</i> <i>Flexner's speech 100 years later...What now?</i>	<i>SYMPOSIUM 21</i> <i>Social Work and Extreme Events - challenges to social work research on disasters and complex ...</i>
<i>PARALLEL SESSIONS 8</i> <i>Friday, April 1st</i> <i>2.45 - 4.15 p.m.</i>	<i>OP 8.4.</i> <i>Research in Social Work education</i>	<i>OP 8.5.</i> <i>Research on Social Crisis, Welfare Reconfiguration and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 8.6.</i> <i>Research on Human Rights, Social Justice and Ethical Issues in Social Work</i>	<i>OP 8.7.</i> <i>Research on Child Welfare, Youth and Social Work</i>	<i>OP 8.8.</i> <i>Research on Social Work Practice</i>

## Keynote Speakers



KAREN HEALY is Professor of Social Work at The University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia. She is also the National President of the Australian Association of Social Workers, a position she has held since 2011. Professor Healy is a National Director of The Benevolent Society, which is Australia's oldest not-for-profit community service agency. Professor Healy has written four books, with a fifth on the way, and numerous book chapters and journal articles. Her research focuses on child and family welfare, social work theory for practice and organisational and social change. Her works have been translated into several languages.



MARC-HENRY SOULET is an Ordinary Professor of Sociology, chair holder of Social Work, and Public Policies. He's the actual Vice-President of the International Association of French speaking sociologists. In this regard, he is fully concerned by (and committed to) contemporary transformations of Social Sciences from a pedagogical and scientific point of view. He directs the Res socialis collection at Academic Press Fribourg where he has coordinated the publication of numerous works on social problems and social policies. He also published several articles in the field of social work as well as regarding epistemological and methodological questions in Social Sciences.



FERNANDA RODRIGUES is Professor of Social Work at the Catholic University of Portugal and the Faculty of Psychology and Education (University of Oporto). She taught in diverse other national and international universities. She is member of the CIIIE (Centre for Research and Intervention in Education) at the Oporto University and is currently involved on a European research - "YOUNG ADULLLT" project (Horizon 2020). She participated in several research projects on social problems, poverty and social exclusion, local development and social change and, public policies and social policies. She acted as Coordinator of the National Plans for Social Inclusion (2006-2010) and as consultant and evaluator in various social projects. On this field, she was evaluator for the national projects under the II and III European Union Anti-poverty programmes and consultant for the UNICEF programme to build the Social Assistance policy in Angola. She is member of the External Evaluation Committee for Higher Education in Portugal, in charge of the evaluation and follow up of the Social Work Courses. On behalf of the IFSW - Region Europe, she is the representative on the Council of Europe. She has several books, written papers and presentations in numerous conferences.



FERGUS McNEILL is Professor of Criminology and Social Work at the University of Glasgow where he works in the Scottish Centre for Crime and Justice Research and is Head of Sociology. Prior to becoming an academic in 1998, Fergus worked for a number of years in residential drug rehabilitation and as a criminal justice social worker.

His many research projects and publications have examined institutions, cultures and practices of punishment and rehabilitation - and questions about their reform. Most recently, his work has focused on the policy and practice implications of research evidence about the process of desistance from offending. He recently led an ESRC funded project, 'Discovering Desistance', which aims to develop the dialogue between academics, practitioners and ex-offenders about how criminal justice can better support people to leave crime behind. Currently, he is Chair of an EU funded research network on 'Offender Supervision in Europe' which involved about 100 researchers from across 23 jurisdictions.

As well as researching, teaching and writing, Fergus has been involved in providing consultancy advice and support to governments and criminal justice organizations in many jurisdictions around the world.

He currently serves as Chair of the Scottish Advisory Panel on Offender Rehabilitation, and is a Trustee, Council or Board Member of several criminal justice charities including CLINKS, Faith in Throughcare, 'Positive Prisons? Positive Futures...', the Scottish Association for the Study of Offending and Vox Liminis. He has co-written or co-edited several books including Offender Supervision: New Directions in Theory, Research and Practice, Offender Supervision in Europe, Reducing Reoffending: Social Work and Community Justice in Scotland, Understanding Penal Practice and Youth Offending and Youth Justice.

His next book, Community Punishment: European Perspectives (co-edited with Gwen Robinson) is due to be published by Routledge in July 2015.

## Social Work Research Agenda

(Chair: Mirja Satka)

Wednesday - March 30th, 5.30 - 7.00pm

Room: 424

## PARALLEL SESSIONS 1

328 | Faye Mishna, MonaKhoury-Kassabri '

*It just crept in'': The Digital Age and Implications for Social Work Practice*

351 | Vincent Horn, Cornelia Schweppe

*Aging in a digital age: Managing family relationships and emotions through information and communication technologies (ICTs)*

603 | Alix Walton

*Seeing more? Seeing differently? The use of visual methods to explore social workers' experiences of their work place*

408 | Susan Kemp, Lawrence Palinkas

*Responding to a Changing Global Environment: Crafting a Cross-National Social Work Research and Practice Agenda*

276 | Mirja Satka, Aino Kääriäinen, Laura Yliruka, Heidi Muurinen

*The knowledge practices of development from the viewpoint of the researcher social workers at Heikki Waris Institute*



## Research on Child Welfare and Social Work

(Chair: Patricia Jessiman)

Wednesday - March 30th, 5.30 - 7.00pm

Room: Exhibition

19 | Julie Selwyn

*The subjective well-being of children in care in England*

277 | Patricia Jessiman, John Carpenter, Simon Hackett

*I got my child back': Children's and carer's perspectives of a therapeutic intervention for children affected by sexual abuse*

281 | John Carpenter, Patricia Jessiman, Simon Hackett

*A Pragmatic Randomised Controlled Trial of a Social Work Intervention for Children Affected by Child Sexual Abuse*

390 | Morag McArthur, Tim Moore, Steven Roche

*Taking notice of children in child protection practice*

458 | Timo Ackermann, Pierine Robin

*Peer Research in Children's Homes-an Empowering Practice?*

## Research on Child Welfare and Social Work

(Chair: Inge Bryderup)

Wednesday - March 30th, 5.30 - 7.00pm

Room: 422

419 | Aude Kerivel, Ulla Peters

*Transitions from out-of-home care into adulthood: normative framings of autonomy and social capital. The case of France and Luxembourg*

442 | Inge Bryderup, Sune Kring, Mie Engen

*Foster care in Denmark-Mapping and typologization*

591 | Lisa Bunting; Janice Mcghee; Claire McCartan, Martin Elliott

*Comparing Child Protection Systems across the UK- Emerging Patterns*

528 | Chaya Possick, Merav Langental-Cohen

*Reflecting on the Voices of Unseen Children: Retrospective Narratives of Israeli Adults Who Were Biological Children in Foster Families*

117 | Martin Kettle

*A Balancing Act - A Grounded Theory of Child Protection Social Work*

## Research on Family and Social Work

(Chair: Elizabeth Frost)

Wednesday - March 30th, 5.30 - 7.00pm

Room: 421

472 | Karina Nygren; Rossitza Guentcheva, Evelyn Khoo, Rasa Naujanienė, Lennart Nygren  
*The appearance of "family" in Bulgarian, Swedish and Lithuanian social legislation and policy- A comparative study*

564 | Mary Shannon, Berni Smyth  
*The ethos of Family Support: Policy-practice restraints and possibilities*

618 | Elizabeth Harlow  
*Reflecting on Policy and the Provision of Support to Adoptive Parents*

439 | Katarina Fagerstrom  
*Child and parent sensitive co-operation working with families with substance misuse - Knowledge making in inter-professional focus groups*

427 | Elizabeth Frost, James Hoggett  
*What is troubling families? What is troubling workers? Lessons learnt from evaluating a UK 'Troubled Families' Programme*

## Research on Adult Care and Social Work

(Chair: Suzy Braye)

Wednesday - March 30th, 5.30 - 7.00pm

Room: 427

64 | Pam Joseph  
*Parent-carers' perspectives on their relationships with complex service systems*

180 | Vlatka Penava, Zdravka Leutar, Marko Buljevac, Marina Milić Babić  
*Some aspects of parenting adult persons with disability*

652 | Suzy Braye; Michael Preston- Shoot, David Orr  
*Autonomy versus duty of care in adult social care: working with self-neglect in the policy context of personalisation*

570 | Sarah Donnelly; Emet Begly; John Brennan, Marita O'Brien  
*'Are older people able to access their expressed preference for care and support?' An Irish Social Work perspective*

619 | Rasa Naujanienė; Natalija Mazeikiene, Jonas Ruskus, Roberta Motieciene, Laura Varzinskiene  
*Seeking for recognition in gerontological social work: insights from participatory action research in elderly care organizations*

## Research on Adult Care and Social Work

(Chair: Johanna Hietamäki )

Wednesday - March 30th, 5.30 - 7.00pm

Room: Descubrimentos

86 | Nina Biehal

*Home or away ? Outcomes formal treated children*

98 | Jonathan Dickens, Gillian Schofield, Chris Beckett, Julie Young, Georgia Philip

*Ensuring high quality planning and provision for children in care: the role of independent reviewing officers in England*

170 | Johanna Hietamäki

*Child welfare mandatory reporting-thresholds from the viewpoint of reporter*

252 | Victoria Sharley

*Identifying and Responding to Child Neglect in Schools*

315 | Joep Hanrath, Andrea Donker, Lous Krechtig and Anne-Marie Bos

*Securing the evaluation loop: developing a new concept for high-resource using children on-the-job*

## Social Work , History and Research

(Chair: Gisela Hauss)

Wednesday - March 30th, 5.30 - 7.00pm

Room: Timor

357 | Johanna Moilanen

*Changes to the practice of using support person in child welfare in Finland- Perspectives on the 1970s and 2010s*

394 | Xiaobei Chen

*Culture in Transnational Child Welfare Practices: Some Historical Reflections for the Present*

471 | Gisela Hauss

*Childhood deprived and betrayed? Negotiating the history of Residential Child Care*

106 | Marjorie Johnstone

*An Unexpected Alliance: Social Work and the Literary Left between the Wars in Canada, 1919-1939*

483 | Jeane Anastas

*Varying Views of Pregnant Teens in Qualitative Research: Perspectives on the "Problem"*



## Research on Family and Social Work

(Chair: Brian Taylor)

Wednesday - March 30th, 5.30 - 7.00pm

Room: Expansão Missionária

59 | Brian Taylor, Mabel Stevenson

*Families communicating about risk in dementia*

321 | Margrete Aadnanes

*Social workers' understandings of family and domestic violence in a culturally diverse context: Postcolonial and intersectionality perspectives*

667 | Cristina Faludi

*Does intimacy in the romantic couple among Romanian youth predict the transition to stable partnership and parenthood in adulthood?*

219 | Susan White, Paula Doherty

*Family complexity in social work. Interrogating Family-based welfare work in the UK and the Republic of Ireland*

514 | Lea Sugman Bohinc, Ana Jagric, Gabi Cacinovic Vogrincic

*Family-in-community-Centred collaborative processual model of Social Work*

## Sexuality Studies and Social Work

(Chair: Urban Nothdurfter)

Wednesday - March 30th, 5.30 - 7.00pm

Room: Brasil

402 | Andrea Nagy, Urban Nothdurfter

*Sexual orientation and gender expression in recent social work scholarship: Good news for all?*

173 | Paul Willis, Michele Raithby, Tracey Maegusuku-Hewett

*A queer question of care in later life: Future directions and priorities for the provision of long-term residential care to older lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people*

213 | Adir Adler, Adital Ben-Ari

*"How We Stay Together without Going Crazy: "Reconstruction of Reality Among Women of Mixed-Orientation Relationships*

## Volunteers and professionals acting and reflecting on new ways to support people that cope with loneliness: practicing the multi-phased method developed in the Netherlands

Meike Heessels, Danielle Damoiseaux, Margriet Braun

Wednesday - March 30th, 5.30 - 7.00pm

Room: Sociedade Científica

The workshop is based on project involved over 100 professionals, (professional) volunteers and other involved citizens designed to develop a textbook and an accompanying training to address loneliness in new and alternative ways in the Netherlands.

We have developed the training for mixed groups of professionals, volunteers and other involved citizens who are active in the same district, area or village.

In this interactive workshop, we will shortly present the methods by which we constructed the textbook and training. Furthermore, participants will try out part of our training. We will work in pairs and groups, and reflect on our own way of addressing loneliness. We will formulate personal and collective actions in relation to our own local networks.

## PARALLEL SESSIONS 2

## Research on Political Conflict , Trauma and Social Work

(Chair: Joe Duffy)

Thursday - March 31st, 10.00 - 11.30am

Room: 424

**555 | Joe Duffy, Jim Campbell**

*Dealing with the legacy of political conflict: Researching the views of social workers in Northern Ireland*

**398 | Ayelet Makaros, Merav Moshe Grodofsky**

*The Role of Social Workers in Social Protest- Comparison between Two Protests in Israel*

**576 | Rana Essed**

*The Islamic Movement in Israel as a Welfare Services Provider: A Case Study of the "Independent Community" Concept Research proposal*

**103 | Shira Pagorek Eshel, Michal Finklestein**

*Family resilience among parents and their adolescents exposed to ongoing political conflict*

## Research on Policy Advocacy and Empowerment in Social Work

(Chair: Jon Symonds)

Thursday - March 31st, 10.00 - 11.30am

Room: Exhibition

**227 | Marijke Sniekers**

*Agency, empowerment and living space of young mothers in a shrinking region*

**585 | Daphna Sommerfeld, Idit Weiss-Gal**

*Policy advocacy engagement of social workers in general hospitals in Israel*

**187 | Jo Moriarty, Mary Baginsky, Jill Manthorpe**

*Gaining the views of vulnerable families: effective engagement with families and their social workers*

**602 | Ali Akbar Tajmazinani**

*Changing Role for Social Workers in Local Social Policy of Tehran Municipality*

## Comparative Research in Social Work

(Chair: Christian Ghanem)

Thursday - March 31st, 10.00 - 11.30am

Room: 422

574 | Christian Ghanem; Ingo Kollar; Frank Fischer, Sabine Pankofer  
*Analysis of the 'EBP Problem'—A Systematic Review of the Conceptualizations of Evidence-Based Practice in the USA compared to German speaking countries*

292 | Janet Anand, Chaitali Das  
*Tripping over difference: A critique of international comparative research methodologies*

481 | Zlatana Knezevic  
*(Re)considering the Comparative: Child protection and Epistemic Cultures – The Case of Swedish BBIC Author keywords:epistemic cultures*

233 | Abigail Ornellas, Alessandro Sicora, Giulio Citroni, Gary Spolander, LambertK Engelbrecht  
*The Role of Best Practice in Social Work: International Collaboration and Lessons Learnt*

## Research on Social Crisis, Welfare Reconfiguration and Social Work

(Chair: Helle Cathrine Hansen)

Thursday - March 31st, 10.00 - 11.30am

Room: 421

365 | Christos Panagiotopoulos  
*Social Welfare state in an era of crisis; the impact of the crisis onto social workers and the challenges ahead*

316 | Helle Cathrine Hansen  
*Gender and recognition – A study from the Norwegian activation context*

432 | Irene Roivainen  
*Communities and the Nordic Welfare Regime, Diaconal Work and Social Work in Finland*

61 | Ulla Rantakeisu  
*On Moralism, Individualism and Consumerism in the wake of the Financial Crisis*

109 | Jean-Pierre Tabin  
*Welfare boundaries*

## Research on Human Rights, Social Justice and Ethical Issues in Social Work

(Chair: Muireann Ní Raghallaigh)  
Thursday - March 31st, 10.00 - 11.30am  
Room: 427

### 523 | Pearse Mccusker

*Liberation through Rights? Social work, mental distress, detention and forcible treatment*

146 | Hana Nimer , Joanna Imad, Hady Aya, Julie ElKhoury, Michel Soufia  
*Reality of Lebanese Prisons: A psychosocial perspective on Aggressivity in a "proharm"environmen*

### 359 | Muireann Ní Raghallaigh, Maeve Foreman

*Social Work with Asylum Seekers in Ireland: Responding to need and advocating for social justice*

### 549| Rebecca Macy, Abby Cannon, Jennet Arcara, Laurie Graham

*Trafficking in Persons and Its Consequences for Individuals' Health and Well-Being: A Systematic Review to Inform Social Work Research*

### 533| Veikko Pelto-Piri, Karin Engström, Lars-Erik Warg, Lars Kjellin, Ingemar Engström

*Staff views on prevention and management of violence at institutions. Aspects of values and safety in encounters with young clients and patients*

## Reflexivity and Practice in Social Work

(Chair: Vivienne Cree)  
Thursday - March 31st, 10.00 - 11.30am  
Room: Descubrimentos

### 121 | Mary Baginsky, Jo Moriarty, Jill Manthorpe

*Conducting a multi-site complex evaluation: making sure the methodology survives the seismic wave of reality*

### 176 | Jessica Roy

*Signs of Safety: An evaluation of the model*

### 184 | Juliet Koprowska

*Conversation analysis as a vehicle for experiment and change in social work practice*

### 181 | Vivienne Cree, Peter Hillen

*Quality in Social Work - The Need for Critical Reflexivity*

### 322 | Valerie Williams, Jon Symonds, Sue Porter

*Using conversation analysis as a basis for improving social work practice with disabled people*

## Social Work, History and Research

(Chair: Maria Isabel Santos)

Thursday - March 31st, 10.00 - 11.30am

Room: Timor

78 | Marie Špiláčková

*Social work in the period of normalization in Czechoslovakia*

169 | Lene Mosegaard Søbjerg

*Challenges of political correctness in the educating of social workers about past social services*

666 | Maria Isabel Santos

*Candeia (1943-1947): the earliest face of professional association among Portuguese social workers. A (trans) national project*

625 | Line Søberg Bjerre

*The construction of children in social work: In the shadow of their parents*

## Social Work Research Agenda

(Chair: Jo Finch)

Thursday - March 31st, 10.00 - 11.30am

Room: Expansão Missionária

197 | Griet Roets, Koen Hermans, Lieve Bradt, Peter Raeymaeckers, Rudi Roose

*Contemporary challenges in European social work research: where do we go from here?*

482 | Mikael Skillmark, Verner Denvall

*When research moves in - the diffusion of evidence-based practice in Swedish social work*

76 | Barbra Teater, Michelle Lefevre, Hugh McLaughlin

*Is there a Practice-Academic Disconnect in Social Work? Examples from the United Kingdom and the United States*

445 | Elisabeth Willumsen

*Research Partnership between academia and practice - developing a joint research project concerning young people at risk*

503 | Jo Finch, Leï Meleyal

*"Heed the quiet voices"- A critical exploration of the "failure to fail" narrative in social work practice placements*

## Research on Health, Disability and Social Work

(Chair: Fiona Mcdermott)

Thursday - March 31st, 10.00 - 11.30am

Room: Brasil

435 | Wim Nieuwenboom, Peter Sommerfeld, Lucy Bayer-Oglesby, Holger Schmid

*Health inequities: Social determinants of health and the role of Social Work*

100 | Fiona Mcdermott, Justine Little, Glenda Bawden

*Watch & Learn: a multidisciplinary health team studies itself*

156 | Csaba Degi

*A research-based perspective on oncology social workers in Romania*

547 | Julie Lawrence

*The Notion of Citizenship for people with Intellectual Disabilities in the UK: A Life of their own*

159 | Lea Zanbar, Haya Itzhaky

*In the Front Line: The Impact of a Training Program for Pediatricians in Children at Risk on Doctor-Social Worker Interactions in Hospitals*

## Research Social Work Profession

(Chair: Silvia Fargion)

Thursday - March 31st, 10.00 - 11.30am

Room: Sociedade Cientifica

222 | Trish Walsh, Erna O'Connor, George Wilson

*A New Form of Inequality ? How do internationally-qualified social workers experience their transition to working life in Ireland?*

137 | Nina Weimann-Sandig, Lena Becker, Lisa Wirner

*Lateral entries in social work fields and the debate on professionalization. A German perspective*

126 | Peter Hendriks

*Turkish and Moroccan Dutch professionals in social work*

606 | Silvia Fargion

*Social work in a medical setting: reflection on inter-professional practice in a power imbalanced context*

235 | Lel F. Meleyal

*A statutory duty of candour, the criminalization of social workers and the achievement of a culture of openness in the profession*

SYMPOSIUM 1

## Counter-Narrative in Social Work: Critical Research and Practice

Michal Krumer-Nevo

Thursday - March 31st, 12.00 - 1.30pm

Room: 424

## PARALLEL SESSIONS 3

*"I am afraid to reveal that I'm racist": Discourse and practice of social workers working with youth of Ethiopian origin in Israel*  
Eynat Vager-Atias

*Practice of poverty aware social work: Service users' experiences*  
Yuval Saar-Heiman

*"You speak in two languages": Feminist social work practice and theory of practice*  
Roni Eyal-Lubling



SYMPOSIUM 2

**A research agenda for social work in contemporary societies:  
possibilities, constrains and limitations**

Milena Heinsch

Thursday - March 31st, 12.00 - 1.30pm

Room: Exhibition

*Connecting Research to Action in Social Work*

Mel Gray, Elaine Sharland

*Developing an Integrated Model of Research Use for Social Work*

Milena Heinsch

*Sources of Knowledge for Decision Making in Social Work*

Fiona McDermott

SYMPOSIUM 3

**Innovations in Social Work Research**

Roger Smith, Louise Hardwick, Aidan Worsley

Thursday - March 31st, 12.00 - 1.30pm

Room: 422

*Long-term follow-up research with a hard to reach population-researching  
adults who were previously involved in the child welfare system*

Simon Hackett

*The Problems of Speaking and Listening in Research: Using Mobile  
Methods to Explore the Lives of Marginalised Young*

Alastair Roy, Jenny Hughes, Lynn Froggett, Jennifer Christensen

*Data Analysis in Participatory Research with Adults with Asperger's  
Syndrome*

Jackie Robinson

*Personal troubles -> public issues? Creating and sharing knowledge through  
urban photography in Downtown Eastside Vancouver*

Natalie Robinson

SYMPOSIUM 4

**Transnational social work - A Border-Crossing Agenda for Practice and Research**

Cornelia Schweppe

Thursday - March 31st, 12.00 - 1.30pm

Room: 421

*Transnational Social Work-An Insight into the Current Debate*  
Wolfgang Schröer, Cornelia Schweppe

*Historical Roots of Methodological Nationalism in Social Work*  
Stefan Köngeter

*Post-Soviet Social Work in Kazakhstan as Transnational Social Work*  
Sofia An

*Moving Concepts - Moving Methods: Possibilities and Challenges of a Transnational Social Work Research Approach*  
Claudia Olivier-Mensah

SYMPOSIUM 5

**Exploring variations in everyday life parenting in contemporary societies: Three cases from Norway**

Anita Sundnes

Thursday - March 31st, 12.00 - 1.30pm

Room: 427

*Exploring infant care taking: Paying attention to variation, and to the details of everyday life*  
Simon Hackett

*Trapped between uncertainty and responsibility: Parents with custodial disagreements negotiating care across households*  
Kari Sjøhelle Jevne

*Observing, reflecting, innovating. Exploring parent sin exile's innovation of own parenting*  
Kari Bergset

SYMPOSIUM 6

**Research as a developmental strategy for Social Work Education in the public university**

**Inês Amaro, Jorge Ferreira**

Thursday - March 31st, 12.00 - 1.30pm

Room: Descobrimentos

*The experience of a PhD Social Work programme in Portugal: pathways, challenges and emerging issues*

**Maria Inês Amaro, Júlia Cardoso, Jorge Ferreira, and Maria João Pena**

*Children and Young People in the context of a Public University. Implications for Social Work*

**Antonia Picornell-Lucas**

*International networks and new methodological approaches: Building new research networks in Social Work*

**A. López Peláez, S. Segado Sánchez-Cabezudo**

*Social housing policy and super-diversity: A challenge for Social Work research in our contemporary society. The Andalusian case*

**Pablo Álvarez-Pérez, Manuela Fernández-Borrero, Fernando Relinque, Medina**

SYMPOSIUM 7

**Migration as social challenge - new forms of social work research? Possibilities, constraints and limitations for social work research on migration**

**Monika Goetzoe, Vesna Leskošek, Eva Mey**

Thursday - March 31st, 12.00 - 1.30pm

Room: Timor

*Restrictions in the Slovene migration policy as a response to incoming refugees from the war zones*

**Vesna Leskošek**

*From protection to participation? Labour market integration and social work from the refugees' perspective*

**Eva Mey**

*"It's a golden cage": impacts of employment policy towards highly qualified migrants in Switzerland*

**Monika Goetzoe**

## SYMPOSIUM 8

### Research as a developmental strategy for Social Work Education in the public university

Talia M. Schwartz-Tayri, Ateret Gewirtz Meydan, Carolyn Gutman, Merav Moshe-Grodofsky, Raghad Alnabilsy  
Thursday - March 31st, 12.00 - 1.30pm  
Room: Expansão Missionária

*Social Workers' Policy Practice in Nonprofit Human Service Organizations*  
**Ateret Gewirtz-Meydan**

*Human Rights in Social Work Education: Service Users and Social Work Students Jointly Research Service Users' Experiences of Accessing Rights*  
**Carolyn Gutman, Merav Moshe-Grodofsky**

*Challenging policies from within: The dynamic of policy practice among social workers in local social services*  
**Talia Meital Schwartz- Tayri, Bob Shapell**

*Palestine women victims of domestic violence: Collaborates or excluded by public social welfare system in Israel?*  
**Raghad Alnabilsy**

## WORKSHOP 2

### Research on Social Work in Ecosocial Transition of Societies

Aila-Leena Matthies, Kati Närhi  
Thursday - March 31st, 12.00 - 1.30pm  
Room: Brasil

The workshop aims to invite interested participants to network with each other around the research topics of ecosocial approach in social work. We invite researchers to share current debates, information about their ongoing projects or ideas for new studies. The aim is to reflect what kind of social work, social services and social security systems would be sustainable.

How is the ecological crisis incorporated into social work research and practices?

What new practices of ecosocial approach in social work have been introduced in different countries?

We hope to bring research projects and ecosocial practices into conversation in order to establish a common platform for the development of this emerging research area and enable further European collaboration.

We would like to discuss empirical and theoretical as well as interdisciplinary approaches.

### WORKSHOP 3

## Dialectics in Critical Realism—Ideas for the Development of Theory and Practice in Social Work

Monica Kjorstad, Mikko Mäntysaari, Elina Pekkarinen

Thursday - March 31st, 12.00 - 1.30pm

Room: Sociedade Científica

The workshop consists of a short introduction on the topic's relevance for social work practice and research, and a presentation on Roy Bhaskar's Dialectic - The Pulse for Freedom. This will be followed by an interactive discussion with the participants on the central concepts of dialectic critical realism, and on its utilization in enhancing a dialogue between social work research and practice.

## PARALLEL SESSIONS 4

SYMPOSIUM 9

Arts based methods as new pathways within social work research

Ephrat Huss, Dorit Segal, Richard Isralowitz, Orli Sarid, Tony Evans,  
Trish Hafford-Letchfield, Mieko Yoshihama, Richard Tolman, Julie Kwikel  
Thursday - March 31st, 2.45 - 4.15pm  
Room: 424

*The relationship between stress situations, stress reactions, and coping of  
social workers through an arts based lenses*  
Patricia Hafford-Letchfield, Ephrat Huss

*Creating and Evaluating Sociocultural Relevant Intimate Partner Violence  
Prevention Programs using Interactive Theater*  
Mieko Yoshihama, Richard Tolman

*Using Arts Methodologies to create reflective and flexible social work policy*  
Tony Evens, Ephrat Huss

*Art-based Intervention Effectiveness on Stress among Nepalese People Indi-  
rectly Exposed to the Nepal Earthquake*  
Dorit Segal-Engelchin, Orly Sarid, Richard Isralowitz

*"It's hard to be the child of a fish and a butterfly". Using Creative Genograms  
to Bridge Objective and Subjective Experiences*  
Julie Zwickel

SYMPOSIUM 10

Lived citizenship on the edge of society

Hanne Warming; Kristian Fahnø, Manon Lavaud, Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha  
Thursday - March 31st, 2.45 - 4.15pm  
Room: Exhibition

*"In the real world you can't stay up until 3a.m"*  
Manon Lavaud

*Geopolitics ad citizenship: why geography matters in defining social citizen-  
ship rights of Canadian-Muslim youth.*  
Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha

*The role of social work practices and policies in the shaping the lived and  
intimate citizenship of young people with psy-diagnosis*  
Hanne Warming

SYMPOSIUM 11

Using a disability lens to achieve social justice for older care users:  
models and concepts

Håkan Jönson, Rafael Lindqvist, Tove Harnett, Annika Taghizadeh Larsson,  
Stina Johansson  
Thursday - March 31st, 2.45 - 4.15pm  
Room: 422

*Swedish disability policies: Ideas, values and practices in a historical perspective*

Rafael Lindqvist

*Normalization and justice*

Tove Harnett, Håkan Jönson

*Function*

Annika Taghizadeh Larsson

*Autonomy and one-caring. A theoretical cross-over innovation in social care*

Stina Johansson

SYMPOSIUM 12

Politicization in and of social work: beyond the existing order?

Tim Vanhove; Pascal Debruyne, Bart Van Bouchaute  
Thursday - March 31st, 2.45 - 4.15pm  
Room: 421

*Crafting arrival infrastructures: The emergence of political subjectivity from below in a superdiverse neighborhood*

Pascal Debruyne

*The political role of a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) in social work*

Didier Reynaert & Siebren Nachtergaele

*"I finally found my place": An ethnography of the political moments in an informal refugee camp in Brussels*

Anika Depraetere

*Social work and the art of the impossible: refugees and the politics of social work(ers) in Flanders*

Tim Vanhove & Bart Van Bouchaute

*Politicization of private citizen initiatives and the role of professional social work organizations*

Elke Plovie, Peter Raymaeckers

## Where Knowledge, Social Work and Social Policy Meet: A Cross-National Perspective on the Involvement of Social Work Academics in Social Policy

John Gal, Idit Weiss-Gal  
Thursday - March 31st, 2.45 - 4.15pm  
Room: 427

*Introduction:* John Gal

*Germany:* Stefan Köngeter and Andreas Herz

*Sweden:* Katarina Thoren and Pia Tham

*United States:* Richard Hoefler and Arati Maleku

*United Kingdom:* Hugh McLaughlin

*Conclusion:* Idit Weiss-Gal

## Social work up close: using discourse, narrative and conversation analysis to analyse recordings of real-life encounters

Tessa Verhallen, Juliet Koprowska  
Thursday - March 31st, 2.45 - 4.15pm  
Room: Descobrimentos

The workshop will be led by members of DANASWAC (Discourse and Narrative Analysis in Social Work and Counselling), an international group of researchers who explore how social work is accomplished interactionally, and what can be gained from its detailed study. We aim to make links between analytical concepts from applied discourse studies (such as boundary work, resistance, classification and delicacy) and concepts in social work (such as boundaries, authority, categories and empathy). In addition, we aim to link these forms of knowledge with social work practice by scrutinising excerpts of naturally occurring interactions between professionals and lay people with the underlying goal of improving communication, social work relationships and successful social work practices. The data for analysis in the workshop have been collected in recent research studies. Relevant concepts and methods will be explained to facilitate participants' engagement in the analysis of the following material:

1. A home visit meeting to a single-mother parent of Dutch-Curaçaoan origin. The family supervisor communicates to the mother that she will apply for a (non-consensual) full custody order over the mother's daughter. To save the child protection agency a lengthy bureaucratic process, the family supervisor aims at getting the mother's voluntary consent to discharge from her legal parental authority in the extract under scrutiny. Translations and transcriptions will be supplied in English.
2. Excerpts from initial child protection conferences in England, where a group of professionals and family members are brought together to discuss concerns about the children. Audio recordings and transcriptions will be supplied in English.



## Social Work Action and a Community Anti-Incinerator Campaign. Some Ideas and Reflections for Social Work Education

Mary Hurley

Thursday - March 31st, 2.45 - 4.15pm

Room: Timor

The workshop is based on the local community environmental campaign (Cork Harbour Alliance for a Safe Environment, CHASE) over the last twelve years and was designed considering the following aspects:

- Input: Using the CHASE campaign as a case study, sharing of relevant findings about the skills and knowledge required by students and practitioners for social action;
- Active Participation of workshop attendees: Exploration and reflection on teaching and learning requirements to develop an awareness of the necessity for social action in Social Work. Proposed questions to pursue; what has reflective practice and learning got to offer in this regard?
- What are the reflective tools that might scaffold/support this process?
- What is required of students and educators in this endeavour?

## What can we learn from observing and grading skills in child and family social work?

Alison Domakin, David Wilkins

Thursday - March 31st, 2.45 - 4.15pm

Room: Expansão Missionária

This interactive workshop will focus on exploring key social work practice skills and how they can be operationalised as research measures. We will share the approach we have developed, demonstrating how social work practice skills can be identified, and how improved skills of (for example) collaboration and purposefulness tend to lead to better parental engagement. We will invite workshop participants to listen to sample recordings and 'have a go' at grading the social work skills they hear. Together, we will consider and debate the value of assessing social work practice skills and discuss the following questions:

- How can we measure and assess the skills used by social workers in their work with parents and children?
- What social work practice skills might lead to better outcomes for families and why?
- How can practitioners, researchers and academic staff work together to produce the best possible understanding and development of social work practice skills?

## Research on Mental Health and Social Work

(Chair: Kirsi Juhila)

Thursday - March 31st, 2.45 - 4.15pm

Room: Brasil

**664 | Sofiya An**

*Social care for patients: Discourses on social work in health care in a post-Soviet context*

**67 | Fang-Pei Chen**

*Building a Working Community: Staff Practice in a Clubhouse for People with Severe Mental Illness*

**569 | Frida Westerback, Ilse Julkunen**

*Young people and mental health: Looking for new solutions and relations in inter-professional collaboration*

**17 | Sarah Galvani, Gary Manders**

*Empowering practice development: applying research lessons to practice. A case study of developing alcohol services within a Punjabi Sikh community in England*

## Research on Social Workers Burnout

(Chair: Inês Amaro)

Thursday - March 31st, 2.45 - 4.15pm

Room: Sociedade Científica

**224 | Paula Mcfadden, John Mallett, Michael Leiter**

*A three process model of burnout and work engagement: a model of resilience pathways*

**364 | Sonia Ribeiro, Inês Amaro**

*Burnout among Portuguese social workers*

**186 | Riki Savaya, Sharon Melamed, Dorit Altschuler**

*Perceptions of service providers' burnout: comparison of service users and service providers*

**325 | Laura Biggart, Emma Ward, Chris Stride, Gillian Schofield, Philip Corr, Clive Fletcher**

*Is Emotional intelligence training associated with reduced stress and burnout in child and family social workers? Results from a UK randomized control trial*

**47 | Eugene Tartakovsky**

*Burnout among social workers working with immigrants from the Former Soviet*

*Union and Ethiopia in Israel: Testing the connections between personal value preferences, immigrant appraisal and burnout*

## The Capability Approach: What can it offer social work ?

Anna Gupta, Didier Reynaert, Rudi Roose, Sylvie Van Dam, Jeroen Gradener, Erik Jansen

Thursday - March 31st, 4.15 - 5.45 pm

Room: 424

## PARALLEL SESSIONS 5

*Child protection responses to forced marriage: The contribution of the Capability Approach*

**Anna Gupta**

*Children's agency in the institutionalized youth land: Perspectives from the capability approach*

**Didier Reynaert, Rudi Roose**

*Challenges and capabilities of migrant organizations as new partners in local welfare systems: Lessons for interventions*

**Sylvie Van Dam**

*Studying community-based social work practices, and the deliberating social worker: Lessons for further theoretical specifications*

**Jeroen Gradener, Erik Jansen**

SYMPOSIUM 15

**Active welfare policy: social work dilemmas and implications for vulnerable clients**

Dorte Caswell, Søren Peter Olesen, Sophie Danneris, Rik Van Berkel, Urban Nothdurfter  
Thursday - March 31st, 4.15 - 5.45 pm  
Room: Exhibition

*Ready for work? Life course trajectories among vulnerable welfare recipients*  
**Sophie Danneris**

*The front line delivery of welfare-to-work: workers' preferences and their antecedents*  
**Rikvan Berkel**

*Social work in Italy in light of the active employment policy*  
**Urban Nothdurfter**

*Decision making at the interplay of institution, inter-professionalism and individuals with complex social problems.*  
**Tanja Dall**

SYMPOSIUM 16

**Using a disability lens to achieve social justice for older care users. Practices and policy change**

Håkan Jönson, Sara Erlandsson, Petra Ahnlund, Lennart Sauer, Katarina Andersson,  
Maria Wolmesjö  
Thursday - March 31st, 4.15 - 5.45 pm  
Room: 42

*Active agents or passive recipients of care-representations of user influence on websites for elder care and disability service providers*  
**Sara Erlandsson**

*Influence in elderly and disability care*  
**Petra Ahnlund, Lennart Sauer**

*Individualization of needs in Swedish Elderly Care*  
**Katarina Andersson**

*Doing Leadership-with inspiration from the Care of Persons with Disabilities*  
**Maria Wolmesjö**

## Empirical ethics in social work: possibilities and challenges

Sarah Banks, Ed de Jonge, Peter Hart, Sabrina Keinemans and Kim Strom-Gottfried

Thursday - March 31st, 4.15 - 5.45 pm

Room: 421

*From the armchair to the field: ethnography and ethics*

Sarah Banks, Peter Hart

*Ethical agency: a model of the professional as ethical agent*

Ed de Jonge

*Moral distress in contemporary social work practice*

Kim Strom-Gottfried

*Ethics: the empirical turn and its methodological consequences*

Sabrina Keinemans

## Talking and Listening to Children in Everyday Social Work Practice: Substantive Research Findings and Methodological Conundrums

Gillian Ruch, Viv Cree, Mark Hadfield, Sophie Hallett, Fiona Morrison, Karen Winter, Michelle Lefevre

Thursday - March 31st, 4.15 - 5.45 pm

Room: 427

*Exploring the social worker-child relationship-issues of power and agency*

*Social workers, children, young people and communicative spaces*

*Seeing the extraordinary in the ordinary: video-based explorations of social worker-child interactions during home visits*

*Researching the private in a 'public' way: exploring the methodological and ethical tensions of using video stimulated recall with children and social work practitioners*

## Views on Human Beings in Social Work–Historical and Present Trends

Maria Appel Nissen, Jens Kjaerulff, Mia Arp Fallovand, Rasmus H.Birk, Pia Ringø  
Thursday - March 31st, 4.15 - 5.45 pm  
Room: Descobrimentos

*The Productive Human Being–the Interplay between Policy and Social Work and the Role of Knowledge and Technologies. A Short Introduction*  
Maria Appel Nissent

*Between Social Work and Action: Reconsidering the “Active Turn”*  
Jens Kjaerulff

*The Active Productive Citizen and Local Community Work*  
Mia Arp Fallow, Rasmus H.Birk

*New Forms of Knowledge in the Activation of Mental Self- Realization?*  
Pia Ringø

*The Activation of the Productive Family–Social Work Responses in History and Present Times of Effectiveness*  
Maria Appel Nissen

## Research on Social Work Practice

(Chair: Bryan Taylor)  
Thursday - March 31st, 4.15 - 5.45 pm  
Room: Timor

248 | Erna O'Connor  
*'Relationship-Based Social Work: A 'Third space' in Responding to Trauma' – A Practitioner Research Study*

267 | Bea Van Robaeys, Peter Raeymaeckers  
*Contextual - transformational social work in super diverse contexts. The perspective of clients and social workers*

409 | Anna Olaison, Sandra Torres, Emilia Forssell  
*Categorization in documentation practices: the role that gender and background can play in the clientization of older people within social work case files.*

497 | Sarah Lonbay, Carole Southall  
*Reflective practice within the arena of adult social care: how do social workers negotiate the liminal space between policy and practice?*

230 | Yoosun Park, Rory Crath, Donna Jeffery  
*Resilience: A Genealogy of a Post-Political Concept*

## Research on Youth and Social Work

(Chair: Judith Metz)

Thursday - March 31st, 4.15 - 5.45 pm

Room: Expansão Missionária

### 424 | Tehila Refaeli, Rami Benbenishty

*Personal and Social Resources Contributing to Functioning and Well-Being among Young People Aging out of Residential Facilities in Israel: A Longitudinal Study*

### 636 | Julinda Cilingiri

*What predicts adolescent antisocial and criminal behaviour? Research findings from a school based assessment procedure*

### 377 | Judith Metz, Jolanda Sonneveld, Said Awad

*Bridge to change? Youth Organizing as method of professional youth work*

### 643 | Astrid Schorn

*Individual activation or critical action-Social circus through the eyes of youth*

### 255 | Daniela Cornelia Stix

*Perception and Usage of Online Social Networks in Youth Work and its influence on pedagogical relationships ?*

## Research on End of Life, Suicide, Severe Illness and Social Work

(Chair:Lorna Montgomery)

Thursday - March 31st, 4.15 - 5.45 pm

Room: Brasil

### 608 | Frank Keating

*Evaluating Practice: arts and reminiscence practice for people with dementia*

### 577 | Lorna Montgomery

*Bereavement interventions in Northern Ireland and Uganda: a comparative qualitative study of professional therapists' perspectives*

### 160 | Lea Zanbar, Menachem Ben-Ezra, NavitBen-Zur

*Community Resources as Moderators of Post-traumatic Distress*

### 313 | Thomas Slater

*"No matter how much intervention may be offered, it will happen": Social workers sense making of suicidal service users*

### 237 | Stephen Briggs, Thomas Slater , Jonathan Scourfield, Julia Bowley

*Understanding adolescent suicidal groups: linking research and practice*

ORAL PRESENTATION 5.4.

## Research on Human Rights, Social Justice and Ethical Issues in Social Work

(Chair: Jane Mcpherson)

Thursday - March 31st, 4.15 - 5.45 pm

Room: Sociedade Científica

## PARALLEL SESSIONS 6

623 | Jane Mcpherson; Carla Cubillos Vega, I-Chen Tang

*Translating Human Rights: Creating culturally-relevant human rights measures for social work in Spain, Taiwan, and the U.S*

317 | Kerstin Svensson, Carina Gallo

*Victim Support as a New Organisation based on Human Rights: A Case Study from Sweden*

598 | Nicky Stanley; Sian Oram; Joanne Westwood, Sharon Jakobowitz, Rohan Borschmann, Cathy Zimmerman, Louise Howard

*Responding to the Health Needs of Young People Trafficked into the UK*



## Reflexivity and Practice Research in Social Work

(Chair: Annamaria Campanini)

Friday - April 1st, 10.30 - 12.00 am

Room: 424

360 | Jeanne Marsh

*Emerging Research on Decision-making in Social Work Practice*

25 | Antony Evans

*Performance theory and discretion - researching creativity in professional practice*

247 | Martine Ganzevles, Wilma Numans

*Given the circumstances: how to optimise practice-oriented social work research*

628 | Rebecca Jones, David Westlake, Donald Forrester

*Lost in Translation? A mixed methods practice-near study of social work using interpreters*

259 | Daniela Monteiro

*Relationship between research and practice: a qualitative study with Portuguese social workers*

## Research on Social Work Education

(Chair: Jean Pierre Wilken)

Friday - April 1st, 10.30 - 12.00 am

Room: Exhibition

421 | Joe Duffy, Jean Pierre Wilken

*Service User Knowledge and Troublesome Pedagogy*

278 | Danielle Turney, Gillian Ruch

*Improving child care social work: the contribution of a cognitive and affective supervision model*

279 | Aino Ritala-Koskinen, Hannele Forsberg

*Strengthening expertise-identity work of child welfare social workers in the context of further education in Finland*

593 | Joanna Rawles

*Talking or writing? The reflective strategies of choice for social work students engaged in developing skills of professional judgement*

343 | Sigrid Nordstoga

*The workplace as a meeting place between research, education and practice*

## Politics, Ethics and Methods in Social Work Research

(Chair: Sarah Banks)

Friday - April 1st, 10.30 - 12.00 am

Room: 422

541 | Sarah Banks

*Co-producing research with communities: issues of ethics and politics*

571 | Julie Morton

*With whose consent? Decision making in Research Ethics Committees (RECs) in the United Kingdom on research with 'vulnerable' research participants*

425 | Sidsel Natland, Jean Pierre Wilken

*User involvement in research-conflicts, management and empowerment*

290 | Michaela Koettig

*Biographical interviewing with juveniles from disadvantaged social settings*

631 | Megan Robb

*The use of vignettes as a reflective and reflexive research method*

## Research on Violence and Social Work

(Chair: Chu-Li-Liu)

Friday - April 1st, 10.30 - 12.00 am

Room: 421

140 | Tordis Kristine Søvde

*Prevention of Dating Violence among Adolescents*

488 | Åsa Cater, Sabina Gomez Jansson

*Method fidelity and cultural adaptation - reflections about the implementation of the manualized American Kids' Club for children exposed to domestic violence in the Swedish social services from a researcher's and a practitioner's perspectives*

572 | Christian Kullberg and Mikael Skillmark

*Understanding, assessments and help-living: Gender sensitive social work with men who are victims of violence*

143 | Eli Buchbinder

*Metaphors of transformations: Change in batterers*

## Research on Social Entrepreneurship, Social Innovation and Social Work

(Chair: Aila-Leena Matthies)

Friday - April 1st, 10.30 - 12.00 am

Room: 427

347 | Antonela Jesus, Maria Inês Amaro

*Social Work and Social Entrepreneurship: a new framework for practice?*

358 | Tuuli Hirvilammi, Ingo Stamm, Aila-Leena Matthies, Kati Närhi

*Criteria of ecosocial sustainability of social innovations and income security*

469 | Dirk Postma, Pim Van Heijst

*Are local civil societies in need of social broker professionals*

340 | Sine Kirkegaard

*Participation and change in hybrid practices*

142 | Sabrina Keinemans, Raymond Kloppenburg

*Volunteers and social workers: what is professionalism?*

## Politics, Ethics and Methods in Social Work Research

(Chair: Steven M Shardlow)

Friday - April 1st, 10.30 - 12.00 am

Room: Descobrimentos

595 | Steven M Shardlow; Marian Foley, Gabrielle HeskHes, Su McCaughan

*Researching Social Work Academics*

633 | Roth Maria; Cath Larkins; Mihai Iovu, Bogdan Abel Beremenyi, AndyBillson, BarryPercy-Smith

*Practicalities and theorization of Roma Children's participatory action research*

568 | Isabelle Brodie, Lisa Bostock

*Back to the future: the role of the literature review in research responses to practice challenges*

437 | Gerd Skjong

*Transitional Experiences and Implications for Social Life - Challenges for Social Work research*

172 | Elina Pekkarinen

*"Being a Case among the Others"- Experiences of Young People on Social Work Interventions*

## Research on Child Welfare and Social Work

(Chair: Maria João Pena)

Friday - April 1st, 10.30 - 12.00 am

Room: Timor

578 | Jonathan Dickens; Marit Skivenes, Tarja Poso, Jill Berrick

*International perspectives on children's participation in child protection court cases*

654 | Louis Pratrizio, Lisa Bostock

*'It's against the rights of the family!': Negotiating access to service users within local authority children's social work service*

537 | Dinithi Wijedasa

*From big data to big impact: Secondary data analysis as method of inquiry in child welfare research*

23 | Justin Rogers

*Managing the stigma of foster care with the support of friends*

75 | Hanife Serin

*The Experiences of Non-Offending Mothers Whose Children Disclosed Sexual Abuse*

## Politics, Ethics and Methods in Social Work Research

(Chair: Jean-Pierre Tabin)

Friday - April 1st, 10.30 - 12.00 am

Room: Expansão Missionária

61 | Ulla Rantakeisu

*On Moralism, Individualism and Consumerism in the wake of the Financial Crisis*

466 | Julie Rahbæk Møller; Mikkel Bo Madsen, Jan Bjerregaard, Michael Munchow

*Entangled Relations- an analysis of the discrepancies in public and private labour market services for socially marginalized citizens*

344 | Isabelle Probst, Monika Piecek-Rionde, Jean-Pierre Tabin

*Ableism at (social) work*

264 | Marjo Kuronen, Elina Virokannas, Suvi Krok, Ulla Salovaara

*How to study transforming welfare service system from the stand point of women in vulnerable life situation*

95 | Mike Kreek

*Digital citizenship in local memory websites from a narrative perspective on empowerment*

## Research on Social Work Practice: Decision Making, Assessment and Risk

(Chair: Brian Taylor)

Friday - April 1st, 10.30 - 12.00 am

Room: Brasil

191 | Inger Oterholm

*The importance of organization to social workers discretionary judgment*

330 | Signe Fjordside

*Documentation requirements in social work with children - When an increased documentation requirement implies a problem-oriented approach*

601 | Andrew Whittaker

*The influence of organizational culture on decision making: Accountability at all costs?*

155 | Jochen Devlieghere, Rudi Roose

*Decision-making Tools in Social Work: a Matter of Transparency or Blind Spots*

150 | Laura Cook

*Conceptualising risk: making sense of the initial home visit*

## Politics, Ethics and Methods in Social Work Research

(Chair: Carla Moretti)

Friday - April 1st, 10.30 - 12.00 am

Room: Sociedade Cientifica

668 | Carla Moretti

*Accessibility to Social Services: the Paths of Migrants*

474 | Vasiliki Theocharidou

*Lost in transition. Exploration of the experiences of Afghan un accompanied asylum seekers in Greece*

10 | Vered Slonim-Nevo, Maya Lavie-Ajayi

*Four stages in the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers from Darfur in Israel: A qualitative study*

155 | Jochen Devlieghere, Rudi Roose

*Care relations of resettled refugees after arrival in Finland*

374 | Alexa Smith-Osborne

*Immigrant Youth Resilience Intervention Study*

ORAL PRESENTATION 7.1.

## Research on Social Work Education

(Chair: Lorna Montgomery)

Friday - April 1st | 12.00 - 1.30 pm

Room: 424

## PARALLEL SESSIONS 7

586 | Raija Koskinen

*Crossing the boundaries in research, practice and education: a case of a special course*

627 | Katarina Levicka, Jana Levicka

*The role of research in social work perceived by Slovak students*

582 | Lorna Montgomery, Katharine Dill, Joe Duffy, Gavin Davison

*The space in between. Preparing students for social work practice*

249 | Eleni Skoura-Kirk

*Does Service User and Carer involvement in social work education promote person centred social work practice? An examination of student discourses*

## Politics, Ethics and Methods in Social Work Research

(Chair: Kelly Smith)

Friday - April 1st | 12.00 - 1.30 pm

Room: Exhibition

505 | Tor-Johan Ekeland, Vidar Myklebust, Randi Bergem

*Evidence based practice in social work. Perception and attitudes among Norwegian social workers*

612 | Sara Serbati, Marco Ius, Diego DiMasi, Ombretta Zanon, Paola Milani

*The use of the Participative and Transformative Evaluation in the P.I.P.P.I. programme in Italy: introducing a performance-based culture within the Child Protection Sector empowering families and professionals as co-researchers*

36 | Yekoutiel Sabah

*The sources of knowledge needed for the development of social workers' intuition: a tentative typology*

261 | Kelly Smith

*Researching invisible things in social work*

## Research on Social Work Education

(Chair: Hans van Ewijk)

Friday - April 1st | 12.00 - 1.30 pm

Room: 422

105 | Alida Gulfi, Valérie Perriard

*Reform of Social Work Education in Switzerland: What Implications for the Practice of Social Educators Working in Institutions for Persons with Disabilities ?*

175 | Raymond Kloppenburg, Ed de Jonge

*Evaluation of alignment between social work education and social work practice*

543 | Carmel Halton

*Learning from Social Workers Experiences of Engaging in Reflection on a new MA Programme*

669 | Reeli Sirotkina, Hans van Ewijk

*Social work as a practice based academic discipline: Postgraduate studies in social work in Estonia*

217 | Sofia Dedotsi

*Researching social work education in times of crisis in Greece: Dilemmas, challenges and reflexive praxis*

## Research on Family, Gender and Social Work

(Chair: Guy Enosh)

Friday - April 1st | 12.00 - 1.30 pm

Room: 421

218 | Linda Bell, Sarah Lewis-Brooke, Rachel Herring, Lynne Lehane, Sioban O'Farrell-Pearce, Karen Quinn, Theresa So

*Mothers' voices: hearing and assessing the contributions of 'birthmothers' to the development of social work interventions and family support*

49 | Jill Chonody, Jacqui Gabb, Priscilla Dunk-West

*Relationship work and older adults: The role of gender in negotiating enduring coupledness*

312 | Guy Enosh, Hani Nouman, Rafah Anabtawy

*Traditionalism or professionalism? Social workers' considerations when recommending parental custody in Arab society*

575 | Christian Kullberg and Pernilla Liedgren

*Gender differences in women's and men's ways into debt problems*

## Social Work, History and Research

(Chair: Eva Wikström)

Friday - April 1st | 12.00 - 1.30 pm

Room: 427

80 | Yi-Shih Cheng

*Concept of "the Poor" and "Social Worker" in Antipoverty Policies in Taiwan: A Discourse Analysis Inquiry*

204 | Heidi Degerickx, Griet Roets, Angelo Van Gorp

*Power to the Poor? The General Report on Poverty in Belgium, 1994*

245 | Yoosun Park

*Fitness for citizenship: A social work history of the intersecting discourses of race and gender in the laws of immigration and citizenship in the US*

605 | Eva Wikström, Erica Righard

*Responses to ethnic and 'racial' diversity in social work practice - The Swedish development in historical perspective*

430 | Siri Fjeldheim

*Concepts in Translation: classic texted and contemporary literature*



## Research on Family, Gender and Social Work

(Chair: Kirsi Juhila)

Friday - April 1st | 12.00 - 1.30 pm

Room: Descubrimentos

308 | Kirsi Juhila, Suvi Raitakari

*Promoting Progress or Maintaining Stability? Practitioners' Dual Roles In Home-Based Mental Health Services*

199 | Chu-Li Liu

*Females suffering both from mental health problems and intimate partner violence in Taiwan: an anti-oppressive perspective*

353 | Silvia Clementi

*Enhancing the ability of the people: an evaluation of an innovative training program in mental health*

673 | Sumeet Jain

*Access to what? Contextualizing 'diagnosis', 'recovery' and 'access to care' in northern India*

182 | Maria Douka

*Social workers' views of psychiatric reforms in Greece: Positive and negative outcomes*

## Social Work, History and Research

(Chair: Inge Bryderup)

Friday - April 1st | 12.00 - 1.30 pm

Room: Timor

257 | Clara Bombach, Thomas Gabriel

*Impact of residential child care on life trajectories*

94 | Memory Jayne Tembo

*Reflecting on Social Work Practices with User Experience: Parental Experiences of Child Welfare Services. An Integrative Review?*

399 | Renate Stohler, Samuel Keller, Clara Bombach

*Requirements to concepts and practice of mother-child-institutions in Switzerland. Results of an evaluation study*

183 | Lisa Moran

*Mapping Children's Narratives of Permanence in Ireland: Evidence from a Mixed-Method Study of Outcomes for Permanence and Stability of Children in Care information on submission*

## Research on Caregiving, Informal Support and Social Work

(Chair: Maria Irene Carvalho)

Friday - April 1st | 12.00 - 1.30 pm

Room: Expansão Missionária

298 | Rebecca Feinstein, Harold Pollack

*"We don't have a plan. We should be working on a plan": Obstacles to caregiver transition planning for individuals with Fragile X Syndrome*

167 | Rosalie Metze, Lex Veldboer

*The professional architecture of informal support in 'district teams' in Amsterdam*

282 | Vedat Isikhan

*The Problems and Burnout Levels of Elderly Caregivers*

457 | Josefa Cardona, Maria Elena Cuartero, Joan Albert Riera, José Francisco

Campos

*Quality, Self-Care and Compassion Fatigue*

## Flexner's speech 100 years later...What now?

Francisco Branco, Cristina Pinto Albuquerque, Maria Inês Amaro

Friday - April

Room: Brasil

*Everyday I have the...Flexner's Speech*

Francisco Branco

*The foundations of social work professionalism reinterpreted in contemporary societies*  
Cristina

Albuquerque

*Answering Flexner 100 years later: reproduction, change and threats to social work in the 21st century*

Maria Inês Amaro

*Dialectic Social Work: a new critical paradigm*

John Ter Horst, Ronald Wolbink

## Social Work and Extreme Events-challenges to social work research on disasters and complex emergencies

Reima Ana Maglajlic, Jim Campbell

Friday - April 1st | 12.00 - 1.30 pm

Room: Sociedade Científica

## PARALLEL SESSIONS 8

*Review the literature on social work and political conflict in Northern Ireland*

Jim Campbel,

*Practices of volunteer counselors (doctors, nurses, psychologists and social workers) working at the Charity Hospital in Christ church , New Zealand immediately following the February 2011 earthquake*

Lesley Cooper, Lynne Briggs

*Network to date in relation to methodological challenges regarding cross-national and comparative research on extreme events*

Reima Ana Maglajlic, Mojca Urek

## Lived citizenship on the edge of society II

Hanne Warming, Kristian Fahnøe, Tom Hall, Anne Wihstutz and Pascale Garnier

Friday - April 1st | 2.45 - 4.15 pm

Room: 424

*Negotiations of belonging and rights in outreach work encounters between homeless people and social workers*

Kristian Fahnøe,

*Citizenship on the edge: homeless outreach and the city.*

Tom Hall

*From objects of care to citizens: challenges to children's citizenship in social work, the case of care giving children*

Anne Wihstutz

*Social work in France: a politic for children's agency*

Pascale Garnier

## How to Apply Realist Evaluation Combining Epidemiology and Effectiveness Research Traditions in Human Services Utilizing Data From Management Information Systems

Mansoor Kazi, Yeongbin Kim and Rachel Ludwig

Friday - April 1st | 2.45 - 4.15 pm

Room: Exhibition

This is a workshop demonstration of award-winning realist evaluations across two continents, with live data analysis of real big data from Chautauqua County (New York State) and Moray Council (Scotland).

Research methods drawn from both epidemiology and effectiveness research traditions are demonstrated in a realist evaluation in partnership with human service agencies from both countries to investigate what programs of intervention work and for whom. Real live data from management information systems (schools, social services, mental health, youth justice) is used to investigate the effectiveness of the human service interventions. As the emphasis is on data naturally drawn from practice, quasi-experimental designs will be demonstrated using demographic variables to match intervention and non-intervention groups. Binary logistic and linear regression will be demonstrated as part of epidemiological evidence based on association, environmental equivalence, and population equivalence. Evaluators and agencies can make the best use of the available data to inform practice.

ORAL PRESENTATION 8.1.

## Research on Human Rights, Social Justice and Ethical Issues in Social Work

(Chair: Maria Inês Amaro)

Friday - April 1st | 2.45 - 4.15 pm

Room: 422

120 | Ed de Jonge

*The ethical sensitivity of social workers*

532 | Andrew Whittaker, Tirion Havard

*The ethical challenges of defensive practice: She who is without sin?*

657 | Fernando Serra, Paula Pinto, Maria Nuncio

*Value tensions and ethical dilemmas in Social Work practice. A study from an international post-graduate context*

327 | Regina Ferreira Vieira, Maria Inês Amaro

*How global the IFSW global standards are? Exploring the penetration of Social Work referential guidelines into professional field*

39 | Antony Evans

*Rethinking Discretion: Managerialism and Entrepreneurial Practice*

ORAL PRESENTATION 8.2.

## Research on Social Crisis, Welfare Reconfiguration and Social Work

(Chair: Darja Zaviršek)

Friday - April 1st | 2.45 - 4.15 pm

Room: 421

495 | Eveliina Heino

*Welfare nationalism and Finnish welfare state: the example of migrants positions as users of basic services*

530 | Darja Zaviršek

*Delayed deinstitutionalisation in post socialism: UNCRPD as the tool for critical social work*

53 | Paul Van der Aa

*Social workers providing 'activating welfare': the need for a research agenda*

368 | Siv OltedKoettigal, Rolv Lyngstad

*Theorizing professional discretion processes at local welfare services*

284 | Jon Symonds, Caroline Miles, Valerie Williams, Sue Porter, Mike Steel

*The Values of Assessment: recipients of social care assessments as partners in the research process*

ORAL PRESENTATION 8.3.

## Research on Social Work Practice

(Chair: Gillian Ruch)

Friday - April 1st | 2.45 - 4.15 pm

Room: 427

278 | Danielle Turney, Gillian Ruch

*Improving child care social work: the contribution of a cognitive and affective supervision model*

611 | Lisa Bostock and Louis Patrizo

*Understanding group supervision: reflective practice, sharing risk and making a difference?*

196 | Ana Maria Oliveira

*The strengths perspective: possibilities of an empowering approach in Social Work*

149 | Sarah Lungen, Barbara Bräutigam, Matthias Müller

*"You do what you have to do": Home-Visiting Work in rural areas*

ORAL PRESENTATION 8.4.

## Research on Social Work Education

(Chair: Elaine Sharland)

Friday - April 1st | 2.45 - 4.15 pm

Room: Descobrimentos

55 | Barbra Teater, Elaine Sharland

*Research Teaching and Learning in Qualifying Social Work Education: A Review of the International Literature*

558 | Erica Righard, Norma Montesino

*Students' conceptualisation of 'ethnic relations' in the Swedish social work education*

629 | Donna Jeffery

*Decolonizing Social Work Education: Where Can This Take our Pedagogy ?*

293 | Alix Walton

*"What exactly are you trying to tell me?" An evaluation of the use of Forum Theatre to develop skills and confidence in giving feedback on performance to supervisees*

56 | Jessica Roy, Barbra Teater and John Carpenter

*Making Social Work Count: A Curriculum Innovation to Teach Quantitative Methods to Undergraduate Social Work Students*

## Research on Social Crisis, Welfare Reconfiguration and Social Work

(Chair: Marjo Kuronen)

Friday - April 1st | 2.45 - 4.15 pm

Room: Timor

283 | Sanja Milutinović Bojanić, Mirjana Nećak

*Between Social Services and their beneficiaries in a transition society (services?)*

580 | Luigi Spedicato, Mario Quarta, Andrea Forte, Anna Maria Vitale, Marile da Vergori

*Bridging the gap between strategic social policies and their local implementation: the Region Puglia as a case study for the evaluation of the effectiveness of social work*

453 | Julie Rahbæk Møller, Jan Bjerregaard, Mikkel BoMadsen, Michael Münchow

*Dynamic development or social stability? An anthropological analysis of how Danish Labour Market Policy effect socially marginalized citizens in Copenhagen, Denmark*

## Research on Human Rights, Social Justice and Ethical Issues in Social Work

(Chair: Rudi Van den Hoven)

Friday - April 1st | 2.45 - 4.15 pm

Room: Expansão Missionária

429a | Veronika Magyar-Haas

*The alienated self of shame?*

429b | Holger Schoneville

*Poverty and social exclusion as shame and attacks on subjectivity. The case of food bank users and the transformation of the German welfare state*

115 | Tina Wilson, Ann Fudge Schormans, Stephanie Baker Collins, Becky Idems, Lisa Watt

*Ignoring intersections between disability and homelessness for youth: challenges and impacts*

621 | Linda de Chenu; Dag Daehlen, Jude Tah

*The contractual state and welfare for people with intellectual disabilities: A comparison of England, Norway and Sweden*

607 | Mike Edwards

*Can sociological theory and/or labor market theory explain the workforce participation of people with disabilities receiving public benefits?*

ORAL PRESENTATION 8.7.

## Research on Child Welfare, Youth and Social Work

(Chair:Hannele Forsberg)

Friday - April 1st | 2.45 - 4.15 pm

Room: Brasil

311 | Andrea Donker,Joep Hanrath, Liesbeth Krol, Lisette Bitter

*Securing quality of transition after secured residential care: no sine cure.*

297 | Kish Bhatti-Sinclair, Bridget Ng'Andu

*Child sexual exploitation in Britain*

221 | Roger Smith

*Towards Welfare Rights in Youth Justice: an evaluation*

641 | Teona Gotsiridze

*Street connected Children and Youths in Republic of Georgia, the HIV risks and challenges they face as citizens of the country*

42 | Gizem Arat

*Promotion of positive ethnic minority youth development assessment in Hong Kong school social work practice: A conceptual framework*

ORAL PRESENTATION 8.8.

## Research on Social Work Practice

(Chair:Teresa Bertotti)

Friday - April 1st | 2.45 - 4.15 pm

Room: Sociedade Científica

642 | Louise O'Connor

*How are emotions constructed in the discourse of new public management?*

393 | Stefan Sjöström, Jesper Enbom

*Public relations in social service organizations a democratic challenge*

493 | Jane Shears

*The Quality of Social Work Report Writing: An Analysis of Social Work Social Circumstances Reports for First-Tier Mental Health Tribunals*

545 | Kirsti Gjeitnes

*An alternative approach to traditional methods for counseling in social work practice*

307 | Johan Boxstaens, Vicky Lyssens-Danneboom

*The strengths and limitations of the solution-focused approach in criminal justice social work*



*"It just crept in": The Digital Age and Implications for Social Work Practice*

Faye Mishna | University of Toronto

Mona Khoury-Kassabri | The Hebrew University

Keywords | Cyber technology in therapy, Cyber communication in traditional social work, Cyber technology and ethics, Online technology and social work practice

## ABSTRACTS

Today's generation of youth and adults relies on communication technologies for entertainment, information, and social connections and more and more, for personal help and advice. With cyber technology having permeated the ways in which individuals seek support for a wide range of issues, the purpose of this paper is to report on a study that examined practitioners' experiences and views of whether and how online communication has entered their face-to-face practice and of the implication for the therapeutic work. Using qualitative methodology, 15 social work practitioners participated in focus groups and interviews exploring their perspectives about the impact of cyber technology on their traditional face-to-face social work practice. The prevailing finding was that cyber communication has dramatically changed the nature of professional relationships. This key finding was supported by four major inter-related themes arising from the data: (1) client driven practice; (2) Pandora's box; (3) ethical grey zone; and (4) permeable boundaries. Implications for practice are provided.

*Aging in a digital age: Managing family relationships and emotions through information and communication technologies (ICTs)*

Horn Vincent | University of Mainz  
Cornelia Schweppe | University of Mainz

Keywords | Aging, Intergenerational relations, Emotions, ICTs, Well-being, Social Work theory, Social Work practice

During the past decades private households have become increasingly digitalized due to improved economic and technological possibilities. Particularly the growing availability of and access to new information and communication technologies (ICTs) facilitates virtual modes of being with others despite physical absence. As a consequence, the cultivation of technological mediated interaction has become part and parcel of long-distance family relationships such as within transnational families. As a constitutive element of transnational families, ICTs have indeed received mayor academic attention. However, little research has been done so far to specifically examine the relationship between ICTs, emotions and family ties in old age. This paper addresses this research gap by asking for the experiences of older people engaging in or being affected by the use of ICTs in transnational family settings. More precisely, this paper aims to answer the following research questions: What impact do ITCs have on the nature of family relations from the older family members' point of view? How does ICTs contribute to the shaping of their emotional life? How do ICTs influence their subjective well-being and perception of being cared for? Empirically, this paper draws on ethnographic research with older people involved in border-crossing family relationships. The empirical findings are discussed in terms of their relevance for Social Work theory and practice. On the one hand, we will discuss if and how ICT-literacy enhances or diminishes older people's agency and coping capacities. On the other hand, we will focus on the way how ICTs change family dynamics and how Social Work can and has to respond to these changes.

*Seeing more? Seeing differently? The use of visual methods to explore social workers' experiences of their workplace.*

Alix Walton | Royal Holloway, University of London

Keywords | Visual Methods, Photo-voice, Democratisation of research, Hot-desking

The use of visual methods, including photographs, in both social work (Clark & Morriss, 2015) and organisational research (Ray & Smith, 2012) remains relatively infrequent. This paper will explore the use of photo-voice (Wang & Burris, 1997) as a research method. Photo-voice is the primary method used in a study undertaken within a social work organisation which explores how social workers experience their workplace, and specifically how they experience the practice of 'hot-desking'. Hot-desking is a term commonly used to describe the organisational practice where staff have no fixed personal desk and use any available desk as needed. Hot-desking is one of a range of flexible working practices which have increasingly been adopted by employers, including those within the public sector, but which remains under-researched.

Proponents of visual methods stress their ability to access elements of participants' experiences and meaning-making which are non-linguistic or subconscious and to reveal 'previously concealed or underestimated aspects of organisational life' (Schrat et al, 2012:3). This paper will consider the extent to which this has been achieved within the study, and the challenges encountered.

The paper will also explore the potential of participant-generated photographs to 'democratise' the research process (Novak, 2010). I will consider whether the photo-voice method has enabled research participants to have greater involvement in creating and interpreting images, and incorporated diverse and what may otherwise be silent voices. These are significant questions given social workers' expressed powerlessness in relation to their employers (Fook, 2012) and organisational environments.

*Responding to a Changing Global Environment: Crafting a Cross-National Social Work Research and Practice Agenda*

Susan Kemp | University of Washington, School of Social Work  
Lawrence Palinkas | University of Southern California, School of Social Work

Keywords | environmental social work, climate change, urbanization, environmental justice, sustainability, interdisciplinary, research capacity

This session, presented by the co-leaders of a US Grand Challenges for Social Work initiative project (<http://aaswsw.org/grand-challenges-initiative/>), aims to stimulate a conversation with international colleagues on building social work's research and practice capacity for responding to global environmental changes.

The unprecedented environmental challenges facing contemporary societies pose profound risks to human well-being, particularly for marginalized communities. Climate change, escalating urbanization, and environmental degradation threaten health, undermine coping, and deepen existing inequities. As of 2015, 375 million people per year are likely affected by climate-related disasters; over 25 million have migrated due to environmental change. One third of the world's urban population lives in environmentally marginal locations. Social interventions - to strengthen community resilience, adaptive capacity, and assets; build sustainable socio-ecological systems; and reduce sociospatial inequities - are increasingly recognized as key to ensuring individual and collective well-being in increasingly turbulent environments. Social work has much to contribute to these efforts, including deep experience with people-in-context, a robust, multi-level portfolio of tested interventions, and a strong focus on human rights and social justice. agenda and related research capacity.

Crafting effective social work responses to environmental challenges will however require significant practice and research innovation: unusual disciplinary partnerships, new methodologies and data sources, and creative development, tailoring, and application of evidence-based interventions. Although a focus on environmental issues is increasingly visible in social

work's academic literature (e.g., recent special issues and monographs on climate change, environmental justice, and sustainability), and in rising levels of concern among social work practitioners and students, little attention has yet been paid to the parallel need to develop an environmental research agenda and related research capacity.

Drawing on our experience in the US with multidisciplinary teams focused on urban and environmental issues, we will identify areas where we see the need to build social work's environmental research capacity, including: readiness for participation in broadly transdisciplinary teams (including urban and physical scientists); multidisciplinary analytic skills, such as the ability to bridge social and physical data, spatial analytics, big data, and applications of emerging technologies; and implementation research aimed at addressing rapidly emerging environmental challenges. We will also invite international colleagues to consider the potential for developing cross-national research partnerships in priority areas for social work leadership, such as community adaptation, organizing, and development; disaster preparedness and response; population displacement and resettlement; and mitigation of environmental inequities. The presentation links in particular to Conference Theme 1 (A Research Agenda for Social Work in Contemporary Societies).

*The knowledge practices of development from the viewpoint of the researcher social workers at Heikki Waris institute*

Mirja Satka | University of Helsinki  
Aino Kääriäinen | University of Helsinki  
Laura Yliruka | HUS  
Heidi Muurinen | University of Helsinki

Keywords | social work practice research, knowledge production as collaboration, knowledge practice in social work, researcher social worker, pragmatism in social work

This paper describes and analyses the knowledge practices of a Finnish social work practice research institute operating in collaboration between the University of Helsinki and the City of Helsinki during the years 2008-2013. The research question is: How is the knowledge practice from the viewpoint of the researcher social workers? Over the years the institute has gone through several phases of development in its knowledge practices. Its organization, established 2000, was reformed at the beginning of 2014 as a collaborative network of the surrounding cities and the university. The data addresses the knowledge practices before the reform, and it includes the published development reports of the Institute (711 pages) and two focus group interviews of the institutes' researcher social workers (n=9). The main research method is qualitative content analysis. As the result we discover a particular, pragmatic knowledge practice of social workers characterized by the following features: The informants identify with the knowledge needs of social work and social service practice. They emphasize and prior knowledge that is constructed by many simultaneous agents and voices and is produced in collaboration with various partners. That is, the concept of social work practice research is both interpretative or self-reflective, and relational. The knowledge practice tends to involve tensions with its social context, and from the viewpoint of the informants, it is also both personal and institutional - the last referring to the collaborating team of social work experts.

*The subjective well-being of children in care in England*

Julie Selwyn | University of Bristol

Keywords | children in care, subjective well-being, human rights

In 2013, researchers at the Hadley Centre for Adoption and Foster Care Studies (University of Bristol) were asked to identify local authorities in England who were providing good experiences for children in care (known as looked after children) and to identify and promote the practices and processes that made that possible. These apparently simple research questions could not be answered. Although each local authority collects data on broad outcomes such as children's educational qualifications there are no national measures of looked after children's subjective view on their own well-being. Indeed, the National Audit Office (2014) noted that although £2.5 billion was spent during 2012-13 on the care of children in foster and residential homes, there are no indicators that measure the efficacy of the care system. So began an action research project that set out to identify what children in care think is important to their well-being, to identify domains and indicators and to devise a survey that children would find meaningful and be willing to complete. The project was funded by the Hadley Trust with researchers from the University of Bristol working in partnership with CoramVoice an advocacy agency. There has been five phases in the development of the well-being survey: literature reviews, expert group roundtable, focus groups with 140 children and young people, survey development (including cognitive interviewing) and piloting. Whilst looked after children shared with children in the general population some key domains of well-being such as the importance of relationships, they identified different indicators such as a consistent and caring social worker and knowledge of their family background and reasons for entry to care, as key to their well-being. Three online surveys have been created: 4-7yrs, 8-11yrs and 12 yrs+. This presentation will describe the development of the survey with children, survey responses from over 500 children and the impact on local authority's practice.

*'I got my child back': Children's and carer's perspectives of a therapeutic intervention for children affected by sexual abuse*

Patricia Jessiman | University of Bristol, School for Policy Studies  
John Carpenter | University of Bristol, School for Policy Studies  
Simon Hackett | University of Durham School of Applied Social Sciences

Keywords | Child sexual abuse, Service evaluation, Service-user involvement

Empirical research into interventions for children who have experienced sexual abuse (CSA) are relatively under-developed, and studies that seek to understand how service users perceive such interventions are more limited still. There is evidence that sexual abuse service users may have different perceptions of their needs to those of the clinicians treating them (Draucker et al., 1997) and those responsible for referring them (Potter et al., 2002). Studies of child service users commonly rely on adult survivors' retrospective accounts of services received in childhood (Allnock et al., 2015; Chouliara et al., 2011). Service user involvement in research on therapeutic work with children is frequently limited to parents and carers, and even though they may not always represent their children's views accurately (Davies and Wright, 2008). Nevertheless carers' views of CSA services are also important, as they are likely to influence the child's access and attendance.

The aim of the current study was to examine service users' perceptions of 'Letting the Future In' (LTFI), a therapeutic intervention for sexually abused children and young people developed by the NSPCC in the UK. Largely based on Bannister's 'recovery and regenerative model' (Bannister, 2003), children are offered up to four therapeutic assessment sessions followed by up to 20 intervention sessions (extended up to 30 if necessary). At the same time, the child's carer is offered up to eight sessions to help them support the child in their recovery. Practitioners delivering the intervention are commonly qualified social workers with additional training in therapeutic work with children.

In-depth qualitative interviews were carried out with 12 children and 17 carers who had received LTFI as part of a wider study evaluating the intervention. The findings reported here concentrate on what contributed to, or limited, user satisfaction with the service. The service was strongly valued

by all respondents. Carers tended to value the service provided for children more strongly than their child, but were also more likely to report dissatisfaction with elements of it. Factors emerging from the study that contributed to user satisfaction included recovery from the effects of CSA, the service centre environment, and the relationship and communication with the child's practitioner. Support provided for the carer was less well received but remained important to some carers. The implications of the findings for therapeutic work with children affected by sexual abuse, and their safe carers, are discussed.

*A Pragmatic Randomised Controlled Trial of a Social Work Intervention for Children Affected by Child Sexual Abuse*

John Carpenter | University of Bristol  
Patricia Jessiman | University of Bristol, School for Policy Studies  
Simon Hackett | Durham University

Keywords | child sexual abuse, randomised control trial, research on practice, evaluation

Background: Child sexual abuse (CSA) is an international problem of “staggering” proportions (Hidden in Plain Sight, UNICEF, 2015). Its effects in childhood and adulthood include post-traumatic stress, anxiety, depression, suicide, problematic sexual behaviour and poor academic/work achievement. Cochrane reviews have found very few rigorous studies of the effectiveness of therapeutic interventions for children, all of CBT.

This study evaluates Letting the Future In (LTFI), a structured, multi-theoretical social work intervention based on an understanding of trauma, attachment and resilience. Intervention methods (over 20 sessions) include relationship building, play and socio-educative work. Parents are offered 8 sessions to help understand and support their child. LTFI is provided by social workers employed by a large UK charity. The primary research question is: What are the outcomes for children and young people affected by sexual abuse of providing LTFI in a community setting?

Methods: 281 children (age 4-17) with established CSA referred to 18 agency teams were randomised to immediate intervention or a six-month waiting-list control group (design and ethical issues were described at ESWRC 2013). Further follow-up after 12 months. 242 (86%) consented to participate. Outcome measures were standardised multi-dimensional scales assessing depression, PTSD, anxiety and behavioural problems (TSCC self-report; TSCYC parent-report, Briere 1996.2002). Primary outcome was proportions of children in intervention and control groups at baseline and follow-up with a ‘clinical-level problem’ or ‘serious difficulty’ on at least one sub-scale. ‘Intention-to-treat’ and ‘effectiveness’ analyses employed.

Results: Preliminary analyses of data available at follow-up (172 children, 71%) suggest a statistically significant decrease in proportion with clinical/difficulty scores vs. control (no change) for older children, but possibly not for young children. Further findings will be presented.

Conclusion: Rigorous outcome research is possible: this is the largest ever RCT of a CSA intervention and one of the largest of direct social work practice.

### *Taking notice of children in child protection practice*

Morag McArthur | Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University

Tim Moore | Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University

Steven Roche | Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University

Keywords | children's participation, child protection practice, child centred practice

### *Background*

Although substantial progress has been made to enable children and young people to exercise the right to participate barriers still remain in the context of child protection that restricts children's participation. This presentation reports on the findings of the first stage of a research project aimed at building a more child centred child protection system. It answers the question of how and to what extent children's views are taken into account in decision making in child protection processes.

### *Methods*

The study design was replicated from an international study by Skivenes and colleagues. An online survey was completed anonymously by child protection practitioners in multiple states and territories across Australia. Using a series of case studies practitioners were asked to identify the level of risk to the child, what they would do to respond to the circumstances, whether and how the child's views would be ascertained and how much weight the child's views would be taken into account in the decision making.

In-depth interviews with a sample of 20 social workers (face to face and telephone) were also carried out which provided a more nuanced view about children's participation, what methods and tools are used to support children's participation and what current practice barriers exist for meaningfully engaging children.

### *Findings*

Preliminary findings indicate that practitioners are committed to hearing from children and that they take the child's needs and wishes into account

when making decisions about what to do. The level of risk, age of the child and experience and confidence of the practitioner are key predictors of when children's views are taken into account.

### *Implications*

This project aims to inform the further development of child centred practice that will assist children to participate in appropriate and meaningful ways. These Australian findings will also provide a comparison of child welfare policies and practices in societies with differing child welfare systems (Norway, England and California; Skivenes et al)

## *Peer Research in Children's Homes – an Empowering Practice?*

Timo Ackermann | University of Hildesheim

Pierine Robin | University Paris-Est Créteil

Keywords | Peer Research, Empowerment, Participation, Child Protection, Child Care, Children Homes, Organizational Development, Qualitative Research

### *Background and purpose*

We conducted participatory research in the context of children's care homes. Our project investigated the opportunities available to young people for participation in children's homes. The results are intended to improve children's participation in organizational development processes. The following two questions guided our research: How can children in children's homes participate in daily life? How can their participation be improved? Methods: A peer-research-project was undertaken according to the following steps. We began by searching for a group of young people who were living in children's homes (we call it "the traveling young research group"). The group we identified consisted of around 12 minors and three professional social workers, as well as two researchers (the authors). The research project was then designed together with the group. We discussed research interests, and trained the participants in research methods (mainly interviewing techniques). This resulted in children and professionals conducting around 50 interviews with their peers (minors with minors, professionals with professionals). Observations were also conducted. The analysis was based on grounded theory methodology and all group members were involved in data analysis.

### *Results*

We found that professionals tend to set particular boundaries to children's participation. This was done according to the perceived competences of the children, but also, for example, due to a lack of resources, through the implementation of restrictive laws, and to maintain order within the children's homes. Both professionals and children find themselves in situations that are ordered by complex systems of rules. The use of food and the possibilities to enter or leave children's homes are usually restricted, as is privacy. Thus,

some minors view children's homes as prison-like, whereas others view their peers in terms of family. Children typically participate in constructing certain aspects of these rule sets, whereas others are placed completely beyond discussion. Furthermore, young people's participation is often bounded to certain merits: minors have to position themselves properly in order to participate. In addition, a hierarchy exists between the children themselves as children who have lived longer in an institution, or who are older, have more opportunities to participate.

### *Conclusions and implications*

Our research has methodological and theoretical implications for participative practices in children's homes. On the level of methodology it demonstrates that peer research is an empowering practice that can be successfully used in the field of social work. Our project motivated the young people involved and enabled them to contribute to processes of organizational development, which are more typically dominated by adults. Second, it showed that peer research projects deliver results that can advance the latest research in social work. In terms of theory, our research points to difficulties in enabling participation (from a professional perspective). But we also found that professionals and young people adopted strategies that enabled them to deal with the difficulties associated with participation. Furthermore, we identified several understandings of participation, including participation as duty, as relief, as dialogue and as conflict. Social workers and researchers could reflect on which understanding of participation should lead their social work practice in children homes. Finally, we would like to discuss the implications of our research for methodology, theory and practice together with the audience.

If accepted, the presentation would be held together with members from the traveling young research group.



*Transitions from out-of-home care into adulthood: normative framings of autonomy and social capital. The case of France and Luxembourg*

Aude Kerivel | Université du Luxembourg  
Ulla Peters | Université du Luxembourg

Keywords | Transition, Out-of-home care, Adulthood, Autonomy, Social capital, Agency

If the end of youth today generally can no longer be described as "rite of passage" (Lebreton 2002, Galland, 2007), this might still be true for the situation of young people who have been in out-of-home care. Indeed, the "end of support", educational as well as financial, often ends for them by the age of 18. This is the case in France (in some cases to 21 years olds during the contract signing young adults ) and in Luxembourg (sometimes till 24 ) Far from the possibility "of an endless experimentation" Bozon (2002), these young people are facing a "clean break" which plunges them into adult life, which is more likely difficult to reach for them (INED 2006). A survey in France showed that care leavers "are greatly over-represented among homeless populations (estimated 23% of 18-24 years), compared with 2% in the general population). For Luxembourg a report by youth centers managers noted the difficulties for young people with no family support to fit into a very expensive rent .

In France and in Luxembourg transitions of young people in care are marked by projects like: «projet individualisé», «projet d'autonomie» or «projet personnel à l'autonomie» (France) and «projet d'autonomisation» (Luxembourg ) The notion and leading concept of autonomy which shapes these projects will be the focus of our discussion.

Based on the results of three evaluations (Kerivel 2013 ) on the consequences of public policies and programs in this field , a study about the trajectories of 122 former foster children in four villages of children (Dubéchet, Doucet-Dahlgén, Kerivel 2014 ) and on the first results of the TransCare project (qualitative interviews with care providers) we will discuss they mean for understanding the transitions of young people growing out-of-care to adulthood.

A qualitative study on the process of transition in Luxembourg (2015) and

the experiences of young people.

Results pointed at the isolation many young people encountered (by changing places and losing relations) and the feelings of powerlessness of the professionals who face an early exit for "young people who are not yet autonomous". Conversely, a place or a group that continues facilitates strong links.

The transitions of young people leaving care can be characterized as "zones of vulnerability" (Castell 2000). We will contrast the idea of individualized autonomy ("an individualized project defined and stable") by the concept of social capital (Bourdieu, 1980) and the concept of a relational agency (Burkitt 2015, Barad 2004, Emirbayer 1997), which points at social and material dependencies and interrelatedness. Herein we see a productive way to enrich the debate on care leavers by a perspective on the agentic potentials. The individual project is embedded in social relations and does not exist without a collective and it cannot be achieved without social resources.

## *Foster care in Denmark - mapping and typologization*

Inge Bryderup | Aalborg University  
Sune Kring | Aalborg University  
Mie Engen | Aalborg University

Keywords | foster care, out-of-home care, comparative study, survey, methodological issues

Foster care is the most common type of placement in out-of-home care in Denmark, and at the same time it is the form of social care for children placed outside the home, which we know least about. For decades the national authorities in Denmark have recommended foster care placements in favor of for example residential care, but we lack Danish research, which can support this. When documentation is needed, we often look to research from other countries, which we normally compare ourselves to (for example Norway, Sweden and England). However, foster care in these countries is fundamentally different regarding legislation, organization, specialization, education and support etc.

The purpose of the research project 'Foster care in Denmark - mapping and typologization' is to amend this lack of knowledge about a complex area. It involves all of the 5.000-6.000 so-called 'ordinary' foster carers in Denmark, who - by arrangement of the local authorities - take children in need of placement into their private homes. Knowledge about the foster carers, their intervention and the children placed in their care will be generated by a large online survey and a qualitative interview-based follow-up study. A review of the national and international research on foster care and a comparative study of foster care in Norway, Sweden, England and Denmark have also been conducted.

The presentation will address methodological issues connected to the research project and research in foster care in general such as:

- i. When doing a comparative study, to which extent can knowledge about foster care in a particular national context be transferred to another national context? Are we comparing 'the same' empirical phenomenon, and to which degree is foster care defined by national differences in legislation, organization, traditions, resources etc., which makes it difficult to transfer

research from other countries to Danish affairs?

- ii. Quantitative and qualitative research methods are commonly considered to differ fundamentally, yet there can be overlaps in regard to both their objectives as well as their applications. The question is where to draw the line - e.g. which types of questions are best answered using qualitative methods, and which can be answered by using survey methods?

## *Comparing child protection systems across the UK - Emerging patterns*

Lisa Bunting | United Kingdom  
Janice Mcghee | McGhee United Kingdom  
Claire McCartan | United Kingdom  
Martin Elliott | United Kingdom

Keywords | comparative child welfare, UK child protection, administrative data, trend analysis, child welfare interventions

### *Background and purpose*

Numerous international studies point to very large variations in child safeguarding reporting as well differences in patterns and rates of child protection interventions between and within countries across Europe and North America. Research developing typologies for different systems has identified two key models: the child protection model and the family support model. Systems with a child protection orientation are characterised by a legalistic/investigatory approach with the relationship between the state and parent tending to be more adversarial and coercive; the family support model is characterised by a more therapeutic, needs assessment approach with an emphasis on partnership and voluntary arrangements between state and parents. Previous comparative research involving the UK has tended to focus either solely on England or the UK as a whole with little attention being paid to differences between the four countries which make up the UK. However, recent official child protection data collected across nations points to considerable variation with Northern Ireland having a significantly higher level of children in need in 2014 compared to England and Wales and Scotland having lower rates of children subject to child protection and much higher rates of looked after children compared to all other UK nations.

This paper specifically investigates how this variation might be attributable to different legal definitions, guidance, data collection practices and policy trends across UK nations.

### *Methods*

Official child protection statistics collected in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland over a ten year period (2005-2014) are analysed to assess

comparability, to ascertain what the data can tell us about the operation of the four UK systems, what changes are discernible over time and the extent to which these may be indicative of different orientations within individual systems. Trends in policy development in the four UK nations are also considered, particularly policy directions evident since the devolution of power to Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in the late nineties.

### *Results*

Systems in England and Wales are characterised by an increasing proportion of referrals proceeding to child protection investigation, case conferences and child protection planning. While rates of looked after children have remained fairly stable in England and have risen in Wales, both countries favour non-relative foster care as placement type of choice. By contrast, Northern Ireland, despite extremely high referral rates and children in need rates, has a consistently lower proportion of cases proceeding to protection investigation. Scotland has very low child protection registration rates but very high looked after children rates, a disparity which can be explained by historical differences in system structure and operation as well as legal definitions. While not directly comparable, the Scottish looked after system reflects a much broader range of placement types with a stronger emphasis on placement with parents and kinship carers.

### *Conclusion*

Trend data routinely collected by UK Governments points to significant differences between countries. While interpretation of such data is commonly fraught with difficulties it can highlight emerging patterns across nations and contribute to debate about the desirability of such direction of travel.

*Reflecting on the Voices of Unseen Children: Restrospective Narratives of Israeli Adults Who Were Biological Children in Foster Families*

Chaya Possick | Ariel University  
Merav Langental-Cohen | Ariel University

Keywords | foster care, child welfare, foster families

Part of reflective social work practice is the evaluation of the impact of interventions not only on the client(s), but also on the significant systems in the clients' lives. This is crucial in order to maximize the efficacy of the interventions as well as to prevent "collateral damage." Foster care is an important component of child welfare services; virtually all of the research in this field to date (understandably) focuses on the experience of the foster child. The current qualitative study fills a critical gap by examining the experience of the biological children in foster homes in Israel, from a retrospective point of view. The study is particularly timely in Israel, as there has been a recent policy shift from dormitories and group homes as the preferred out-of-home placement to increased use of foster care in the child welfare system. Fourteen men and women aged 18-38, whose families took in a non-family foster child for a period of at least a year while the interviewee was under 18 years of age, were recruited in a snowball sampling strategy for the study. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted, recorded, transcribe verbatim and analyzed thematically according to the grounded theory method. In these interviews, the biological child shared his/her experience as a member of a foster family including introspection regarding the influences of fostering on their personal lives and family dynamics in the past and present.

In the findings chapter, three main themes emerged:

1. The fostering experience is constructed as an emotional burden by the biological children. This burden is felt throughout the process--the emotionally difficult adjustment due to what is perceived as the sudden arrival of the children, the need to cope with the social and behavioral problems of the foster child, and the confusion and pain that sometimes surrounds the separation from the foster child

2. There is a sense of invisibility in the narrative of the biological child in the foster family especially vis-à-vis the mother and the foster care social worker and a need to find ways to cope with this perceived reality.

3. Finally, most of the interviewees express pride in their families who took on an altruistic project that contributed to their family as a unit while at the same time experiencing ambivalence regarding becoming a foster family in their own nuclear families in the future.

In the discussion, the experience of the biological children in the foster families was analyzed theoretically from a family systems and a relational dialectics perspective. Practical implications for the further development and delivery of foster care services in a way that ceases to ignore the needs of the biological children in foster families is presented. In our view this is not only an ethical imperative, but will also ultimately contribute towards the successful integration of the foster child.

*The appearance of "family" in Bulgarian, Swedish and Lithuanian social legislation and policy - a comparative study*

Karina Nygren | Umeå University  
Rossitza Guentcheva | New Bulgarian University  
Evelyn Khoo | Umeå University  
Rasa Naujanienė Vytautas | Magnus University  
Lennart Nygren | Umeå University

Keywords | family policy, social policy, legislation, welfare regime, comparative research, case study design

Background: In most societies, the family is the primary unit of socialization, economic and social support of its members. When it is unable to fully carry out its functions, support and service to families in need becomes a priority area of the social work profession. However, service provision is highly dependent upon the social and political contexts in which it takes place at the same time as the role and composition of the family is changing. In the era of globalisation, family policies and social care services are at the intersection of increasingly diverse family situations and complex welfare state environments. The study presented here is a sub-study of the NORFACE-WFSF funded study Family Complexity and Social Work. A comparative study of family-based welfare work in different welfare regimes (FACSK).

*Aim*

In this, we aimed to compare the structural foundations of family-based welfare work in three countries (Sweden, Lithuania and Bulgaria) representing different welfare regimes, varying from de-familialised to different degrees of re-familisation. More specifically, there was a focus on how 'family' is addressed and conceptualized in social legislation and policy within these three countries. This is important on a practice level since the complex welfare state environment is influential in how social workers conceptualise 'family' and how they construct and define family members as recipients of their services.

*Method*

Using a multiple case study design, data were collected via relevant and central legislation and national policy documents. In the three countries we scrutinised such documents from four social service and policy areas: child protection, substance abuse, migration and mental health. We also analysed constitutional legislation as an overarching source of principles.

*Conclusion*

The comparative analysis reveals fundamental differences in how 'family' is conceptualised and emphasised in the legislative and policy contexts of social work in Sweden, Lithuania and Bulgaria. Possible explanations and implications for theory and practice are discussed.

*The ethos of Family Support: Policy-practice restraints and possibilities*

Mary Shannon | University of Salford

Berni Smyth | National University of Ireland Galway Associate

Keywords | Family support, strengths based approach, social work practice

The theoretical underpinnings of a Family Support approach suggest that its application across services as an ethos and a style of working is a key element. At a policy level, family support approaches are gaining increasing prominence - both in the well-developed sector in the UK and the emerging sector in Ireland, although in the practice context of retrenched resources. Previous research by the authors with family support workers both in England and Ireland showed the importance of process factors in family support service provision: crucially the style adopted by the key workers. Subsequent small scale research in the sector has complimented these findings, revealing a distinctly strengths based approach even within poorly funded settings.

Whilst family support approaches as a preventative strategy and a focus on early intervention has developed, social work services themselves in each jurisdiction have become narrower in their focus in the child welfare arena. Given that the strengths based approach and style of working in itself is most valued by service users and is seen to be fundamental to the success of interventions, such a focus can arguably be of value across the spectrum of services.

This paper therefore draws on findings from small scale studies undertaken by the authors in each jurisdiction, arguing that:

- i. The application of family support as a style of working and in the ethos of a strengths based approach in itself is of value;
- ii. The discussion is relevant for social work practice across different jurisdictions as child social work at a policy and practice level become increasingly located at the remedial. We suggest therefore that such a strengths based ethos rooted in family support principles and theory can be valuable in social work which must operate in current lean service regimes.

*Reflecting on Policy and the Provision of Support to Adoptive Parents*

Elizabeth Harlow | University of Chester

Keywords | Adoption support, Policy, Evaluation

In 2013 a pilot post-placement adoption support service (PPASS) was introduced by the two voluntary adoption agencies 'Adoption Matters' and 'Caritas Care'. Both agencies, which were acting in partnership, were based in the northwest of England. Funding, which enabled the provision of this specialist service until March 2015, had been won from the National Prospectus Grants Programme. This paper offers insights generated from an illuminative evaluation of the service, with the evaluation taking place between February 2014 and March 2015 (see Harlow et al.2015).

From the accounts gathered from the adoptive parents, it was concluded that, despite the government's legal and policy commitment to the provision of post-placement adoption support since 2005, prior to the establishment of the PPASS, parents had found it hard to access the help they needed. Two interconnecting explanations might be offered:

a) Adoption as the replication of the autonomous birth family  
Luckock and Hart (2005) have pointed out the ambiguity of adoption. Although in policy it provides 'reparative parenting for particularly vulnerable children' (p.125) in legislation it replicates the autonomous birth family. Initially, adoptive parents wanted to replicate the autonomous birth family and avoid being seen as 'different'. Hence, there was a desire to be independent of social workers, but also a reluctance to confide anxieties for fear of being constructed as a failed parent. This was exacerbated by the belief that the placing social worker was interested in the child's needs only.

b) Funding and the organization of services  
As time passed and contact with social workers ceased, parents (usually mothers) might seek help from a variety of sources. For example, schools, their medical practitioner, who might refer to the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service which might in turn refer the parent back to the Local

Authority. In short, the parents appeared to ricochet between agencies in their attempts to elicit relevant help. The foundation of the help-seeking endeavour was the adopted child's behaviour or development, and when rejection occurred it was related to the 'nature' or severity of the child's problem, the source of funding for the service and responsibility for providing help. This might be understood in the context of limited funding, but also the complexity of service provision based on networked organizations (to do with the neoliberal emphasis on the market economy, partnerships, procurement and performance measurement which defines the governance and delivery arrangements).

From the evaluation of the PPASS, it was interpreted that parents were appreciative that their problems were acknowledged and that there was a response to their search for help. Simply knowing that the service existed was said by one parent to be a form of reassurance that enabled her to continue as an adoptive parent. However, funding for the service was time limited and the prospect of further funding was precarious. This paper will elaborate on the above content and following the work of Elliot (2008), gives attention to the way in which, within the context of adoption policy, the organization and delivery of services has the potential to undermine or contain the fears and anxieties of their users.

*Child- and parent sensitive co-operation working with families with substance misuse - Knowledge making in inter-professional focus groups*

Katarina Fagerström | Folkhälsan

Keywords | co-operation, substance misuse in families, critical reflection, dialogue, focus groups

#### *Background and purpose*

Networks of professionals involved in helping families with substance misuse related problems often have conflicts concerning the goals for individual family members and the family as a whole. The professionals from the field of substance misuse treatment tend to forget the children in the family, or see these children as the biggest motive for parents to stop drinking or taking drugs. The child welfare services often lack expertise in substance misuse issues and want to rescue the children from the drinking parents. In doing so, they perhaps become insensitive to the children's loyalty and love towards their parents. Professionals seldom recognise misuse early, so the problems have usually become more serious and complicated (Itäpuisto 2013, 2005; Fagerström 2005). Trifnoff & al. (2010) have developed the concept of child and parent sensitivity to take into consideration both the child's and the misusing parent's needs (Itäpuisto 2013). In an action research setting I conducted eleven focus group conversations for family workers, social workers, school social workers and professionals from substance misuse treatment.

#### *Methods*

The aim for gathering focus groups in the workshop was to through dialogue create relationships and challenge working cultures, so that people learn to value each other's personal and professional experiences, expertise and recognise each other's work. Ghaye (2005) notes that dialogue both within teams and across professions moves the process of reflection beyond the individual, and is informed by a concept that Mezirow (1991) refers to as leading to perspective transformation. Power differences need to be acknowledged and that dialogue between individuals must be supported by mutual respect and a commitment to the process (Karban & Smith 2010, 177).

For this presentation I analyse the participants' reflections about their own and each other's expertise in co-operating in professional networks and reflections of what they have learned from each other during the focus group conversations.

In analysing dialogue in focus groups (Marková et al. 2007, 136), it is easier to work with topical episodes that are sequences of talk which are internally topically coherent. Topics do not simply follow one another as autonomous units in a sequence; rather they develop out of interactions between prior, present and projected future topics, and the transitions are often shaded. Three different groups met.

### *Results and Conclusions*

This presentation is based on an article in progress which will be one of five articles in my doctoral dissertation. I am working on an analysis where I look at the focus group participants' reflections on co-operation in professional networks and what they learn about themselves and from each other in the present situation in the focus group.

*What is troubling families? What is troubling workers? Lessons learnt from evaluating a UK 'Troubled Families' Programme*

Elizabeth Frost | University WE Bristol  
James Hoggett | University WE Bristol

Keywords | troubled families, stigma, policy, support, profession

### *Background*

In the summer of 2011, England experienced a series of 'riots': social disorders mainly perpetrated by youth. The UK Prime Minister partly ascribed these to 120,000 'troubled families', who caused problems in their communities and also put high costs on the public sector estimates then at £75,000 (about 100,000 Euros) per year per family. The government's response to this was to institute a 'Troubled Families Programme', which would target families in which a member or members were: involved in youth crime or anti-social behaviour; have children who are regularly truanting and/or have an adult on 'unemployment' benefits. Support for these families was to be provided from within the existing local government structure of UK. Workers were offered only rudimentary training. Caseloads were small and the work with each family intense. This paper reports on key issues which emerged during the evaluation of one such project in an urban area in the West of England, 2013-14.

### *Methodology*

A group of researchers from UWE competitively tendered to undertake the evaluation of this area's 'Troubled Families' initiative. This was an evaluative study, using mixed methods to undertake a complex analysis of a still evolving picture, as the initiative was 'rolled out'. Process, impact and economic evaluations were undertaken. Purposive sampling was undertaken, and semi-structured interviews were undertaken with workers, managers, and families. By integrating ethnographic work, interview data and case file notes, case studies were produced which examined the families previous experience of welfare support and how families and key workers worked together currently and with what outcomes. This paper draws on those case studies, constructed around 12 'troubled' families. It re-analyses the interview transcripts, with a specific focus on the families' narratives of 'trouble',



and in what way this policy initiative addresses these.

#### *Presentation*

Having very briefly sketched the background of 'Troubled Families' in the UK and the parameters of the evaluation and its methodology and findings, the central aim and substantial content of this paper is to offer a discussion of the themes which emerged from a re-examination of the interview transcripts from the families and workers. The contrasts between the policy definition of 'troubled' (as troubling the state in terms of behaviour and cost) and the families' experiences of troubles often engendered by the state (e.g. poverty, lack of support from agencies, stigma etc.) will be presented, and a brief analysis of the oppositionary ideas discovered in relation to 'trouble' will be proffered. The (12) workers' narratives of offering a service here, as unqualified workers undertaking an extremely broad remit within an existing network of professional, multidisciplinary welfare support will also be considered. The paper will move to some concluding comments on how families and workers have responded to this government initiative, and whether it seems to be a more useful, less 'troubling' form of intervention than mainstream social work. The policy implications for social work, battling over professional identity in an uncertain political arena will, finally, be briefly outlined.

#### *Parent-carers' perspectives on their relationships with complex service systems*

Pam Joseph | University of Sydney

Keywords | parent-carers, parent perspectives, Care, anonymity, consent, visual data, research interviews

Care of a child (including adult children) who requires high-level care frequently involves entering into relationships with a wide range of service providers across multiple service systems. This study views these relationships through a critical lens, challenging existing ways of thinking about relationships between parent-carers and services, and questioning established conceptualisations of 'care' and 'caring'. By listening deeply to the voices of parents, the study aims to contribute to an improved nexus between formal and informal care.

The study was advertised via patient and community organisations' newsletters and social media, and word of mouth. Twenty mothers and five fathers who care for a child with high-level care needs took part in a semi-structured interview and used a low-tech tool to 'map' their service systems. Interviews were held in five Australian states, including both metropolitan and regional areas. The data production phase of the study concluded in November 2015.

Parents shared information about their view of their relationships with multiple services across sectors such as health, disability, education, employment and housing, and of their own role and identity within and/or outside these service systems.

Two consent forms were used. In addition to a standard pre-interview consent process, a post-interview consent form enabled parents to specify any constraints regarding the use of their information. The intention of this two-step approach was to maximize parents' control and to explicate potential limitations in the de-identification of data. The high-level care needs experienced by many of the families in the study were as a result of rare disorders, and anonymity was difficult to guarantee given the very unusual nature of many parents' circumstances.

This presentation discusses ethical and methodological challenges and opportunities that were identified in the course data production, including experiences in using the two-step written consent process and participant creation of a service map, and makes recommendations for these strategies in other social work research.

### *Some aspects of parenting adult persons with disability*

Vlatka Penava | University of Zagreb

Zdravka Leutar | University of Zagreb

Marco Buljevac | University of Zagreb

Marina Milić Babić | University of Zagreb

Keywords | parents of adult persons with disability, social support, quality of life, future challenges

Parenting a child with disability is a great challenge. When those children become adults, parents' worries and fears do not disappear nor do they diminish. New questions and problems arise with every life stage a child enters, so parents often feel emotionally and physically exhausted. Globally speaking, there are few studies on this topic, and in Croatia we have almost none.

The aim of this study was to get the insight into some aspects of parenting adults with disability. Also, differences between those parents regarding different types and degrees of an adult child's disability are examined. Both quantitative and qualitative approach was used in this research, conducted in 2015. In the quantitative part of this research we tested in total 300 parents of adult persons with disability. They filled a questionnaire about certain quality of life dimensions (family structure, forms of support, their needs, some aspects of parenthood, spirituality). Qualitative part of the research was consisted of conducting the semi-structured interview with 20 parents. Through the interview they expressed their experiences in raising a child with disability and providing care for an adult child, as well as their thoughts on the future challenges.

The results of this study provide us an insight into various determinants of parenting adult persons with disability. We got a good understanding on what kind of difficulties and fears of adult persons with disability have to face on a daily basis, as well as the level and type of support they need. These findings will contribute to the scientific knowledge and provide the insight into parenting adult with disability in the national context, but can also be a guideline for policy holders and practitioners who work with these families

*Autonomy versus duty of care in adult social care: working with self-neglect in the policy context of personalisation.*

Suzy Braye | University of Sussex

Michael Preston-Shoot | University of Bedfordshire

David Orr | University of Sussex

Keywords | adult social care policy, personalisation, self-neglect

The state's role in providing care and support to adults who have needs related to age, disability, or illness has, in England, been transformed, with the policy agenda now driven by the ideology of choice and control, and shaped through the language of personalisation (Leadbetter et al., 2008). As the organising principle for the retreat of the neo-liberal state from any significant role in providing welfare, personalisation is embedded within new legal rules on adult social care (Care Act 2014; DH, 2014). These emphasise that any action by the state to meet an individual's care and support needs starts with the assumption that the individual is best-placed to judge their own wellbeing; they are infused with references to the importance of 'views, wishes, feelings and beliefs', 'choice' and 'involvement in all decisions'.

Yet some of the most challenging roles for social workers in adult care and support are those in which the choices exercised by individuals - in terms of how they live or how they behave - in some way fall beyond a societal threshold of acceptability and tolerance. One such set of circumstances are those related to self-neglect: here an individual may neglect their own self-care or health in extreme ways that become life-threatening, or may neglect their domestic environment through extreme squalor and infestation or hoarding, posing severe risks to their own and others' safety. Both pose multiple ethical, practical and organizational challenges to social services. The self-neglect research that underpins this paper has demonstrated that what works here are assertive practice approaches that prioritise relationship-building and trust, and that a duty of care sometimes means limiting choice and control.

This paper will address the question: how can social workers negotiate the tensions between these two extremes: (i) a policy environment that prioritises

the autonomous choice of the individual and (ii) research evidence that indicates the value of more persistent, assertive approaches to practice. It draws on a rigorous review of the international literature on self-neglect, and on qualitative data from 91 interviews - practitioners, managers, and service users who self-neglect - analyzed using framework analysis methods. The findings highlight the complexity and diversity of self-neglect trajectories, and how individual biographies shape whether and how the individuals concerned can be said to exercise 'choice and control' in the context of their lived experience of self-neglect. They also demonstrate how professional relationships are the framework within which the tensions between autonomy and a duty of care can be addressed, and a balance of imposed and negotiated interventions sought. The paper will conclude by demonstrating both the constraints and the opportunities created within the contemporary policy discourse of personalisation, choice and control.

*'Are older people able to access their expressed preference for care and support?' An Irish Social Work perspective.*

Sarah Donnelly | University College Dublin  
Emet Begly | The Alzheimer Society of Ireland  
John Brennan | IASW  
Marita O'Brien | Age Action Ireland

Keywords | older people, decision-making, Social Work

### *Background*

Care of older people is a rapidly expanding area of social work practice and employment, meaning that most social workers will inevitably become more exposed and involved with older people, carers and their families (Duffy and Healy, 2011). Research indicates that most older people would prefer to live in their own homes and have support services provided to enable them to do so for as long as possible (Barry, 2010). However, there is an evident tension between this objective and the availability and delivery of appropriate community care or the promotion of 'ageing in place', with the consequent heavy reliance on the Nursing Home Support Scheme (NHSS) in the Irish context (Donnelly and O'Loughlin, 2015). This study set out to explore the perspectives and experiences of social workers in the Republic of Ireland working with older people to identify issues/barriers in accessing community supports and to examine older people's involvement in decision-making relating to their care planning, particularly focusing on those with a cognitive impairment/dementia. This study is a joint initiative between the Irish Association of Social Workers (IASW), Age Action Ireland and The Alzheimer Society of Ireland.

### *Methods*

A mixed methods study design was adapted and the study consisted of two phases: Phase 1 consisted of an on-line survey of social workers (via IASW) using Survey Monkey as a tool to administer the questionnaire to social workers in the Republic of Ireland. Phase 2 consisted of semi-structured telephone interviews with at least two social workers from each Community Health Office (CHO) area. Survey data was analysed using SPSS and qualitative data analysed using an interpretative inductionist approach (Kuczynski and Daly, 2002).

### *Results*

Differing practices emerged around older people's involvement in decision making relating to their care with both organizational and family members an influencing factor. Geographical inconsistencies were also revealed in social workers' ability to access community supports and clear tensions were found as home supports are delivered within the framework of what is available in that particular area. Waiting lists for community services operate in many areas and the concept of 'joined up' services in reality resembles more of a 'patchwork quilt' and as a result, social workers have to strongly advocate for services which the older person has been independently assessed as requiring.

### *Conclusions and Implications*

Currently there is no statutory entitlement underpinning eligibility for home care in Ireland or legal requirement that older people must be involved in decision-making related to their care. Despite a social policy agenda which aspires to promote 'ageing in place', increasingly services are only available to those with higher care needs meaning that preventative, early intervention and support is problematic. Equity in availability and access to support services requires urgent attention. This study also raises important questions about the nature of older peoples' involvement in decision-making, particularly those with cognitive impairment or dementia and highlights the need for further social policy developments in this area.

*Seeking for recognition in gerontological social work: insights from participatory action research in elderly care organizations*

Rasa Naujaniene | Vytautas Magnus University  
Natalija Mazeikiene | Vytautas Magnus University  
Jonas Ruskus Vytautas | Magnus University  
Robertas Motieciene | Vytautas Magnus University  
Laura Varzinskiene | Vytautas Magnus University

Keywords | recognition, gerontological social work, participatory action research

The aim of the paper is to present a debate on recognition of gerontological social work which was derived from empirical study on human resources management in elderly care organizations. In the aging society the elderly care is playing a more prominent role in the sector of social services. Social workers, nurses, medical doctors, care workers and other professionals interact in this field that creates a particular setting of social work profession. The paper invites to discuss the concept of recognition and its implications in gerontological social work practice. The concept of recognition allows to grasp recent developments and emerging challenges (neoliberal turn, economization and etc.) in the field of social work, its interplay with other fields, self-esteem and wellbeing of social workers and their attitudes toward work. Recognition is considered as a psychological, moral and political phenomenon. The authors of the paper refer to theories of recognition (Honneth; Fraser), professional field and symbolic capital (Bourdieu). Notion of recognition reflects worth and value of the human being, it expresses a fundamental human need to be appreciated and respected. The debate on recognition in gerontological social work setting derived from findings of participatory action research carried out in two private and two public organizations that provide elderly care. 48 individual and focus groups interviews were conducted with managers, social workers, nurses, assistants of nurses, care workers and physical therapists. Analysis of research participants' accounts allowed to interpret the recognition not only as a subjective experience, but as a part of a socially and politically constructed identity. This understanding reveals political dimension of recognition of gerontological social work and opens possibility to create support and motivation system for social workers in organizations and promote reputation of social work in society.

*Home or away? Outcomes for maltreated children*

Nina Biehal | University of York

Keywords | child protection, outcomes for maltreated children, children in care

*Background and purpose*

It is widely considered that outcomes for 'children in care are generally poor. Research has pointed to poor education outcomes, high rates of mental health problems, disproportionate involvement in substance abuse and crime and the over-representation of care leavers among the unemployed, homeless and prison populations. However, most studies to date have found it hard to disentangle the effects of being in care from the impact of the experiences (in most cases, abuse or neglect) that led to their admission. As a result, key questions remain unanswered. (i) Does being in care compensate children for previous disadvantage and improve their wellbeing, from a frequently low starting point? (ii) Or does it instead compound the disadvantages they bring with them into care? (iii) In other words, do children who enter care do better or worse than children with similar backgrounds and histories who remain at home?

One of the toughest decisions that social workers have to make is whether to support abused and neglected children at home or take them into care. This aim of this study is therefore to investigate: (i) whether outcomes for maltreated children who are admitted to care are better or worse than those for similar children who remain at home, monitored and supported by social workers; (ii) which maltreated children, in which circumstances, are most likely to benefit from admission to care or, alternatively, from remaining at home?

*Design and methods*

This comparative, longitudinal study was funded by the ESRC (the English research council for social sciences). It drew on data from local administrative databases to identify a large sample of children under nine years old who were known to have experienced abuse or neglect (n=390). Children who were admitted to foster care due to maltreatment, and who were still in

care at follow up (the care group), were compared to a group of maltreated children who were monitored and supported by social workers (on a 'child protection plan') and who were never admitted to care (the home group). Interviews were conducted with parents (of the home group) or foster carers (of the care group) to assess the children's progress and development and explore their current circumstances at home or in care. The interviews included measures of health, mental health, attachment and educational progress. Children's speech and language development was also assessed. In addition, the children's social workers completed survey questionnaires on the children's histories, family circumstances, the nature, severity and timing of the maltreatment they experienced and the quality of parenting they were currently receiving (if known).

### *Results*

At the time of writing (September 2010), data collection has been completed and analysis is underway. The study will end in March 2016, by which point we will be in a position to present important new findings on how outcomes for maltreated children who enter care compare to those for children with similarly adverse experiences who are supported at home. The implications of these findings for policy and practice will also be highlighted. Due to its timing, this conference is likely to be the first at which this study's findings will be presented.

### *Ensuring high quality planning and provision for children in care: the role of independent reviewing officers in England*

Jonathan Dickens | University of East Anglia  
Gillian Schofield | University of East Anglia  
Chris Beckett | University of East Anglia  
Julie Young | University of East Anglia  
Georgia Philip | University of East Anglia

Keywords | children in care, planning and decision-making, professional independence

### *Background and purpose*

In England, there are long-standing professional, public and political concerns about the quality of planning for children who are 'looked after' by local authorities (in care), the implementation of those plans and the effectiveness of services for the children and their families. Research suggests that the concerns are not always justified, but nevertheless they have led to a highly prescriptive set of legal requirements and government guidance about care planning and review. Key figures in this system are 'independent reviewing officers', IROs. They are employed by the local authority, but independent of the line management of the case. Their main roles are to monitor the implementation of care plans and ensure that the child's voice is heard in the process. The post came into being in 2004, but ever since there have been doubts about their effectiveness.

### *Methods*

This paper draws on research into care planning and the role of the IRO conducted by the authors in 2012-14. The research was a mixed methods study. There was a file survey of 122 children in care in four local authorities; interviews with social workers, IROs, parents and children; multi-professional focus groups; and a nationally-distributed questionnaire.

### *Results*

The study found that IROs were undertaking their roles in ways that were often rather different to the requirements of the statutory guidance. There was evidence that IROs could exercise professional independence and raise

formal challenges if they were unhappy with the progress of the case, but generally they preferred advice, discussion and negotiation, and sometimes direct intervention to help deal with a matter. Social workers and their managers often appreciated this more collaborative approach, although there could be resentment if IROs were perceived to have gone too far beyond their proper role. Some young people and parents expressed doubts and discontent about their IRO, but on the whole they did see them to be independent and effective.

#### *Conclusions and implications*

There are frequent calls for IROs to be 'more independent' and 'more challenging', but the dangers of such an approach are that it does not pay proper regard to the complexities and challenges of deciding, implementing and reviewing plans for children in care. The children and their families often have very great needs, there are many different decision-making levels and processes, there are accountabilities for spending public money, other agencies are involved, circumstances can be uncertain and unstable, and resources are limited (money, services, personnel, time). In this context, the role of the IRO has evolved to intervene in more subtle and (usually) cooperative ways. The study has messages for inter-professional working, and the nature of 'professional independence' in public sector welfare bureaucracies.

#### *Child welfare mandatory reporting - thresholds from the view point of reporter*

Johanna Hietamäki | National Institute for Health and Welfare

Keywords | Child welfare, mandatory reporting, qualitative research

#### *Background and objective*

Mandatory reporting is passed in the child welfare legislation in Finland. The child welfare law obliges professionals (e.g. teachers, doctors, nurses, health nurses, psychologists, police) to report to social services the suspicion of a child in need of protection. The most frequent reports were made from the police, but the professionals who meet children regularly (e.g. early education) report relatively infrequently. The researches concerning to the contents of the reports have been made in Finland but there is no research based information about the process of mandatory reporting. In the background of this study is the case eight year old girl died because of her dad and stepmother physical abused her. Many professionals had met the girl and her family. The professionals had done mandatory reports but there were also many situations when there were signs of maltreatment but the professionals did not report. This case led to the formal reports. Based on these reports the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health funded a research and developing project. This research is one part of this wider project. The objective is to study what kind of thresholds there are to entry into the mandatory reporting and child welfare social work?

#### *Methods*

**Data collection involved eleven focus groups interviews with the primary school teachers (2 focus groups), early education teachers (2 focus groups), family health nurses (3 focus groups), doctors (4 focus groups: child psychiatry, adolescent psychiatry, pediatric clinic and emergency services).** The focus groups interviews involved a total of 75 professionals. Interviewees described from three or four cases starting from the situation when they became worried about the child's situation, what happened after that, what kind of actions they had with the family, colleagues, social workers and the other people before, during and after the mandatory report. All interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed (289 pages, spacing 1.5). Data analysis

used a content analysis approach.

### *Results*

The data consists of 37 cases. The professionals described 10 successful and 17 problematic mandatory reporting cases. Furthermore 10 cases were open or they had decided that they are not going to do the mandatory reporting. The initial results express that there are four thresholds in the mandatory reporting process. The first threshold related to the becoming worried about the child's situation. The second threshold relates to the action after becoming to the worried. The third threshold is related to the decisions and practices to do the mandatory report. And the fourth threshold is related to the social workers' response to the mandatory report.

### *Conclusions and implications*

The thresholds related to the mandatory reporting process are also thresholds for entry into the child welfare social work services. Education, training, knowledge about the child maltreatment and how to work with the parents and children are important in the case of mandatory reporting. Multiagency collaboration practices before and after the report with the professionals and family, knowledge about the other professionals work and good consultation practices are important.

## *'Identifying and Responding to Child Neglect in Schools'*

Victoria Sharley | Cardiff University

Keywords | child neglect, schools, education, multi-agency, identification, early Intervention, case-file Analysis

### *Background & Purpose*

Child neglect is the most complex form of child maltreatment to respond to, often because it is chronic rather than based upon specific incidents as physical or sexual abuse may be. Identifying whether the care a child is receiving is poor enough to be labelled neglect is a significant challenge for practice. This makes it difficult to ensure that the child is provided with the appropriate help, in a timely manner that will improve their situation sufficiently.

The study investigates the extent of involvement of mainstream primary and secondary schools in identifying and responding to child neglect. It examines the relationships between Education and Social Services in a multi-agency environment, specifically exploring the experiences of school staff in how they respond to children and parents when there is concern that a child is being neglected. The project sits within CASCADE (Children's Social Care and Research Development Centre) at Cardiff University and aims to understand how schools identify child neglect, and the quality and breadth of the early interventions they implement. The results of the study will inform policy and social work practice and hence improve the wellbeing of neglected children.

### *Methods & Study Design*

The study comprises of two phases: (1) Analysis of a sample of Children's Services' case files from three Local Authorities with differing levels of social deprivation and varying rates of neglect on the Child Protection Register (n=150), (2) Qualitative school-based interviews at both a primary and secondary school in each of the three Local Authority areas (n=30).

This paper focuses upon the findings from Phase (1) of the study. The case file analysis sampled up to fifty of the most recent cases in each Authority where the child's name was placed on the Child Protection Register under the category of 'Neglect', the child was of school age, and a school was the referring agency to Social Services.



A structured schedule categorised the extent of the school's level of involvement in each case from initial referral, through to assessment, Initial Child Protection Conference, Initial Core Group and to the first Review Conference. Qualitative data has also been gathered throughout the process in terms of the role of the referrer, and what early support and help has been offered by the school to ameliorate neglect, such as provision of food, finance, or clothing to the child.

Initial findings will be presented to the conference exploring associations in the sample between the type of school (primary or secondary), the characteristics of the child, and the level of involvement of the institution in identifying and responding to child neglect in a multi-disciplinary environment. Although the study is yet to reach its conclusion, the research fits closely within theme six of the conference, making an original contribution to the evaluation of the quality of early service provision in schools for children experiencing neglect.

*Securing the evaluationloop: developing a new concept for high-resource using children on-the-job*

Joep Hanrath | Hogeschool Utrecht (University Applied Science Utrecht)  
Andrea Donker | Hogeschool Utrecht (University Applied Science Utrecht)  
Lous Krechtig | Hogeschool Utrecht (University Applied Science Utrecht)  
Anne-Marie Bos | Hogeschool Utrecht (University Applied Science Utrecht)

Keywords | secured residential care, supportive development, implementation, evaluationloop

### *Background*

Sometimes austerity measures and evidence-based social policy making do coincide. In the Netherlands, secured residential youth-care institutions were commanded to reduce time spent inside for so called high-resource using children. Time spent in a secured residential care institution is extremely expensive. A reduction of this time would reduce the budget while simultaneously reducing the aversive aspects of this kind of institutional care and increasing the quality of the care received. In order to achieve this, the quality of care as well as the collaboration of all organisations involved was to be improved by working with a new supportive concept, so-called Trajectory care. In comparison with the old concept the focus shifted from consecutive, separated (therapeutic) interventions, to a more long term support strategy facilitating future steps towards independence, starting very soon after entering the institution and continuing on the outside during approximately two years. One professional is to guide the youngster during this whole trajectory.

### *Methods*

Research questions addressed the quality of the method of implementation as well as the quality of the specifics yet to be determined of the new care program. A combination of action research methods (150 interviews) and multiple case studies (26) were conducted during one and a half year from the start of the new care program. The development of Trajectory care was observed and to some extent measured.

### *Results*

A true reduction in institutionalized time was achieved and collaboration between organizations improved up to a certain point. However, the new

care program did not fully thrive. It required simultaneously development and implementation of very diverse and complex (therapeutic) care in tailor-made Trajectory care. It was learning –on-the-job and required constant learning loops of evaluation and adjusted implementation.

### Conclusions

The intensified collaboration between the secured residential institution and other organizations did result in reduced time spent inside. The supportive concept, trajectory care, in itself still seems a strong concept. Nevertheless, structural learning loops in the implementation procedures were identified as insufficient for establishing positive development during unfavorable contextual circumstances.

### *Changes to the practice of using support person in child welfare in Finland - Perspectives on the 1970s and 2010s*

Johanna Moilanen | JAMK University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | practice of using support persons, child welfare social work, voluntary work, the Finnish history of child welfare

The presentation focuses on analysing how the practice of using support persons has evolved in the statutory municipally-organised child welfare in Finland through times. The explicit purpose of this practice, launched in the 1970s, is to provide support to children and young people who are clients of the municipal child welfare services. The idea is to form an interpersonal relationship between a child and an adult volunteer worker, and as an 'open care' method in child welfare social work the relationship is then guided and controlled by municipal social workers.

The presentation is based on the author's PhD research completed in 2015. In the study, complementary methodological and theoretical ideas were adopted from several sources: relational sociology of childhood; Pierre Bourdieu's relational sociology; and Foucauldian governmentality research. The study applied a longitudinal qualitative research framework and was based on a data set comprised of both historical data and data from the 2000s and 2010s.

The results demonstrate that the practice of using support persons can serve as a prism for exploring the changing relationships between the welfare state and civil society, professional social work and volunteer work and, eventually, between children and adults. The results indicate that the practice of using support persons has transformed through struggles between the agents that occupy interrelated positions in the field of child welfare social work. One conclusion is that the idea of the normality and the naturalness of the nuclear family model is the enduring foundational belief of the practice in the field of child welfare social work. Furthermore, the position of children in the operation of the practice seems to have remained rather unchanged as for instance the practice is still rather adult-led. The main implication for the social work practice is that developing means for children's stronger involvement in the field of child welfare social work is necessitated.

*Culture in Transnational Child Welfare Practices: Some Historical Reflections for the Present*

Xiaobei Chen | Carleton University

Keywords | culture, child welfare, China, Canada, historical, Christian missionary philanthropy, transnational adoption

*Background and purpose*

How can social work practices with regard to cultural diversity be reflective? This paper seeks to address this question through comparatively analyzing how child welfare practices are organized by concerns about a non-Western culture in two Canadian-Chinese encounters: Christian missionary philanthropy in China around the turn of the twentieth century and transnational adoptions almost a century later.

Since the early 1990s transnational adoptions from poorer countries by affluent parents in the West have increased significantly and acquired unprecedented volume and visibility. China has been a prominent country of origin until about 2005. Most adoptions from China have brought girls from marginalized social and economic backgrounds into familial relations with privileged professional, middle class white adoptive parents. Little known and discussed among adoptive parents, social workers, facilitators, caregivers, government officials, and the public on both sides of the border is a genealogical predecessor of recent adoptions, the existence of a significant historical formation of connections between Chinese children and white missionaries of comparable gender, racial, cultural, and class dimensions. These connections took the forms of care at orphanages, residential or day schooling, and occasional informal adoptions.

*Method*

This is an interpretivist, qualitative study of two sets of transnational child-welfare-related encounters involving white Canadians and Chinese children. Research on the historical work of missionaries uses secondary sources on mission history and archival materials held in Canadian and Chinese archives. Primary data on contemporary adoptions was mainly collected through 73 semi-structured interviews with adoption professionals (9), adoptive parents (12), government officials in both Canada (8) and China (3), Chinese-Canadians (10) and Chinese nationals in China (31). Additional primary sources include participant observations of information

sessions and cultural celebration events, publications related to adoptions from Chinese, both in print and online (mainly websites for government departments, adoption agencies, adoption support groups, individual parents and adoptee's writings, and Chinese-language websites hosted both inside and outside China), and numerous chance conversations in places such as coffee shops, restaurants, or taxis. The theoretical framework is primarily informed by Foucauldian studies of governance and subject-making, post-colonial theorizing of cultural politics, childhood studies, and ethics of recognition.

*Results*

There seems to have been major shift in how Chinese culture is perceived and acted upon in child welfare practices: while Western Christian missionaries saw Chinese culture as pagan superstition, today adoption service professionals emphasize maintaining adopted children's heritage culture for fostering "robust" ethnic identities. Against this appearance of progress, I argue that the present heritage celebration paradigm is limited in addressing the constraints faced by Chinese-Canadian children and youth. If the earlier model of cultural assimilation took shape in the context of colonialism and civilization imperative, today's heritage celebration has emerged out of concerns with identity and difference on the left in the 1960s and 1970s and the rise of co-opting state multiculturalism since.

*Conclusion and implications*

In the ideological context of state multiculturalism, social work practices often become a conduit for multicultural governmentality, which perceives culture as objects, demands non-white Canadian subjects with rooted belongings, and operates in ways that sanctions and incorporates, as it depoliticizes and subordinates (Brown 2005). Reflective social work practices ought to be critically aware of these tendencies and contest the pressure to participate in producing normative, depoliticized, neoliberal multicultural subjects.

*Childhood deprived and betrayed? Negotiating the history of Residential Child Care*

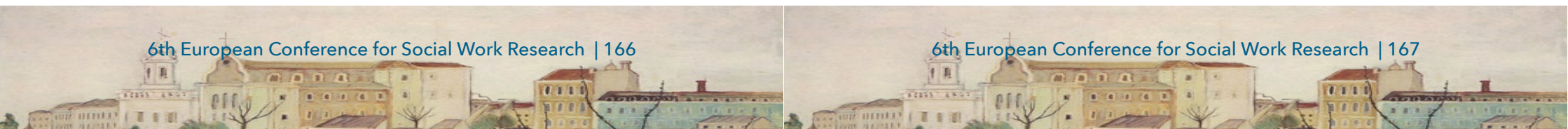
Gisela Hauss | SGSA Switzerland

Keywords | history of social work, childhood, residential child care

During the twentieth century, tens of thousands of children and adolescents in Switzerland were placed in foster families or care homes. Recent research indicates that the welfare of the children was often secondary. Placement in a care home or a foster family was often associated with social isolation, compulsory work or even with sexual or physical abuse, engendering life-long consequences for those affected. Several European countries have recently undertaken efforts to reappraise this past. Similar steps are currently in preparation in Switzerland. The last several years have seen increased public and research interest in the issues surrounding residential child care.

The proposed paper examines interdisciplinary research in the context of political efforts to reappraise the past. It is based on initial provisional findings of the research network "Placing children in care. Child welfare in Switzerland 1950 - 1990", funded by the Swiss National Foundation (<http://www.placing-children-in-care.ch>). In the ongoing analysis of the data, an image of childhood in care emerges that challenges received conceptions in a new way. It contrasts with other still valid narratives on the history of childhood in residential care. In those narratives, care homes are construed, in analogy to extended families, as spaces of protection (for example, group homes [Retungshäuser] in the 19th century). The image of a distressing and unsettling childhood in residential care emerges into the view of the public as crystallized in collective figures of memory (Assmann), in films, various events and photographs. Child care homes become a symbol of a betrayed childhood. In my paper, I present the contradiction-ridden conceptions of childhood in residential care, on the one hand drawing on first interim findings from our research project, on the other observing the process of political efforts to appraise the past. Conceptualizations of childhood are never beyond dispute. The to date relatively uncritical traditional constructions of childhood in Switzerland are actually challenged by social efforts to detach the

solely individual and scattered memories of children in residential care from their individual experiences, thus rendering them permanently available in societal figures of memory. In this processes childhood does not appear as a homogeneous formation, nor is it shaped by a uniform normative orientation. Memories and counter-memories, fragments and figments flow into the construction of childhood. The societal memory of childhood - analyzed here in the case childhood in the residential care home - as well as the historical conceptions of childhood in the scientific disciplines and practices, currently appear contradictory and uncertain in regard to their affirmative, identity-molding function. My paper provides a window onto changes in the construction of childhood in residential care. A key question is: when and under what social conditions are memories formed and rewritten, and what social strategies of remembering and forgetting are associated with that? In this way, the proposed paper also opens up a space for discussion regarding dynamic processes of the current policies (and politics) of remembering.



*An Unexpected Alliance: Social Work and the Literary Left between the Wars in Canada, 1919-1939*

Marjorie Johnstone | York University, Canada

Keywords | history of social work, radical social work, history of social welfare research

At the turn of the twentieth century, informal social work was widespread in Canada but in the interwar years there was a shift to professionalization with the introduction of university-based training (1914) and the formation of a Canadian professional association (1926). Between the two World Wars was a time of social ferment, with the economy shifting from affluence to recession, which escalated urban social problems, particularly unemployment and the demand for relief. It was also a time when the political left and the labour movement gained increased popular support in the face of the apparent failure of capitalism (Finkel, 2007). Small leftist magazines flourished many established and edited by women. Two social workers Dorothy Livesay and Margaret Gould were co-editors in such a magazine, *The New Frontier* (1936-1937) which was dedicated to giving a voice to the proletariat (Irvine, 2008; Rifkind, 2009). In their articles on social issues they mobilized sociological approaches to knowledge and interviewed mothers, workers and union activists as material for their articles. This approach was synchronous with emerging new directions in social work research which sought to document social problems and disseminate the results in the public domain (Zimbalist, 1977).

Gould and Livesay were part of an active group of socialist-feminist social workers who sought to advance a social justice agenda. Using an historical archival approach this paper will examine their literary production in relation to 1) their social work careers using their writing in the *New Frontier* and in other supplementary archival sources and 2) their activism in relation to other contemporary Canadian radical social workers and 3) their social work research methods in relation to current social welfare research approaches of the time. The current dominance of neoliberal ideology, the retrenchment of the welfare state and the global demand for austerity make the study of early social work strategies to circumvent the dominant discourse and expressions of dissent particularly pertinent.

*Varying Views of Pregnant Teens in Qualitative Research: Perspectives on the "Problem"*

Jeane W Anastas | NYU Silver School of Social Work

Keywords | teen pregnancy, qualitative research, social problems, narratives

*Background.*

In the United States, the dominant discourse about pregnancy and childbearing in the adolescent years is of serious problems and risks for most young mothers and their children. However, qualitative and other research findings have suggested that being pregnant and becoming a parent in the teenage years may have variable outcomes over the long term and even benefits for some (e.g., Williams, 1991). When research findings vary, research review and synthesis is useful. Clemmons (2003) and Spear and Locke (2003) published syntheses of qualitative studies of teen motherhood, and Bonnell (2004) has synthesized quantitative findings from the US and UK. No prior synthesis of studies of pregnant teens in particular has been identified. Since research has shown that some teens' feelings and attitudes may change between pregnancy and the early months and years of parenting, this systematic review focused on pregnant teens.

Historical study of how "unwed mothers" have been cared for in the United States from the late 1800s until the mid-twentieth century (Kunzel, 1993) shows that social workers came to play a dominant role in professionalizing these services, which then consisted of "maternity homes" where unwed mothers gave birth and then surrendered their infants for adoption. However it was not until the early 1970s that teen pregnancy and teen parenting became specific topics of professional study and intervention. A source of this new concern was that marriage as a response to teen pregnancy was declining, and pregnant teens were increasingly choosing to keep their babies rather than choosing adoption. In addition, the problem, like being "on welfare," was racialized. Since then, rates of adolescent pregnancy have been declining in the US and UK but they remain higher than in other wealthy Western nations. While social views of single motherhood have changed over time, the attitudes and practices of pregnant teens with respect to what they call "young motherhood" are still under scrutiny, and myths about teen pregnancy and parenthood have persisted (Klerman, 1993).

Narratives reflect and perpetuate views of social problems and of the people in any “problematic” or marginalized group. Kelly (1996) described four competing narratives that differ in how teen pregnancy and parenting are understood and therefore how the problem should be addressed. The first is the discourse of bureaucratic experts that locates the “problem” in the psychology of the young women themselves (that something is “wrong” with the girl): needing someone to love them, having had abusive or traumatic experiences, or lacking knowledge about contraception, health in pregnancy, or parenting. This view encompasses the “babies having babies” framework that holds that a “child” cannot adequately function as a responsible adult with respect to healthy behaviors during pregnancy nor successfully mother an infant or growing child.

The second narrative is the “wrong” morals/“wrong families” view embraced by Conservatives. This view may include critiques of the cultural or subcultural norms that are now seen as promoting unconventional family formation or family structures. The third narrative is of a “wrong society” with policies and institutional practices that create or perpetuate problems for young people who are pregnant or parenting. These views reflect those of oppositional movements (principally feminist and/or Afrocentric or anti-racist) asserting that society is wrong not to support teen pregnancy and childbearing. Teen pregnancy and parenting are seen as an alternate path to adulthood. Those focusing on problems like school disaffection also fit in this group. The fourth theme is what pregnant and parenting teens think is the biggest problem: stigma.

This study classifies the qualitative studies reviewed with respect to the first three points of view. Examination of findings of all the studies with respect to themes of stigma and stigma management is the focus of the next stage of analysis.

#### *Methods.*

The methods used in this systematic review of qualitative studies of pregnant teens were drawn from Saini and Schlonsky, (2012). The presentation will specify the procedures used to identify studies initially and will include a PRISMA diagram of the process of identifying qualified studies for inclusion in the systematic review. This review was of qualitative or mixed method studies of pregnant teens published between 1989 and 2014; studies including mixed samples of pregnant and mothering teens were included if the sample included 3 or more pregnant teens. Inclusion criteria also included studies from the USA, Canada, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

Additional inclusion and exclusion criteria will be described. This paper reports on the first level of data analysis (descriptive analysis—Saldanya, 2013) that identified the dominant points of view taken on teen pregnancy in this body of qualitative research.

#### *Results*

The first finding was this was not a null review; 27 unduplicated studies (33 publications) were identified that met all sampling criteria. While the disciplines of some first authors could not be determined by any information in the publication itself (n = 2), nurses were most commonly the authors (n = 12), with other health fields represented by counseling psychology, public health, midwifery, and medicine. Other disciplines represented included sociology of education (2), family studies, and leisure studies. The one social work author was in the “bad society” group. A table displaying the findings informing this presentation will be shared with the audience.

As to points of view taken on the problem of teen pregnancy, happily there was only one study published in 1993 (nursing) that took the “bad family/bad morals” point of view, a study exploring why pregnant teens were no longer choosing adoption for their babies. A quotation illustrates this kind of narrative: the author is “surprised” that “the teens showed no shame in embarking on single motherhood,” a moral, pro-marriage point of view. Also reflected in the author’s discourse was concern with poverty and welfare dependence that was considered a consequence rather than a “cause” of teen pregnancy.

The majority of the studies took a “problem girl” perspective (20), which is not surprising given that journal articles and books published by professionals would tend to reflect the dominant views of “professional experts.” Common themes in these studies’ findings included intense emotions; the need for social and emotional support especially from their own mothers and sometimes from the boy’s father; and role changes. For example, studies that becoming pregnant led many young women to stop “partying,” drinking, smoking and fighting--“new ways” involving adopting more healthy and less risky lives for the sake of the unborn baby. Although most common in the “problem society” studies, some studies in this group also presented data suggesting that, given a lack of other opportunities for these low-income women with problems at school, early childbearing can be seen as a rational alternate route to adult status, with educational and vocational

pursuits postponed but not abandoned.

The social/institutional change orientation (Kelly's 3rd or "opposition" narrative) was relatively uncommon (n=6) among these studies. This "wrong society" point of view was most often evident in studies of schooling and school disaffection. Three of the 6 studies of this kind came from England. The stigmatization and institutionalized marginalization experienced by pregnant teens was a prominent theme in the findings of this subset of studies.

### *Conclusions*

Overall, the professional "problem girl" perspective predominated in these studies. Indeed many young women who become pregnant as teens do face health, mental health and other individual challenges. These studies were generally very sympathetic with the young women studied, but their recommendations for practice consisted of guidance for preventive and supportive work with individuals. Although social structural problems like poverty, educational exclusion, or being or having been "in care" are related to teen pregnancy and early mothering, social policy and social provision on a broader scale are not usually addressed.

Social workers published little in this small subsample of research on teen pregnancy. A health or public health perspective predominated, which may explain the involvement of nurses in research on teen pregnancy. It may also reflect what feminists describe as the medicalization of women's bodies and lives.

Stigma and stigma management, the biggest concern of pregnant and parenting teens themselves, was not explicitly studied but came up in the themes identified in the narratives of quite a few of these studies. It is time to make stigma, Kelly's (1996) 4th narrative and a common concern among pregnant teens, and the microaggressions that lead to felt stigma, a focus of our research. Along with structural factors, these sometimes subtle and unconscious manifestations of negative stereotypes and attitudes contribute to the marginalization and social exclusion these young mothers-to-be experience.

### *Families communicating about risk in dementia*

Brian Taylor | University of Ulster  
Mabel Stevenson | Ulster University

Keywords | dementia, risk and decision making, family carers

### *Background and purpose*

Family carers are often involved in decisions concerning the health and social care needs of people with dementia. These decisions frequently involve considering risks inherent in daily living situations, where effective communication about risks is required. While an extensive and growing body of research on general risk communication in health care is available, there is a paucity of literature pertaining to risk communication in social care and more specifically in dementia care. The research reported here is part of a multi-stage study on risk communication in dementia care involving health and social care professionals, people with dementia and family carers. The purpose of this phase of the study was to understand the risks that present most concern to family members caring for an individual with dementia; to explore attitudes and approaches of this group towards risk; and to examine how information about risks is communicated between family carers, care recipients and professionals working in dementia care.

### *Methods*

Five focus groups were held across Northern Ireland involving twenty-two familial carers of individuals with dementia. Participants were purposively recruited through Alzheimer's Society. A grounded theory approach was used for data analysis.

### *Findings*

Family carers were most often concerned about issues of uncertainty such as driving, falls, financial mismanagement and mistreatment, getting lost and using electrical appliances. Respondents focused on consequences rather than probabilities of risk. Risk was associated with negative terms such as danger, harm, vulnerability and accidents although several carers noted that risk taking could also be beneficial. Family carers were conducting informal processes of risk assessment and management for their family member

with dementia. Input from social workers, health care and voluntary services influenced and supported them. The overall process was mediated by the individual context with factors including personal history, progression of dementia, co-morbidities, environment, supports available and attitudes of family carers affecting both risk factors and also approaches taken. Family carers engaged in discussions about risk with professionals and sometimes with their family member with dementia. Discussions related not only to medical treatment, but also to activities such as driving and to managing risks in the home. Findings suggested that risk communication, in terms of discussion of risks with both professionals and care recipient, was not necessarily central to how carers deal with risks in the community.

#### *Conclusions and implications*

Familial carers of people with dementia take an active role in dealing with risks in the community and would benefit from more focused education and support from services in this aspect of their caring role. In the quest for quality, services might usefully be informed by research such as this with family carers. Research to establish a robust evidence base of prevalence of specific risks of concern in dementia care would support professionals, families and people with dementia to understand and manage risks more effectively. Social workers in dementia care would benefit from developing more effective and person-centred forms of risk communication so as to provide care that is supportive but not excessively intrusive.

*Social workers' understandings of family and domestic violence in a culturally diverse context: Postcolonial and intersectionality perspectives*

Margrete Aadnanes | Oslo and Akershus University College

Keywords | domestic and family violence, young people, 'culture', 'ethnicity', social work

In this paper, I will present ongoing analysis of social workers' and therapists' understandings of family and domestic violence. The child and family welfare services in Norway are facing new challenges in relation to a growing cultural diversity among its users. Thus, it is important to explore and analyze the knowledge underlying the practice in family violence cases. Building on postcolonial and intersectionality theories, I try to show how normative understandings in social work practice, when taken for granted, can contribute to overlooking other important aspects in cases concerning domestic and family violence.

The paper represents the third article in my PhD dissertation about young people who have experienced domestic and family violence. The background for the study is an articulated need for knowledge within social work in Norway that can address challenges related to a rapidly changing demographics and a growing cultural diversity. It is an important task for social work research to develop such knowledge.

The analysis is based on qualitative interviews with 20 professionals, both social work practitioners and therapists who work in child welfare services, family help centers and women's shelters. Central research questions are a) How do professionals understand the phenomenon of domestic and family violence in a culturally diverse context? b) Do the concepts 'culture' and 'ethnicity' affect their understandings, and if so – in what ways?

By applying analytical concepts like 'majority' and 'whiteness', which represent categories of power within postcolonial and intersectionality perspectives, I try to show how understandings of family and domestic violence can appear self-evident and unquestionable in social work practice. Furthermore, I will argue that postcolonial and intersectionality perspectives can



enable practitioners to identify such taken for granted understandings and look beyond categories like 'culture' and 'ethnicity' in the understanding of family violence. This will enable an approach which is sensitive to other categories of relevance, such as poverty, health and class.

*Does intimacy in the romantic couple among Romanian youth predict the transition to stable partnership and parenthood in adulthood?*

Cristina Faludi | Babes-Bolyai University, Romania

Keywords | young adults, Romania, intimacy, violence, couple

#### *Background and purpose*

Youth ages 19 to 22 are transitioning from adolescence into young adulthood, a time when individuals begin to make their own decisions about the path they will take in adulthood (Nagaoka et al., 2015). In search for independence, young adults approach the vocational, educational, and personal issues as major decisions. One of the primary social development in young adulthood is the entry into romantic and longer-term sexual relationships (Gutgesell and Payne, 2004). Recent studies pointed that, despite the spreading of selfish individualism, there exist a continued high value of commitment within intimate relationships (Carter, 2012). This paper proposes to investigate the interlink between the levels of intimacy, respectively of violence within the current couple relationship, and the plans related to personal development in the near future among Romanian youth. We assume that a strong intimacy encourages the plans for personal achievement, while elements of violence in couple discourages the partners to assume adult roles in the personal life.

#### *Methods*

A sample of 1509 Romanian young people completed the second wave of the on-line self-administered Outcome of Adolescence Questionnaire during October 2014–February 2015. Only respondents having a current romantic partner were selected; consequently, analysis were applied to 836 young people. The age range is 19–23 years, mean age is 20, and 66% are female. Independent-Samples T-Test was used to compare the differences between partners' positive or negative intentions related to moving together or separating with the partner, getting married and giving birth to a child, according to the mean scores on intimacy and violence in the current partnership.

#### *Results*

About 90% of participants having a romantic partner were sexually active, and 60% were in partnership for more than a year. Intimacy and violence in

couple produce the strongest significant differences regarding separation: young people with lower levels of intimacy and higher levels of violence in their couple intend to withdraw from the partnership in the next 2-3 years. It seems that intimacy and violence do not have impact on the intention to move together with the partner. Instead, higher levels of intimacy predict the intentions to get married and to have a child. Levels of violence in couple make no difference in such plans. The results showed that women perceived higher levels of intimacy, whereas men felt higher levels of potentially violent behaviours in their couple. Also there are more significant influences for future personal issues among women than among men.

Conclusions and implications. Implications for social work practices of our findings are discussed. Cultivating commitment and intimacy in the partnership is a resource to foster a positive youth development. Social workers should encourage young adults to develop their autonomy, to be aware of new roles and responsibilities, requiring choices and decisions. The individual response of social worker depend on his/her assessment of a range of factors, some of which we have discussed here. Planning a response and supporting young people to manage their behaviour is a key-role for social workers.

*Family complexity in social work. Interrogating Family-based welfare work in the UK and the Republic of Ireland*

Susan White | University of Birmingham

Paula Doherty | University of Birmingham

Keywords | family practices, complexity, professional judgement, moral reasoning

This paper presents emerging findings from the UK and the Republic of Ireland on social workers' understandings and everyday theorising about family. The study forms part of a large international comparative project funded by Norface. The study uses mixed methods including: detailed multi-stage vignettes used in a series of focus groups in each setting, non participant observation of everyday organisational activity and individual interviews with selected practitioners, managers and opinion leaders. These methods are used to explore how social workers 'speak family'. The intervention of the state in family life is morally contentious and can involve both valuable support and the most coercive of interventions such as the compulsory removal of children. Social policy and professional practice relating to families is influenced by prevailing understandings of normality and deviance, autonomy and dependency, responsibility and risk. This paper will examine in detail the current moral settlements about these matters. The main aim is to identify patterns of family orientation in social work in order to inform understandings of the formulation of family policy, governance of the family as an institution and how this is negotiated by social workers. The project will compare different types of social work with the family: child welfare, drug/alcohol abuse treatment, migrating families and mental health. By asking practitioners to discuss in detail and show their reasoning about case vignettes, this study provides insight into; how the notion of 'family' is presently understood and operationalised in day to day work, how discretion is used, how a service is defined, and which inequalities are talked about as 'acceptable' or 'unacceptable'. By examining multiple perspectives it is possible to discern patterns and explore the interaction of structural and organisational contexts, policy and law within the way in which practitioners' reason. This has the potential to stimulate conversations and debates about social policy and social work nationally and internationally.

## *Family-in-community-centred Collaborative Processual Model of Social Work*

Lea Sugman | Bohinc University of Ljubljana, Faculty of social work  
Gabi Cacinovic Vogrincic | University of Ljubljana, Faculty of social work  
Ana Jagric | University of Ljubljana, Faculty of social work

Keywords | family-in-community, process, collaboration, co-creation, working relationship, synergetic theory of complexity, qualitative action research

Despite the increasing emphasis on client-centred, strengths-based, solution-focused, participatory, narrative, dialogic, etc. approaches to contemporary social work there still exists a gap between the professional concepts and their use in direct practice. This also applies to the research which in general keeps focusing on social work contents, tasks, competences, etc., i.e. on the »what«, and tends to neglect the focus on the process (leading in the direction of desired outcome) and the needed conditions for such processes to unfold, i.e. on the »how«. Decades of developing theoretical concepts to make postmodern, reflective and reflexive social work education, practice and research possible, have led a team of Slovenian researchers-teachers-practitioners at the Faculty of Social Work, University of Ljubljana, to devise a Family-in-Community-Centred Collaborative Processual Model of social work direct practice. The model's theoretical framework is synergetic theory of complexity with its 8 generic synergetic principles, realized in direct practice with the participants in "individual working projects of help" within a wider context of "working relationship of co-creating". The model suggests "how" a context is co-created that has a potential to have an energising effect on the participants who respond with motivation to change their less successful patterns of functioning.

The model's applicability and usefulness was tried out in a qualitative action research project (2015-2016, Norwegian Financial Mechanism Programme). Reaching out in the community (through both public and non-governmental organizations) with an offer to professionally support and help families facing complex psychosocial problems (such as poverty, unemployment, family violence, social exclusion, poor academic achievement, behavioural and mental health problems, etc.) brought us in contact with families in need. The sample consisted of 28 multi-stressed families, of which 22 remained in the project; 19 MSW students practicing their role of a family social

worker, and 6 teachers-researchers as their supervisors. The time span of the project was up to 6 months for the majority of students. A variety of data-gathering methods was used as follows: 1/ MSW students-practitioners regularly filling out a specially designed form in order to document the process of support and help from session to session; 2/ MSW students-practitioners writing a final report about this process; 3/ students conducting evaluation interviews with those 22 families at two points in the research timeline; 4/ final process-evaluation interviews with 17 families conducted by the researchers at the end of collaboration; 5/ students-practitioners' focus groups where one of the two sets of questions referred to the process of co-creating desired change. The collected data was qualitatively analysed following a procedure (Strauss and Corbin, 1990) from open coding, to axial coding and selective coding, thus integrating the linked categories into a narrative with a story line (a "tentative theory") and a metanarrative ("tentative metatheory", "interpretative synthesis") based on integration of narratives constructed by using different data-collecting methods. The presenters of this paper would like to share the encouraging research results which confirm the usefulness of collaborative processual model with the professional audience and open space for instructive discussion.

*Sexual orientation and gender expression in recent social work scholarship:  
Good news for all?*

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Urban Nothdurfter | Free University of Bolzano, Italy

Keywords | sexual orientation, gender expression, LGBTQ, social work scholarship

In 2014, the IFSW has adopted a document that outlines the general standpoint and policy of the IFSW and its member organisations in respect of sexual orientation and gender expression. The document addresses issues such as the criminalisation and pathologisation of sexual identities, sexual orientations and gender expressions that do not correspond to sexual and gender normative prescriptions, the discrimination and social exclusion of LGBT people because of cultural values and religious beliefs, and the intersectional character of experiences of discrimination. The document explicitly refers to the importance of knowledge about and from LGBT people and their experiences as well as to the need to include LGBT related issues in social work education.

However, different studies have shown that LGBTQ topics still receive minimal attention in mainstream social work scholarship. Furthermore dominant discourses focus on the vulnerability to mental distress of LGBT people and to the lacking suitability of services to address their needs.

The paper presents the results of a systematic literature review in selected leading social work journals covering the years from 2010 to 2015. The research aims to quantify the amount of contributions on LGBTQ issues, to categorise them according to their thematic focus as well as to their conceptual and theoretical approach. Particular attention is given to contributions highlighting positive experiences of LGBTQ people and pointing out that ideologies of sexuality and gender related injustice are not only a minority issue but do affect all people.

*A queer question of care in later life: Future directions and priorities for the provision of long-term residential care to older lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) people*

Paul Williams |  
Michele Raithby |  
Tracey Maegusuku-Hewett |

Keywords | older people, ageing, sexuality, Lesbian gay bisexual, long-term care services, social Work, equality

*Background and purpose*

Dedicated long-term care provision for older lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) adults is an established and growing phenomenon internationally, for example, LGB (including transgender)-specific retirement homes are operating in European nations, including France and Spain, and in some US states (Carr and Ross, 2013). An inherent expectation within this new market is that concerns attached to non-heterosexual ageing, homophobia and discrimination will be abated. Within the United Kingdom, demands for separate services run against the intended objectives of the Equality Act 2010 that requires all service providers in England and Wales, public and private, to provide non-discriminatory services. This begs the question of whether expansion of specialist provision or the enhancement of existing care services for older people should be the future priority for public bodies, LGB advocacy groups and housing providers. In this presentation we will critically explore some of the assumptions and meanings inherent in discussions about providing LGB-specific housing and care services as a newly-evolving area of knowledge construction about what constitutes 'good care' for diverse groups of older adults.

*Methods*

We present thematic qualitative findings from a mixed-methods study into the inclusion of older LGB adults in long-term care provision in Wales. Concluded in 2013, one component of the study involved semi-structured interviews with 29 LGB adults (50-76 years of age) living independently in the community about their hopes, expectations and concerns for future care provision in residential settings. We also present the views of representatives

from older people's and LGB advocacy organisations and networks (n=20) who participated in a series of four focus groups convened in North and South Wales.

#### *Results*

Findings indicate that the perspectives of both interview participants and stakeholders waver between a separatist discourse and a mainstreaming agenda. The majority of older lesbians in our sample report a preference for women-only accommodation while gay men express a preference for mixed mainstream or LGB-specific models; gender is evidently a mediating factor across the findings. Participants' life-stories and their current and previous social networks also inform their preferences.

#### *Conclusion and implications*

The provision of choices, in spite of the lack of public resources to support this, is clearly important for older LGB adults when contemplating the future possibility of living in long-term care environments. Implications for enhancing the quality of care environments for diverse groups of older people will be discussed alongside the implications for social workers in adult care who have professional responsibilities in advocating for responsive and inclusive housing provision for LGB people in later life.

Reference: Carr, S. & Ross, P. (2013). Assessing current and future housing and support options for older LGB people. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

#### *"How We Stay Together without Going Crazy:" Reconstruction of Reality Among Women of Mixed-Orientation Relationships*

Adir Adler | University of Haifa, Israel

Adital Ben-Ari | University of Haifa, Israel

Keywords | qualitative research methods, mixed-orientation relationships, bisexuality, intimate relationships, alternative relationships

The phenomenon of mixed-orientation relationships (MOR), in which the female partner is straight and the male partner is gay or bisexual, is imperceptible, yet not insignificant. Until recently, the literature that addressed this phenomenon has focused mainly on the men's perspective, while ignoring the women's experiences and constructed meanings. Most of the studies have employed a pessimistic tone, underscoring the obstacles faced by each of the spouses and their various motives to end the relationship. This study, which is part of a broader study that was conducted in Israel, was designed to reveal these women's voices, seeking to understand how they construct their reality within such a relationship. Contrary to the pessimistic outlook that dominated previous studies, this study aimed to explore the elements which assist in maintaining those relationships. Hence, the researchers were particularly interested in understanding couples where the spouses choose to stay together. Based upon the phenomenological paradigm, in-depth interviews with eight women in mixed-orientation relationships were conducted. The findings indicate that in order to adapt to their newly constructed reality, women reframe various individual, marital, and social aspects in their lives. Those reframing processes constituted a point of departure to developing a conceptual model, which outlines the journey to reality reconstruction among women in mixed-orientation relationships. In this presentation, we will present the personal, marital, and social challenges of these women in their journey to reconstruct their reality.

*Volunteers and professionals acting and reflecting on new ways to support people that cope with loneliness: practicing the multi-phased method developed in the Netherlands*

## WORKSHOP

Workshop organizers | Meike Heessels, and Danielle Damoiseaux | Hogeschool van Arnhem en Nijmegen, Netherland; Margriet Braun | Saxion University, Netherlands

Keywords | empowerment, loneliness, the power of local networks, volunteers professionals citizens cooperating as partners

Loneliness is a subjective experience of an unpleasant or inadmissible lack of (the quality of) certain social relationships. Approximately one third of the Dutch people describe themselves as lonely (Tilburg & De Jong-Gierveld, 2007). Levels of loneliness differ across Europe. On average (older) residents of Northern European countries are less lonely than their peers in Southern European countries (Fokkema et.al.2012). For example, while in Italy family ties are traditionally strong, but loneliness is relatively high (Fokkema et al. 2012). This might be due to economic factors, health, but also expectations about social relations that are not fulfilled.

Loneliness has a wide range of negative effects on quality of life as well as health. Most interventions designed to combat loneliness are ineffective (Fokkema & Van Tilburg, 2007). This is probably due to the fact that these interventions do not succeed in actively connecting to the specific person's story, needs and wishes (Masi, Chen, Hawkey & Cacioppo, 2011; Schoenmakers, 2013). Treatment is most effective when a trajectory for improvement is constructed together with the person (Machielse, 2015). Furthermore, long-term effect and chance of prevention is greatest when the client's social network is involved (Jonkers & Machielse, 2012).

Based on these principles, we have worked together with over 100 professionals, (professional) volunteers and other involved citizens to develop a textbook and an accompanying training to address loneliness in new and

alternative ways in the Netherlands. A team of 20 professionals and researchers worked closely together in making and re-modelling this training and textbook. Throughout this collective learning process, research and practice were constantly put into dialogue with each other. We decided that practice would always be leading: the actual stories of lonely people were central and not theories or methodological considerations. Client perspective was included through experiences from professionals and volunteers with lonely or isolated citizens. Furthermore, some of our team had some had experienced periods of extreme loneliness themselves. Finally, we interviewed 122 adolescents and older people on their experiences with loneliness throughout their lives.

In September 2015, we published the book and training. We have developed the training for mixed groups of professionals, volunteers and other involved citizens who are active in the same district, area or village. The training is without cost and can be started independently by any mixed group of professionals and volunteers who want to set up personal trajectories for lonely and isolated people and to join their powers, supplies and insights locally. Participants interact and learn together on the basis of actual cases. In between the meetings, the participants go back to their own practice and actively get in touch with (potentially) isolated or lonely people and really listen to their stories. Then, the participants support these people in taking small, personally formulated steps to what they themselves consider improvement. Throughout these trajectories, participants reflect on their experiences with their colleagues from the local training group. Learning is in the relationships among people: establishing a network is more than just collecting a group of people that 'should' work together. It is finding a shared motivator through going back to the stories that count: your own story and that of others who feel lonely.

In this interactive workshop, we will shortly present the methods by which we constructed the textbook and training. Furthermore, participants will try out part of our training. We will work in pairs and groups, and reflect on our own way of addressing loneliness. We will formulate personal and collective actions in relation to our own local networks.

*Dealing with the legacy of political conflict: Researching the views of social workers in Northern Ireland*

Jim Campbell | University College Dublin  
Joe Duffy | Queen's University

Keywords | Political Conflict, User Involvement, Ethic of Care

Presenters: Professor Jim Campbell, University College Dublin, Dr Joe Duffy, Queens University Belfast

Despite the fact that social workers, alongside other professionals, have been dealing with the legacy of the Northern Irish conflict for forty years, few empirical studies have been carried out in this field. A decade old study revealed the experiences of mental health social workers in dealing with violent contexts and the choices they made in helping clients (Campbell and McCrystal, 2005). More recently a group of academics have explored ways of preparing students for practice in such contexts, with a particular focus on engaging victims and survivors as educators in social work educational programmes (Duffy, 2012; Coulter et al, 2013; Campbell et al, 2013).

This paper will be used to reflect upon the complex ethical issues that arise for researchers in such divisive, contentious and dangerous contexts. We will describe how we have used an ethic of care approach in our methodology whilst being conscious of the impact of our evaluation approach on respondents. Our argument is that this type of research can enable researchers to reflect upon their own biases, assumptions and biographies and in doing so contribute to an understanding of the role that social work academics can play in peace building in societies emerging from/pre post conflict

The paper concludes with a brief summary of a new research project that builds upon this learning where a mixed method approach is being used to social workers' views on the legacy of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

*The Role of Social Workers in Social Protest - Comparison between Two Protests in Israel*

Ayelet Makaros | Bar Ilan University, Israel  
Merav Moshe Grodofsky | Sapir College, Israel

Keywords | social workers, social protest, role of social worker

Purpose and Background: Recent years have witnessed the outbreak of social, political and economic protests throughout the world. In 2010, the world witnessed the eruption of the "Arab Spring"- a wave of revolution and protest against tyrannical regimes in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya. In 2011, the Occupy Wall Street Movement began in the United States and spread to over 100 cities in the country and over 1,500 cities globally in protest against capitalistic socioeconomic policies that harm the public at large. Social workers have been involved in these waves of protest, assisting their clients to fight for their rights. This paper presents findings from two Israeli protests: the "Single Mothers Protest" (2003) and the "Tent Protest" (2011). The paper focuses on the role of the social workers in the protests.

Method: Qualitative methods were employed to collect the research data. In the "Tent Protest" (2011) data was collected through a focus group interview. The research sample consisted of 11 social workers (nine women and two men). Of the 11 participants, 10 were public employees in welfare services in 11 different local municipalities throughout the country. In the "Single Mother Protest", data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The research sample consisted of 11 respondents: 3 social workers from municipal social services, 2 community organizers, 4 social workers from the Social Affairs Ministry and 2 activists.

Results: To date the social work social protest literature has focused primarily on performance tasks employed to achieve protest goals. These include organizing demonstrations, lobbying, media campaigns, advocacy, letter writing and more. The findings of this research indicate that in both of the social protest movements in Israel these tasks did not suffice. In these movements, social workers reported on their interventions in the dynamics and the relationships among diverse constituencies and players associated with the protests. Building collaboration, promoting conflict resolution, defining the protest leadership and their roles and task distribution were among the

primary social work roles reported. Three spheres of social work action were identified: Task Force; Support Force; Resistance Force.

Applications: Social protest is visible in countries around the world. Social protest is recognized within the profession as a legitimate action to promote greater social justice. Identifying the roles of the profession within this arena is important for the socialization of both neophyte and veteran social workers working within protest movements.

*The Islamic Movement in Israel as a Welfare Services Provider: A Case Study of the "Independent Community" Concept Research proposal*

Rana Essed | Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Keywords | faith based organization, social services, palestinian community in Israel, minorities, social policy

Until the 1970s, social scientists tended to ignore the role played by religion in society and its impact upon political and policy processes. Over the last three decades, the impact of religion has been the subject of growing interest and scholars now often see it as a significant factor in both policy design and implementation. This is the case with regard to social welfare policy in different parts of the world, among them the Middle East. The present study seeks to contribute to this emerging scholarship by examining the case of the Islamic Movement among Palestinian citizens of Israel.

The Palestinians in Israel have experienced processes of discrimination and marginalization in multiple areas, one of the most important of which is welfare. Throughout its history, the Israeli welfare state has been characterized by severe segmentation, which has often excluded and marginalized the Palestinians citizens of the country.

In recent decades, the Islamic Movement has emerged as a crucial religious and political force among Palestinians in Israel. This movement has also been a key player in the field of third sector organizations, providing diverse social services to members of the Palestinian community. Its centrality to that community and its major role as a provider of social services. Indeed, scholars argue that the movement has provided services where the state has failed to do so, or has served an alternative to the inadequate services available.

A fundamental principle in the movement's activity is the concept of an "independent community". It refers to the creation of a community, which administers its institutions independently, devoid of the pressures applied by the Israeli Establishment on Palestinians on both public and individual levels. Practically, this entails providing social services through religious organizations in a variety of fields of activity. Although the literature recognizes the key role played by the Islamic Movement in social services in Israel, there is still no study that explains how historical events, changes in the welfare



system, and internal developments within the movement led to the emergence of the "independent community" concept.

The current research has two main questions: (1) What are the principles that influenced the development of the concept of the "The Independent Community"?; (2) What factors influenced the development of the provision of social services by the Islamic Movement, in what manner are these services provided, and is the provision of social services by the Movement part of the "Independent Community" project?

The study is based on the content analysis of two types of sources. The first is archival materials from 2000 to the present that include the newspapers of the Islamic Movement and the local Palestinian press. The second is in-depth interviews with activists and leaders in the Islamic Movement. In these days I'm completing the data collection, the study's findings will hopefully shed light on the specific case, as well as contribute to a better understanding of the global phenomenon of emerging communities of ethno-religious minorities that operate independently of state welfare services.

*Family resilience among parents and their adolescents exposed to ongoing political conflict*

Shira Pagorek Eshel | Bob Shapell School of Social Work, Tel Aviv University  
Michal Finklestein | Department of Social Work, Zefat Academic College

Keywords | family resilience, exposure to political conflict, families with adolescents

#### *Background and purpose*

In recent decades, there has been a growing understanding that family resilience may mediate the impact of adversity on family system health, and therefore serves as an important focus for social work intervention. Nevertheless, the trajectories of family resilience among families with adolescents who are exposed to ongoing political conflict have been understudied. As a result, practical intervention knowledge is also lacking. These Families face multiple challenges resulting from the combination of the family's developmental stage and the threatened security due to the political situation. It is therefore important to broaden social workers' understanding regarding the way parents and adolescents perceive their families' resilience in this complex situation. Identifying the different variables explaining family resilience among parents and their adolescents may assist social workers to explore new pathways for intervention and bridge between theory and practice. Our study aimed to examine whether discrepancies in perceived family resilience exist between parents and their adolescents in the context of political conflict, and whether there are differences in the predicting variables of family resilience, among these two segments of family-members. Relations between exposure to security threats, anxiety, personal resilience, self-differentiation, and family resilience were explored. These variables were selected based on the current literature on families with adolescents under adversity.

#### *Method*

The sample included 89 dyads of parents and their adolescents, who resided in Israel, in the Gaza bordering communities, and had been exposed to missile fire for 13 years. The participants comprised of 71 mothers and 18 fathers aged 35-60, and 39 adolescent daughters and 50 adolescent sons, aged 11-18. A convenience sampling approach was used. The study was

approved by the Zefat Academic college ethics committee. The questionnaires examined parents and their adolescents' exposure to incidence of missile shooting threats and evaluated levels of anxiety (TAI), personal resilience (CD-RISK), self-differentiation (DSI) and family resilience (FRAS). All questionnaires had good psychometric qualities. Statistical analyses included a Repeated Measure ANOVA to explore differences in family resilience and Hierarchical Regression Analyses to examine the contribution of the independent variables to the variance in family resilience.

### *Results*

No significant differences were found between parents and adolescents in levels of perceived family resilience. Among the adolescents, being a girl, having high personal resilience and low levels of anxiety predicted higher levels of family resilience. In parents, high personal resilience and high levels of self-differentiation predicted higher family resilience.

### *Conclusions and implications*

Though the level of family resilience was perceived similarly among parents and their adolescents, it was predicted differently in each group. This may indicate the need to collect information and plan interventions that promote family resilience while taking under consideration the family's unique developmental stage of adolescence, as this factor may result in different trajectories for family resilience in the same family system. Intervention in times of crisis should also target adolescents and parents who are challenged to achieve high levels of family resilience. The trajectories of family resilience should be further explored on both sides of the Gaza border.

*Agency, empowerment and living space of young mothers in a shrinking region*

Marijke Sniekers | Zuyd University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | young motherhood, agency, empowerment, space, gender, shrinking society

The relationship between young motherhood and living space is a contested one. Unfavourable socioeconomic living environments are often identified as contributing factors to early motherhood, but marginalised living conditions are also seen as consequences of teenage motherhood. In a shrinking region, such as Parkstad in the Netherlands, living conditions seem poor. Parkstad experiences demographic shrinkage due to an ageing population and emigration of young people as well as socioeconomic shrinkage because of high unemployment and low educational levels of its population. However, an analysis at the intersections of gender, space and age can reveal empowerment and agency of young mothers in their living environment that not necessarily reflects deprivation, and can add an insider perspective of young citizens on predominantly outsider urban and spatial planning or policy studies on shrinkage.

The aim is to unpack the notion of agency as a fluid, dynamic concept which is demonstrated in everyday life of young mothers in a shrinking region. The research question is: How does agency show in young mothers' engagement with their living spaces in Parkstad as a shrinking society? This question is addressed in an ethnographic study.

Data are firstly collected through 45 semi-structured interviews with young women between 18 to 34 years living in Parkstad. The women's ages at birth of their first child vary from 17 to 23 years. Most women are fulltime mother, one-third of the population attends an education and some are employed in a paid job. Secondly, data are collected through participant observation throughout 1 year in weekly meetings of two young mother groups from two main welfare organisations in two different towns in Parkstad region. Of the 45 mothers interviewed, 17 also participated in the young mother groups. Analysis of interviews and participant observation reports was done through

open, thematic coding after which main themes such as social and physical environment were chosen.

The study shows how agency varies between active participation to create change in individual lives as well as on a sociostructural level in society, and passive adherence to norms within the intersections of gender, space and age. Young mother's agency depends on their knowledge and use of living spaces in their neighbourhoods and houses. Young mothers challenge, negotiate and contemplate about which pathways to follow and which people to engage with. Active, deliberate, transformative agency mainly shows when young mothers are individually engaged or intrinsically motivated. However, agency also shows in practical, tacit and emic knowledge on their living spaces and everyday use of these spaces, in negotiation with etic images of these living spaces.

The research findings can be valuable in regeneration strategies in shrinking societies that ask for active citizen participation and bottom-up approaches to include views of youngsters. The results can also be relevant for social policy and for social workers, who work from a strengths-based approach, to recognize not only active, transformative agency, but also take into account everyday knowledge, careful considerations and compliance with societal norms and customs as empowerment strategies.

*Policy advocacy engagement of social workers in general hospitals in Israel*

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Iditi Weiss-Gal | Tel-Aviv University

Keywords | policy advocacy, social workers, hospitals, health

Social workers are expected to be involved in policy advocacy in order to contribute to better social policies for their service users. This is also the case in health social work. However, there is very limited literature relating to the policy advocacy role of social workers in the health field and it is unclear how this discourse of policy involvement is translated into action by individual social workers in hospitals.

The study's aim is to expand knowledge on the level of involvement in policy advocacy by social workers employed by hospitals in Israel and on the factors associated with this. Based on the "Policy Practice Framework" (Gal & Weiss-Gal, 2015) the study explores motivational factors (e.g. policy practice skills, political efficacy, political interest, policy practice education or belonging to recruitment networks) and facilitative factors (e.g. the levels of organizational support for policy engagement) associated with policy engagement by social workers.

The study is based on a sample of 102 social workers employed in 12 government hospitals in Israel. We are currently analyzing the data and this analysis will be presented at the conference. The results will shed more light on the levels of engagement in policy advocacy, the specific actions social workers engage in, and the factors associated with levels of engagement in policy advocacy. The results will contribute to better understanding the factors that playing a role in understanding social workers efforts to affect policy change and peruse social justice.

Gal, J., & Weiss-Gal, I. (2015). The "why" and "how" of policy practice. *British Journal of Social Work*. 45, 1083-1101.

*Gaining the views of vulnerable families: effective engagement with families and their social workers*

Jo Moriarty | King's College London  
Mary Baginsky | King's College London  
Jill Manthorpe | | King's College London

Keywords | engagement, research recruitment, Professional gatekeepersp

The Department for Education (DfE) has invested £100m in 57 projects as part of the English Innovation Project. King's College London (KCL) was commissioned to evaluate one of the largest projects within this programme. The project is Transforming Children's Services with Signs of Safety Practice at the Centre is led by Professor Eileen Munro, Dr Andrew Turnell and Terry Murphy (MTM) MTM's proposal sets out four broad evaluation questions:

- (i) Is 'Signs of Safety' being implemented?
- (ii) What organisational forms best support front line practice?
- (iii) Are outcomes for children and young people improving?
- (iv) Is there better value for money across children's social care?

The KCL team is evaluating the third and fourth areas. In the evaluation of the outcomes for children and young people one aspect of the proposed methodology is to interview two samples of families - parents and children aged over six years - at two points in time. These are families that had contact with children's service departments because their children were judged to be at risk and where their children are usually the subjects of child protection plans. Capturing the views of these families is a central concern of this evaluation.

The methodology approved by the University's Research Ethics Committee and by most of the ten pilots is that parents are provided with details of the evaluation and what involvement entails. They are then given time to consider if they wanted to withdraw their names from the list before it is transferred to the evaluation team. A small number of pilot areas required families to opt into having their names made available to the team. Consent from the families to take part in the project was obtained at a later stage.

The team is encountering a range of responses from social workers working

with families; there are those that facilitate access and promote co-operation through to those that establish blockages and discourage families' participation.

Many of the families would fit the definition of being 'vulnerable'. While there will be methodological and ethical issues in any research with families these take on specific sensitivities when researching vulnerable families. Previous studies have identified many of the issues encountered by the KCL team but while these inform an approach, responses have had to be designed to meet specific situations.

This paper will examine the challenges and solutions to:

- (i) the different approaches adopted by the pilots to involving what some consider 'vulnerable' or 'hard to engage' families in evaluation
- (ii) working with social workers and other professionals attached to these families
- (iii) the strategies adopted by some social workers to block access to families
- (iv) the recruitment and retention of families
- (v) locating and contacting families
- (vi) confirming that informed consent is in place
- (vii) making sure questions and the instruments used are understood.
- (viii) attempting to capture the voice of children and young people.

## *Changing Role for Social Workers in Local Social Policy of Tehran Municipality*

Ali Akbar Tajmazinani | Allameh Tabataba'i University

Changing policy context in Tehran city requires changes in the roles of social workers within the municipality. Despite decreased budget allocations from central government to Tehran municipality in recent years due to a considerable fall in the overall country's revenues, Tehran municipality has continued its new approach to become a so-called 'social institution', seeking alternative ways and mechanisms. However, there is a need for reflection about the roles of social workers in local social development practices. Based on the findings of seven focus group interviews with representatives of NGOs working for the well-being of seven target groups of social development in Tehran (children, young people, women, old people, people with disabilities, female heads of households and people at risk of exclusion such as the homeless and street children) as well as individual and group interviews with members of the above-mentioned groups, the paper addresses grounds for changing roles of social workers in line with local social development goals. It seems that looking at their roles within a merely 'statist approach' or the 'community project-based approach' needs to be complemented with more focus on the 'community participation approach'.

## *Analysis of the 'EBP Problem' – A Systematic Review of the Conceptualizations of Evidence-Based Practice in the USA compared to German speaking countries*

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Keywords | evidence-based practice, systematic review, comparative study, epistemology

The concept of Evidence-Based Practice (EBP) provoked strong response in social work. Okpych and Yu (2014) even identified EBP as one of the main determinants of the latest paradigm change in social work practice. Their historical analysis is however restricted to the USA. Whereas EBP was widely adapted in the USA, as well as in Scandinavian countries and in Great Britain, in other European countries criticism on EBP is predominant. This is also the case in German speaking countries. Many scholars are well aware of this dissonance; however, there is no systematic research about this phenomenon. To empirically contribute to the understanding of those differences we conduct a systematic review and pursue the following research question: How is EBP in the United States compared to German speaking countries conceptualized? According to our conceptual framework based on some theoretical publications (Rosen, 2003; Sommerfeld, 2015) we hypothesize that (1) the unclear term 'evidence', (2) the different conceptualizations of EBP and (3) the different cultural historical developments, including different epistemologies, may play a crucial role.

To identify all relevant publications we conduct a comprehensive search in both generic (e.g., ERIC, Web of Science) and specific databases (e.g., WISO, SOWIPORT, Social Service Abstracts). This database search is complemented by a hand search for further journal articles, book chapters, books and proceedings. We include all articles with first-authors from German speaking countries or the USA which have the terms 'evidence-informed practice' or 'evidence-based practice' in the title and 'social work' in the title, keywords, or journal title. Since most EBP articles refer to the influential publication by Sacket et al. (1996), we retrieve all publications from 1996

6th European Conference for Social Work Research | 200

6th European Conference for Social Work Research | 201

until 2015. From those publications, we firstly extract the used references to analyse the theoretical embedding by means of a network analysis. For a further investigation we take a random sample of each of the two sub-groups; publications from German speaking countries (n = 100) and from the USA (n = 100). Those publications are analysed by the use of a coding scheme oriented on the meta-narrative review approach by Greenhalgh and colleagues (2005). We accordingly code the applied 'theoretical lens', the conceptualization of EBP (incl. the applied definition of 'evidence'), the criticism on EBP, as well as the epistemological markers (Gringeri et al., 2013). To ensure an appropriate interrater-reliability, two reviewers independently code 20 % of the articles (cf. Schlosser, 2007). Eventually, we compare the results of all coded publications (German speaking countries vs. USA) in terms of significant differences regarding the perceptions and conceptualizations of EBP as well as their theoretical embedment.

We are currently conducting the literature search and expect results within the next months. Besides those results we further want to outline the current discussions in terms of a clarification of the term 'evidence' (Fisher, 2014; Mullen, 2015), especially the challenging task how to include the practitioner's expertise and reflexivity into the EBP model.

### *Tripping over difference: A critique of international comparative research methodologies*

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Chatail Das | Hochschule Bremen

Keywords | comparative research methodologies, social work, reflexivity and reflectivity

Comparative social work research affords academics and practitioners the opportunity to address diversity in social work practice across different national contexts. For example social work in Europe is characterised by a rich but confusing mosaic of profiles, titles, training traditions and tasks (Lorenz, 2002). When applying a similar gaze to examining social work across the global north and south, the level of multiplicity and fluidity is further intensified. Comparative methodologies undoubtedly offer useful tools and

frameworks for highlighting the uniqueness of social work practice within specific settings, by making the implicit explicit and at the same time promoting a notion of global social work. The vision to release social work from the narrow horizons of national constructions and traditions and contribute to a more comprehensive framework for approaching and conceptualising social work (Adams, et al., 2000) is promising. However based on the practical experience of undertaking social work research in India, a simplistic understanding of comparative analysis tends to be naive and potentially harmful and unethical. An uncompleted qualitative research project involving narrative case studies exploring the topic of ageing in Pune, India demonstrates the consequences of underestimating the significance of history, linguistics, cultural and political contexts in shaping social work theories, practices and research methodologies across the global north and global south. Comparisons have a tendency to reproduce prevailing power imbalances and imperialistic views between countries, cultures and peoples. Any foray into comparative research therefore demands reflexivity upon one's own cultural, power and privilege as well as reflexivity, or the ability critique what is being compared, by whom and for what purposes.

*(Re)considering the Comparative: Child protection and Epistemic Cultures - The Case of Swedish BBIC*

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Keywords | epistemic cultures, Sweden, UK, knowledge, childhood, child protection systems, discourse analysis

This paper discusses the knowledge transmission from the English Integrated Children's System to Swedish BBIC, 'Children's Needs in Focus', in the light of comparative approaches towards child welfare, contemporary advocacy for cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural approaches, and the emphasis on knowledge-based social work. The focus is on the conceptual framework of risk assessments in the context of the Swedish child protection system. The purpose is to critically assess children's epistemic position in these complex processes of knowledge distribution.

Discourse analysis is used as a framework for analysis of evaluations, reports and research linked to BBIC and ICS. With the concept epistemic culture, I look more closely at knowledge production and what is included in the realm of 'evidence' and research, as well as what is considered to be knowledge-based social work. Such an approach allows for analyses of epistemic cultures that are not necessarily confined to space and instead are widespread and distributed in line with other logics.

Preliminary findings indicate how a knowledge transfer serve as a knowledge-legitimizing practice which in many ways exemplifies a homogenization of two geopolitically distinct contexts. From this point of view, BBIC and ICS are tightly interlinked and may be seen as parts of one and the same epistemic culture, similar epistemologies and ontologies of childhood, as well as its epistemic subjects and objects of knowledge. What becomes comparative not only links the two systems' assumptions of the universal but comparison in itself becomes a legitimizing practice.

This paper suggests the importance of going beyond conventional comparative welfare approaches and pay more critical attention to epistemic cultures, a fields' scientific communities, and disciplinary boundaries when trying to understand contemporary social work.

*The Role of Best Practice in Social Work: International Collaboration and Lessons Learnt*

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Keywords | International Social Work, Best Practice, Social Work Research

The concept of 'Best Practice' has been populated across various business, organizational and more recently, service-oriented fields with the rising belief that improving services and various project management schemes is best achieved through identifying, evaluating and facilitating the transfer and implementation of practices that seem to work successfully to other areas and strategies. Although a long-standing concept within business and the private sector, this idea began to globally infiltrate public agencies and non-governmental organizations in the early 1990s as a result of increasingly regulated service measures and the influence of new public discourse in advocacy for 'excellence'. As a result, service providers and social workers have come under pressure to offer evidence for the nature of their practice in a manner that is accountable and regulated. However, the concept of Best Practice within social work is still highly debated. Many refer to the benefits of evidence-based social work, particularly for international social work research and collaboration; others argue that the concept is rooted in business management ideology, is task-orientated, and leaves little room for human interactions, contextual understandings and indigenous knowledge development. Over and above this, concerns have also been raised regarding the nature of Best Practice implementation in social work being somewhat unclear, with an uncertainty regarding the understanding of the terms 'excellence' and 'best practice' and how these might be operationally defined and implemented.

This paper examines these arguments and the role of Best Practice in social work, against the backdrop of a number of country examples of best

practice in social work, selected by partner teams from a Marie Curie EU-FP7- International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES) concerning six EU and non-EU countries. These examples were selected to identify best practices and tools already used in participating countries, and to develop new tools for different social work contexts toward the development of frameworks and tools to improve the quality of social services delivered to service users. The authors of this paper highlight that the analysis of cases selected by partner teams is beneficial in shedding light on what they perceive to be the relevant social issues or social work/ social policy tools in their national contexts. Discussions about the necessity of best practice in social work, its benefits and its challenges for both on-the-ground practice and international collaboration and research are presented.

*Social Welfare state in an era of crisis; the impact of the crisis on to social workers and the challenges ahead*

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Keywords | poverty, social welfare services, social welfare system, work burden, supervision

The present global economic crisis raises new concerns for social workers. One of its most visible results is the further socioeconomic decline and marginalization of excluded populations. Taking in consideration this unprecedented situation, this article presents qualitative findings on how the increasing social impact of the socio-economic crisis on poverty and deprivation has also raised concerns about the weakening of the social welfare system. In particular this article highlights the burden that social workers have undertaken due to the deterioration of quality of life of Cypriots and to the decrease of personnel in social welfare services. Methodology: The sample of the study was social workers from the three major districts in Cyprus (Nicosia the capital, Limassol and Larnaca). Participants (n=25) were approached out of their office hours and interviewed. Focus groups focused on the impact of the crisis in their day to day work, the work burden that may have worsen due to deprivation and to the cut of welfare services staff and the opportunities that have for supervision during those difficult times. In addition possible ways of alleviating these difficulties were explored. Results: Findings indicate that due to the weakening of the welfare state, the increase in the vulnerability amongst high risk groups, the cut off in welfare services budget and the increase in the workload, social workers lose their motivation, their desire to work and their belief in the state. The need for specialized staff, working together with other disciplines, close linkage with local universities and supervision become imperative in a system that is on the edge of collapse.



## *Gender and recognition – a study from the Norwegian activation context*

Helle Cathrine Hansen | Oslo and Akershus University College

Keywords | activation program, social work practice, recognition, gender

### *Background and aim*

The Norwegian Qualification Program (QP) was implemented in 2007, as Norway's most comprehensive nationwide activation program, aiming at preventing poverty and social exclusion through labour market integration of social welfare recipients and long-term unemployed service users. With tailor-made measures, i.e. work-training, courses, social and physical training and medical treatment, and close and long-time follow up from social workers, the aim of the QP is to assist service users in qualifying for the labour market, with the ultimate goal of becoming self-sufficient through paid employment. The aim of this paper is to explore QP participants' outcomes from participating in an activation program, and to explore how their efforts to obtain paid employment is recognized.

### *Theoretical approach*

Recognition as analytical perspective is widely used in social work research, in particular Honneth's theory of recognition, focusing identity-formation and self-realization, with the key concepts of self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem. Nancy Fraser's theory of recognition focuses parity in participation, and recognition is tied to institutionalized patterns of cultural values and the status order of society. By combining Honneth's and Fraser theories of recognition in the analysis, the paper seeks to connect the micro-level interactional data to a macro-level discussion of outcomes of an activation program.

The study is based on field research conducted in four Norwegian labour and welfare offices (NAV). The data were produced by ethnographic observations of 33 follow-up meetings with QP-users and 16 individual interviews with QP service users. In the meetings, the participants discussed matters related to the individual service users' QP plan, including measures and employment approach, skill-training placement, health problems, family situation, housing and economy. All together 11 social workers and 34 users

participated in the study.

### *Findings*

Findings indicate that women and men gain differently from participating in QP than men do. Women seem to be more satisfied with the program, as they acquire new knowledge and new skills which increases their possibility to participate in work-life and in society. For male participants, however, QP does not seem to have the same skill-enhancing and knowledge-enhancing outcomes. The findings point to a loss of status and misrecognition for men, due to lack of Labour market inclusion. For women, however, participating in QP has a recognizing and status-enhancing effect, pointing towards social inclusion.

### *Conclusion and implications*

From this we may conclude that a mainstream activation policy program with individually tailored measures, seem to work differently for men and for women; status-enhancing for women and status-quo or -decreasing for men. This implicates both social work practice and activation policy. Further questions to be discussed is whether relationship-based follow-up of participants, which is prominent in QP, is a "genderified" social work practice and 2) how activation programs can be adjusted to those who "only want a job"?

*Communities and the Nordic Welfare Regime, Diaconal Work and Social Work in Finland*

Irene Roivainen | University of Tampere

Keywords | communities, Social Work, diaconal work

In my presentation, I discuss the relationship between church diaconal work and municipal social work in Finland. In recent decades, partnerships and community-based solutions have also been strengthened in the Nordic welfare regime. Communitarian ideas, such as “the Big Society”, highlight the responsibilities of communities in providing welfare. In southern European countries, which follow the principle of subsidiarity in the Roman Catholic Church, communities have a central role, while the public sector is marginal in the provision of welfare. In the Nordic countries, the public sector has had the main role in managing social services; the state and municipalities have had a central role in providing and funding social services.

The Lutheran Church’s interpretation of the role of diaconal work is connected to the Nordic Welfare model. Diaconal work in the Lutheran Church covers most of the informal social work in Finnish society. It is a system that parallels public social work, with a professional staff. Historically, diaconal work has had a pioneer role in Finnish society, but during the period of strong welfare state its role was marginal. Since the economic crisis of the 1990s and the transformation of the welfare regime, co-operation has posed a considerable challenge. However, the division of labour and partnership are subject to specific boundary conditions both at the level of welfare sectors and at the level of professional work.

Few studies exist on the relationship and the interface between social work and diaconal work in the Nordic countries. In Finland, several doctoral theses have been published at the department of Practical Theology at the University of Helsinki, but none in Social Work. In my position of professor of social work, I have acted as the pre-examiner and opponent of these doctoral theses. I will use them as my data, as well as my own texts on the theme.

In my proposal, I look for the prerequisites of a true partnership between social and diaconal work, keeping in mind the principles of the Nordic welfare society. The focus of my proposed presentation addresses particularly Theme Four of the conference (Social Work and Social Policy: interrelations challenges and impacts in times of crisis). In Europe, the role of churches as providers of welfare in the context of different welfare regimes is an important theme, which is linked to both social work praxis and research. The presentation is based on a review of literature about the relationship between social work and diaconal work in the Nordic countries.

*On Moralism, Individualism and Consumerism in the wake of the Financial Crisis*

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Keywords | financial crisis, attitudes, consumption, vulnerability

The financial crisis starting in 2008 was global. Sweden is generally considered to be one of the countries least affected at the macro level, but the effects can take different shapes at the regional level and the crisis can impact on individual households and persons. Concurrent with the financial crisis, there is a development indicating that social problems have increasingly been displaced from being a public service responsibility to being an individual responsibility. This shift is taking place while the income gap is widening and more so in Sweden than in other OECD countries.

The aim of the study is to increase knowledge of the ideological and material changes that are displayed in the wake of the financial crisis. The changes are explored through studying the prevalent negative and individualised perceptions of groups now rendered vulnerable as a result of the financial crisis, how perceptions are experienced by the afflicted and which groups are now at a disadvantage in a growing consumer market.

The analysis utilized a population survey "In the wake of the financial crisis" from 2010, involving 2039 adults, ages 18-64, in the county council of Varmland, Sweden. The survey investigated aspects of changes due to the financial crisis, asking the respondents to compare their life situation before the crisis with their situation at the time of the survey, that is, two years later.

The analysis shows that negative and individualised perceptions of the unemployed, social benefit receivers and the sick listed are common, in particular of the unemployed. However, a negative attitude is less common if the respondents have an unemployed or otherwise afflicted next-of-kin. Those afflicted by unemployment, having to live on social benefits or being on long-term sick leave also bear witness to having been treated negatively by others while the non-afflicted respondents do not have the same nega

tive experience. The three vulnerable categories are also at risk of being excluded from consumption. The study shows that ideological and material displacement tendencies entail a greater risk of deprivation for those affected by the financial crisis.

## Welfare boundaries

Jean-Pierre Tabin | Haute école de travail social et de la santé, Switzerland

Keywords | boundaries, social policy, non take-up

One of the explicit objective of social policies is to address the issue of vulnerability, scientifically defined as a “lack of resources, which in a specific context, places individual or groups at major risks” (Spini, Hanappi, Bernardi, Bickel, & Oris, 2013, p. 19)

However, previous research (e.g. Bonvin, Dif-Pradalier, Rosenstein, 2012, 2013a, 2013b; Tabin & Perriard, 2014) has shown that social policies are deeply ambivalent and act both as providers of resources and as stressors. Indeed, being in welfare certainly gives access to resources and programmes which include resources for material well-being (cash benefits or in-kind services), resources for agency (training, activation programmes, guidance by social workers, etc.), and resources for participation (social insertion programmes, education, etc.). But access to these sets of resources is subject to the fulfilment of various conditions, which means that some people or groups are entitled to these resources while others are excluded, and the conditions and constraints are sources of stress. These conditions and constraints evolve over time and, from the mid-90s, have increasingly included behavioural expectations, thus implying that those who do not abide by these new conditions (e.g. duty to activate oneself or to accept training, etc.) lose their access to resources.

By contrast, being out of welfare impedes access to such resources, but also frees people from the constraints and conditions attached to them. Research in other countries (e.g. Warin, 2006, 2010) and in Switzerland (e.g. Kehrlı & Knöpfel, 2006; Schuwey & Knöpfel, 2014) have shown that there are a significant number of people who choose not to take up their benefits, or who are excluded from benefit entitlement. Such people have to rely on alternative resources to cope with their difficulties.

What mix of constraints and resources/skills/opportunities is provided to or imposed on recipients ? What kind of conditions are they subjected to? Who is in and who is out ? To what extent have the legal boundaries of welfare (between the insiders and the outsiders) shifted in recent years? And, as

social workers always have some manoeuvring room open for discretionary decision-making (see e.g. Dubois, 2010; Hertz, Martin, & Valli, 2004; Lipsky (1980), Meyers & Vorsanger, 2002; Steinmetz, 2014; Thorén, 2008; Van Berkel & Van der AA, 2012; Wright, 2003), how do they (re)interpret official boundaries and reframe the mix of constraints and opportunities for recipients ? We will try in this paper to discuss these questions with data based on our ongoing research on non take-up in Switzerland.

Data: analysis of new cantonal "active" social policies in canton Vaud and 77 interviews of social workers in charge of the implementation of these new laws.

Research grant: Swiss National Research Foundation, NCCR LIVES, IP 208).

*Liberation through Rights? Social work, mental distress, detention and forcible treatment*

Pearse Mccusker | Glasgow Caledonian University

Keywords | social work, human rights law, mental distress, detention and forcible treatment

The detention and forcible treatment of people with mental distress is inherently ethically complex and increasingly contested. Contextualised by the paradigm shifting legal nature of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (UN, 2006) this paper poses seminal questions for current social work thinking and practice in relation to 'madness' and compulsion. It reports on a small-scale qualitative study exploring the role and perceptions of Mental Health Officers (MHOs) as specialist social workers navigating the competing demands of upholding human rights versus protecting people from harm. Informed by Scottish law, which enshrines principles of least restriction and reciprocity along with rights of access to education, training, employment and social activity, and thematic analysis of three focus groups with twenty-seven MHOs, the findings from this study call into question the extent to which social model approaches currently inform the detention and forcible treatment of people with mental distress. In doing so the study queries the extent to which social work in this context has been colonized by medicine. Conversely, it also confirms some examples of social model practice, which offer tangible means of navigating the ethical dilemmas of detention and forcible treatment and thus merit wider discussion and dissemination. Problematising CRPD's level of absolutism, this paper nonetheless posits it as a vital and powerful means of leverage for achieving the wide spread integration of such social model interventions; a game-changing opportunity for supporting the aspirations of social workers to bridge the gap between their espoused values of social justice and the often oppressive nature of current mental health practice.

*Reality of Lebanese Prisons: A psychosocial perspective on Aggressivity in a "pro-harm" environment*

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Joanna Imad | AJEM, Lebanon  
Hady Aya | AJEM, Lebanon  
Julie El Khoury | AJEM, Lebanon  
Michel Soufia | AJEM, Lebanon

Keywords | prison, incarceration, aggressiveness, forensic, harm reduction, mental health, psychosocial

Prisons in Lebanon fall under the responsibility of Ministry of Interior with a penitentiary staff only trained to maintain order, advocate security and promote punishment at the expense of health care and rehabilitation of the inmates. This increases risk and recidivism and creates a 'pro-harm' environment. The detention conditions are inhumane and even basic needs and rights are breached. In addition to a slow and complex process in updating of the static regulation, many problems can be enumerated including overcrowded prison, an ongoing traffic of drugs, as well as a limited access to financial, technical and human resources. These problems are added to the fact that detention in itself can be traumatizing, with the psychological pressures that the detainees face including the loss of freedom and a diminished almost non-existent intimate life; no intimate space, sexual deprivation and other. The incarceration and mental health problems are closely related in the sense of emergence of mental health problems and/or amplification of pre-existing symptoms. However, mental health in Lebanese prisons is neglected and there is neither assessment nor follow-up of the psychological state of the inmates.

In order to defend the rights of prisoners, and ameliorate the conditions of detention and rehabilitation, the association Justice and mercy (AJEM), a non-governmental non-profit organization, was created in 1996 at the initiative of a group of social workers. Studies conducted by AJEM show that the common behaviours that the prisoners resorted to, include 3 kinds or clusters of aggressive behaviours. The first cluster, the auto aggressive behaviours, include those directed towards themselves demonstrated in self-inflicted injuries, suicidal attempts, individual hunger strikes and risky

behaviors (tattoo in prison, sharing of sharp instruments, unprotected sexual intercourse and substance use). The second kind of behaviours, the hetero-aggressive behaviours, reflects hierarchy within the system and include aggression by prisoners against their peers, by the "Chawichs" who are the prisoners with a power delegated by the ISF (Interior Security Forces) or by ISFs themselves. The third kind are those displayed collectively, including riots, taking members of Internal Security Forces (ISF) as hostages, breaking the doors of the cells and setting fire in the prison buildings and equipment. These three kinds of aggressive behaviours are frequent in Lebanese prisons and difficult to control. By its multidimensional support (social, legal, medical and psychological), Ajem's intervention tries to fill in the gaps in the mental health program through Information, Education and Counselling (IEC) sessions, individual or group psychotherapies, follow up, as well as social support.

*Social Work with Asylum Seekers in Ireland: Responding to need and advocating for social justice*

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Maeve Foreman | Trinity College Dublin

Keywords | asylum seekers, refugees, Ireland, forced migration

#### *Background and Purpose*

In Ireland asylum seekers are accommodated in large institutions known as 'direct provision'. This system has received much criticism (Shannon 2012; Thornton, 2014). This paper will draw on two pieces of research: Study 1 focused on the experiences of social workers working with asylum seekers living in 'direct provision'; Study 2 focused on the experiences of refugees transitioning out of 'direct provision' following the granting of their protection claim.

#### *Methods*

In study 1, members of the Irish Association of Social Workers were invited to participate in an online questionnaire, with the option of also taking part in an interview. The questionnaire was completed by 149 social workers and 15 qualitative interviews took place. Study 2 involved interviews with 22 asylum seekers/refugees and with 5 stakeholders, using a purposive sampling strategy. Descriptive statistical data analysis was used for the quantitative survey data and thematic analysis was used for the qualitative data.

#### *Results*

The findings of the studies suggest the multiple negative effects that direct provision has on the lives of asylum seekers and refugees and the many difficulties that these individuals face when leaving this form of institutional living often after many years. However, in keeping with Irish and international research (Muecke, 1992; Ní Raghallaigh, 2010; 2011; Schweitzer et al., 2007) it also highlights the resilience of this group and their desire to make the most of opportunities and to move on with life. In relation to social workers, it is evident that those working with asylum seekers face many challenges, not least of an ethical nature given the manner in which this client group is treated by the state.

### *Conclusions and Implications*

The findings are of relevance to social workers in many jurisdictions in Europe who are increasingly working with asylum seekers and refugees especially in the context of the current refugee 'crisis'. It suggests that social workers have a key role to play not only in responding to the needs of individual asylum seekers and refugees but also in advocating for policies and practices that are consistent with human rights and social justice principles.

*Staff views on prevention and management of violence at institutions. Aspects of values and safety in encounters with young clients and patients*

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Karin Engström | Dep. of Child and Youth Studies, Stockholm University  
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Keywords | violence, values, youth residential homes, staff, qualitative content analysis, framework method

### *Background*

Previous research on risk assessment and prevention of violence has often focused on evidence-based knowledge. Our assumption is that prevention of violence is not only a question of evidence, but also a question of values. In this research project, we strive to investigate how staff, in practice, balance the need of safety with values in encounters with young clients and patients.

The aim of the study was to describe staff members' and ward managers' views on aspects of values and safety in the prevention and management of violence.

### *Method*

We used case study design with multiple cases. A strategic sample was included because the object of selection was to get different kinds of institutions. The cases were two youth residential homes, one with girls as clients, and the other with boys. A third institution was a child and adolescent psychiatric clinic. All the institutions had the possibility of working with coercive care. Semi structured interviews were done with ward managers and focus group interviews with staff members. The material was analyzed by qualitative content analysis with an inductive approach using the framework method.

### *Preliminary results*

All three institutions had policies and routines on values, ethical conduct, prevention and management of violence. In all the institutions, staff had

developed strategies on how to deal with violence on the basis of education that they had received and routines for prevention of violence. The staff at the youth residential homes had been involved in the development of a policy on values and could relate their work to these values. In the psychiatric case, these values were developed centrally and staff perceived them as abstract in relation to their work. In all the institutions, staff members and managers shared the value of "safety for all involved" to minimize harm to any person.

The major difference between the institutions was one of the youth residential homes where the staff and the management showed strongly shared values in comparison with the two other institutions. In this institution, both staff and ward manager stressed closeness to clients. They stressed, more than other focus groups and managers, learning between staff and the need to be humble; to dare to say when they could not handle a situation practically and emotionally. They saw themselves as role models for the young clients and felt secure in addressing situations with risk of violence. Staff in other institutions felt less secure about dealing with violence and felt a lack of support from the management.

*Conducting a multi-site complex evaluation: making sure the methodology survives the seismic wave of reality*

Mary Baginsky | King's College London

Jo Moriarty | King's College London

Jill Manthorpe | King's College London

Keywords | multi-site evaluation, diverse data, signs of safety

#### *Discussion*

Shared values between the staff and the management seem to be an important factor in the prevention and handling of violence. In addition, closeness to clients can possibly provide the conditions for safer environment and meetings with the patient as a subject - as a Thou, in Buber's terminology. The manager seems to play a key role in creating and maintaining shared values and makes the staff feel secure in an environment where there is a risk of violence.

#### *Background*

The Department for Education (DfE) has invested £100m in 57 projects as part of the English Innovation Project. King's College London (KCL) was commissioned to evaluate one of the largest projects within this programme. The project is Transforming Children's Services with Signs of Safety Practice at the Centre. Professor Eileen Munro, Dr Andrew Turnell and Terry Murphy (MTM) successfully applied for funding to work with ten local authorities to attempt to change practice in children's services at every level using Signs of Safety. MTM's proposal sets out four broad evaluation questions:

- Is 'Signs of Safety' being implemented?
- What organisational forms best support front line practice?
- Are outcomes for children and young people improving?
- Is there better value for money across children's social care?

MTM's own action research was been designed to address the first two points. The DfE agreed that the independent evaluation by KCL would focus primarily on the final two. However it would be impossible to ignore the potential impact of variations in implementation on outcomes and we have incorporated a measure to assess this, alongside drawing on data collected by MTM.



### Methods

The KCL evaluation consists of:

- analysis of the relevant documentation collected and interviews conducted in the ten pilots
- examination the impact of the adoption of Signs of Safety practice on outcomes for children and young people by:
  - developing and scoring a series of five point Likert scales attached to key variables (see Louis, 1981)
  - interviewing two cohorts of families - each cohort comprising approximately 15 families in each pilot area - (n= 150 per cohort x 2) where parents, children and young people from these families are interviewed and complete appropriate clinical measures at initial contact and six months later (T 1 and T2)
- examining the case records of these families (with their consent) for indication of Signs of Safety practice
- surveying the social workers attached to these families to gain an understanding of how they assess their competence in and use of Signs of Safety with these families specifically and families more generally
- collecting background data from wider groups of social workers in these ten areas
- collecting data on the time spent on and with these families
- analysing routinely collected data for the pilot sites and comparing these with the same data collections in their statistical neighbours.

### Results

Analysis of data has not yet commenced. Initial findings will be included in the presentation.

### Challenges

The presentation will explore how to address the methodological challenges of:

- conducting a complex evaluation across ten sites
- reflecting the very different starting points of the ten pilots in the analysis
- bringing together data on the cases from interviews with families, survey data obtained from social workers and examination of case records
- locating the findings within the broader context
- working in collaboration with MTM's action researchers.

### Signs of Safety: An evaluation of the model

Jessica Roy | University of Bristol

Keywords | signs of safety, assessment tools, mixed method, evaluation

### Background

Signs of Safety is described as a 'safety- and solution-orientated approach' to child protection practice. It provides a collaborative means of risk assessment and safety planning for statutory and non-statutory agencies who work with children who have been, or are, at risk of maltreatment. The Signs of Safety model has been widely implemented and there is a growing range of empirical research evidence exploring its use and impact within statutory agencies. However, there is little to indicate how, and to what effect, Signs of Safety is being used by non- statutory agencies. This paper reports on an independent evaluation of the use of Signs of Safety by a non-statutory agency in the UK. The agency is commissioned by the local authority to provide voluntary support for children and families with multiple and complex needs. The study was undertaken as a PhD placement, funded by the ESRC.

### Methods

The study adopted a mixed methods approach with three strands. First, a qualitative strand involved semi-structured interviews with 7 mothers, fathers and family members, and 5 practitioners. Second, a participatory evaluation session was undertaken with 6 children and young people. Third, quantitative data was collated from case files to provide an overview of the profile and needs of families engaging with the agency. Saliency analysis, an extended version of thematic analysis, was used to explore the qualitative data. Descriptive and bivariate statistics were used to analyse the quantitative data.

### Findings

Data from case files indicated that families referred to the agency had multiple support needs. Qualitative findings indicated that Signs of Safety was considered to be a useful and accessible tool. Specifically, practitioners felt that it supported critical reflection and risk assessment. Children and families praised the specific tools developed to work with children. However, a number of significant concerns were raised in relation to Signs of Safety.

Practitioners raised concerns that the approach had the potential to minimise risk to children in cases of neglect and emotional abuse. Furthermore, it appeared that Signs of Safety was being used inconsistently within and between agencies. There were also indications that the model was being used by the local statutory child protection team to operationalise high thresholds.

#### *Conclusions and implications*

The evaluation provides an important insight into the use of Signs of Safety by a non-statutory agency. The implications of the study are three-fold. Firstly, there is an evident need for clear and consistent practice guidelines about the expected format of Signs of Safety across and within agencies. Secondly, future research should explore the experiences of a wider range of agencies and individuals who have experience of using, or working with, the approach. Finally it appeared that existing tensions, relating to thresholds and multi-agency relationships, were being reflected and magnified via the Signs of Safety model. As such there was a disparity between the intended and actual use of the model. This will be discussed with reference to relevant practice and research literature.

#### *Conversation analysis as a vehicle for experiment and change in social work practice*

Juliet Koprowska | University of York

Keywords | child protection, conversation analysis, institutional talk

#### *Background and purpose*

Child protection social work can be emotionally and socially uncomfortable, since social workers, other professionals and families do not always agree about problems and solutions. This discomfort is common in decision-making meetings about the welfare of children that bring families together with professionals. The study reported in this paper asked, 'How is communication accomplished in child protection conferences?' The research hypothesis was methodological: that a detailed analysis of turn-by-turn interactions might reveal whether and how participants got into interactional trouble. The intention was to arrive at recommendations that could form the basis of an experimental intervention and lead to improvements in practice.

#### *Methods*

The study collected audio recordings of initial child protection conferences (ICPCs) held in a single local authority in England over a period of 9 months. During the study period, 67 ICPCs were held. Selection was by consent, resulting in 12 ICPCs being collected. Turn-by-turn interactional analysis using conversation analytic concepts and methods was chosen because it enables a detailed understanding of how interactants in the situation understand and influence one other. The approach starts without presuppositions about how participants should behave, or about the nature of 'good practice'. It is not reliant on the perceptions of researchers or subjects, or on their memories after the event.

#### *Results*

The analysis is not complete. Examination of the early stages of the meetings has yielded results about the interactional behaviour of chairs, social workers and family members. First, there is variation in the way that chairs establish the purpose and climate of the meeting, determine legitimate topics for discussion, and decide who speaks when. Second, social workers

supply the justification for the meeting, which I call the 'social worker's warrant'. They name 'concerns' and family inadequacies, using linguistic devices to soften what they say. Nearly half the social workers also refer to redemptive factors in the family. They use what I call 'reference-switching', i.e. switching from talking about the family, to addressing a family member directly, and switching back. This was found in association with redemptive factors. Family members respond, by invitation or spontaneously, to justify events, explain their conduct, and re-categorize themselves as reasonable parents when accusations are made.

#### *Conclusions and implications*

Chairs underutilize the authority of their role to clarify who is present, and to specify the focus of the conference. They do not require social workers to present both family difficulties and strengths, and social workers deal with this inconsistently. The absence of consistent discussion of redemptive factors has implications for families, who do not always seem to feel acknowledged and involved. Additionally, all participants experience a highly unusual social situation, where people speak ill of others who are present. The emotional awkwardness that results could be ameliorated by small interactional changes. These include the way that questions are framed and answered, routine inclusion of family strengths, and acknowledgment of (if not support for) family perspectives. Further research making such experimental changes and evaluating the outcomes is planned.

#### *Quality in Social Work - The Need for Critical Reflexivity*

Vivienne Cree | The University of Edinburgh  
Peter Hillen | The University of Edinburgh

Keywords | service evaluation, quality, critical reflexivity, evaluation research

Quality is of primary concern to social work practice; resources will always be limited, and those using services deserve the best. But what is quality, and how is it measured? This paper explores the challenge of measuring quality in social work by looking in detail at two recent evaluations of services (statutory and voluntary) in Scotland. Both evaluations were commissioned by the agencies that funded the evaluations and both involved a mix of methods (interviews and focus groups, analysis of case records and observation). Both were conducted in a climate of funding cuts and both led to changes in agencies' practice. It will be argued that service evaluation sits uncomfortably between new public management (NPM)'s imperative for measurement and efficiency within a market economy and agencies' own need to reflect on their practice and listen to the views of their service-users. Thus NPM processes force agencies into a continual cycle of monitoring and review that may, paradoxically, impede organic change and development. Meanwhile, the academics and researchers who conduct evaluations find themselves in compromising and compromised positions, reluctant to give feedback that might exacerbate pressure on practitioners and agencies and lead to cuts in services in the future. It is suggested that adopting a critically reflexive approach to evaluation offers one way forward.

## *Using conversation analysis as a basis for improving social work practice with disabled people*

Valerie Williams | University of Bristol  
Jon Symonds | University of Bristol  
Sue Porter | University of Bristol

### *Background*

A growing body of research about professional practices uses Conversation Analysis (CA) (Antaki, 2011) offering a direct window onto how things are done by practitioners. This approach is increasingly used to make recommendations for good practice in other fields such as primary care (Heritage et al, 2007); mediation services (Stokoe, 2013) and learning difficulty services (Williams, 2011). This paper draws on two studies that used recordings of naturally occurring practice in two English studies of social work practice with disabled people.

### *Method*

Both studies were funded by the NIHR School for Social Care Research. Audio recordings were made of meetings between social workers and service users, focusing on support planning and assessments for social care users. In both studies, problematic moments were identified in the meetings and CA was used to make a systematic analysis of the interaction as it unfolded.

### *Results*

Our results were discussed with disabled people and the interactions acted out in role play, highlighting the power imbalances inherent in the interactions. Based on these responses to the data, improvements were suggested for how practice interactions could be improved in the future. An outcome from one project was a DVD for use in training social care staff. In the project about support planning, for instance, the service user (a person with intellectual disabilities) was not listened to when he protested about his upcoming day centre placement. Our group suggested that he could have demanded an advocate, and also that the role played by his mother in the interaction could have opened up the debate for a more reasoned solution.

### *Conclusion*

Our conclusion is that conversation analysis (CA) can be used in a practical way to intervene in social care practice. By making recordings of actual practice as it occurs in its natural setting, the approach offers a way to examine practice which takes account of both practitioner and service user.

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### *Social work in the period of normalization in Czechoslovakia*

Marie Špiláčková | University of Ostrava, Czech Republic

Keywords | Czechoslovakia, social work, history

The paper presents a qualified knowledge of the history of social welfare and social work in seventies and eighties of 20th century, called normalization in Czechoslovakia on the bases of scientific approaches, and with use of relevant research strategies. Methodologically is the published results based on historical research. It maps historical development of social care, including social services and identifies used methods of social work. The paper describe five areas of interest: Care for elderly people, Care for people with changed work ability, Care for children, youth and family, Care for socially maladapted people and Care for gypsy people. The result present a integrated description of social welfare and social work, existing just before 1989.

### *Challenges of political correctness when educating social workers about past social services*

Lene Mosegaard Søbberg | VIA University College, Denmark

Keywords | social services, social history, teaching students

In 2012 the Danish parliament decided to finance a study about the experiences of Danish citizens placed in public residential care in the period 1945-1980. The project was formally administered by the National Board of Social Services in Denmark and the assignment was to collect and present the voices of orphans, disabled, homeless and other categories of people who lived in residential care homes during the 20th century. The intent was to secure that the history of former placed persons was not forgotten or hidden. The main part of the project was historical research, which resulted in a 500 page report with a great number of interviews with former placed citizens and historical facts about the political, social and cultural development of the studied period.

The second part of the project involved transforming the research report into teaching material for bachelor students of social work and pedagogy and to students at elementary and secondary school level. The intention of this part of the project was to communicate the historical lessons of the project to future social workers and school children. This paper presentation focuses on the task of producing the teaching material. The conundrum of the task was to navigate between the didactical challenges of explaining 35 years of social development through the voices of the citizens involved while at the same time walking on a thin line of political correctness and steering out of troubled waters in present day national politics.

The interesting issue is that producing this highly relevant teaching material involved a number of dilemmas and contradictory discussions about the power to define which historical facts school children and students should be taught. Which words are more appropriate to use - the words which were appropriate at the time (such as retards or abnormal persons) or the present more politically correct words such as mentally disabled? The question is how to teach the lessons of social history in an appropriate manner while at

the same time explaining the actual historical context and the developments that have taken place.

Didactical considerations about school children's ability to understand the complexity of being placed in residential care were challenged by the complexity and the desire to include every type of disability in order not to disadvantage the various groups of marginalized citizens and their present day interest organizations.

The presentation intends to open a discussion about the correct way of presenting facts of social history which are true to history while at the same time making the historical facts understandable to students of various ages.

*Candeia (1943-1947): the earliest face of professional association among Portuguese social workers. A (trans)national project*

Maria Isabel Rodrigues Dos Santos | Catholic University of Portugal

Keywords | Portuguese social work history, professional associativism, transnational social work, international Catholic organizations

In Portugal, the emergence of professional social work took place during the late 1930's, following the opening of the oldest countrywide training school: the Lisbon Social Work Institute. This period of Portuguese history leads us to the New State's (Estado Novo) construction phase, throughout a new national conjuncture in relationships between Catholic Church, State and intellectual movements, and across a national historical framework shaped by political authoritarianism, and strongly closed to international influences.

This presentation covers the first movements towards an associative grouping of Portuguese social workers, carried out by catholic former students from the Lisbon Social Work Institute, which was conveyed through *Candeia* [Candle Lamp] bulletin. Published between 1943 and 1947, *Candeia* bulletin closely followed the process of establishing the "Association of Social Workers from the Lisbon Social Work Institute" (officially recognized in 1946), encouraging professionals to take action around a common associative project, similarly to what was happening with other Catholic social workers all across Europe.

Curiously, given the Portuguese "closing aboard" imposed by political reasons since the early 1930's, transnational connections took here a significant role, more precisely, relations taken between the Lisbon Social Work Institute's board and an international Catholic organization: the "Union Catholique Internationale de Service Social" (UCISS), seated in Brussels during that same period. The newly created professional Association, throughout *Candeia* bulletin, claimed the improvement of its associate members, not only at a professional level, but also in a moral and religious dimension, based on Catholic Church's social doctrine. This first professional Association was incorporated as a UCISS's full member in 1946, being this illustrative of the

transnational relations that sharply marked Portuguese social work's identity since its early beginnings.

The historical sources that support this presentation have been collected in Portuguese and foreign historical archives, mainly in Brussels (Centre d'Animation et de Recherche en Histoire Ouvrière et Populaire).

*The construction of children in social work: In the shadow of their parents*

Line Sørberg Bjerre | Aalborg University, Institute of Sociology and Social Work

Keywords | child's perspective, social work with children, case management ICS, Social Diagnosis

In this paper I will discuss paradoxes between the development of certain social work practices with children, such as ICS (Integrated Children System), and casework traditions of the social work profession.

In recent years, Danish law has incorporated "the child's perspective" - which means that social workers are required to bring the child's voice into their casework. Within a similar timeframe, social work methodology has changed with the introduction of ICS. In social work practice, however, these new standardizations live side by side with a case management tradition of social diagnosing.

In my research, I have been studying how the child is constructed in social work practices, focusing (as a psychologist) on which discourses and psychological paradigms are used in such constructions. I have conducted a qualitative study of social work in Denmark, observing three different teams in a Danish municipality.

Overall, I have found that social workers talk about families in a way that rarely gives children's words or perspectives any weight. Instead, social workers are mainly concerned with the social or psychiatric diagnosis of the mother, or their own professional relationship with the parents. In important ways, their discussions of families are informed by the traditions of social diagnosing, which have historically been informed by psychiatric and psychoanalytic thinking, particularly the notion of psychological determinism; the child's perspective remains out of sight. In this tradition, children are largely constructed as passive victims of the parents' problems.

With the child obscured in the shadow of the parents' social diagnosis, it remains difficult to implement the intentions of legislation that seeks to foreground the child's perspective. I conclude that if children continue to be constructed as passive victims, social work will struggle to implement the ICS model; more importantly, children's active agency will remain underrepresented in social work practice.

Is social work and its science activity marked by controversies? Are there beneficial ways in which disagreements should be explored and perhaps resolved?

The nature of controversies is too little considered in social work. This is due in part to how the rationalist tradition, by its assumptions, sees controversies as abnormal, deviant phenomena. 'Thus scientific disputes are reconstructed to become amenable to a rationalist image of scientific development' (Brante and Elzinga, 1990: 34). Latour presents controversies as a tug of war between:

1. Radicals: scientific knowledge constructed entirely out of social relations.
2. Progressist: science is partly constructed out of social relations but nature somehow 'leaks in' at the end.
3. Conservatives: although science escapes from society there are still factors from society that 'leak in' and influence its development.
4. Reactionaries: science becomes scientific only when it sheds any trace of social construction.

Godin and Gingras (2002) say 'scientific knowledge is ... a set of arguments (experimental or theoretical) that have survived objections' (pp145f). Different types of controversies occur, because there are different kinds of conflicts. These may be with regard to facts, theory or principle.

Two examples:

1. Should outcome evidence rest primarily on internal (Campbell) or external validity (Cronbach).
2. A statistical debate between Yule and Pearson regarding nominal and interval variables.

To develop this second example, MacKenzie sets out the controversies that took place in British statistics between Yule, Galton and Pearson (MacKenzie, 1981). Yule and Pearson proposed alternative and competing measures of statistical association between two nominal variables - Yule's Q and

Pearson's C. MacKenzie argues regarding the cognitive and social interests of the two parties. Pearson had a deep-rooted commitment to the utility of statistical prediction and developed nominal measures by analogy with interval level and regression theory. Yule had a more pragmatic concern with the data itself and hence interest in nominal data as phenomena in their own right. Pearson was a eugenicist, while Yule had no particular interest in eugenics. Also Pearson was a typical member of the rising professional class, while Yule came from a downward mobile traditional elite with generally conservative tastes.

If people are working in different traditions and with different goals 'discovery' will take different forms. However, this is not to deny 'connections between statistics and the real world' (McKenzie, 1981: 216).

How ought disagreements to be handled? Three kinds of work are needed: Empirical: Kirk and Reid (2002) stress the need for treating questions of science empirically.

Cognitive: by a falsifying perspective; by retaining the distinction between rational and social causes in science; by recognizing real controversies in social work science that cannot be restricted to rational, cognitive issues. Social. There is a too-frequent tendency to resort to 'swearing' (Williams). We commence in attack mode. We should talk with (not at) those with whom we profoundly disagree, on the assumption that in principle we can hear each other; and respect and assume that their positions are held with integrity and have a right to be heard.



*Contemporary challenges in European social work research: where do we go from here?*

Griet Roets | Ghent University  
Koen Hermans | Catholic University of Louvain  
Lieve Bradt | Ghent University  
Peter Raeymaeckers | University of Antwerp  
Rudi Roose | Ghent University

Keywords | changing welfare state regimes, reflexivity of social work researchers, interrelated challenges

#### *Background and purpose of the proposed presentation*

In this paper presentation, we address insights emerging from an inter-university exchange between social work researchers in Flanders (the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium). During a long-term seminar series, we discussed the disciplinary identity of social work research as an academic discipline in the context of changing social, cultural, economic and political developments and contexts in Flanders as contextualized in the broader context of Europe. The starting point of these seminars was that social work cannot be disconnected from the broader context in which it takes part as an actor rather than as an executor of social policy rationales.

While many European welfare states are facing new social and economic risks and are confronted with scarce resources in realising the welfare rights and well-being of all their citizens, a recent body of research suggests that this growing pressure on the welfare state results in the idea that public responsibility for the welfare of citizens should be directed towards the private responsibility of the individual, his/her natural social networks (such as the family) and the community/civil society. While many governments are rolling back the state, this public responsibility is currently transferred to individual service users, their families and communities. As such, the relationship between citizens, civil society, the market and the welfare state is fundamentally changing, and this development implies fundamental challenges for both social work professionals and welfare recipients.

#### *A summary of the main points of the presentation*

In our paper presentation, we argue that social work research undergoes

fundamental challenges in the current context. In that vein, however, we tried to identify a sound and academic social work research agenda while critically considering possible directions for social work research. In an attempt to reflexively position our role as social work researchers in these changing relations of power, we aim to discuss three interrelated challenges that social work research appears to experience while teasing out how social work researchers can position their work: (1) a historical challenge, (2) a theoretical challenge, and (3) a methodological-political challenge.

How the proposed presentation addresses one or more of the conference aims and themes

In our paper presentation, we develop a critical stance that can be considered as a productive and creative pathway for social work research in the context of changing welfare state regimes.

#### *Conclusions from and implications of your presentation for research*

By bringing together the perspectives of researchers from different universities and different theoretical and disciplinary traditions of social work research in Flanders, we attempt to develop innovative answers to these three challenges that are interrelated with changes in social policy.

*When research moves in - the diffusion of evidence-based practice in Swedish social work*

Mikael Skillmar | Linneaus University, Sweden  
Verner Denvall | Linneaus University, Sweden

Keywords | evidence-based social work practice, collaboration, academic social services offices, practice-based research

### *Background*

In Sweden, as elsewhere, the development of evidence-based practice (EBP) in social work has been debated for over a decade now. One of the issues concerns the top-down strategy used by the Swedish government to enhance the knowledge about interventions in social work practice. Critiques argue that this is not a feasible way forward; instead the social work profession needs to take over the leader pin. This of course calls for structures that enable social work practitioners and researchers to engage in practice-based research in order to solve current and urgent issues. Academic primary-care centers have been established as a possible way forward in implementing an evidence-based medicine in Swedish healthcare. Clinical research is one of the basic tasks in those centers, involving much of the personal. Here, we will reflect upon the possibilities for a similar approach within the social services. This presentation aims to present research about the conditions for new pathways between Swedish social work practice and research and to critically review the idea of academic social services offices. The following questions will be addressed:

- (i) What characterizes an academic social services office?
- (ii) What are the opinions of management in charge?
- (iii) What are the recommendations from research?

### *Methods*

A survey was launched twice (2005 and 2015) to the leading association of administrative leaders in the social services in Sweden. Among other things they were asked about their opinions of EBP and of clinical research in social work, also if they were in the need of staff with a PhD-education. Furthermore, a review of relevant literature and expert consultations is being undertaken focusing on significant mechanisms when it comes to establishing

structures in order to support the development of academic social services offices and practice-based research.

### *Results*

Results from the survey show that leaders are more positive towards EBP today than ten years ago. However they are not keen on hiring staff educated in research and especially management in smaller organizations express severe difficulties to hire staff with appropriate skills and to further develop the competence to do research within their workplace. This calls for collaborations with other organizations as well as with researchers from universities and R & D-units. Results from reviews and expert-interviews will be added.

### *Conclusions*

Administrative leaders support the idea of a knowledge-based social work and to use interventions whose effects are demonstrated by evaluations. However they lack strategies, competence and role-models to create a research-based organization. This paper-presentation contributes to the building of bridges between practice and research through presenting analysis of the views of management as well as innovative ways of research-production within the social services.

## *Is there a Practice-Academic Disconnect in Social Work? Examples from the United Kingdom and the United States*

Barbra Teater | College of Staten Island/City University of New York  
Michelle Lefevre | University of Sussex  
Hugh McLaughlin | Manchester Metropolitan University

Keywords | practice experience, research activity, social work academics

### *Background and Purpose*

In the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US), there is variation in the extent to which social work academics have experience and expertise in both research and practice. Historically, having a social work qualification and practice experience has reportedly been considered more important in the recruitment of new academics than a doctorate or research experience if applicants did not hold both. Following concerns that this prioritisation resulted in insufficient research capacity and experience for the discipline, the pendulum is thought to have tilted in the opposite direction. Neither polarity offers an ideal solution, with the dichotomy raising concerns about a disconnect between the worlds of practice and academia. To map the territory within the UK and US, this study has gathered baseline information to answer the research question: What is the profile of social work academics in terms of demographic characteristics, practice qualifications and experience, and research skills and activity?

### *Methods*

A cross-sectional online survey consisting mainly of closed-ended questions was administered in the UK in 2014 (55 questions) and in the US in 2015 (58 questions). The questions addressed the academics': characteristics; academic roles and aspirations; perceptions of social work and social work education; past and present experience of practising social work; and research activity. Quantitative data from the UK (N=200) and US (N=501) samples were analysed using descriptive statistics and bivariate analyses.

### *Results*

Over 95% of the UK and US participants were social work qualified with 84.3% of the UK registered with a regulatory body and 61% of the US

holding a social work licence. Length of time in practice for the UK participants ranged between 1-36 years (M=13.9) compared with 0-42 for the US participants (M=11.4). Fewer of the UK participants (29.8%) had practised within the past five years compared to 43.2% of the US participants; nearly 20% of the US participants were still in practice (6.7% for the UK). A greater percentage of US participants (75.4%) held a doctorate compared to the UK participants (34.4%). Three-quarters of both samples reported being research active. Both samples reported the largest percentage of their time was spent on teaching (UK 41.3%, US 49.7%), followed by administration/service (UK 38.8%, US 35%), and lastly by research (UK 20.3%, US 20.1%). Both samples reported spending less time on research or teaching activities than is expected by their universities but more time on administration/service.

### *Conclusion and Implications*

The profiles of social work academics from the UK and the US suggest that there are real concerns of developing a dichotomised workforce of: (1) educators who lack research expertise; (2) and researchers who are distant from the realities of practice. Ways forward need to be found of integrating researcher and practitioner expertise, including the development of lecturer practitioners, supporting practitioners in undertaking doctorates whilst in practice, or in the first few years of an academic post, and ensuring that the teaching and administration workload related to social work programmes, relative to other "pure" disciplines, does not hinder research activity.

*Research Partnership between academia and practice – developing a joint research project concerning young people at risk*

Elisabeth Willumsen | University of Stavanger, Norway

Keywords | research partnership, joint research project, practice-based research for children at risk, innovation, dialogues between academia and municipality

In recent years, there has been a focus on the relationship between higher education and local actors. This has led to collaborative research efforts and partnerships between University of Stavanger and health- and social services in the local environment. In line with international guidelines, practice-based research has become a priority area, addressing concerns and questions based in the community.

A partnership was established between Department of Health, Centre of Research Innovation and a nearby municipality. Over the last years, the municipality has been particularly concerned about young people at risk, due to the identification of growing mental problems and increased number of drop-outs from secondary school, which is also registered by audit authorities.

The presentation will focus on the initial phase of the contact with the municipality and the subsequent collaboration process, framing the research project. The role of social work researchers and students is elaborated and critically discussed, related to establishing a community of practice research. Experiences, challenges and opportunities are outlined to illustrate how the dialogue proceeded between the university and the municipality in order to develop and organize a joint research project.

*Health inequities: Social determinants of health and the role of Social Work*

Wim Nieuwenboom, Peter Sommerfeld, Nicole Bachmann, Lucy Bayer-Oglesby, Holger Schmid | University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland, School of Social Work

The theme of this presentation is health and its social determinants, with a special focus on social inequalities and the role of Social Work. "Social determinants of health" are defined by the WHO as the circumstances in which people "are born, grow up, live, work and age, and the systems put in place to deal with illness" which are in its turn influenced by economics, politics, and social policies (WHO, 2008). "Health inequities" are defined as avoidable health inequalities. These arise from inequalities within and between societies, e.g. countries or states. Social and economic conditions have a profound effect on the risks of people's lives and on illness, on the chance they will be treated and more generally on their health behavior.

Although the correlation between health outcomes and its social determinants has already been established empirically and although the WHO definition of health includes a social dimension, implementation of social determinants is still underway. On the WHO World Conference on Social Determinants of Health in Rio de Janeiro in 2011, the "Rio Political Declaration on Social Determinants of Health" was adopted. A global political commitment for the implementation of the so-called "social determinants of health approach" in order to reduce health inequities was expressed. Recently an UN Platform stressed the need for "a social determinants of health approach".

This implementation of a "social determinants of health approach" also affects the profession of Social Work. Whereas experts point out that Social Work is strongly engaged in the health system and in health promotion strong relationship exists between social work and health, Social Work is still neither seen as a core discipline in the health sciences, nor is it recognized as a health profession (cf. Homfeldt & Sting p. 13). We postulate however, that a social determinants approach cannot be realized without recognizing Social Work as an important actor and cooperation partner that has to be involved in a variety of interventions.

In the paper that are to be presented, social determinants of health will be discussed, with the overall aim to provide and discuss actual empirical knowledge that underpins the need for social intervention and the involvement of social work on different levels.

*Watch & Learn: a multidisciplinary health team studies itself*

Fiona Mcdermott, Justine Little, Glenda Bawden | Monash University, Australia

Keywords | evaluating multi disciplinary teamwork, video reflexive research, reflexive practice

### *Background & Purpose*

In many settings where social workers work, decision making is carried out in multidisciplinary teams (MDT). This is particularly so in the health field. MDT meetings bring together different health professionals (including social workers) to develop an integrated strategy for delivering patient care. Little research evaluating team action from the team's point of view has been published. In light of this, we posed this research question: How does a multidisciplinary team in General Medicine make discharge plans for patients? To study the team's action from the point of view of the team itself, we used video reflexive research (VRR) methods.

Video-reflexive research is a new method which has been used to assist teams in evaluating themselves. The use of video provides unique opportunities to participants in being and becoming reflexive practitioners, engaging with 'what really happens' in practice, enabling and empowering them in evaluating what they are doing.

It was anticipated that from the MDTs' review, a new or differently structured MDT decision-making process may emerge.

### *Methods*

A multi-method research design utilised observation of team meetings, interviews with team members, filming of four MDT meetings, focus groups for data analysis. Research participants comprised health and allied health staff (including social workers) working in a large public hospital who volunteered to participate. Footage of the team meetings was edited to highlight elements relevant to the research question. This edited footage was provided to the MDT for review, critique and analysis. The findings from the video analysis and focus group discussion were then coded and analysed thematically by the researchers and provided to the MDT.

## Results

Specific results in summary form:

Currently, we have ethics approval, recruited participants and commenced filming. Findings from data analysis will be available from December 2015.

They will address:

- the dynamics and ways in which the team functions
- how team members talk to one another
- what can be learned about the social and professional roles of team members, the distribution of authority and power within the group, and the perceived impact of all these elements on the decisions that are made
- possible changes to MDT processes
- reflection on and analysis of the process of doing VRR

## Conclusions and implications

VRR places data analysis and interpretation in the hands of key stakeholders, members of a MDT. It's purpose is to enhance reflective practice and lead to practice changes, led by stakeholders. It privileges 'bottom up' approaches to research implementation strategies whereby those 'doing the work' are engaged in the change process. It addresses the time-lag between research findings and practice change, offering a democratic and empowering approach to clinical research.

If the research has yet to reach its conclusion, please make clear how it will contribute to the conference themes.

The research findings will address conference themes 2 and 6, presenting findings from research which has provided participants with opportunities to:

- scrutinise their practice
- strengthen MDT's distributed intelligence
- appreciate richness and complexity of their practice
- be directly involved in the generation of evidence for practice
- transform practice through practitioner-led change
- build capacity for ongoing critical appraisal of practice

## A research-based perspective on oncology social workers in Romania

Csaba Degi | Babes Bolyai University, Romania

Keywords | oncology social work, research, Romania

The Romanian Association of Social Workers recently (Lazar, 2015) reported that less than 6% of registered and licensed social workers are active in medical settings in Romania, but it is still unanswered how many of them are working in oncology services and who are the practicing oncology social workers in Romania. According to a Ministry Order from 2007, cancer institutes, relevant regional and university hospitals with an oncology section should employ a social worker, but this is still not a reality. In Romania psychosocial cancer care is not a routine component of care except in rare circumstances (Dégi, 2013; O'Malley, Dégi, Gilbert, & Munch, 2014). APSCO - Assessment of Psycho-Social and Communication needs in Oncology - is the first extensive research project in Romania focusing on psychosocial aspects of cancer, both from the perspective of patients and involved specialists. This research project uses a mixed methodological approach with a quantitative component (questionnaires) and a qualitative (in-depth semi-structured interviews) alike. It is the first nationwide assessment of professionals working with cancer patients in Romania. A total of 134 respondents completed the survey and were interviewed in 2014; 8.2% represents social workers. The aim of this exploratory analysis is to better understand Romanian social workers' experiences and their perceptions of working with cancer patients in the present situation regarding the unattended and unconsidered psychosocial needs within the oncological direct practice. In this context we recommend oncology social workers to be one of the most comprehensive support sources in Romania, empowering the existing networks to provide better care and to enrich quality of life while ensuring that patients in need of psychosocial services have unrestricted access to them.

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This work was supported by the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research, UEFISCDI, project PN-II-RU-TE-2012-3-0011.

*The Notion of Citizenship for people with Intellectual Disabilities in the UK: A Life of their Own*

Julie Lawrence | University of Salford, UK

Keywords | intellectual disabilities, human rights, social work, total communication, transitions

This presentation will discuss an empirical qualitative study about seven adults (n=7) (citizens) who had intellectual disabilities. They were successfully moved from one rural location, to live in an urban location in the UK within a 12 month period during 2014.

The presentation will address the notion of citizenship within a European context underpinned by a human rights framework. The outcomes from the transition process are highlighted, alongside the necessity to ensure that vulnerable adults are protected from abusive situations whilst living out their lives. The presentation will also demonstrate how a human rights based approach to social work was utilised through the use of a Total Communication approach.

This initiative was driven by a statutory intellectual disability service based in the UK. All the individuals were of white British origin. The rural location had been their home for the past thirty years, but it was under risk of closure by the Care and Social Services Inspectorate. It was important to keep the citizens at the heart of decision making during the transitional phase.

In terms of methods, informed consent had been sought (where appropriate) and pseudonyms had replaced any identifying features. The remit was to ascertain what they wanted, in terms of a change in living circumstances. During the data generation phase individuals responded more positively through being able to tell their 'stories'.

Therefore, in terms of analysis, a narrative inquiry approach was utilised which had been influenced by Kohlar Riessman and Quinney (2005). This was supplemented by the use of a humanistic approach (Total Communication)

to reciprocal communication techniques employed by social workers (n=4). The Total Communication approach encompassed a person centred planning (PCP) ethos. PCP is a set of approaches designed to assist someone to plan their life and support systems. It embraces the social model of disability and is used to increase personal self-determination and improve independence (Sanderson et al., 2006). Most of the individuals did not use verbal communication techniques and therefore appropriate engagement on a one-to-one basis was imperative in order to capture communication styles and preferences.

The ethical debates raised in this study were focused towards the residential home staff. It raised the question: how had a person's needs and wishes been fulfilled over a period of thirty years? It transpired that no records had been kept about each person and initial engagement with both staff and individuals was difficult.

The main positive outcomes from this study resulted in all the citizens being moved to separate living arrangements (of their choice) within an urban town. This was facilitated through the use of a visualisation map, a feature of the Total Communication approach. The visualisation map contained three components of importance: people, connections, places.

Important implications for policy and practice suggest that the Total Communication approach can foster respectful relationships with individuals who do not use verbal communication, in effect it enables voices and choices to be heard by professionals such as social workers. In addition to this the maintenance of accurate records about individuals is pivotal. This factor can either help or hinder important processes for vulnerable people who can be, as in this case, at important junctures in their lives.

*In the Front Line: The Impact of a Training Program for Pediatricians in Children at Risk on Doctor-Social Worker Interactions in Hospitals*

Lea Zanbar | Bar Ilan University & Ariel University  
Haya Itzhaky | Bar Ilan University

Keywords | hospital social workers, children at risk, pediatricians, training program for pediatricians

Hospital treatment of victims of child abuse and neglect requires maximal cooperation between doctors and social workers. Suspected cases of abuse or neglect must be identified in real-time, during the child's short stay in the hospital, and the decision of whether or not to report the case and to whom, must be made.

Until recently, the professionals dealing almost exclusively with children at risk in Israel were the hospital social workers, who met with them on their admittance to the emergency room and operated under the auspices of child protection committees. The realization that effective treatment of these children also demands the close involvement of physicians led to the development of an intensive year-long training program for hospital pediatricians. The current study, based on in-depth interviews with the doctors who participated in the program and the social workers who work with them at 14 hospitals in Israel, sought to examine the impact of the course on cooperation between these two groups of professionals. In addition, it examined whether and how the training program affected hospital procedures for dealing with children at risk.

Phenomenological analysis of the interviews revealed several themes. The program increased the pediatricians' knowledge and awareness of children at risk, and bolstered their confidence in dealing with the problem. In addition, it led to greater collaboration between the doctors and social workers. At the same time, however, the change experienced by the doctors also contributed to increased friction between the two professional groups. We propose possible explanations for this outcome, as well as practical recommendations for enhancing the potential effectiveness of such programs and improving the dynamics between the two professions.



*A New Form of Inequality? How do internationally-qualified social workers experience their transition to working life in Ireland?*

Trish Walsh | Trinity College Dublin  
Erna O'Connor | Trinity College Dublin  
George Wilson | Queens University Belfast

Keywords | professional mobility, social work in austerity, social justice issues in social work recruitment

Previous research (Walsh et al, 2013) highlighted some issues of social justice regarding the recruitment to, and employment of, internationally qualified social workers in Ireland, north and south. In the previous work, spanning 1996-2007, the differential pathways into NI and the ROI were tracked. The data showed how the greatest numbers of inward migrant workers come from Anglophone countries such as the US and Canada, the Antipodes, and the UK itself as well as intra-island mobility between NI and the ROI.

In the context of severe staff shortages in 2000-2002, specific recruitment drives from ROI resulted also in a large short-term increase in workers from some African countries (particularly Zimbabwe and South Africa). Indeed for some of these years the numbers recruited internationally exceeded those graduating from local courses. Apart from this the trend persisted of the majority of migrant social workers coming from Anglophone countries, despite the more favourable migration laws for members of the EU.

In this follow-up study, we initially collated and analysed the most recent available figures from 2008 - 2013 for social workers seeking accreditation in NI and ROI, tracking the dramatic fall in internationally-qualified social workers applying for recognition of their qualification since the recession. We considered which trends persist and if so what their implications are for the profession and its commitment to social justice. We presented this initial analysis in 2015 (O'Connor et al, JSWEC, 2015). We followed this initial scoping exercise with an online questionnaire to research in more depth the experiences of internationally qualified social workers resident in NI and ROI.

A total of 130 completed surveys were submitted by 31st August 2015 and are being analysed. The survey data contains both factual profile information and qualitative data on respondents' experiences in making the transition from obtaining an international qualification to gaining employment in Ireland to their induction and post-qualifying needs.

In this paper we will discuss the emerging findings and their implications for social work, noting also the work of Beddoe in New Zealand, Hussein et al in the UK and Bartlett in Australia. In particular we will outline the changing face of international social work mobility as it relates to the island of Ireland and pose questions regarding ethical and social justice issues which relate to the challenges which internationally qualified workers may face in specific contexts.

Findings relating to the role of professional associations, formal registration bodies, employers, researchers and educators will be considered, in the light of a critical question: Who can and should take responsibility for an ethical approach to the treatment of internationally-qualified social workers?

*Lateral entries in social work fields and the debate on professionalization. A German perspective*

Nina Weimann-Sandig, Lena Becker, Lisa Wirner | German Youth Institute

Keywords | lateral entries, skills shortage, social and personal services, professionalization of social work

*Background & Purpose*

Within the field of Social Work social and personal services play an essential role. The presented social research focuses on skills shortage in the field of social and personal services. The main examples in Germany are jobs in the area of geriatric care and child daycare. In this context the question arises if there is a greater need for lateral entries.

These lateral entries are critically discussed in Germany. The approaches of the German "Länder" (states) are very different with regard to qualification requirements of the lateral entrants, duration of the training and training elements. Critics of lateral entries worry about a deskilling of the social work force instead of a needed professionalization.

In our study we show that professionalization and lateral entries are not mutually exclusive. We are also discussing the general mismatch between professionalization and academic profession in the named fields of social work.

*Methods*

Our presentation is based on empirical results from a qualitative study that focuses on lateral entries. The presentation highlights the different ways of lateral entries in Germany. It describes the experiences of lateral entrants as well as the experiences of the employing facilities and discusses the effects on professionalization. The study combines different qualitative methods. At first a qualitative document analysis was done to examine the different programs within the federal German system. Secondly 10 Group discussions with lateral entrants were held - separate for geriatric care and child care. Thirdly we conducted 20 interviews - both for geriatric care and child daycare - with experts. The qualitative sample consisted of a sociologically balanced group considering East-West-differences, rural and urban structure

as well as different institutions. The analysis of the group discussions was done by using reconstructive methods, the data of the expert interviews was collected by content analysis.

*Results and implications*

One of the central results is, that under specific conditions, like e.g. the generally high motivation of lateral entrants and their practical knowledge from other workspaces, combined with good professional instructions, lateral entries can be a useful way to end skill shortages. What we can also show is, that as both - child daycare and geriatric care - are part of social work and social services, there are different types of lateral entries with regard to the educational background of the entrants and requested job profiles as well as a different discussion on professionalization.

So as an implication for the academic debate on professionalization of Social Work one has to consider that not only academization may be a way to improve qualitative standards. As recommendation to the work fields we can say, that teams in geriatric care and child daycare benefit from lateral entrants although there is a greater need for coaching and supervision.

## *Turkish and Moroccan Dutch professionals in social work*

Peter Hendriks | Utrecht, University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | social work identity, boundary work, Islam, participative inquiry

### *Background and purpose*

This qualitative descriptive study explores the professional experiences of newly started Turkish and Moroccan Dutch female, Muslim, professionals in social work and studies how these professionals connect to the profession. Social workers in general, face challenges in dealing with clients with a migrant background, whom they perceive as 'different and difficult'. Social work organisations are committed to recruiting and retaining employees of diverse backgrounds and assume that by employing Turkish and Moroccan Dutch professionals, they are acquiring the knowledge and skills required to deal with these differences. We aim at the inclusiveness of the profession.

Our questions were:

- A. How Turkish and Moroccan Dutch professionals connect to the social work profession and position themselves in their new professional context.
- B. To explore if and how these newly started professionals resolve their (multiple) identity tensions and find positive sources of identification in social work.
- C. What kind of professionals do these newly started social workers desire to be and which hindrances do they experience.

### *Methods and study design*

- The first phase(2013-2014): 10 newly started professionals from a Turkish or Moroccan Dutch background were interviewed in semi-structured interviews. Theoretical key concepts were: Super-diversity, Complexity and Boundary Work. Selection of interviewees was done by the networks of their organisations by self-identification (as Turkish or Moroccan-Dutch).
- The second phase (2014): 40 interviews were done by eight Turkish and Moroccan Dutch professionals/co-researchers with peer respondents. Method: participative qualitative inquiry. In reflection meetings the co-researchers reflected on the research process itself, being instrument as well as object of research. Theoretical concepts: professional social work

identity, participative inquiry and boundary work.

- The third phase (2015): a secondary analysis of the same 40 interviews was done by the researchers. Method: a content analysis, inspired by the capability approach (Amarthya Sen). The interviews were screened on two major theoretical concepts: desires (beings and doings) and constraints.

### *Summary of some results and conclusions*

- Turkish and Moroccan professionals in social work, are loaded with high expectations; by their parents to succeed in their careers, but also to fulfill the gender-specific expectations as women who care for their families; by their employers as experts in dealing with 'difficult' clients from a migrant background; as a progressive force within their communities and 're-making the mainstream' (phase 1).
- Increasing diversity and complexity lead to higher claims and expectations and we have reason to believe that this will result in a higher vulnerability for professionals (phase 2).
- Within the context of identity tensions, due to social and political processes in the Dutch society, the importance of a 'supportive' (and challenging) professional social work identity is advocated (phase 2).
- The Turkish and Moroccan Dutch professionals start to question subtle discrimination in the workplace and this awareness contributes to forms of 'micro-emancipation' (phase 3).
- Turkish and Moroccan Dutch professionals can play an important role in the development of culturally relevant social work practice and education in the Netherlands (phase 3).

*Social work in a medical setting: reflection on inter-professional practice in a power imbalanced context*

Silvia Fragon | Free University of Bozen / Bolzano

Keywords | social work in a medical setting, inter-professional practice, power dynamics

#### *Research question*

Social work in hospital setting has a long history; research has shown its value, but at the same time has revealed how it has always been fraught with tensions and contradictions. Many researches have connected the difficulties to a clash in perspective between the social and the medical cultures. Providing room for social work in hospital derives from a view of illness and health as connected to social as well as physical factors. Empirical evidence, though, shows how often social work is underutilized, or not properly considered. The point is that lack of understanding takes place in a context of strong power imbalance between medical and social profession within the hospital. Social workers are often dissatisfied with the level of cooperation and with the way they are involved in interventions with clients. Although there have been several studies on issue role and problems of hospital social work in the past, still the issue of cooperation in power imbalance situations represent an open issue.

#### *Methods*

This presentation is based on a qualitative study in South Tyrol, developed out of a cooperation between hospital social workers and the University. The research study explores the views of medical and social professions on the dynamics of inter-professional practice in a Hospital environment. Ten medical doctors, fourteen nurses, six social workers and six patients were interviewed and asked for their views on social work in hospital, their knowledge of it, their expectations, and experiences. All were asked critical incidents of good and bad cooperation.

#### *First results*

The interviews have allowed to identify both several points of friction between professions, such as a different time frame, and also elements that could constitute a good base for inter-professional practice, such as an

acknowledged need of social work on the side of the medical professions. The main issue undermining cooperation seems to be, though, a lack acknowledgment and under-evaluation of the complexity of the tasks of social workers. It appears that the professionals with more power tend to simplify what the role and task of the weaker profession entails.

*A statutory duty of candour, the criminalization of social workers and the achievement of a culture of openness in the profession*

Lel F. Meleyal | University of Sussex

Keywords | candour, transparency, nudge

In the UK, since the 2013 Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry there has been growing concern about the impact of workplace cultures which fail to see or hear problems and therefore fail to take action to protect service users. The Inquiry report proposed a statutory duty of candour on health and care providers with the possibility of criminal sanction for providers and individuals who allow standards to be breached or where they are 'obstructively dishonest'. In 2015 the UK High Court upheld an appeal by the Professional Standards Authority which said that a sanction administered to a nurse was over lenient and had not taken into account the seriousness of a 'dishonest' failure to prioritise the patients interests. The nurse, allegedly to protect a colleague, had not shared important information about abuse of a patient. The court agreed that the sanction was inadequate and required the nursing regulatory body to re-hear the case. In 2015 the government launched its consultation a new criminal offence of 'wilful neglect' with the proposal to prosecute social workers who, through deliberate, neglectful treatment or inaction, concealment or cover up fail to act on abuse or neglect. The proposal, like the Statutory Duty of Candour aims to make individuals and providers accountable. However, whilst it would be difficult to argue against the intentions of such duties, there is a significant and developing body of research knowledge which suggests that regulatory impositions erode values based self-regulation and can lead to other perverse outcomes such as defensive, risk averse practices which are potentially damaging for service users. Drawing on a literature review combined with a secondary analysis of data from a small UK grounded theory qualitative research study into the impacts of regulation on social work practice this paper proposed that the imposition of duty may contribute to the problem of failures in accountability. It considers points of decision making and proposes small scale, local, behavioural 'nudge' interventions which it is suggested have significant potential to facilitate positive engagement with transparency and accountability in the social work workplace.

*Counter-Narrative in Social Work: Critical Research and Practice*

SYMPOSIUM

Symposium Convenor | Michal Krumer-Nevo, Ben-Gurion University

Keywords | critical social work, poverty-aware social work, feminist social work, social work theory and practice, anti-oppressive social work, critical reflexivity

The term 'critical social work' can be applied to a variety of social work practice models derived from a host of critical social theories and approaches. Among these are the radical, Marxist, socialist, structuralist, feminist, anti-oppressive, human-rights-based, post-modern and post-structuralist approaches. Common to all these approaches is their perception of social work as a political activity (i.e., as taking place in an arena of power relations) and their criticism of the social status quo and of the role social workers play in maintaining it. They also share the aim of enhancing social justice. Committed to this aim, the symposium will bring to the fore the findings of three studies that use a critical perspective to analyze social work practice. In addition, the symposium will exemplify the bridging of theory and practice through critical reflexivity. The presenters will address the question of what critical research is for them, how it influences their perspectives on social work practice, and the nature of the relationship between theory and practice in social work.

Following are the abstracts of the three studies that will be presented in the symposium. The first, by Eynat Vager-Atias, will focus on the discourse and practice of social workers who work with immigrant youth from Ethiopia to show how social workers address discrimination and racism. In contrast to this study, which reveals the individualistic nature of social workers' treatment of social ills and the many ways in which practitioners fail to perceive their practice as political, the other two studies describe and analyze current practices that adopt a critical and political perspective. Yuval Saar-Heiman will present the perspectives of service users in a special program for working with people in poverty through the framework of the poverty-aware paradigm. Roni Eyal-Lubling will analyze interviews with feminist social workers in diverse contexts regarding the theoretical and practical principles of work. These presentations enhance an agenda of hope regarding what social workers can do in practice to challenge the social status quo in their direct work with service users.

Abstract 1 | *"I am afraid to reveal that I'm racist": Discourse and practice of social-workers working with youth of Ethiopian origin in Israel*

Eynat Vager-Atias | Ben-Gurion University

Though anti-oppressive approaches are at the center of the theoretical discourse in social work, scholars criticize the marginal influence of its principles in public youth social services. The study sought to answer questions about how social workers understand discrimination and racist experiences of youth of Ethiopian origin and how they deal with those issues in their practice.

The lecture is based on a qualitative research which included interviews with 32 social workers who work with youth of Ethiopian origin in public social services in Israel.

Jews of Ethiopian origin started to immigrate to Israel in the 80's of the 20th century. Since then, this community has suffered poverty and social isolation on the basis of its ethnic origin. Particularly conspicuous is the condition of 30,000 youth who have been overrepresented in parameters of risk and adversity despite the large investment of resources on both the educational and welfare levels.

Findings reveal three main discourses which form the professional discourse in relation to issues of discrimination - integration, meritocracy and social conflict. Despite the fundamental differences in the primary assumptions which underlie them, all three discourses form the foundations of a practice which ignores or marginalizes discrimination experiences of youth. Social justice issues are not perceived as professional targets and steps are undertaken in order to remove these issues from the professional discourse.

These findings allow for an observation, sometimes painful, of the ways social workers might take part in a culture of silence and silencing of discrimination. Nevertheless, this observation also contains the opportunity to increase awareness and to develop practices which respond to issues of inequality, oppression and social justice.

Abstract 2 | *Practice of poverty aware social work: Service users' experiences*

Yuval Saar-Heiman | Ben-Gurion University

In recent years, there has been an increase in scholarly writing on the theory and practice of critical social work with people living in poverty. Yet, there is a lack of research on the experiences and perspectives of service users

regarding this kind of practice. This qualitative study explored the experiences of service users who took part in a special poverty-aware social work program in Israel.

Using an interpretative interactionist approach, in-depth interviews with nine women were held three times over a two-year period. Findings reveal a high degree of satisfaction with the program on the part of the women. Data analysis revealed that the satisfaction was derived from four main experiences: the experience of visibility; the experience of the active partnership in the fight against poverty; the experience of close, hierarchy-challenging relationships; and the experience of material and emotional needs being provided for. Examination of the different themes emerging from these experiences emphasizes the significance of intervention in a real-life context, the challenging nature of the helping relationship in the intervention, and the focus of the intervention on both the material and the emotional needs of the women.

The contribution of the study to critical social work practice lies in its systematic description and conceptualization of poverty-aware practice. Furthermore, the fact that the knowledge about this practice was derived from the experiences of women living in poverty enables to understand its suitability for service users and highlights questions regarding the possibility of implementing such practices in other realms of social work.

Abstract 3 | *"You speak in two languages": Feminist social work practice and theory of practice*

Roni Eyal-Lubling | Ben-Gurion University

Though feminist social work has been practiced in Israel for the last several decades, little has been written about it so far. This qualitative study aims at bridging this gap by documenting and conceptualizing feminist practice and theory of practice based on interviews conducted with 12 feminist social workers.

Interviews reveal that feminist social workers describe their practice as significantly different from traditional social work practice. Findings expose 4 analytic principles that feminist social workers adopt - gender analysis; awareness to power relations; analysis of welfare services as oppressive institutions; and, the use of feminist language. These analytic principles are translated into 10 principles of action that lead social work feminist practice. Together, these principles form a rich professional picture of a unique approach carried-out outside the traditional boundaries of social work

practice – both in its physical and relational sense. Alongside, participants shared that applying feminist perspective in social work requires them to continuously bridge between their own feminist beliefs and approaches and those of their fellow colleagues who hold more traditional ones. As one of the interviewees described it: "You speak in two languages". The contribution of the study lies in its acknowledgment of marginal social work practice in Israel, in opening a space for feminist values and principles in the profession and in creating a "home" for all those who long for it.

*A research agenda for social work in contemporary societies: Possibilities, constraints and limitations*

#### SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convener | Milena Heinsch, University of Newcastle, Australia

Keywords | research utilisation, evidence based practice, practitioner research

Now more than ever we are living at a time when a vast amount of knowledge is immediately available to us, at the click of a mouse. Amid these diverse forms of knowledge, scientific research has been endowed with particular value and importance as a key component of competitive advantage for organisations. Approaches like evidence-based practice have gained international momentum across many professional domains. Social workers are under pressure to use research evidence to inform their decision-making is increasing, as government agencies and funding bodies demand more accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness in the provision of social services. However, despite a recent movement towards greater research use in many areas of social work practice, criticisms persist that social work practitioners rarely base their decisions on sound research. While evidence describing effective interventions exists, there continues to be relatively little attention paid to knowledge utilisation processes or the ways in which research is translated to practice. Consequently, there is little clarity on how to achieve research use, nor social work contributions to discourses surrounding research creation and use.

The broader research utilisation literature highlights a range of challenges to connecting research with practice. Not least, the breadth and diversity of the research utilisation field, with different terminology used across diverse disciplines to refer to the same phenomenon, is further complicated by disagreement about the meanings and paradigms underlying these terms. There is also a paucity of theory development about the research utilisation process, combined with many models remaining untested so their applicability and relevance in a range of contexts is largely unknown. In practice, while efforts have been directed towards training and encouraging social workers to contribute to and make use of empirical evidence, little attention has been paid to identifying the nature and sources of knowledge that social workers themselves nominate as influencing their practice decisions.

This symposium, for the first time, brings together findings from several research studies conducted mainly in Australia over the past ten years, which have explored knowledge production and utilisation in social work from the perspective of researchers and practitioners. The symposium will highlight current constraints and limitations to achieving research use in social work. Most important, moving beyond these, it will explore possibilities for enhancing connections between research and practice, setting a new and exciting research agenda for social work in contemporary societies. (388 words)

Abstract 1 | *Connecting Research to Action in Social Work*

Mel Gray | University of Newcastle, Australia

Elaine Sharland | University of Sussex, UK

In contemporary society, research is seen as essential to effective and accountable service provision. When it comes to considering research use, social work has been more informed by the discourse of evidence-based practice (EBP) than the related interdisciplinary fields of knowledge production and utilisation (KPU). Research utilisation is broadly concerned with the interrelated processes of forging connections between research, policy, and practice, and how this process can be conceptualised, theorised, modelled, and measured. In some senses, the study of research use is in its infancy. There is relatively little empirical work evaluating how effectively research utilisation strategies achieve tangible change. In other senses, the field is not new. It has emerged from a wide spectrum of disciplines, including health, management, information science, education, sociology, geography, and social work, and is far from homogenous. Terminologies used frequently intersect and confuse, and shift over time. In the EBP field, there has been disagreement about the existence or extent of overlap between EBP and 'evidence-informed' or 'evidence-guided' practice. Within KPU discourse, writers speak interchangeably of production and utilisation, or use other terms altogether. Some distinguish between knowledge translation, knowledge transfer, dissemination, knowledge exchange, and research diffusion; others have referred to implementation science, knowledge mobilisation, and innovation. This paper examines commonalities and distinctions between the EBP and KPU discourses of research use. It considers how and where these discourses are coming together, through a focus on 'knowledge mobilisation', 'implementation', and 'innovation', and a shared emphasis on the role of organisations in bridging the gap between research and action. It hopes to contribute to the movement towards greater research use in social work and

enhance understanding of the mechanisms by which research is connected to action.

Abstract 2 | *Developing an Integrated Model of Research Use for Social Work*

Milena Heinsch | University of Newcastle, Australia

A range of theories and models have been developed to explain the process of research use. However, no overarching theory has yet been developed. One reason for this is that many models remain untested so their applicability and relevance is largely unknown. There is an urgent need to establish the effectiveness of knowledge utilisation models in a range of contexts. One such context is social work, where criticisms persist regarding the lack of research use in practice. This paper reports on an empirical and literature based study that aimed to contribute towards development of an integrated model of research use in social work. A review of models and theories of research use was conducted. These models were synthesised to identify common elements and differences. Next, qualitative interviews were conducted with 26 Australian social work researchers to examine how they conceived, explained and experienced the research utilisation process and the factors that impact on this process. Participants experienced research use as a socially engaged and relational process, rather than a unilinear event whereby research knowledge moves neatly from the context of production to that of application. The results of the study were used to reflect critically on existing models and theories of research utilisation to develop an Integrated Model of Research Use, with the aim of contributing to theory development in the knowledge utilisation field from a social work perspective. In particular, the study explored the potential of one research utilisation model—the interactional model of research use—to enhance research use in social work. The findings revealed four key approaches to interaction for the purpose of facilitating research use, termed 'situated', 'engaged', 'programmatic' and 'conventional'. These approaches reflected a graduation from intense interaction and coproduction in the context of application to brief interaction targeted at traditional—linear—approaches to the dissemination of information, respectively. Engaged and programmatic approaches were found to be most effective in facilitating conceptual and instrumental research use and in minimising symbolic use by practitioners. In general, neither situated interaction nor conventional knowledge transfer approaches were found to facilitate research use beyond the transmission, cogni



tion or referencing stages of research use. The findings of this study provide preliminary insights into theoretical frameworks that may be most effective in enhancing research use in social work.

Abstract 3 | *Sources of Knowledge for Decision Making in Social Work*  
Fiona McDermott | Monasch University, Australia

Considerable research has highlighted the importance of social workers working from an evidence base, alongside recognition of the factors that serve as barriers to so doing. While efforts have been directed towards training and encouraging social workers to contribute to and make use of empirical evidence, little attention has been paid to identifying the nature and sources of knowledge that social workers themselves nominate as influencing their practice decisions. This paper will present findings from research in a large health network where social work practitioners and students participated in an ongoing project building a repository of evidence, called the Evidence Based Bank (EBB). The EBB contains 400 systematic reviews and empirical studies pertaining to social work interventions frequently undertaken in health settings such as discharge planning, family work, psychosocial support etc., relevant to different service user groups and populations. In light of systematic reviews and empirical studies being available and accessible to practitioners via this online resource, a study of 15 social workers has been conducted to explore the sources of evidence they used in their decision-making. Findings from this study will be presented with reference to: (i) the extent to which practitioners used the EBB, and (ii) the nature and sources of other knowledge they drew from. The study concludes that understanding more about the sources of practitioners' knowledge contributes to advancing understanding of the research-practice relationship with implications for research, curriculum and professional development.

## *Innovations in Social Work Research*

### SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convenor | Roger Smith, Durham University, UK

Keywords | innovations, research design, research methods, analysis, using research, using social media, mobile methods, participatory analysis, using visual images

### *Symposium Summary and Framework*

Drawing on a major project to discover and report current 'innovations in social work research' (Hardwick et al, 2016), the proposed symposium aims to explore the distinctive and diverse methodological territories social work research is confidently moving into; whilst also taking account of the contemporary constraints and challenges it faces in the UK and internationally. The project will be exemplified by the following themes:

- Design and planning: using new technologies
- Methods: ethnographic approach and mobile and visual methods
- Analysis: shifting engagements and 'insider knowledge'
- Dissemination and Use: sharing knowledge

It will be shown that within these approaches social work research is finding new ways to engage with and validate social work practice and is offering alternative means of representing service users' perspectives in the research process, as well as giving insight into the fast-changing UK policy context. The case made throughout this symposium is that social work research offers "another approach for achieving social work objectives" (D'Cruz and Jones 2004: 58), and, like practice, also maintains a common 'identity and purpose' (Roger 2012:433).

The four papers presented exemplify these methodological themes. Simon Hackett's paper demonstrates the potential value for researchers of engaging with new technologies and social media in the process of identifying and recruiting 'hard-to-reach' research populations.

The ethnographic approach and mobile and visual methods is exemplified by Alastair Roy et al's paper recounting using a 'visual matrix' as a means of facilitating getting close or 'practice near' to participants in recovery. This approach encourages 'visual thinking' and new ways of understanding complex and embodied emotions.

The theme Shifting Engagements and Insider Knowledge is covered by the third paper given Jackie Robinson. She gives an account of engaging in a

Participatory Action Research (PAR) project with three co-researchers with Asperger's syndrome. Their insights form the basis of the analytical strategy developed, generating a model which represents both a systematic user-led framework for making sense of findings; and a resource capable of replication in future research.

And, finally, the fourth theme of Sharing Knowledge is exemplified by Natalie Robinson's paper on the annual 'Hope in Shadows' photography contest in a low-income inner city neighbourhood in Canada. It explores how photography can facilitate a discussion about personal and collective identities and create an open dialogue with participants, revealing the significance of self and place.

The symposium will then open to the floor for a discussion regarding the significance of innovations in social work research at a time when, for social workers in the UK, creativity in practice is being curtailed by difficult working conditions, harsh welfare reform, and major cuts in funding.

Overall, the symposium aims to foreground the distinctive and transformative potential of research grounded in social work principles and practices; whilst at the same time it will provide an opportunity to hear about the range of social work research 'innovations' happening across Europe, but also the nature of constraints experienced - with a view to collectively articulating the generative power of social work research to effect change for the better for service-users and the profession itself.

*Abstract 1 | Long term follow up research with a hard to reach population-researching adults who were previously involved in the child welfare system*  
Simon Hackett | Durham University

Social workers' interventions are often relatively transitory when placed against the wider context of children's lives. The success of social work interventions with children should ultimately be measured not only by short-term goals, such as immediate improvement in family functioning, whether a child is re-referred or whether there is a repeat critical incident, but also by the child's longer-term developmental outcomes. However, the extent to which social work interventions meet the needs of children as they develop through adolescence and into adulthood is often poorly understood.

This presentation will be based on a study funded by ESRC which sought to follow-up a group of children and young people with sexual behaviour problems who were known to services in the 1990s and who are now adults. The aim was to conduct narrative research interviews to learn about the im-

port of childhood problems on people's subsequent life trajectories and to understand the impact that professional interventions in childhood had on individuals' development.

The presentation will focus on the design of the study and in particular how practical and ethical challenges associated with tracing and contacting former social welfare service users were overcome. The research team used various publicly available internet and social network resources as part of their approach. Simon will describe the use of these methods, together with an appraisal of the practicalities and ethics of such approaches.

*Abstract 2 | The Problems of Speaking and Listening in Research: Using Mobile Methods to Explore the Lives of Marginalised Young Men in Manchester*  
Alastair Roy, Jenny Hughes, Lynn Froggett and Jennifer Christensen | University of Central Lancashire

Social work and welfare practices are founded on mobilities, as practitioners must move between and within the different areas of practice not only to be co-present with service users, but to understand the lives of those they are professionally responsible for. In this respect, walking is not simply a physical and behavioural activity, it is a kinetic way of thinking and knowing. These ideas have important implications for the embodied practices of research and social work. We argue they share common problems and we conceive them both as forms of praxis - thinking in movement (or, thinking through movement). Employing mobile methods can involve an altered conception of how and where fieldwork should be realized, as well as how research might be recorded and analysed - and to what effect? This is important for reasons first identified by bell hooks (1989) who argues the problem of speaking cannot be separated from the problem of listening. If young people are to speak in their preferred 'voices' and spaces then audiences - in this case researchers - must learn to attend, listen and hear in new ways. Hence mobile methods are of relevance to social work researchers because harnessing movement and the relationship between humans and place can alter the conditions of knowledge making and uncover new meanings and understandings of people's lives which are structural, cultural, and simultaneously deeply embedded in subjectivity. The ideas are examined through data from a research project conducted in Manchester, England, which used walking tour interviews to explore the lives of young men in the city. The methods allowed for a meaningful exploration of the ways in which the young men's social, psychic and embodied worlds are intertwined, thus generating

the kind of client-centred knowledge needed both to understand individual stories of survival and to inform appropriate and timely practice interventions.

Abstract 3 | *Data Analysis in Participatory Research with Adults with Asperger's Syndrome*

Jackie Robinson | De Montfort University

An account will be given of a participatory research project which involved three co-researchers with Asperger's syndrome. The research fully involved the co-researchers in the design of research tools, collection of data, data analysis and dissemination. The focus of this paper will be on the data analysis. Differences of power were addressed through a consideration of the research process in all stages and this will be considered with particular reference to the data analysis stage. The methods used to ensure that the expertise of the co-researchers will be discussed as well as the way the insights of the co-researchers was utilised to understand the data from other adults with Asperger's syndrome. A shared understanding of the data was achieved through discussion. The coding of the data and the work that the researcher and co-researchers did on making sense of the codes, assigning them to themes resulted in the formation of a model of understanding will be outlined. This model of understanding was originally formed to make sense of the data and to give a model for a mutual understanding between people with Asperger's syndrome and people who do not have Asperger's syndrome. The model also forms a useful framework for embedding the principles of working in a fully inclusive way with co-researchers for future research.

Abstract 4 | *Personal troubles->public issues? Creating and sharing knowledge through urban photography in Downtown Eastside Vancouver*

Natalie Robinson | Liverpool University

Drawing on a study of the 'Hope in Shadows' contest in Downtown Eastside Vancouver (DTES), this paper explores the potential of urban photography as a methodological tool for social work research. The Hope in Shadows contest invites 200 low-income residents to take pictures of their neighbourhood on an annual basis, and is described on its dedicated website as: 'a community-driven project that uses photography as a vehicle for people living in poverty to share their stories and to represent their community on

their own terms' ([www.hopeinshadows.com/our\\_story](http://www.hopeinshadows.com/our_story)). Through observational research and focus-groups with DTES residents during the tenth annual contest in the summer of 2012, I sought to develop an insight into the ways that people might use photography to talk about community issues. The research points to how people can use images of meaningful places in their neighbourhoods to explore concepts transcending immediate observations of the physical urban space, provoking a recognition of environmental, social and psychological interconnections. This paper concentrates on two notable findings that came out of this work. First, how taking and talking about images of the DTES enabled participants to say something meaningful about personal and collective identities, encouraging them to:

- move away from normative, linear accounts of lived experience
- articulate difficult concepts through visual metaphor
- explore the importance of place as part of ongoing identity construction
- participate in meaningful interpretations and analysis of community-generated data

Secondly, how participants used images to speak to wider publics - sharing images in community forums, speaking to wider publics and policymakers. Participants noted the importance of their stories being made visible, actively seeking engagement within and beyond their neighbourhood to catalyse change for the community. I will detail my own experiences of creating and sharing knowledge with participants, and discuss the strengths and challenges of attempting public social research.

*Transnational Social Work – A Border-Crossing Agenda for Practice and Research*

SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convener | Cornelia Schweppe, Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

Keywords | transnational social work, transnationality, addressees, social services, research agenda, historical studies, methodology

Social work is highly influenced by transnational developments and processes. These developments concern the transformation of the nation state and its key institutions as increasing flows of people, social relationships and organisations transcend national borders, connecting worlds that used to be distinct from one another. Research meanwhile provides a great deal of evidence that it is not only specific target groups (e.g. migrants) who exhibit transnational connections. Rather, what we see is that the transnationalisation of day-to-day worlds affects many of the target groups of social work and that, as a result, we can also observe a corresponding transnationalisation of the organisations for social work. Alongside the long-established social services which are deliberately designed to be of a transnational nature (e.g. international adoption agencies, international youth exchange programmes), it is increasingly the case that other programmes and institutions of social work that are not explicitly geared towards cross-border interrelationships are facing transnational challenges (e.g. children and youth welfare, debt counselling, long-term care, social counselling programmes). These processes and transformations create fundamental challenges for social work. In the transnational studies, the concept of "methodological nationalism" points to the naturalisation and substantialisation of the nation state in the social sciences, particularly in the 19th and 20th century. In the discourse and discussions of social work, it is still frequently the case that the nation state is used as the unquestioned background tapestry. This in turn means that the problem definitions, analysis categories and methods that are developed are also automatically placed in the context of the nation state and its organisations and institutions.

As a result, it is difficult for social work to identify transnational processes, and there is a risk that transnational processes are depicted only to a limited degree – if at all – in social work terminology, social work practice and re

search strategies. In response to this problem, transnationalisation requires critical analysis of the established link between nation state and social work; this link must be loosened to pave the way for description and analysis of the ways of life of the target groups of social work and its interventions that are designed to meet their needs. Accordingly, the key challenge of transnational processes is to reflect and recognise the way in which the nation state is often firmly embedded in social work concepts as a frame of reference and to overcome the frequent equating of "national" with "societal". The planned symposium will take up these challenges, which social work is only now beginning to systematically analyse and reflect. These challenges will be addressed from a theoretical, historical, methodological and practical perspective. Overall, the aim of the symposium is to promote the connectability of social work to transnational day-to-day worlds which are of key importance for its future if it wants to support people to cope with the challenges of everyday life and live meaningful lives in a globalised world. The ability to identify and effectively respond to cross-border interrelationships will become one of the important professional skills in the field of social work services.

Abstract 1 | *Transnational Social Work – An Insight into the Current Debate*  
Wolfgang Schröer | University of Hildesheim  
Cornelia Schweppe | Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

The presentation addresses the developments and theoretical foundation of "transnational social work". It will outline how the reception of "transnational studies" in the field of social work opens up the way for the reflection on and definition of social processes and formations in a nation state, thereby also providing a perspective on developments and constellations that serve to interconnect national borders. Although social work is gradually opening itself up to transnational processes and dimensions, its frame of reference to date has often been mobile people, in particular migrants. Using the examples of "children and youth welfare" and "care of the elderly", we will show how social work fields that are not explicitly "transnational" are nevertheless also embedded in cross-border processes on the political and organisational level as well as on the level of the target groups of social work. We will show how these fields of social work are influenced by an "ongoing interconnection or flow of people, ideas, objects, and capital across the borders of nation states in which the state shapes but does not contain such linkages and movements." (Glick Schiller & Levitt, 2006: 5). The term "border work"

can be used to show how social, political, legal and biographical interrelationships are put in place that address or interlink the borders drawn by nation states. It is these border interconnections that must be identified and that pose a challenge to the organisational structures and practices of social work so that it succeeds in securing people's agency – on a biographical, social as well as political level.

Abstract 2 | *Historical Roots of Methodological Nationalism in Social Work*  
Stefan Köngeter | University of Trier

Transnational studies pose a two-fold challenge to social work research. First, the transnationalization of knowledge and ideas in social work is considered to be an integral, but conflicting part of social work as a global profession: On the one hand, the transnationalization of knowledge and idea is critiqued against the background of colonial theories and professional imperialism (Midgley 1981). On the other hand, the internationalization of social work research is supported by many social work scholars to create a global profession promoting social justice. Second, this currently contradicting approaches towards the transnationalization of social work are rooted in a specific lack in historical research on the development of social work research. For too long social work has overlooked the importance and the changing meaning of the nation and the nation state for social work ideas and practice. This blind spot is subsumed under the term methodological nationalism (cf. Beck 2002; Wimmer/Glick Schiller 2002a; 2002b). This methodological nationalism also obstructed the view on the importance of those transnational processes in the development of social work from the late 19th century onwards. In historical research on the development of social welfare ideas, Rodgers (1998) revealed the importance of these transnational processes for the establishment of a welfare society. Although we find these transnational processes also in social work and social work research, these transnational processes are hardly recognized in social work history. Against the background of three historical case studies on the settlement movement, on the emergence of community social work, and on the German Jewish social workers in Palestine, this talk will present and discuss patterns of the early transnationalization of social work research. Furthermore, it will be presented how these transnational processes paradoxically promoted the prevalent methodological nationalism in social work.

Abstract 3 | *Post-Soviet Social Work in Kazakhstan as Transnational Social Work*

Sofia An | Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan

This paper will focus on the transnational processes of the introduction and institutionalization of social services for families and children in the context of child welfare transformation in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. It will show how this central field of social work is shaped by a complex interplay of the state, transnational organizations and national NGOs. As social services as an institution were absent from the Soviet welfare system, this transnational interplay is especially reflected in the introduction of the Law on Special Social Services (2008) which indicates a paradigmatic change in the institutional logic of child welfare provision and social work. This fundamental legal framework of social work reflects how interests of different national and transnational actors are negotiated and sets the basis of transnational ideas and formations in social work in post-Soviet Kazakhstan. Thus it will be shown (1) how the idea of social services for families and children was promoted by UNICEF with the support of international consultants from social work from Western Europe as a policy alternative superior to the Soviet approach to child welfare, specifically, to state children's residential institutions; (2) how social services for domestic NGOs involved in the provision of social supports to families and children in their communities, provided not only a better response to social issues but also a way to increase the legitimacy of newborn non-state organizations and attract financial resources for their work (3) how for the state authority, social services were a strategy to reform outdated public welfare institutions for selected groups of beneficiaries. Thus, the idea of social services for families and children served as a shared frame for overlapping but distinct interests of diverse policy actors and a basis for transnational partnership.

Abstract 4 | *Moving Concepts – Moving Methods: Possibilities and Challenges of a Transnational Social Work Research Approach*

Claudia Olivier-Mensah | Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

The transnationalisation of the social world creates challenges for the discipline and profession of social work. In view of the fact that social work practices are confronted with transnational involvements of the their actors in their diverse working fields (Schröer/Schwepe 2013) and that the knowledge of social work is historically transnational (Köngeter 2013), transnational social

work research also has to be reflected methodologically (Chambon/Königter 2012).

The importance of research on transnationality stems from its adoption of a perspective which makes reference to the relationships, networks and practices created through cross-border transactions and exchanges (Mau, 2007). This modified view of social practices creates a change at the level of academic observation, and thus a change in social science research methods. Transnational studies are a growing and interdisciplinary research field and have their origins in the migration research of the 1990s (Glick Schiller/Basch/Blanc-Szanton 1992). They offer a perspective which permits the analysis and reconstruction of transnational practices of individuals, groups, organisations and policies across national borders. The concept of "methodological transnationalism" underlines the key importance of the reflection of methods in transnational research (Wimmer/Glick Schiller 2002). The concept of transnationalism inevitably raises the question of how transnational phenomena and mobilities can be captured methodically.

The presentation will discuss the methodological possibilities and challenges of social work research in transnational contexts and argue that when research concepts are changing, methods also have to be moved. Specifically, it will focus on qualitative research methods and their adaptation for the analysis of transnational processes and structures in social work. In this respect, the presentation will outline approaches for the analysis of transnational life worlds. It will focus on multi-sided ethnography and its approach to follow people, or things of interests as well as on transnational social network analysis with the aim of reconstructing cross-border networks.

*Exploring variations in everyday life parenting in contemporary societies: Three cases from Norway*

#### SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convener | Anita Sundnes, Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences

Keywords | infant caretaking, high-conflict parenting, parenting in exile, socio-cultural perspectives

#### *Symposium abstract*

Social work and social workers have long been concerned with families, and contemporary social work related to families with children involves exploration of parenting. Parenting is considered largely in terms of the facilitation of child development (Woodcock, 2003). Social workers must relate to a variety of parenting practices, often aiming to support the parents in facilitating child development.

The symposium will illuminate parenting possibilities and processes from an interactional and socio-cultural perspective. Thus, parenting is not perceived as a fixed quality, but as situated in a relationship with others, such as children, co-parents and sometimes professionals, in a material, historical and cultural context. This symposium argues that social work practice may benefit from research that explores the perspectives of the parents themselves. Furthermore, from research that explores the details of parenting practices as well as how parents make meaning to their caretaking activities. Our aim is that the present perspectives may open new possibilities for how social workers may understand and support parenting processes.

This symposium presents three empirical studies on parenting: infant caretaking, parenting in high-conflict custodial families and parenting in exile, and thus cover a variation in parenting practices. In addition to covering variation, the papers also share a socio-cultural approach to parenting, which see people as agents, who actively make meaning of their experiences, meanings that give direction to their actions as human beings. Furthermore, they have in common a qualitative methodological approach, which draws on elements from the life mode interview (Haavind 1987). This involves interviews with detailed descriptions of the everyday life of the family, parents being encouraged to reconstruct specific events, including their interpreta

tions of and reflections on such events.

Abstract 1 | *Exploring infant caretaking: Paying attention to variation, and to the details of everyday life*

Anita Sundnes | Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences

Social work related to families with children involves exploration of parenting practices, for instance in relation to counseling or judgments of care-taking quality. Infant caretaking is performed in many ways and with a vast range of approaches, and it is a continuous challenge for professionals to interpret parent's practices. There is a demand for research-based knowledge on parenting; the question is what kinds of knowledge that are advantageous and in what ways such knowledge may be produced.

This paper argues the importance of research that offer conceptual models for understanding everyday life parenting practices, that covers variation in parenting practices and that highlight how they are related to family features and embedded in socio-cultural conditions. The importance of remaining close to the details of everyday life, as well as to the underlying relational and social processes, is argued. Also, it is argued that knowledge on the range of variation within normal family life is beneficial in social work.

A qualitative interview study of parent's regulation of infant sleep is presented as a case. 51 families participated in the study. The life mode interview approach was used, which involves detailed descriptions of the everyday life of the family. Key results of the analysis are presented, and implications for how parents' sleep-related practices may be understood are discussed.

Abstract 2 | *Trapped between uncertainty and responsibility: Parents with custodial disagreements negotiating care across households*

Kari Sjøhelle Jevne | Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences

Families with prolonged custodial disagreements have characteristics that may evoke child welfare concerns. However, it is unclear how child welfare workers may assist these families. This paper suggests that exploring how parents share care, within household as well as across household, may be a useful approach for professionals working with these families. The presentation uses knowledge of how 'ordinary' parents share care with other caregivers as tool for analyzing 'high-conflict' parenting.

The paper draw on qualitative interviews with 15 parents, 8 fathers and 7 mothers, who a) had severe disagreements on the child's residence, contact or how to provide the child adequate care, and b) had been in contact with the child welfare service during their custodial battles. The study shows that the majority of parents are concerned about the quality of care in the other home. Furthermore, that they struggle to balance their involvement across household, such as having insight into and influence on the care given in the other home.

The paper argues that professionals, who aim to assist these families might benefit from analyzing caring practices as located in a material, historical and socio-cultural context. By focusing on care, professionals may increasingly direct their attention away from the adults as former partners and towards the child's situation. It is argued that such an approach may be beneficial when professionals aim to assist families in the best interests of the children.

Abstract 3 | *Observing, reflecting, innovating. Exploring parents in exile's innovation of own parenting*

Kari Bergset | Sogn og Fjordane University College

The number of resettled refugee families is increasing in contemporary European societies. As new immigrants, parents in exile meet several welfare professionals, also social workers. However, there is limited knowledge about how parents find professional efforts useful to their parenting as new immigrants. How do refugee parents modify their parenting in order to master the new context, and from where do they gather inspiration? Are professionals a part of this, and how?

This paper explores the self-constitution of refugee parents expressed in narratives of their parental practices during approximately ten years in Norway. 12 fathers and 13 mothers in 16 families are interviewed twice, individually or spouses together.

The modification of parenting in resettled refugee families is often referred to as acculturation, in the meaning of adopting a new culture. This paper will challenge the concept of acculturation, and instead explore how refugee parents in diverse ways innovate their parental practices in a transnational setting. The narratives of parental practices in a new context are analyzed as innovative, active work. The inspirational sources for innovation are diverse, and one of them is Norwegian welfare professionals such as social workers.

The analysis show that observing professional practices with children had more impact than verbal advices from professionals. Furthermore, that observation as active work, followed by the work of reflection, were useful for these parents in the process of innovating their own parental practices. The paper therefore discusses the emphasis on verbal counselling in contemporary social work with parents.

*Research as a developmental strategy for Social Work Education in the public university*

#### SYMPOSIUM

Synposium convenors | Inês Amaro and Jorge Ferreira, ISCTE-IUL, Portugal

Keywords | social work, social work research, research networks, social work education

The development of social work research throughout years has become one of the biggest and ever-present concerns emerging from the social work field. Moreover, in the context of public universities the reinforcement of the support to social work research has been seen as critical for the acceptance and acknowledgement of social work as an academic discipline, peer with other disciplines of the social sciences realm.

In Europe, this linkage with research activities as a means of developing social work position within public universities has been taken different forms and implications. Therefore, the aim of the proposed symposium is to explore, analyze and debate different experiences of research development in social work, its implication for the position of this discipline in the university and the ways in which these activities connect with social work education, namely at master and PhD level. We will explore Iberian experience at this regard.

From Portugal, we will present the experience of the PhD programme at the University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL) and the national research networks in-progress with other higher schools.

From Salamanca/Spain, an approach to an existing Iberian and Latin American network of teaching and research will be developed, highlighting the outcomes and the contribution to the position of social work in Spain, Portugal and other countries involved (Latino-américa).

Finally, from Madrid an experience will be brought on how intercontinental networks may enhance and contribute to the research body in Social Work. The aim is to debate and share experiences from which we can learn the various ways in which research activities based on networks (national or international) might contribute to reinforce the position of social work at public universities.



Abstract 1 | *The experience of a PhD Social Work programme in Portugal: pathways, challenges and emerging issues*

Inês Amaro, Júlia Cardoso, Jorge Ferreira, Maria João Pena | ISCTE-IUL

The University Institute of Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL) was the first public university to grant a PhD in Social Work in Portugal. The programme was launched on the school year 2004/2005 and since then it has produced 7 doctorates and presently involves over 40 doctoral students.

Over the past years a number of cooperation networks have been developed in order to enhance research, debate and progress in the academization of the Portuguese Social Work.

These networks have improved, not only the dialogue between disciplines, but also within Social Work at a national and international basis.

The presentation will look upon gains and advantages of such network relationships.

Abstract 2

*Children and Young People in the context of a Public University. Implications for Social Work*

Antonia Picornell-Lucas | Salamanca University, Spain

Despite efforts to research in childhood and social work fields, research is not growing as a science responsibility. In this situation, Latin American Research Institute of Salamanca University has made a contribution to build new knowledge coming from a variety of countries.

REDIdi was established in 2013. It's an international collaborative network. It involves different national social and political contexts and disciplines. The project involves many colleagues come from a wide range of transnational locations: Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Portugal and Spain. Their priorities are to deliver resources to support institutions for teaching and researching in any children field: changing best practices, providing training in research methods, facilitating knowledge,... Additionally, this project would like to translate research findings to a social work curriculum and to contribute to ensure the high quality of child protection international children.

The presentation will illustrate the international and collaborative project to achieve the aims.

Abstract 3

*International networks and new methodological approaches: Building new research networks in Social Work*

A. López Peláez | UNED, Madrid/Spain)

S. Segado Sánchez-Cabezudo | UNED, Madrid/Spain

Social Work as a scientific discipline and profession, faces formidable challenges in the 21st-century that are triggered by a constantly changing environment. We must effectively respond to these challenges in order to significantly contribute to the socio-economic development of our respective societies. An effective response requires that we examine our profession's challenges, reevaluate our methodologies, and critically analyze our own professional and scientific evolution.

It is very important for European Social Work practitioners and educators to conduct an in-depth analysis of Social Work's evolution in the United States, and to carefully and thoroughly compare diverse models of analysis, trends and intervention strategies in both continents. Conversely, social work schools in the United States pay particular attention to theoretical frameworks and professional intervention models employed by European welfare systems and professionals.

In this paper, we present two work experiences in international networks. First, the research network between the WMU and the UNED, through the research group Koinonia. Secondly, we present the international research network "International Network for Social Policy Research and Teaching".

Abstract 4

*Social housing policy and super-diversity: A challenge for Social Work research in our contemporary society. The Andalusian case.*

Pablo Álvarez-Pérez | ISCTE-IUL, Portugal)

Manuela Fernández-Borrero | Universidad de Huelva/Spain

Fernando Relinque Medina | Universidad de Huelva/Spain

In Spain and some other countries, different variables and social dynamics interconnected have led foreign or ethnically diverse population to be "forced" to live in degraded neighborhoods or where social housing are located.

In the area of social housing, to talk about super-diversity is to understand that all these elements and variables of differentiation (characterization at the same time) have a role in the management processes of these houses

and public spaces (physical and social) where social workers have to intervene. In order to do so, Social Work should make efforts to understand and adjust to social change in a double way: practicing and researching for an accurate intervention to be able to respond to the new emerging needs related to the integration and exclusion associated with accessing and maintaining housing, that is a social right.

In order to strengthen the theoretical reflections presented about diversity management on social housing and its relationship with other key social protection policies, results drawn from a research project regarding social intervention in social housing will be presented. The Ministry of Public Works and Housing of Andalusia funded this project. Participants include 404 tenants of social housing in Andalusia. The sample was obtained with a confidence level of 95.5%, and 47% margin of error, distributed proportionately to the number of areas of social housing (a total of 21 areas). Ad hoc questionnaire was used.

Departing from the project findings, we will explore the implications of the research for social work practice and for setting up an agenda for social work education.

*Migration as social challenge – new forms of social work research? Possibilities, constraints and limitations for social work research on migration*

## SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convenors | Monika Goetzoe, Faculty of Social Work - University of Applied Sciences Zurich; Vesna Leskošek, Faculty of Social Work - University of Ljubljana and Eva Mey, Faculty of Social Work - University of Applied Sciences Zurich

### *Symposium Abstract*

Current developments with new global and European dimensions in migration processes challenge societies in many ways. Questions towards legal frameworks and financial aspects, concerns about security, social cohesion and social integration, but also solidarity, justice and human rights are to be examined and need answers and ideas. Social work holds responsibility for creating practices that incorporate concerns of the citizens and of the migrants (refugees in current situation). The complexity of current questions can best be researched in close cooperation between research and practice. The proposed symposium contributes to discussions on perspectives on how operative designs for social work research on migration topics could be developed, with reference to what social work can contribute in terms of knowledge, concepts and practice approaches. Results of recently finished researches on restriction in the Slovene migration policy (1), labour market integration and social work from the refugee's perspective (2) and migration and integration patterns towards highly qualified migrants (3) reveal the need of deliberate, solidary practices, to cross discriminatory approaches. The symposium intends to discuss options, methods and approaches for social work research on migration. In detail, we will discuss four questions and their impacts on social work research on migration: 1. Do we need a "special" social work research on migration? If yes, what are the specific social work perspectives and what is the original contribution to the field of inquiry and to the practices developed in order to respond to contemporary migration issues? 2. How can knowledge production acquired through research be transformed into practice and how the academisation of social work incorporates (or not) the practice? 3. Which forms of interdisciplinary and methodological approaches would serve best to research exigent, complex phenomenon and crisis situations (like current refugees crisis in Europe) that need prompt, immediate but well informed response? 4. How can we

integrate newly developed concepts in migration research as e.g. "border regimes", "transnationalism", "travelling concepts" and "positionalities" and how useful are they to inform practice? The aim of our presentations and discussion in the symposium is to encourage ideas and potentials of social work research on migration, possibly in a future network of ESWRA.

*Restrictions in the Slovene migration policy as a response to incoming refugees from the war zones*

Vesna Leskošek

Current situation concerning refugees in Europe is becoming increasingly tense and restrictive. Slovenia is a Schengen border country and the pressure to keep refugees away from the EU is very strong in both formal way through EU institutions and informal way through media and public activities of the EU politicians and citizens. The policy is becoming nationalistic and based on hatred. Extreme right parties and groups gained sympathy and support and even less right wing parties adopted views and measures of the extreme right.

In current situation researchers play important role in recording and preserving facts that are so fast turned into ideologies, because of the constant attempts to cover up, relocate and mask the fact, to "rationalise" or better racialize the problem. One of the examples is a decision of Slovene government to make restrictive changes in asylum legislation, even though there is less than 100 applicants and half of them already left the country. The intent of such policies is to build a national coalition towards the issues related to migrations and not so much to regulate refugees in their attempts to cross the country. There is an increasing attempt to present refugees as a fret to security, as potential terrorists and also as bearers of patriarchal masculine values they strengthen fear from violent, barbaric eastern Other.

In the presentation, we will further explore and support the claims with results of the participatory action research that was conducted during the work at several entry points on Slovene borders.

*From protection to participation? Labour market integration and social work from the refugees' perspective*

Eva Mey

Having gained access to the international protection means also to face a

specific national asylum procedure and a specific refugee integration politics. In Switzerland, there exist tight regulations and a huge number of so-called integration programs in order to promote and channel labour market integration of refugees. However, labour market integration stays on a low level and shows that refugees find themselves in less privileged, most precarious branches and positions in the labour market - no matter how many years they live here and what sort of knowledge and education they bring along. Interviews with refugees conducted in a recent explorative study, show a huge gap between the aims, wishes and resources of refugees on the one hand, and the minimal options and strong restrictions on the other. They also reveal that in this situation, social work is not only reduced to the role of allocating to (low) labour market positions, but contributes to the objectification of displaced people in their interactions with state authorities. In the presentation we will explore the mechanisms of the objectification, to which refugees are exposed in the interaction with state authorities and social workers and discuss the constraints, possibilities and responsibilities of research in this context.

*"It's a golden cage": impacts of employment policy towards highly qualified migrants in Switzerland*

Monika Goetzoe

EU policy strategies as the European Job Strategy or the Swiss strategy for fighting poverty emphasize the importance of employment as the main means for integration in society. The political goals towards competitive economies in Europe find manifold expressions in texts and programmes relating vocational training, tertiary education and employment. Migration policies include legislation strategies and employment strategies, so highly qualified migrants (mainly from EU countries) seem to become the most welcomed and accepted group of migrants.

Our recently finished comparative study on biographies, migration patterns and paths of labour market integration of highly qualified migrants thus reveal another, much fractured reality. Intersections of gender, age, health, country of origin, family situation and capability to be mobile have a great impact on how social participation and integration can be realized, thus revealing the gendered, culturalized and racialized system of employment politics. The impact on welfare system can be discussed as challenge for social workers to face fragmented and

multisited positions of migrants, sometimes contradictory to specialized measures social work does provide.

In the presentation, we will discuss how integration and participation can be supported by research approaches, and by newly developed concepts in migration research and by forms of cooperation between research and practice as well between researcher and migrants.

*Political social work: Social workers' praxis for social change*

## SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convenor | Talia M. Schwartz-Tayri, Bob Shapell School of Social Work, Tel Aviv University

Keywords | policy practice, social change, social policy, political action, anti-oppressive practice

### *Overall Abstract*

"All social work is political"(Haynes & Mickelson, 2009)

Globalization, along with the dominance of Neoliberal ideologies, creates ongoing challenges to the welfare state and the social work profession in western societies. Therefore, it is not surprising that now, more than ever, social workers are called upon to expand their practice arena and influence policy in order to further the well-being of service users.

The symposium focuses on the variety of gateways through which social workers can enter, as individuals or agencies, to engage in political social work. The engagement of social workers in political advocacy activities is rooted in the foundation of the social work profession, and in the last decades has enjoyed the attention of scholars in social sciences. Political advocacy is now considered one of the key practices among social work interventions, since it comprises both direct help and service provision to individuals and families. Moreover, activities undertaken by social workers aim to influence the reaction actions of larger administrative systems to answer service users' needs. Often, social workers can also use advocacy practices to challenge imbalanced power relations currently in status quo, by combining it with other anti-oppressive practices. These practices view service users as worthy partners in shaping the outcomes of professional interventions. As such, political advocacy serves as a central tool to promote human rights and social change.

The studies included in the symposium demonstrate the many facets of political social work praxis undertaken in a variety of arenas: in social work education, public social services, and non-governmental advocacy agencies. Despite the differences in the extent that each one of the studied practices gives voice to service users, all of them describe social workers efforts to promote service users' interests and rights at the macro level, its incentives, possible explanations and outcomes.

The symposium provides a broad platform to explore the concept of political social work, as it includes quantitative and qualitative, participatory and non-participatory empirical investigations. Beyond their theoretical and empirical significance, the presentations will address the implications for social work practice and policy.

*Social Workers' Policy Practice in Nonprofit Human Service Organizations in Israel*

Ateret Gewirtz- Meydan | Bar-Ilan University, Israel

The study's aim is to expand knowledge on the level of involvement in policy related interventions ("policy practice") among social workers employed by nonprofit human service organizations (NPHSOs) in Israel, and on the motivational and facilitating factors associated with this. The sample consisted of 106 social workers employed in NPHSOs, which include social advocacy as one of their goals. Findings revealed a relatively low level of involvement in policy practice. Level of involvement was associated with political efficacy, political interest, partisanship, activity in political and professional organizations, civic and professional skills and organizational support for policy practice. The strongest predictors were policy practice skills and organizational support. The study's conclusion is that an understanding of involvement in policy practice must take into account both the degree to which an organizational context facilitates this type of practice and the individual factors that motivate policy practice involvement. As such, consolidation of policy practice among social workers should address both facilitating and motivational issues.

*Human Rights in Social Work Education: Service Users and Social Work Students Jointly Research Service Users' Experiences of Accessing Rights*

Carolyn Gutman | Tel-Hai College, Israel

Merav Moshe-Grodofsky | Sapir College, Israel

Current human rights literature addresses the history of rights discourse, the theoretical link between rights and social work and critical issues that lie at the core of the discourse. Specific attention to rights education for social workers is limited. This gap presents conceptual and practical challenges for a profession committed to engaging in rights work.

The authors contend that service user involvement in social work education is critical to advance rights as a major tenet of the profession. Service user involvement in rights based social work education enables students to construct a conceptual and practice framework that is critical for rights practice. Service user involvement in social work education is not new, but rarely has it been associated with the rights literature. Both human rights discourse and service user involvement in social work education are rooted in critical theory. Both value subjective experience and emphasize the individual in context. The two can therefore be envisioned as parallel critical approaches. Both advocate transforming the oppression and powerlessness experienced by service users to more egalitarian patterns of interaction between them and social work professionals.

Grounded in a participatory action research framework, social work students and service users developed a research methodology to learn about the experiences of service users as they attempt to access their rights. Within the context of a yearlong human rights research seminar, students and service users engaged in dialogical praxis, enabling all participants to conceptualize and address rights based work as the core paradigm of the seminar methodology. The paper will delineate the approach employed and articulate key issues raised by both students and service users as they learned to work in partnership.

*Challenging policies from within: The dynamic of policy practice among social workers in local social services*

Talia-Meital Tayri-Schwartz | Bob Shapell School of Social Work, Tel Aviv University

Scholarship regarding social workers engagement in the policy process has gained more focus in the last decades. Yet little is known about the factors that affect social workers' engagement in policy processes as an integral part of their professional roles.

The study sought to enhance the understanding of the engagement of social workers in policy practice, by examining an explanatory model comprised of both individual and organizational factors and drawing upon three theoretical bodies: the Civic Voluntarism Model, Social work scholarship concerning the political behavior of social workers, and Schein's organizational culture model.

The model was tested employing a cross sectional design and drew upon

a systematic sample of 300 social workers from 22 local social care services in Israel. Using path analysis (SEM), the findings showed that both individual and organizational factors are strong predictors of policy practice, and further, that the mediated relationship between them contributes to a better understanding of the dynamics, which leads social workers to actual engagement in policy processes.

This pioneering study revealed the significant role of the organization in shaping the political behavior of social workers not only within the context of their work, but also in political arenas outside of the organization they work for: in professional, social and political volunteer networks. Research applications for practice emphasize the characteristics of an effective policy practice training. It is also suggested that in order to promote policy practice in social work services and embed it in social workers' praxis, it is necessary to utilize combined strategies with workers, managers and policy makers.

*Palestine women victims of domestic violence: collaborates or excluded by public social welfare system in Israel?*

Raghad Alnabilsy | Ruppin Academic Center, Israel

The suggested presentation includes central research findings based on in-depth interviews with 23 Palestine women in Israel victims of domestic violence. The study sought to investigate their stories and increase their voices as victims. The qualitative analysis exposes the experiences, perceptions and coping strategies of the victims, emphasizing on their understanding of their story. In particular, they discussed the complex relationships created under the practices implemented by social workers, as social care providers.

The main theme in the presentation will focus on the mutual struggle to establish partnerships between governmental Israeli service providers and Palestine victims, as well as the outcomes of the intervention. The process disclosed acute socio-political barriers concerning the definition of domestic violence, its circumstances, and the way to fight against it. Further findings describe interviewee perceptions on the process of reaching out for assistance in a conflictual political context; on interventions undertaken by services providers (social workers, the police and child protection officers), and on their position in shared-decision making processes led by social workers in Jewish cultural context.

Conclusions will share the insights of the researcher on the impact of political conflict on social workers' praxis in general, and on participatory

attempts in particular, and concerning the victims' experiences of oppression and secondary circles of abuse. Applications to anti-oppressive social work methods and to cultural sensitive social policies will be proposed.

WORKSHOP

Workshop organizers | Aila-Leena Matthies and Kati Närhi, University of Jyväskylä - Finland

The ecological crisis is a challenge for social work in all countries since it affects human communities and threatens especially the wellbeing of the most vulnerable groups. The crisis cannot be overcome with technological solutions only but it requires a profound ecosocial transition in present welfare states.

The comprehensive interdisciplinary ecosocial transition of societies seeks towards sustainability, balancing economic and social development with the limited resources of the natural environment. It means efforts in different areas of policy, activism and scientific work in search for a practical and conceptual progress. Therefore, it is vital to strengthen the ecosocial paradigm also in social work.

The workshop discusses how social work and more specially social work research can contribute to the ecosocial transition. Over the past few years, the debates on sustainable development, ecosocial, ecological, green or environmental social work have grown to be one of the most dynamic global topics of the discipline and profession. The debate has taken a prominent place at several international conferences, which has been followed by global networking of scholars and practitioners. However, collaboration between researchers from different countries and universities has so far been limited.

The workshop aims to invite interested participants to network with each other around the research topics of ecosocial approach in social work. We invite researchers to share current debates, information about their ongoing projects or ideas for new studies. The aim is to reflect what kind of social work, social services and social security systems would be sustainable. How is the ecological crisis incorporated into social work research and practices? What new practices of ecosocial approach in social work have been introduced in different countries?

We hope to bring research projects and ecosocial practices into conversation in order to establish a common platform for the development of this

emerging research area and enable further European collaboration.

We would like to discuss empirical and theoretical as well as interdisciplinary approaches.

The 120 min workshop will be organized by Aila-Leena Matthies and Kati Närhi (University of Jyväskylä, Finland). After the opening and introduction (10 min) there will be two prepared short impulse presentations to concretise the topic (30 min together). These will include a presentation by workshop organisers about the research network of Ecosocial transition and its forthcoming edited book "Ecosocial Transition of Societies: Contribution of Social Work and Social Policy". Further, Helena Belchior Rocha (University of Lisbon, Portugal) will present her doctoral thesis on integrative eco-social model for community practice. After that a platform will be opened for further spontaneous presentations, questions and ideas of the participants (30 min). Finally the discussion will be systematized interactively with the help of smart wall or flip charts (45 min). The discussion aims to generate ideas on following issues:

- Topics of ecosocial paradigm to be researched
- Methodological and theoretical ideas
- Overcoming challenges of the research
- Concrete forms of further research collaboration, also in the frame of ESWRA/ ECSWR

## WORKSHOP

Workshop worganizers:

Monica Kjørstad | Oslo and Akerhus University College of Applied Sciences

Mikko Mäntysaari | University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Elina Pekkarinen | Finnish Youth Research Network

Dialectic philosophy has a long history, starting from Aristotle and reaching to Hegel, Marx, Kierkegaard and Adorno. The aim of the ancient Greek dialectics was to show the insufficiency in common statements and use the dialectic method to question the accepted everyday opinions and knowledge. In social work, dialectic thinking may uncover mechanisms that cause human problems and reveal, how mechanisms and occurrences interact in different contexts. The aim of this workshop is to explore the use of dialogue for raising questions, answers, and arguments in seeking a deeper understanding of different concepts that are crucial for the production of knowledge in social work. To pursue this aim, we introduce a philosophy of dialectic critical realism.

Roy Bhaskar (1944-2014), the original thinker and the founder of the philosophy of science called critical realism, developed a radically new and original theory of dialectics. Bhaskar's first phase of critical realism was an answer to the question whether naturalism was possible, whereas the second - dialectic phase - was about the possibility of change. As change-oriented understanding of the world is crucial to social work, this focus on change offers an illuminating viewpoint for social work research. Bhaskar's dialectic critical realism also takes a criticized stand in ethics by supporting moral realism and claiming that there is an objective morality. This is explained with reference to ethical aletheia, a conception of human nature, and our ability to move from facts to values. Even though social work as a profession is committed to ethical standards, social work research has tended to be non-committal to moral issues, or even supporting ethical relativist position. As ethical issues should be the pinnacle of social work research, the dialectic critical realism challenges our position in moral questions.

Roy Bhaskar's "Dialectic - The Pulse for Freedom" (1993) is, however, cryptic and confusing in reading. It requires a dialogue in order to be understood. As critical realism, including its dialectic phase, has a strong commitment in developing a philosophy for creating a better world, it makes a very interesting choice as the philosophy of social work research. Within the main headings of this conference, the workshop will initiate a dialogue about how a dialectic approach may facilitate the dynamic relation of theory and praxis in social work. Our intension is to search for a pathway to a deeper understanding of the nature of social problems.

The workshop consists of a short introduction by professor Monica Kjørstad on the topic's relevance for social work practice and research, and a presentation by professor Mikko Mäntysaari on Roy Bhaskar's Dialectic - The Pulse for Freedom. This will be followed by an interactive discussion with the participants on the central concepts of dialectic critical realism, and on its utilization in enhancing a dialogue between social work research and practice.



SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convenor: Ephrat Huss | Ben Gurion University, Israel

Keywords | arts based research methods, arts and social work, participatory research method

*Overall presentation*

There is at present a turn towards the arts in social theory and practice as seen in arts based research, visual culture and anthropology, in indigenous, decolonizing and action based research methods, in social media and community arts, and in playback and community theatre, photo-voice, arts therapy and outsider arts, to name a few. This consortium is made up of members of a special interest group in the arts in social work that was founded at last year's ECSWR conference. It aims to connect between social work and the arts on a deep theoretical level, as a methodology to create reflective social work practice and as a new pathway between praxis and research, and as a potential new core competency and vision-in social work research education and practice. This panel will cover a broad range of uses of arts in social work, describing arts based research with marginalized service users, with social workers, with communities and as an approach within social work decision making and policy.

*Abstract 1 | The relationship between stress situations, stress reactions, and coping of social workers through an arts based lenses*

Patricia Hafford-Letchfield | Middlesex University, UK  
Ephrat Huss | Ben-Gurion University

The issue of stress and 'burnout' in social work is endemic requiring a continuing search for strategies that can facilitate coping strategies and help to build 'resilience'. This is imperative given the links between social work stress, staff turnover, public denigration of the profession in some national contexts and the impact of these adverse factors ultimately on the experiences of service users. However, there is little literature describing the social workers own definition of their stress and coping, and most importantly, of the connection they see between stressors, stress reactions and coping  
Method: Eighty social workers were asked to draw a stressful situation at

work, identify their stress reaction through compositional elements in the art, and also identify their strengths and coping through adding them to the image if needed. Analyses used mixed methods, pointing to central symbols, themes, contexts, and most importantly, to the dynamics- between the stressors and the coping.

The findings point to the problematic connection between the stress situation that is defined as systemic, versus the stress reactions and efforts to cope that are based on the individual social worker, with a tendency to self-blame, and to be generally stronger, rather than addressing the systemic problems that cause the stress. The use of a single image to integrate stressors, stress reactions and coping helped to understand and to define the social workers own perception of their stressors and coping reactions, in a more nuanced way than measuring stress or coping alone or by relying on more traditional methods such as questionnaires. The findings are of relevance to supervisors, managers and policy makers.

*Abstract 2 | Creating and Evaluating Sociocultural Relevant Intimate Partner Violence Prevention Programs using Interactive Theater*

Mieko Yoshihama & Richard Tolman | University of Michigan, School of Social Work

*Objectives and background*

Social workers must create effective programs that are responsive to diverse communities and must incorporate their values and perspectives. This presentation discusses the use of interactive theatre, Theatre of the Oppressed in particular, peer educators, and audience response systems to create community-generated approaches for bystander interventions (i.e. actions taken by people who become aware of controlling, abusive and violent behavior of others) in order to prevent intimate partner violence (IPV) and to foster change in community norms.

*Methods*

Instead of "tailoring" a generic program to a specific community, we sought to mobilize community members to develop and implement socio-culturally-relevant IPV prevention programs. In this ongoing university-community partnership, we work with community members to create a short skit that depicts abusive and controlling behaviors of a partner in an intimate relationship. Community members served as actors and peer-educators to lead IPV prevention workshops that featured this theater presentation.

After a performance of the scripted play, audience members are invited to replace a character on stage and to try out different approaches to resolve the problematic situation. We used audience response system (e.g., clickers) to assess the degree to which the audience identified with the story and characters depicted in the play and the perceived effectiveness of the audience's intervention aimed at preventing IPV.

#### *Findings and Implications*

Interactive theater and audience response systems can be effectively used to create innovative, community-generated approaches to IPV prevention. The script and scenes created by peer educators provided a realistic and familiar milieu where community members can try out various prevention strategies that they perceive fit their sociocultural context. By clicking answers to questions, audience members can share their thoughts and feelings anonymously, which helps to surface divergent voices and expand the inclusiveness of the theater-based community dialogues.

#### *Abstract 3 | Using Arts Methodologies to Create reflective and flexible social work policy*

Tony Evens | Royal London University

Ephrat Huss | Ben Gurion University

Expertise in social work is often characterized through diametrically opposed ways—either as technical, propositional knowledge validated by evidence, or as fluid and flexible judgement based on relational and empathetic understanding. Arts theory and practice, we will argue—drawing on sets of examples and material from the visual arts and drama—contribute a valuable method that enables us to bridge the rule-based versus relational and intuitive divide in social work knowledge. This becomes a pathway for creating new forms of knowledge in social work. This enables to integrate both phenomenological and contextual knowledge. We will argue that a characteristic of arts practice is the way it involves understanding, adapting and developing rules in particular circumstances in the interest of creating richer and newer understandings of phenomena. We will defend this premise through presenting a typology of arts mechanisms that illustrate how arts practice can provide insights into similar processes in social work practice: This includes a creative approach to rules, challenging constraints, holding multiple perspectives simultaneously, and embodying and exploring practice and guidelines for future practice. We will describe arts mechanisms that include

the tension between figure and background as a method for depicting the reciprocal relationship between micro and macro levels of social experience. We will illustrate the tension between verbal content and its translation into visual form as a trigger for excavating a reflective dialogic space with self and others. We will describe the tension between symbols and their changing compositional depictions as a method to negotiate homeostasis versus change within social systems. Our claim is that Arts practice can provide insights into similar processes in social work practice involving a creative approach to rules challenging constraints, developing understandings to move beyond taken-for-granted perspectives; and, through embodying and exploring practice, help develop guidelines for future practice.

#### *Abstract 4 | Art-based Intervention Effectiveness on Stress among Nepalese People Indirectly Exposed to the Nepal Earthquake*

Dorit Segal-Engelchin, Orly Sarid and Richard Isralowitz | Ben Gurion University

#### *Aim*

Most earthquake trauma related studies focus on people directly exposed to the disaster; the current study focused on an indirectly-exposed group. The aim of this study was to examine the effectiveness of a single-session art-based intervention to reduce stress among 116 Nepalese students, who were enrolled in a special program in Israel during the April 2015 Nepal earthquake.

#### *Methods*

The intervention included drawing pictures that were later shared in small groups related to three topics: (1) emotions and thoughts related to the earthquake; (2) personal and collective resources that may help them cope with the earthquake outcomes upon their return to Nepal; and, (3) integration of the stressful image and the resource picture. To examine the intervention effect, the student Subjective Units of Distress (SUDs) values were measured using a pre-post design.

Results indicate that students' initial high distress levels significantly decreased on completion of the intervention. The study results extend prior findings by showing efficacy of an easily implemented art-based tool for stress reduction among individuals indirectly exposed to disaster conditions

Abstract 5 | *"It's hard to be the child of a fish and a butterfly". Using Creative Genograms to Bridge Objective and Subjective Experiences*

Julie Zwickel | Ben-Gurion University

*Aim*

This research describes the use of a creative genogram that combines the client's objective and subjective phenomenological experience of his family constellation. The creative genogram includes personal symbols, colors and shapes, as well as varying the overall page designs and formats of the basic family genogram.

*Method*

The data sources are the written documentation of fourteen social workers narratives and copies of the genogram-art products themselves, as well as comments of the participants who learnt this as an enrichment skill. The genograms thematically analyzed by the creators of the genograms, within a group context. The authors disguised facts, and re-sketched the genograms without the names and details of the family as rendered in the original genogram, to protect the privacy of the participants.

*Findings*

The personal interpretation of objective family history, taken together with the 'reality' or "hard data" about of the family and its history, expressed through the genogram, encouraged the participants to choose novel interpretations, or to 'reframe' the experience in another way. The group context intensifies the social understanding of personal pain. This situates the arts within a critical discourse, rather than a dynamic one in which it is seen as useful for the diagnosis or ventilation of emotion, rather than placing the emotion within a social and problem solving context. This frames drawers of creative genograms not only A product of his or her past, but also, as an active and creative interpreter of the past. Group use of this tool points to gendered and cultural levels of identity as experienced within the family.

*Lived citizenship on the edge of society I & II*

SYMPOSIUM I

Symposium convenor: Hanne Warming | Roskilde University, Denmark

Keywords | social work practices, vulnerable groups, lived citizenship, social space, empowerment, normalization, public- private space, care

*Overall abstract*

The focus of this symposium is the role played by social work in overcoming the citizenship challenges faced by vulnerable groups, e.g. vulnerable children and young people, ethnic minorities, and homeless people. In the symposium, we address citizenship from the concept of 'lived citizenship' (Lister 2007), i.e. citizenship as practiced and experienced through everyday interaction, and from a spatially perspective. Thus, we present a number of empirical studies of spatially contextualized social work and 'lived citizenship' citizenship practices, and of the cultural, social and political conditioning of these practices.

The overall aim of the symposium is to advance the understanding of the lived citizenship of vulnerable groups and of how social work practices undermine or strengthen the citizenship of these groups. Focusing on how social work practices contribute to shape citizenship of vulnerable groups, the symposium aims to contribute to theoretical development in relation to citizenship and social work as well as to a more reflective practice within social work. Thus, the symposium will engage in discussion and theorizing of empowering practices.

*Theoretical approach:*

The concept of 'lived citizenship' may be understood from a cultural citizenship approach that views citizenship as a self - other relationship rather than a subject - state relationship. The self - other relationship has four dimensions: rights, responsibilities, participation and identity (Delanty 2003). This approach to citizenship implies an ambition to look beyond formal citizenship towards contextualized meaning and power (re-)producing practices through which people understand and negotiate rights, responsibilities, participation and identity, including a sense of belonging (Lister 2007). From this perspective, citizenship emerges from the multiple everyday interactions between people in which they perform, learn and experience

citizenship as a self – other relationship (Hobson & Lister 2002). Approaching citizenship from this perspective implies a processual focus on citizenship in terms of positioning and identity shaping (rather than as a state or status) and on subjective experiences, difference and symbolic power relations (Stasiulis 2002, Moosa-Mitha 2005).

Further, our approach to citizenship in terms of ‘lived citizenship’ entails a social spatial perspective, i.e. an understanding of the interactions that shape lived citizenship as spatially contextualized. Our social spatial approach addresses space not only as a place where “things happen”, but as a “social action situation” in which material (including bodily) and discursive relations are interwoven (Simonsen 2001:35). We understand the spatially context as shaped through intertwined local, national and global meaning-making patterns and power relations. Thus, our spatial perspective on citizenship calls attention to how local institutionalized social work practices and negotiations of rights, responsibilities, participation and identity are shaped through specific social and material settings and at the same time related to wider symbolic power relations (Desforges et al. 2005).

This symposium will primarily focus on social work practices and ‘lived citizenship’ in relation to issues around normalization, public-private space, care, and social work practices and ‘lived citizenship’ in relation to issues around identity negotiations, intimate citizenship, difference-centred citizenship and intersectionality.

Abstract 1.1 | *Negotiations of belonging and rights in outreach work encounters between homeless people and social workers*

Kristian Fahnøe, Metropolitan University College, Denmark

Based on an ongoing fieldwork, this paper explores how lived citizenship of homeless people in Copenhagen city is shaped through their encounters with outreach workers. During the encounters which are situated in public space, at drop-in centers, and shelters, the outreach workers try to establish and maintain a collaboration with the homeless person in order to change the his or her situation and find appropriate housing. The paper explores the encounters as ongoing negotiations of belonging and of rights and responsibilities which shape and reshape the lived citizenship of the homeless person. The negotiations consist of spatial practices, experiences, and narratives (Koefoed and Simonsen 2012) where the homeless person’s self-identifications interact with social categorizations (Jenkins 1996). The analysis aims

to show how these everyday negotiations are linked to housing policies,

gentrification, employment policies, and the homeless person’s legal ties to the administrative territories of the local municipalities.

Abstract 1.2 | *Citizenship on the edge: homeless outreach and the city*

Tom Hall, Cardiff University, Great Britain

This paper is concerned with encounters between the urban homeless and certain service providers, particularly those service providers who endeavour to meet acute housing need where it is first found, in the city at least – on the street. The stakes in such encounters can be particularly high: rights, responsibilities, participation and identity are all held in balance across a line of difference and inequality. Any such line can be taken as a symbolic border, marking the point at which society loses hold and the possibility of citizenship disappears. In this sense there is a moral geography to street work with the homeless; it represents a sort of ‘edgework’ not only in the established sociological or criminological sense – possibly – but literally, inasmuch as it plays out along and either side of a frontier. Michael Rowe (1999) makes use of just this framing of ‘homeless outreach’ work in his ethnographic study of the relationship between the homeless and the social service community, *Crossing the Border*.

This moral geography gives a sharp contour to the ‘edgework’ of homeless outreach. But there is a concrete geography also: the citizenship frontier across which street-based service providers practice touches down in physical locations and runs, sometimes perversely, through the middle of any city. City centre public space provides some affordance for homelessness and the meeting of needs out of doors, but not reliably so. Other mundane and indistinct spaces do too. Turning from the figurative border of service provision to the physical geography of homelessness, but building on Rowe’s work, this paper considers citizenship at the edge (and in the middle) of the modern city. Fieldwork in Cardiff, Wales, UK, provides a basis for discussion.

Abstract 1.3 | *From objects of care to citizens: challenges to children’s citizenship in social work, the case of care giving children*

Anne Wihstutz, Protestant University of Applied Sciences, Berlin, Germany

Social policy, NGO programmes, and health services address children as heads of households (CHHs) or young carers as vulnerable. (Kölch et al 2014). The idea of vulnerability and dependence is inherent to the idea of

childhood and constituent for welfare states and social policy (for the Global

North, see Mierendorff 2010). Correspondingly, children's life is conceptualized as ideally taking place under the guidance and care of parents, marked by learning and play, and protected from the economic hardships or social responsibility for others or themselves (Boyden 2003). Children who due to their work and caring responsibilities run contrary to the moral and social order of society, have been categorized as children "out of place" (Nieuwenhuys 1998) and social problems (Payne 2012). Starting from the everyday agency (Payne 2012) employed by children "out of place" the paper discusses strategies of participation, of belonging, and processes of identity by care giving and household heading in terms of "inclusive" or "lived citizenship" (Lister 2007) as "differently equal" social actors in multiple self-other relationships, emergent from and embedded in contextualised social relationships of unequal power (Moosa-Mitha 2005). I deploy a critical reading of Social Services self-positioning towards "non-competent citizens" (Rose 1996). Social services and programs addressing "children in need" are analyzed in view of their underlying concepts of childhood and vulnerability, discussed in respect to their impact on children's citizenship respectively. Based on a multifaceted understanding of lived citizenship the paper asks how social work informed by care ethics (Tronto 1993) and care logic or "cuidadania" (precarias de la deriva 2004) should conceptualize vulnerability and dependence to be inclusive and empowering to all members of society independently of their social or legal status as (non-)citizen.

Abstract 1.4 | *School Social work in France: a politic for children's agency*  
Pascale Garnier, Université Paris 13 Nord

Based on a study about professional practices of school social workers in French secondary schools this paper aims to show the distance between the French formal conception of citizenship and the 'lived citizenship' that the professional try to perform. The French educational system is tied the universal and political conception of republican citizenship which links the individual to directly the Nation. It promotes equality between people and a vision of children as purely future citizen. Children must be educated in order to acquire knowledge, rational thinking and critical competences for promoting the common good instead of individual interest. But the social workers' refer to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as a wider regulation, which applies to the situations they deal with, especially for migrant children. It goes hand in hand with a critical position toward

school values and norms.

The social workers have responsibilities in connection to child protection, absenteeism, with disabilities, prevention of risk behaviors, financial help, and advocacy etc. Children can speak with the social worker in confidentiality. This is fundamental for instituting a space for children's voices. The social workers' ambition is to find solutions chosen by the child. As social workers do not have any authority they rely on the children's capabilities as 'agents' in their attempts of providing solutions to children's problems. The creation of an empowering space for children's voices may be linked to "lived citizenship" which relates to the subjective and micro-sociological dimensions of everyday life. The primary challenge here is to welcome and promote children's voice. However, the dialogue could be seen as inscribed in a relation of symbolic violence, but despite the children's "choice" is limited, there is room for positioning, attachments, resistances or selflessness.

## SYMPOSIUM II

Keywords | social work practices, lived citizenship, social space, empowerment, identity negotiations, intimate citizenship, difference-centred citizenship, intersectionality

Abstract 2.1 | *"In the real world you can't stay up until 3 a.m."*  
Manon Lavaud | Roskilde University, Denmark

This paper shows how norms about the good citizen infuse the social work practices in a residence for young people with 'psychological vulnerabilities'. The paper draws on interviews made with several of the young people living at the residence and the professionals around them, focusing on their narratives and perceived strengths and weaknesses, combined with observations of the everyday-life at the residence.

Using a difference-centred approach (Moosa-Mitha, 2005) and understanding citizenship as formed by everyday-life experiences and sense of belonging (Lister, 2007), the paper takes a closer look at how expectations in social work towards these young people are shaped by ideas of difference related to norms about the good citizen. Recurrent themes in the empirical findings deal with learning a 'normal' daily rhythm and developing social skills, besides also acquiring basic educational competences. The overall purpose is - implicitly and explicitly - for these young people to become

'self-supporting', with reference to societal expectations of what a good life consists of.

The paper shows that while the social work practices at the residence aim to involve the young people in order to enhance their possibility to meet societal expectations, the young people are continuously positioned or positioning themselves as different and outside the norms of what is expected of a good, autonomous citizen, potentially undermining their sense of belonging to 'real society'. Nevertheless, some of the practices and narratives can also be seen as attempts to challenge the prevailing norms.

Abstract 2.2 | *Geopolitics ad citizenship: why geography matters in defining social citizenship rights of Canadian-Muslim youth*  
Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha, University of Victoria, Canada

Using the insights of critical/political geographers (Massey 2005, 2013; Harvey 2006, 2008, 2009; Smith 1992, 2005; Spivak 2014; Isin 2007, 2012), and based on an empirical study, this paper will theorize on the nature of social responsibility for and rights of Canadian-Muslim youth as the 'other' of Canadian secular and securitized society. Specifically it will examine how relational notions of space as contested and constructed on nationalist, gendered, racialized and secular lines affect the (social) citizenship experiences of Canadian-Muslim youth. It will also analyze the co-constitutive nature of space and identity that produce and are produced by particular subject positions of Canadian-Muslim youth as they respond to being citizens of Canada.

Abstract 2.3 | *The role of social work practices and policies in the shaping the lived and intimate citizenship of young people with psy-diagnosis*  
Hanne Warming, Roskilde University, Denmark

This paper is based on ethnographic field work in a residence for young people with psy-diagnosis carried out in the period 2014-15. It examines how identities, emotions and trust - power relations are negotiated between the young people and social workers in the everyday life at the residence, and how state (and municipal) policies as well as materiality are co-actors in the construction of these everyday interactions. The social workers ambition is empowerment of the young people - the paper examines in what way, this ambition is settled, and the barriers it encounters.

Theoretically, the paper is based on a lived citizenship approach which

emphasizes the contextualized meaning and power (re-)producing practices through which people understand and negotiate their rights, responsibilities, participation and identity, including a sense of belonging, in and through their everyday interactions (Lister 2007). The lived citizenship approach include, what Plummer (2001) has termed intimate citizenship: that is, how the most private decisions and practices, e.g. how to be a friend, how to treat one's body etc, have become inextricably linked with public institutions, law and state polices (Plummer 2001). In order to elucidate how social work practices and policies impact the young people's lived citizenship, the project deploys Delanty's distinction between disciplinary and inclusive citizenship learning processes. Lister observes that citizenship struggles, including those in the realm of intimate citizenship, 'play out at multiple, interrelated spatial scales" (Grundy & Smith, 2005:390; after Lister 2007:55). Likewise, trust dynamics are interrelated, intersectional, multi-cited and multi-scaled (Warming 2013). Thus, the paper will argue and demonstrate how the shaping of lived citizenship connects the intimate and the global flows of ideas and knowledge about citizenship, psy-diagnosis etc.

*Using a disability lens to achieve social justice for older care users.*

SYMPOSIUM *Part I: Models and concepts*

Symposium convenor | Håkan Jönson

Keywords | elder care, equal rights, disability policies, social justice

*Symposia introduction:*

Håkan Jönson | School of Social Work, Lund University, Sweden

The symposium and its papers contribute to the theme of the conference by showing the potential for social work research to provide perspectives that reframe issues of human rights and social justice for older persons who receive eldercare. During the last decades, the nexus between the fields of disability and aging policies have attracted increased attention. Several researchers have suggested that gerontological social work would gain from adopting and using ideological concepts like citizenship, human rights, social justice, equality, inclusion and discrimination; concepts that have been prominent in research and activism on disability but less used in the field of gerontological social work. In particular models and concepts that highlight the ways that societies constrain and disable persons with impairments have been mentioned as having the potential to enhance the welfare of older people who age with, or into, disability. The aim of the symposium is to investigate what potential the use of a “disability lens” has for improving conditions for older people with impairments – the population that at present receives help in the form of eldercare. The method used by the researchers of the symposia means that concepts that have been used within the disability field in Sweden and internationally are used to analyze eldercare policies and practice. The method allows the researcher to pose new questions and reach a novel understanding of eldercare. As a result the present ideology and arrangements that are taken for granted within eldercare policies as well as gerontological social work practice and research may be questioned. The comparison to how concepts and models have been used to achieve social justice within the disability field reveals that goals concerning eldercare, even though they are perceived as ambitious, are in fact much more difficult to operationalize into rights than goals concerning persons with disabilities. For instance, according to official Swedish policy documents older people in need of care should be able to live with safety and dignity, but the same

documents state that (younger) persons with disabilities should be able to “live like others”. The latter goal invokes “others” as a reference group and makes possible an analysis that focused on relative deprivation and social justice. By using a disability lens, researchers in the field of gerontological social work may provide policy makers and activists with tools that can be used to change the moral framework of care for older people and improve the quality of the help that is made available for this group.

Abstract 1.1 | *Swedish disability policies: Ideas, values and practices in a historical perspective*

Rafael Lindqvist, Department of Sociology, Uppsala University, Sweden

This paper analyzes changes in Swedish disability policy in terms of ideas and values about redistribution. It shows how different definitions of disability, policy ideals and interventions can be discerned during the time-period early 1900s up to present days. In the liberal period in the beginning of the last century politics targeting disabled people basically consisted of poor relief and workhouses with the purpose to infuse work ethics in the inmates, supplemented by an emerging differentiated system of care institutions. The second era consists of the decades post- World War 2 until the 1970s, when social security, social services and an active labour market policy emerged. Key policy concepts during this era were normalization and integration to be materialized within the framework of universal social policies and public services. The last period encompasses the development away from the universalist model of the 1960s and 70s, to a more selective civil rights-oriented welfare model in the early 21st century that also emphasizes accessibility, anti-discrimination and human rights as key elements in disability policies. The United Nations Convention for the rights of persons with disabilities, play a crucial role as a road map in this context. This last period also signifies a shift towards more private provision of disability services and focus on the disabled person as a consumer. Disability services in this last period also take on an individualized character emphasizing activation and individual responsibility to become employable. The paper concludes with reflections on similarities and differences between policies focusing disabled people and policies mainly targeted to elderly people.

Abstract 1.2 | *Normalization and justice*

Tove Harnett & Håkan Jönson, School of Social Work, Lund University

What is a normal life for an older person who receives eldercare? What references should be used to back claims for social justice? The concept of normality has been relatively absent in Swedish eldercare policies, but central to disability policies, where it has been linked to strives for social justice. One example is the Scandinavian normalization principle, stating that society should make available for persons with impairments living conditions that are as close as possible to those of "others." The aim of this paper is to introduce an equal rights framework that may be used to analyse and improve living conditions of older persons with impairments, persons who receive eldercare. The framework is based on the Scandinavian normalization principle of disability policies and uses analytical concepts from reference group theory and the theory of relative deprivation. In the paper, three types of references are identified and discussed: context centred references, category centred references and personhood centred references. In the framework these references appear as being either internally or externally oriented in relation to care and impairment. It is concluded that eldercare policies of Sweden tend to define normality and justice as internal to care and impairment. Contexts of care and categories like other care users - in general or specified to a particular facility or district - are used to judge if a situation is regarded as unjust. The paper discusses cases where references to categories and contexts that are external to care or impairment have been used, for instance by referring to residents in nursing homes as tenants (category) in their own apartments (context). It is proposed that references to living conditions of "people in general" or persons belonging to the third age could be used to improve living conditions among older persons with impairments.

#### Abstract 1.3 | *Function*

Annika Taghizadeh Larsson, Department of Social and Welfare Studies, Linköping University, Sweden

While younger persons with impairments are commonly referred to as people with disabilities/persons with impairments or as disabled people in policy and research, persons with impairments and support needs above the chronological age of 60- 65 years are most often referred to as merely "elderly" or "older people"; that is, "with impairment" is omitted. Additionally, older people's state of functioning is often described as inconveniences or concerns, rather than impairments or disabilities. The aim of this paper is to compare and discuss these different ways of writing and talking

about younger and older people with impairments and support needs, as well as the different ideas about function that are embedded in the concepts and formulations that are used. The analysis that will be presented points to several problems with the normalization of functional limitations that is embedded in current conceptualizations concerning older people with support needs and impairments. It also suggests a number of advantages of consistently adopting the social or relational approach to disability also in relation to older people with support needs. That is, of adopting the approach to function that activists and scholars within the field of disability studies for several decades purposively have used, preferably in relation to younger people. The inter-related benefits that will be highlighted concern quality of support, access to medical and rehabilitation treatments as well as preconditions to maintain a preferred life style in later life, despite bodily changes.

#### Abstract 1.4 | *Autonomy and one-caring. A theoretical cross-over innovation in social care*

Stina Johansson, Department of Social Work, Umeå University, Sweden

Elderly care and care of people with disabilities are organized differently and the conceptualization of their activities must be understood in relation to the historical roots. Especially within care for people with disabilities some solutions can be classified as "cross-over innovations". A personalized care, "personal assistant", has been developed in opposition to how care work had been performed: authoritarian and hierarchical. Disabled people don't want to use the term care even if they accept to receive such help that from a theoretical perspective should at least partly be classified as care. The terms service or help are used. The assistance is for example organized around what in the caring perspective is called "one-caring". In the service perspective the service provider and the recipient should be recognised as two independent parts and service is a right that should be justly distributed. According to this criteria practice diverges from the ideal. Elderly care has developed to something that is far from a personalized care but in the presentation of the help the concept of care is used. A theoretical analysis comes to another conclusion. In the paper a theoretical analysis of some innovations in social care will be done. In the analysis will be used the concepts from the ongoing discussion among scholars about what caring and service respectively is characterized by. The perspective which I call "caring" has a moral focus on supporting people according to their individual needs. Care is guided by the principle of goodness and/or the desire to avoid da



mage while justice and autonomous relations between performer and recipient should characterize services. Concepts like personal needs and how they are defined, asymmetrical/symmetrical relationship, autonomy, dependency and independency, dignity, justice, rules and regulations will be used. Dilemmas with the two perspectives will be discussed as well as embedded potentials for change.

#### SYMPOSIUM Part II: Practices and policy change

Abstract 2.1 | *Active agents or passive recipients of care - representations of user influence on websites for eldercare and disability service providers*  
Sara Erlandsson, Department of Social Work, Stockholm University, Sweden

Issues of autonomy and independence are vital for adults who need help to cope in everyday life, regardless of age. Despite this, adults with care needs are usually categorized as either old or disabled, and research on eldercare and disability service is conducted in different disciplines using contrasting perspectives. This paper aims to bring perspectives from disability research to eldercare, by comparing constructions of ideal relationships between care givers and care recipients in eldercare and disability services, and to what extent recipients' influence in daily life is articulated within them. This question was explored through a discourse analysis of text and images on 37 websites where providers of disability service and eldercare market their services. The analyses, departing from the premise that advertising is both drawing on and reproducing discourses on good care and power relations embedded in them, focused on representations of care givers and recipients' agency and influence over care. The findings showed that eldercare providers depicted the ideal relationship between care givers and recipients as close and intimate, but also, that care givers professional knowledge was given precedence over the recipients', and that older recipients appeared as a homogenous group without agency and influence over care. In contrast, providers of disability services put emphasis on recipients own ability and agency, and stressed their right to influence how care is provided. Based on the results from the analyses, it is concluded that the ideal relationship reproduced by eldercare providers give care givers the right to define how care is performed. On the other hand, advertisements from providers of disability services put more emphasis on the users' own agency, and thereby provide better conditions for user influence. It is suggested that increased

exchange between eldercare and disability services can contribute to the recognition of older care recipients as agents.

Abstract 2.2. | *Influence in elderly and disability care*  
Petra Ahnlund, Ph.D., Senior lecturer & Lennart Sauer, Ph.D., Senior lecturer;  
Department of Social Work, Umeå University Sweden

Care for elderly and care for persons with disabilities are two sectors in the welfare state, aiming to give support, care and service when needed. There are both similarities and differences between the two sectors, our interest is how the concept influence has been discussed and understood in this both sectors. Influence is regulated in the Swedish Social Service Act and in the act concerning Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments but is operationalized in different ways in care for elderly and care for persons with disabilities. It is for example much more concrete described for the care of persons with disabilities. In the care for elderly, influence is described in a more general way with diffuse terminology. The aim with the paper is to discuss differences and similarities in relation to influence and its consequences for the everyday life. Laws, policies and previous research are discussed as is interviews with personnel working in respectively sector focusing on their descriptions of what they do at work. Our results show that personnel in the care for persons with disabilities include their clients in their work, influence is more visible for that group, and it is something obvious to consider at work in relation to participation and influence in ones' own life. For the personnel in the care for elderly, influence is not as visible as a concept and when they talk about their work, they talk about routines and organisational needs. Our conclusions are that organisational guidelines as well as laws and policy decisions creates different opportunities to make influence for clients possible.

Abstract 2.3 | *Individualization of needs in Swedish Elderly Care*  
Katarina Andersson, Department of Social Work, Umeå University, Sweden

Compared with people with disabilities, elderly people are defined as a homogenous group in relation to the Swedish Social Services Act's (SFS 2001:453) in wordings of certain groups. How come elderly persons are seen as a homogenous group and not as individuals with individual needs? The aim of the study is to analyse how care managers interpret individualization of care by analysing their arguments in the needs-assessments that pre

cede decisions of granted care. How is individual care interpreted according to the care managers? Qualitative in-depths interviews with care managers were conducted in one of the bigger municipalities in mid-Sweden, which had implemented free choice (The Act on System of Choice in the Public Sector, SFS 2008:962) in line with neo-liberal thinking on marketization of care. The care managers' interpreted individualization of care as common standards, referring to political guidelines, not in relation to individual needs of the elderly. Further, groups of elderly with other ethnic background, were often ascribed different needs, according to these standards and therefore did not always qualify for care provision. Analysis shows that in relation to ethnicity, the lack of individualization appeared to be the most evident in the care managers' arguments in needs-assessments. Seeing the ethnic elderly as a homogenous group, individual needs were rejected. Those who were perceived as claiming 'special needs' by the care managers were defined as belonging to a 'problem-creating' category that did not fit into the standards for care. Social representations and categorisation of groups thus become a hindrance for individualization of elderly care needs. Further, the idea of individualization of care follows the rational of independent individuals - the discourse of active aging - rather than dependent vulnerable individual elderly in need of individual care.

Abstract 2.4. | *Doing Leadership - with inspiration from the Care of Persons with Disabilities*

Maria Wolmesjö, Department of Social and Welfare Studies, Linköping University, Sweden

What can be learned from the care of persons with disabilities to give inspiration for doing leadership in elderly care? Social care is one of the largest employers in the municipalities in Sweden and its organisations deal with difficulties to find qualified and well educated staff members. Managers struggle with how to handle value issues and how to handle demands on how to balance the economy with needs, how to organize, how to supervise staff members and provide new competence when needed with being a good/ the best care provider in competition with others. Even though challenges seems rather similar it seems like working within the disability sector in general is given a higher status and have more staff-member for each user/ care-receiver than what is common in elderly care in general. In this paper I focus upon how first line managers in care of persons with disabilities are doing leadership and a central research question is how this can inspire a

creative thinking of doing leadership in elderly care. The methodological approach used was informal interviews with first line managers with experience from both organisational fields in municipal care. Analysis was done by using a comparative approach and trying to identify common concepts and different strategies. The results point out first line managers will benefit if inspiration of doing leadership can be used to develop the elderly care. A main outcome from this study is developing a model of doing leadership, which can be used as implications for practice in collaboration to develop new policies in social care from different perspectives.

Symposia final | *The Declaration of Equality and social justice for older care users*

Håkan Jönson, School of Social Work, Lund University

SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convenors | Tim Vanhone, Bart Van Bouchaute - Artevelde University College Ghent and Pascal Debruyne - Ghent University

Keywords | politicization and the political role of social work, social activism, civil society, grass-root organizations, equality, citizenship, human rights

*Overall abstract*

The position, role and practice of social work is today more than ever a focus of societal debate. In times of budgetary cuts and fiscal austerity and calls for 'Big society' (in the UK) or 'the participatory society' ('Participatiemaatschappij' in the Netherlands), the complex positionality of social work is a key debate.

This symposium proposal focuses more specifically on 'politics' and 'the political'. Is social work destined, in its position between populations with social demands and those who manage the changing welfare states, to take a post-political and thus more consensual position? This symposium wants to stir the debate on 'the political' and its meaning to social work. Our focus lies on the policy impact of social work organisations, on social interventions of professional social workers, on the discretionary space in that daily practise, on the political subjectivation of populations. In these processes of subjectivation, people become political subjects through the struggle on equality. It involves the radical implementation of notions of human rights, solidarity and (political) citizenship and implies the claiming of politicised 'spaces' by the disadvantaged and their social workers.

Our approach of 'politicization' is not methodical but substantial: what does consensus and conflict mean in the understanding of 'the political' as a praxis that questions and disturbs the 'existing order' in the process of claiming social rights and equality? And how do people become 'political subjects' through social work practices? In these processes all kinds of methods and actions can be used.

Our symposium aims to define and refine this concept of politicization and 'the political' in the context of the practices and organizations of social work in their dialectical relation with (1) client systems and grass-root organizations in civil society: how does their politicization challenge social workers and their organizations (input factors)? and (2) with the governments and

market actors: how do they stimulate or limit the politicization of social workers, their organizations and clients (output factors)?

Our goal is to discuss and increase further reflection and elaboration about the importance of 'the political' and 'politicization' for social work and its strive to realize social rights and equality.

Abstract 1 | *Crafting arrival infrastructures: The emergence of political subjectivity from below in a superdiverse neighborhood*

Pascal Debruyne, Ghent University

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall, cities as Brussels, Antwerp or Ghent and secondary urbanized places undergo the dynamic of superdiversity. A "diversity within the existing diversity" is transforming our urban areas to places where minorities become the majority (Vertovec, 2007). Superdiverse neighborhoods function as places of arrival where newcomers take the first steps to become de-facto citizens (Saunders, 2010). Nowhere is this superdiversity more present than in Brussels' popular neighborhoods like Anderlecht.

If the arrival infrastructure is defined as those parts of the city with which newcomers interact upon arrival and in which their future social mobility is negotiated, then self-organizations are vital agencies in providing the building blocks for this arrival infrastructure. In this paper we focus on the self-organization "Le Manguier en Fleurs". Preliminary fieldwork was done between January 2015 and April 2015. Additional fieldwork is planned between September 2015 and December 2015. Methods to gather data are semi-structured interviews and ethnographic observation.

The organization fully managed by volunteers, became a place of engagement where migrants meet and engage with each other and the volunteers (Amin, 2012). The organization forms place-based solidarity networks through which information is shared, the first steps into the bureaucratic welfare state are taken through arranging papers, language courses and informal education are given, several cultural activities are organized, women's health support is given, post-curricular school activities are organized for kids, and so on.

By working through proximity these volunteers have overtaken the place of social professionals and other formal social workers. Due to professionalization and marketization, there is a growing 'information gap' and distance between migrant newcomers, self-organizations and institutionalized social

work (Nolf & Wallendael, 2012; De Donder, ea. 2014). This paper engages more in-depth with the agency of these volunteering professionals: how do they break the predetermined space of politics in which only predetermined actors—let's say citizens—have visibility and are taken seriously when asking for democratic rights (Rancière)? We engage with their grass-roots agency in a political sense to assure the city as 'a space of universal rights' (484-485) for those groups who belong to the "part-of-no-part". By understanding their specific practices, we gain knowledge about how to assure urban universal rights that emerge from the everyday politics by these agencies.

Abstract 2 | *The political role of a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) in social work*

Siebre Nachtergaele, University College Ghent

According to the global definition of social work, human rights are a fundamental foundation for social work (IASSW & IFSW, 2014). The framework of human rights is generally understood as an important lever for the political role of social work. Social work is supposed to 'politicize' social issues, i.e. questioning the taken for granted power relations, discourses and existing orders that can cause social injustice and violations of human rights (Dominielli, 1996; Gray & Webb, 2013; Weinberg, 2010).

In general, it is acknowledged that the political role of social work is shaped through the practice of advocacy and social activism. These practices aim at challenging the power of the institutional arrangements designed by 'macro legislation matters' (Kam, 2014). The political role of social work in this view is rather externally oriented. Much less attention goes to the internally oriented political role of social work, where social work is reflexive for its own position in society and its own power. As social work is not just an executor of state-driven policy, but a profession with a discretionary space in which it aims at realizing social justice and human dignity (Evans, 2004; Gilbert & Powell, 2010), social work should constantly asking the fundamental question as to what is 'social' in social work (Kam, 2014).

In this presentation, we will discuss the political role of social work, as one of the core building bricks of a human rights-based approach (HRBA) in social work. We present an ongoing research project in Flanders (Belgium), where a HRBA to social work is studied in the context of community development practices. By way of an ethnographic research design, both the external and internal political role of social work is studied.

Abstract 3 | *"I finally found my place": An ethnography of the political moments in an informal refugee camp in Brussels*

Anika Depraetere, University of Antwerpen

In the face of an increasing influx of refugees in Europe and the inability of public authorities to respond to this in an adequate and timely way, an informal refugee camp was built in September 2015 in front of the Foreign Office in Brussels, Belgium. In this refugee camp around 150 volunteers worked together on a daily basis to provide shelter, food, medical care and even schooling and animation to up to 1.000 refugees.

This paper examines moments of politicization inside this refugee camp, based on ethnographic fieldwork in the kitchen of the camp. This kitchen was set up by CollectActif, a participatory project addressing food waste, which is led by six undocumented migrants. We examine how the practices of people in and around this kitchen disturb the existing ways of 'dealing with refugees' and the boundaries being drawn between refugees, undocumented migrants, regular migrants and people in general. Hence, we analyse how the kitchen becomes a political practice guided by the hypothesis of equality, interrupting the existing and highly unequal order in which everyone is allocated to a particular place and many non-nationals are denied citizenship (Rancière, 2001). We analyse this particular political moment and place in relation to the broader development of the refugee camp, other actors in this camp and the changing discourse on refugees and citizenship.

Abstract 4 | *Social work and the art of the impossible: refugees and the politics of social work(ers) in Flanders*

Tim Vanhove & Bart Van Bouchaute, Artevelde University College Ghent

The current refugee crisis in Europa has led to a strong societal debate on the problem in terms of controlling, receiving and distributing the refugees. This debate is situated within the realm of 'the politics' or 'the art of the possible' (Lefort; Mouffe; Rancière) where the 'existing order' is not questioned: the procedures, the position of the refugees or the practices of civil society and governmental organisations are not subject of discussion. However, the directly involved civilians and organisations try to reposition the debate to 'the political' or 'the art of the impossible'. In this struggle for equality and social justice for refugees, the existing order becomes disputed.

These challenges were investigated throughout exploratory case-studies of

refugee organisations in Flanders. These organisations varied on scale, mission, institutionalisation and relationship to the government. A multimethod approach was used, with (1) participatory observations of social workers that work with refugees and volunteers; (2) group interviews on the discretionary space of governmental social workers; (3) interviews with politicians, experts, social workers and volunteers; (4) political and media discourse analysis.

The results show that social work organisations are challenged to position themselves within repoliticised relations with the refugees and the grass-root organisations on the one hand and with governments and politicians on the other hand. They experience a growing conflict between a consensual, managerial approach and a conflict approach fuelled by the struggle for equality and social rights for refugees. Politicisation depends on the varying focus on doing what is expected and doing what is needed. Practitioners that question the status quo only act politically if they perceive a self-defined or top-down mandate for it. The internal and public discourse of social work organisations on the refugee debate has as strong influence on this mandate for politicisation.

Abstract 5 | *Politicization of private citizen initiatives and the role of professional social work organizations*

Elke Plovie, Peter Raymaeckers, University Catholic Leuven Limburg

Today we could speak of a hype of these private citizen initiatives. There seems to be more initiatives than ever before and they are regularly picked up by media. In the current political climate of austerity and the shift towards the individual responsibility of the citizen, both the national government and the local authorities have high expectations for citizen initiatives. They are thereby regarded as important stakeholders in solving complex social issues such as child care, care for elderly, diversifying cities and sustainability.

In this paper we present the results of our empirical research on citizen initiatives in Flanders. The aim of this study is to have a better understanding of the goals and objectives of these initiatives, who is involved, how they are organized and how they relate to other stakeholders in the field, that is professional social work organizations and government. We conducted semi-structured interviews with 250 citizen initiatives.

In our analysis we first make a distinction between a social and a political understanding of citizenship. We look at where the citizen initiatives position themselves in this distinction. A second step in our analysis brings us to the relationship between these citizen initiatives and the professional social work organizations and the government. The rise of citizen initiatives and the current political climate challenge the role and position of professional social worker. The relationship between the three partners is even more complex when citizen initiatives are about disturbing the existing order. We describe the shifts in the role and position of the social worker and specify how social workers can contribute to the politicization of citizen initiatives and, on its turn, of social work practices.

*Where Knowledge, Social Work and Social Policy Meet: A Cross-National Perspective on the Involvement of Social Work Academics in Social Policy*

## SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convenors | John Gal, Hebrew University; Idit Weiss-Gal, Tel Aviv University; Katarina Thorén, Stockholm University and Pia Tham, University of Gävle - Sweden

Keywords: policy practice, social work academics, social policy

### *Overall abstract*

The goal of this symposium is to present and discuss the findings of a cross-national project that sought to explore the interface between social work academia and social policy in diverse societies.

The role of academics in addressing social challenges has captured the attention of thinkers virtually since the advent of academia. This societal role has been the subject of much interest and, no less important, of fierce debate. Of late, the growing expectation by governments for an identifiable impact of universities on society has led to renewed interest into this relationship.

Due to social work's commitment to social change and its avowed focus on addressing the needs of populations adversely affected by social problems or by inadequate policies, the underlying assumption of the project was that social work academics would seek to play an active role in the social policy process. While there is some evidence that social work academics in different countries do engage in policy processes, attempts to study systematically this engagement and the factors associated with them are rare.

As such, the project presented here adopted a common research tool, an online survey, in thirteen countries (Australia, Canada, China, Finland, Germany, Israel, Portugal, Puerto Rico, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States) in order to explore the contours of social work academics' engagement in policy-related activities, the forms that this takes and its extent. It also sought to identify explanatory factors that affected this engagement in the policy formulation process. These included factors related to the social work academic's perception as to the social role of academia, their personal role as academics, and their capacity to inter-

vene in the policy process. In addition, organizational factors related to the academic institutions in which they served were examined.

The first study of its kind, the findings of this cross-national effort are intended to serve as the point of departure for a scholarly discourse on the policy role of social work academics. This discourse should enable us to both better understand this type of engagement and, no less important, to lead to an effort to increase this involvement and enhance its impact. Given the potential contribution of social work academics to the policy formulation process and their position as educators and role models, it is imperative that social work academics have the tools and support needed to increase their policy involvement.

The symposium will comprise of an introductory overview of the project and a presentation of its research tools and methodology. Following that, findings from will be presented by scholars from Germany, Spain, Sweden and the United States. The symposium will conclude with a short comparative analysis and an open discussion.

### *Introduction*

John Gal, Hebrew University

### *Abstract 1 | Germany*

Stefan Köngeter and Andreas Herz, University of Trier

Social Work in Germany is a profession and a discipline that experienced two waves of politicization. The first wave came after the German student movement in 1968 when many social work academics and professionals adopted Marxist social theory in order to explain social work and social welfare as well as formulating a critical theory of social work (Hollstein & Meinhold, 1973; Mollenhauer, 1976). We are currently experiencing a second wave of politicization. Following the introduction of a neoliberal agenda of welfare from the end of the 1990s onwards, social work academics have argued in favour of a political mandate for social work (Bütow, Chassé, & Lindner, 2014; Lallinger & Rieger, 2007; Merten, 2001; Seithe, 2012; Stövesand & Röh, 2015). However, social work academics rarely discuss their own political impact, but rather stress the need for a critical theory and claim a politicization of the profession. Our survey among 400 social work scholars reveals the emphasis on a critical attitude to social work as a profession, but

also a surprisingly high level of political engagement. This is of particular interest as these political activities are rarely mentioned, or discussed, in Germany. Furthermore, a cluster analysis of the political activities shows that we can identify six clearly distinct activity patterns. The most interesting result is that we can see that the older generation of social work scholars shows a high level of political engagement and impact, whereas the younger generation splits into two groups: a group of critical scholars who focus on protest activities and a group of scholars focussing on academic professionalism with a low level of political engagement. Our presentation will give a short overview of the German situation of the social work discipline(s), present the results of the cluster analysis, and discuss possible explanations of these results.

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#### Abstract 2 | *Spain*

María-Asunción Martínez-Román and Miguel-Angel, Mateo-Pérez, University of Alicante

The so-called economic and financial crisis is not local (although it has local effects) but global and has been the excuse to apply neoliberal adjustment policies which have severe social consequences and which have shaken political, economic and social rules. Civil society is showing its indignation towards policies they consider unfair and which do not take citizens into account. Regarding social work, the neo-liberal economic policies have had

a deep impact on welfare provision and the shape of social work practice. The universities have a responsibility to include in their syllabus the quality standards for an education in social work including the education for the professional practice of human rights and training to influence on the policies from their own professional practice. In the present Spanish case, research questions run as follow: Are social work academics engaged in social policies? Are they training their students to engage in social policies? What role is being played by social work faculties and departments of Spanish universities?

#### Abstract 3 | *Sweden*

Katarina Thorén, Stockholm University

Sweden has a reputation of being a developed welfare state with well-established social policies and welfare institutions. Social work has a stable role in the Swedish welfare system and professional social workers are the , work research are also established parts of the Swedish academic system and most social workers are trained in the system of higher education in Sweden. Hence, there are several schools and departments of social work at many universities in Sweden, including many social work academics with both research and education as their primary aims. Nevertheless, the relationship between social work academia and social policy in Sweden is relatively unknown. We do not know the level of social policy engagement among social work scholars and teachers or the content of such involvement in either their education, research or the public discussion on welfare issues. This paper endeavours to uncover a number of questions around Swedish social work academics' involvement and engagement in social policy issues and social policy formulation. The study seeks a better understanding of the role of Swedish social work academics as policy actors as part of the wider academia-policy discourse, and to scholarship within social work. The paper is based on a survey of faculty members engaged in research and/or teaching at all social work programs in Sweden. The survey was a web-based in both Swedish and English and it was sent to 17 social work schools and more than 670 respondents during 2015. The response rate is approximately 45%.

#### Abstract 4 | *United States of America*

Richard Hoefler and Arati Maleku, University of Texas at Arlington,

Social work education in the United States requires graduates to have competence in advocacy (Council on Social Work Education [CSWE], 2010) and many social workers pursue careers focused on influencing social policy. Unfortunately, we know little about the policy practice activities of those who implement this mandate, the faculty of schools of social work. This paper draws on the results of quantitative data gathered from an online survey among accredited social work programs in the US that explored factors influencing social work faculty engagement in policy practice.

Our analyses show interesting results. Data indicate that non-tenured social work faculty members are more engaged in policy practice than tenured faculty. Results indicate that social work faculty who perceive the importance of policy role and believed they had higher levels of policy practice competencies were more likely to engage in policy practice. The study positively and significantly correlates student support with faculty engagement in policy practice. Additionally, responses indicate that working with students was the most prominent form of policy practice engagement. Respondents describe that their schools or departments of social work are perceived to provide more support for policy practice engagement than their larger university environments. Finally, our study reveals that most respondents believed they had very low impact among policy makers and advocacy organizations.

The paper delves into possible reasons for these findings, including the traditions of academia in the United States and current job pressures to obtain grants and publish research, rather than be involved in the community and larger policy issues. While we must be cautious in generalizing the results, this study adds important information to the social work literature regarding policy practice by academics in the United States. It serves as a useful contribution to the study of this topic internationally, as well.

#### *Conclusion*

Idit Weiss-Gal | Tel Aviv University

*Researching social work up close: using discourse, narrative and conversation analysis to analyse recordings of real-life encounters*

#### WORKSHOP

Workshop organizers | Tessa Verhallen, Utrecht University and Juliet Koprowska, York University

Keywords | hands-on experience in analysing social work interaction, reflexive practice, enhancing transcultural communication

The essence of social work lies in face-to-face engagement with clients, however, research which explores what actually happens in such encounters remains limited. This interactive workshop offers participants hands-on experience of analysing interaction through the examination of audio recordings and verbatim transcriptions of real-life social work encounters. By doing so, we aim to enhance reflexive practice and learning.

Participants will compare data from two European countries, the Netherlands and England. We will take a close look at examples of transcultural communication between social work professionals and parents, and at the interactional trouble arising in meetings where parents who are present are discussed by professionals. We aim to increase the self-awareness of professionals by recognising possible biases reflected in talk and becoming more sensitive to various asymmetries and (sub)cultural differences.

The subtleties of naturally occurring conversation mostly go unnoticed in everyday interaction, and as a consequence are rarely susceptible to recall by participants. The study of recordings of live interaction sheds a different and unexpected light on material often researched through observation and semi-structured interviews. The workshop's theory and methods derive from a large body of research examining institutional talk and interaction, developed in ethnomethodology, conversation analysis, socio-linguistics and narrative analysis.

The workshop will be led by members of DANASWAC (Discourse and Narrative Analysis in Social Work and Counselling), an international group of researchers who explore how social work is accomplished interactionally,



and what can be gained from its detailed study. We aim to make links between analytical concepts from applied discourse studies (such as boundary work, resistance, classification and delicacy) and concepts in social work (such as boundaries, authority, categories and empathy). In addition, we aim to link these forms of knowledge with social work practice by scrutinising excerpts of naturally occurring interactions between professionals and lay people with the underlying goal of improving communication, social work relationships and successful social work practices.

The data for analysis in the workshop have been collected in recent research studies. Relevant concepts and methods will be explained to facilitate participants' engagement in the analysis of the following material:

1. A home visit meeting to a single-mother parent of Dutch-Curaçaoan origin. The family supervisor communicates to the mother that she will apply for a (non-consensual) full custody order over the mother's daughter. To save the child protection agency a lengthy bureaucratic process, the family supervisor aims at getting the mother's voluntary consent to discharge from her legal parental authority in the extract under scrutiny. Translations and transcriptions will be supplied in English.
2. Excerpts from initial child protection conferences in England, where a group of professionals and family members are brought together to discuss concerns about the children. Audio recordings and transcriptions will be supplied in English.

*Social Work Action and a Community Anti- Incinerator Campaign; Some Ideas and Reflections for Social Work Education*

## WORKSHOP

Workshop organizer | Mary Hurley, University College Cork, Ireland

Keywords | social work education, civil society, social work skills, reflective practice, citizens' participation

Involvement in a local community environmental campaign (Cork Harbour Alliance for a Safe Environment, CHASE; <http://chasecorkharbour.com>) over the last twelve years has led me to think about how we, as social work educators, might teach social action to students in Social Science and Social Work programmes in the 21st century.

Through involvement in social action, communities developed a range of skills which are pertinent to both social work and social work education. Some of these skills include: effectively raising awareness of local and national issues; lobbying at a local, national and European level; employing the necessary communication skills to work with local and national media in order to highlight local issues; using technical writing skills to contribute to local and national waste policy; developing technological competence to influence change; as well as networking skills to support other communities faced with similar challenges nationally and internationally. Skills around fundraising and acquiring leadership skills to sustain the campaign over time are also developed.

The motivation for my own personal involvement in the anti-incinerator campaign in Ireland (CHASE) was based on: issues of social justice, the ethical disposal of waste and solidarity with neighbours faced with another unwanted development in their neighbourhood. Now as a social work educator (and practitioner of many years), I have a strong interest in social work's role in promoting/advocating for social change and development. However, engaging with this aspect of social work is particularly complex in a work environment where the impact of neoliberal politics and policies are increasingly felt. This is evinced by the overly rigid emphasis on regulatory compliance and risk averse practice, in the face of which the true vision of social work, as

agent for social change, is being eclipsed. Social workers' voices are rarely

heard except as a defensive response to catastrophic events. In our work, at the coalface with service users we witness directly the impact of ever reducing services and welfare budget cuts. We know better than most the effect of conservative national policy and legislation. Where are our voices as social workers and educators? Who has turned us into bureaucratic post-boxes? Are we silencing ourselves?

When we witness social injustice in our work, how can we as educators, support students (and practitioners) to engage and respond at a broader structural level that results in positive social change? Can the experience of a small-scale, neighbourhood campaign offer insights to the social work profession and to social work education?

In 2010 I completed a Master of Social Science (by Portfolio) on the campaign (which was then ongoing and finally won by CHASE in 2011). Moving from the position of activist to researcher to undertake the study was a challenge. However keeping and sharing a reflective journal, which challenged my own subjectivities, was an essential endeavour both for my role as researcher and an activist. Teaching on a course where reflective practice is the pedagogical bedrock, has begun to challenge me to consider ways of teaching and engaging with students that might support and encourage social action.

Workshop Design- (It is envisaged that the workshop will have 3 stages)

- Input: Using the CHASE campaign as a case study, sharing of relevant findings about the skills and knowledge required by students and practitioners for social action
- Active Participation of workshop attendees: Exploration and reflection on teaching and learning requirements to develop an awareness of the necessity for social action in Social Work. Proposed questions to pursue; what has reflective practice and learning got to offer in this regard?
- What are the reflective tools that might scaffold/support this process?
- What is required of students and educators in this endeavour?

Proposed outcome of workshop: Developing a working group to advance the teaching and learning practices to encourage social action in the education and practice of Social Work.

*What can we learn from observing and grading skills in child and family social work?*

#### WORKSHOP

Workshop organizers | Alison Domakin and David Wilkins, Tilda Goldberg Research Centre, University of Bedfordshire

Keywords | observing and grading social work practice skills, academic and practitioner partnership working, recordings of practice

In England there is broad agreement about what areas of knowledge and skills are needed for good social work practice, but little or no specific research evidence showing what these skills look like when applied in practice. Recent developments in England, such as the statement of Knowledge and Skills for Child and Family Social Work (DfE, 2014) and the impending development of a 'licence to practice' scheme for child protection social work, will no doubt create much needed debate about how we measure the difference between outstanding or good social work practice skills and adequate or inadequate social work practice skills.

We report in this workshop on an innovative approach to defining, observing and grading practice skills in Child and Family Social Work with the involvement of practitioners, researchers and academic staff. Our involvement in coding and assessing practice skills has progressed from simulated client interviews to observing and recording direct practice. As a result, we now have a team of researchers and academics who can reliably code and assess practice to produce consistent results in both pre and post qualifying settings.

We are now combining our expertise and learning in four major research projects across ten Local Authority areas utilising the same methodology for observing and grading skills in direct practice. Together, we expect these projects to generate around one thousand recordings of practice over the next twelve to eighteen months. T1 and T2 outcome data will also be collected from hundreds of families, allowing quality of practice to be linked with outcomes.

Learning from this programme of research has also enabled us to embed observation and grading of practice skills as a core part of the assessment strategy on our post-graduate social work programme, generating over

seven hundred recordings of practice every year. Academic staff and practice educators grade students' practice skills and formal feedback is provided which counts towards students' academic profiles - a development which is the first of its kind in social work education in the United Kingdom.

This interactive workshop will focus on exploring key social work practice skills and how they can be operationalised as research measures. We will share the approach we have developed, demonstrating how social work practice skills can be identified, and how improved skills of (for example) collaboration and purposefulness tend to lead to better parental engagement. We will invite workshop participants to listen to sample recordings and 'have a go' at grading the social work skills they hear. Together, we will consider and debate the value of assessing social work practice skills and discuss the following questions:

- How can we measure and assess the skills used by social workers in their work with parents and children?
- What social work practice skills might lead to better outcomes for families and why?
- How can practitioners, researchers and academic staff work together to produce the best possible understanding and development of social work practice skills?

*Social care for patients: Discourses on social work in health care in a post-Soviet context*

Sofiya An | Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan

Keywords | health care, discourse analysis, post-Soviet social policy

The emergence and development of professional social work and social services has been a major feature of shifting welfare architecture in post-Soviet states. Social work and personal social services were absent in the Soviet welfare, including health care facilities. As a result, hospitals and primary care facilities emphasized medical aspects of care, while social issues were addressed inconsistently. Since 2010, the government of Kazakhstan, a newly independent post-Soviet state in Central Asia, began to introduce special social services within governmental primary health care facilities. The proposed paper will present the findings of the ongoing research project on the emerging social work practices in various settings in Kazakhstan. I will apply critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003) to examine the recently adopted legal/regulatory frameworks and organizational documents, including the standards of care, job descriptions, etc. that regulate the emerging social work practices, the relations between health care practitioners and social workers, and the provision of social services in health care settings. Some of the research questions that I seek to address are as follows: What is the place of social work in health care, as constructed by the regulatory documents? What is the role of social work and social services in health care? How is the relationship between a social worker and a patient constructed in these texts? What are the potential implications for social workers, for patients, and for care? The government and organizational discourses on social work will be compared to the global/transnational legal and regulatory frameworks that regulate social work and social services as well as Soviet-era regulatory documents on care for patients. The study findings will inform the planning and design of social work services in health care facilities. The findings will also contribute to the knowledge about the transformation of welfare institutions in a post-Soviet context.

## *Building a Working Community: Staff Practice in a Clubhouse for People with Severe Mental Illness*

Fang-pei Chen | National Chung Cheng University Department of Social Welfare, Taiwan

Keywords | mental health clubhouse, mental health recovery, practice research, individualized care, psychiatric rehabilitation

### *Background*

The clubhouse model is an evidence-based program providing a restorative environment for people with a psychiatric history to support their continuous growth despite the impact of severe mental illness. Clubhouses' programmatic elements strive to enhance empowerment, competency, and recovery through members and staff working side-by-side as equals. Much of the effort to create and maintain such an environment is made possible through staff's understanding of, and capacity to carry out the principles of a clubhouse. Although practice in a clubhouse plays such an important role, little research was conducted to explicate the intricacies of the day-to-day operation. This research project purposes to establish an empirical understanding of practice in a clubhouse, taken into account of influences at individual, program, and organizational levels.

### *Methods*

This grounded theory study focused on Fountain House in New York City, the original clubhouse. In addition to in-depth interviews with 28 staff members, 10 supervisors, and 15 members, the researcher conducted 262 hours of participant observation in 41 visits to all 7 program units over a five-month period. Participant observation was essential to study the nature of working relationship, because the researcher was able to have first-hand experiences of aspects of staff roles and functions and observe their interactions with members and other staff. Participant observation influenced the formulation of interview questions while interviewing was used to clarify observation and generate directions for observation. All interviews, ranging from 30 to 60 minutes in length, were verbatim transcribed and analyzed by using dimensional analysis procedures. Notes were taken on participant observation, focusing on unit characteristics, activity flow during the observed period, specific practice episodes, and reflective memos for theoretical and methodological considerations and the researcher's reflexivity. The multiple

sources (staff, members, and supervisors) and types of data (interviews and observation) provided the basis for comparative analysis.

### *Results*

Staff indicated intertwined practice domains of social connections, unit work, and individual needs in the clubhouse. To function as clubhouse staff, staff focused on (a) professional use of self to develop a genuine relationship to engage members, reduce power differential, model management of relational boundaries, promote positivity, and develop individualized relationships, and (b) community building to facilitate community identity, connect with the larger community, orchestrate flow of the work day, and teamwork with members and other staff. These practice foci were facilitated by the flexibility and openness of the organizational structure and the intentionality of the program design.

### *Implications*

The study identified a multifaceted practice model in which staff employed approaches and strategies that were fostered by specific model designs. This result may support staff training in clubhouses and the ongoing dissemination of the clubhouse model. Moreover, the identified model of practice differed significantly from traditional clinical practices. The details delineated in the findings offered basis for deliberating alternative forms of mental health service delivery and practices to support mental health recovery. Finally, participant observation allowed the researcher to have first-hand experience, which was particularly beneficial in examining nuances of complex, multifaceted practice.

*Young people and mental health: Looking for new solutions and relations in interprofessional collaboration*

Frida Westerback | University of Helsinki, Mathilda Wrede Institute  
Ilse Julkunen | University of Helsinki

Keywords: actor-relational-approach, young people's agency, service user experience, mental health services, interprofessional collaboration

This study is based on a practice research frame with young people as service users of mental health services and professionals in interprofessional collaboration. The study focused on perspectives of both personnel working with youth and the young people themselves. Altogether 40 interviews with professionals and 32 young people were conducted in Helsinki, Finland during a two year research project.

The study draws on the works of Luuk Boelens and his actor-relational approach (ARA) based on a relational understanding of space and derived from an intensive interchange between practice and theory building up the knowledge base in planning where different actors, as well as the civil community, are integrated into a research design. The starting point was a mapping among the professionals' views on mental health services and their state of art. The second part of the study focused on young people's agency and their experiences of participation when encountering with the professionals working in these services.

The study provides important insight in how young people think about services and experiences of encounters with interprofessional practices. Services have resulted in fragmentation and need for coordination between services in order to provide adequate and holistic efforts when responding to service users' complex needs (Arnkil & Seikkula 2015), still young people feel left out and not responded to. The results of the study show that young people's agency tends to broaden the gap between young people with mental health issues and the mental health services. The results revealed that young people found the services hard to reach and access due to stigmatization and they felt the spaces to be too bureaucratic and not safe and secure. Successful encountering of youth with mental health issues was found in the no-profit sector and small size units in the public sector. Successful encounters could also be found in contact with individual professionals, although this

required a special "interest" from the professional, from the youth's point of view.

Both professionals and youth had three common recommendations for developing basic services and preventing mental health issues among youth. All recommendations were directed towards the comprehensive and vocational school, as it is the environment where youth spend a considerable amount of time. The first recommendation is universal school-based prevention programs focusing on mental health, the second recommendation suggests more adults as in youth workers or social workers integrated in the school system. The third recommendation involves personal assistance to young persons at risk through mentoring or coaching.

*Empowering practice development: applying research lessons to practice. A case study of developing alcohol services within a Punjabi Sikh community in England*

Sarah Galvani | Manchester Metropolitan University  
Gary Manders | University of Bedfordshire

Keywords | practice development, learning from the research process, alcohol and a Punjabi Sikh community

*Background and purpose*

This paper is based on a scoping study commissioned by an alcohol agency in England to underpin its development of an alcohol service within a Punjabi Sikh community. Its main objective was to explore the feasibility of developing a Community Alcohol Support Package (CASP) with the specific aims of i) establishing the views of service providers, commissioners and other relevant administrative bodies about the alcohol support needs within the local community, ii) establish the views of residents of the community about their alcohol support needs, iii) identify the environmental opportunities and challenges within the community for developing a CASP. The study took place within a local context of increasing numbers of Punjabi Sikh men presenting to hospital accident and emergency departments with serious alcohol-related problems and a local and national policy context of imminent re-commissioning of all services and massive cuts to health and social care budgets.

*Methods*

An ethnographic approach was adopted which combined observation, vignette-based focus groups, individual interviews and self-completion surveys. The recruitment strategy comprised purposive sampling - targeting particular events or organisations for self-completion questionnaires and focus groups - and snowball sampling, for service user and key informant interviews. Our observation work comprised street-based observation of the geographical Ward within which the majority of the community was based. Quantitative data were analysed using a statistical software package, SPSS, and involved primarily descriptive statistics and bi-variate analysis where possible. The qualitative data were thematically analysed using Nvivo software using a system of detailed coding, categorising and synthesis within thematic domains.

*Results*

A total of 152 people took part in the data collection comprising groups of people of all ages drawn from schools, women's group, community centres, faith-based organisations, local conferences, local policy and service provider organisations. The findings that emerged highlighted a diversity of views about the tensions between culture and religion in relation to alcohol consumption, the role of Gurdwara in supporting people with alcohol problems, generation differences and what alcohol support was needed. However, this paper will focus on the lessons learned from the research process. It is the challenges of conducting the research that resulted in powerful lessons for the process of practice development. Key among these were negotiating the political landscape within the community, the importance of power and status in opening doors, how language and gender influenced responses, overcoming the perception of 'white services parachuting in', and the time and patience required to secure involvement.

*Conclusions and Implications*

In a policy landscape of maximum outputs for minimum input both the process and findings of this scoping study offer tremendous challenges for community and citizen participation in practice development work. However, they also offer opportunities in a wider policy context that prioritises community-led and recovery oriented alcohol service provision.

## *A Three Process Model of Burnout and Work Engagement: A Model of Resilience Pathways*

Paula McFadden | Queens University Belfast

John Mallett | Ulster University

Michael Leiter | Acadia University, Nova Scotia, Canada

Keywords | resilience, burnout, exhaustion, control, social worker burnout

Child protection social work is a highly complex and challenging profession. This is a critical job, responsible for managing child abuse and neglect of children within society. Aspects of burnout such as emotional exhaustion (feeling extended beyond capacity) and depersonalisation (reduced feelings for service recipients) has been disproportionally reported in this occupational group (Tham & Meagher, 2009; McFadden et al., 2014). This paper presents data from a stratified random sample of 162 child protection social workers in Northern Ireland who were assessed for levels of burnout using the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach & Leiter, 1996), resilience using the Resilience Scale-14 (Wagnild & Young, 1993) and perceptions of work factors using the Area of Work Life Scale AWLS (Leiter, 2008). A path model was estimated using MPLUS 7 (Muthén, & Muthén, 1998-2015), based on an extension of the Two Process Energy and Values model (Leiter, 2008) to also include resilience, perceived rewards and community support. Findings: Resilience directly predicted aspects of burnout (Emotional Exhaustion = .46,  $p < .01$ ) and Personal Accomplishment (beta = -.28,  $p < .05$ ) and indirectly predicted all aspects of burnout via perceptions of Control and having a Manageable Workload. Reward perceptions also directly predicted feelings of Control (beta = .42,  $p < .01$ ) and having a Manageable Workload (beta = .26,  $p < .05$ ), as well as perceptions of Fairness (beta = .40,  $p < .01$ ) and Value congruence (beta = .32,  $p < .01$ ). Consistent with the original Two-Process Energy and Values model (Leiter, 2008), the relationship between perceived Rewards and burnout was fully mediated via perceptions of Control, Fairness, Value Congruence and having a manageable Workload. There were no associations between perceptions of organisational culture/support (Community) and burnout measures but Community was significantly predictive of Fairness which in turn was predictive of Value Congruence within the original two process model. Other pathways and mediating relationships are reported and further research direction discussed.

## *Burnout among Portuguese Social Workers*

Sónia Ribeiro | Catholica University of Portugal

Inês Amaro | ISCTE-UL, Portugal

Author keywords | social work, burnout, emotional exhaustion, labor dissatisfaction

Stemming from doctoral research, this study analyzes the burnout in Portuguese social workers as well as their relationship with the organizational climate, mental health, social support and perceived demographic and socioeconomic variables. With this research we intend to minimize the shortage of research and studies on burnout in social workers, thus making a contribution to the scientific literature on this issue, and to better understand this reality.

According to the multidimensional Maslach model (1998), burnout is characterized by three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and diminished personal accomplishment. It is related to organizational factors, working conditions and to the cultural context in which the individual is inserted.

We applied the quantitative method, using a questionnaire for sociodemographic and socioprofessional characterization of Social Workers; the application of the Maslach Burnout Inventory to assess burnout; the Social Support Scale to analyze the perceived social support; the Quaco to analyze the organizational climate; and the General Health Questionnaire - 28 to assess psychopathological symptoms. The study was conducted through a non-probability sample of convenience and composed through the snowball technique, consisting of 550 social workers.

From the results obtained we were able to conclude that roughly 38% of Portuguese social workers experience burnout in the early stages of the process (emotionally exhausted); 19% have more advanced symptoms (depersonalization); and 11% are at a serious level as they present diminished personal accomplishment. A quarter of all Social Workers has labor dissatisfaction, especially related to the workload they are subject to and to their participation in the management of their service. About half of these professionals want to change the workplace and a quarter want to change profession altogether. Higher levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and professional inefficiency are associated with psychological malaise, low perception of social support and lower job satisfaction, lower satisfaction

with the autonomy, meetings, the working environment, the participation, and the workload.

Empirical evidence advice that prevention, awareness and monitoring strategies, addressed to social workers and their employers, should be created. However, these actions alone are insufficient since it does not take into account the economic, political and social forces that draw the working conditions in the institutions that employ social workers.

Strategies to influence the definition of labor, health and social policies should be analyzed, including the promotion of measures to ensure effective working conditions to these professionals.

### *Perceptions of Service Providers' Burnout: Comparison of Service Users and Service Provide*

Riki Savaya | Tel Aviv University

Sharon Melamed | The Welfare, Public Health and Human Services Administration Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipality

Dorit Altschuler | The Welfare, Public Health and Human Services Administration Tel Aviv-Yafo Municipalit

Keywords | Burnout, Service Providers, Service Users Welfare Agency

#### *Background and purpose*

A great deal has been written about the deleterious consequences of burnout for both service providers and their clients. Consequences for service providers include, among other things, impaired emotional and physical health, a diminished sense of well-being, and sleep and memory problems. With respect to clients, burnt-out service providers are less able to be empathic, collaborative, and attentive; are less able to bond with their clients, and to form a cooperative working alliance with them; and generally show poorer job performance, and provide poorer quality services than service provider who do not suffer from burnout.

#### *Objectives*

To the best of our knowledge, no study has investigated the congruence between service providers' and service users' perceptions of the service provider's burnout and its consequences. We will address these issues in our presentation. Specifically, we will report findings on the gaps between these two groups, in perceived service providers' burnout and its impact on service users' perceived changes and on their satisfaction with their social workers.

#### *Method*

Based on two studies -- one querying service users, the other querying service providers, at a large municipal social welfare agency -- we were able to create a 270 matched service provider X service user sample. Service providers answered questions about their own levels of burnout; service users were asked to rate their social workers' levels of burnout. All the service providers in the agency were asked to fill out the questionnaire. As for the service users, we interviewed a sample obtained by a multistage sampling



procedure.

Perceived service users burnout was assessed by the Maslach Burnout Inventory. The items cover three factors: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Service users completed a modified version of the questionnaire, in which they were asked to report their perceptions of their service providers' burnout.

### Results

- Service users' satisfaction with the service providers was in the high moderate range.
- Service users' perceived changes in presenting problems were in the low moderate range.
- Compared to service providers' perceptions of their own burnout, service users perceived them as less emotional exhausted, less accomplished and behaving in a more depersonalized manner. All differences were significant at  $p < .001$ .
- Two hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to determine whether the discrepancies in perception of service providers' burnout predicted the service users' satisfaction with their social workers and their perceived changes in presenting problems. Finding showed that the entrance of the three discrepancies (e.g., emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment and depersonalization) into the analysis added 62% to the explained variance in satisfaction with the service provider, and 11% to the explained variance in perceived changes.

### Conclusions and implications

Findings indicate the role of service providers' burnout in service users' satisfaction with their social workers and their perceived effectiveness of intervention. The implications of these findings will be discussed with relation to working alliance, and practices to prevent social workers' burnout.

*Is Emotional Intelligence training associated with reduced stress and burnout in child and family social workers? Results from a UK randomised control trial*

Laura Biggart, Emma Ward and Gillian Schofield | University of East Anglia  
Chris Stride | University of Sheffield  
Philip Corr | City University, London  
Clive Fletcher | Goldsmiths University, London

Keywords | social work training, emotional intelligence, burnout, stress

Work-based stress and burnout are widely recognised as important inhibitors of performance among a range of public service professions including: teachers, police officers, nurses and social workers (McQueen, 2004; Bennett, Evans & Tattersall 1993; Kyriacou, 2001; Burke, 1994). Emotional Intelligence skills have been found to moderate the effects of burnout (Melita, Prati & Karriker, 2010), but there is little consistent evidence to show the benefits of Emotional Intelligence interventions on outcomes. A number of recent meta-analyses (Martins et al 2010, O'Boyle 2011, Malouff et al 2014) have supported findings that individual differences in Emotional Intelligence influence mental health and well-being, work performance, and relationship quality. There is less evidence to show whether Emotional Intelligence training for adults can increase Emotional Intelligence or reduce negative outcomes such as stress or burnout.

This Economic and Social Research Council funded study investigates whether Emotional Intelligence (EI) training is associated with reduced rates of stress and burnout using a cluster randomised wait list control design in a population of social workers in the UK. Two hundred and fourteen child and family social workers were recruited across 8 local authorities and randomly assigned to the intervention EI training group or the control (work as usual) group. A two day Emotional Intelligence training intervention was developed by adapting the RULER programme (developed at the Yale Centre for Emotional intelligence) for the profession of social work. Data was collected across six time points over a 12 month period, with the intervention taking place between the second and third time point. Measures included workload, experience, Ability EI, Trait EI, stress, burnout, job demands-control, IQ and personality. Results comparing baseline data and post intervention data will be presented at the conference.

*Burnout among social workers working with immigrants from the Former Soviet Union and Ethiopia in Israel: Testing the connections between personal value preferences, immigrant appraisal and burnout*

Eugene Tratakovsky | Tel Aviv University

Keywords: immigrants, burnout, values, social workers, Israel

Burnout among service providers working with vulnerable populations can lead to a deterioration in well-being and high turnover of the workers and a decrease in levels of their services. The current study proposes a new threat-benefit theory (TBT) as predicting experiences of burnout and personal accomplishment among social workers working with immigrants. Based on the theory of human values (Schwartz et al., 2012) and extending Integrative Threat Theory (Stephan & Stephan, 2000), TBT suggests that the local population perceives immigrants not only as threatening but also as beneficial for the receiving society. In a study carried out among 358 social workers in Israel, findings supported a conceptual model in which levels of threat appraisal positively predicted levels of burnout and levels of benefit positively predicted feelings of personal accomplishment and negatively predicted burnout. In addition, findings showed that 1) both immigrant groups were seen as both constituting threats and benefits to the receiving society; 2) Levels of threat were predicted negatively by values of universalism, benevolence, self-direction and positively by power, tradition and conformity; 3) Levels of benefit were predicted negatively by values of self-direction and power (Ethiopian immigrants) and positively by conformity and tradition (FSU immigrants).

*The Capability Approach: What can it offer social work ?*

SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convenors | Anna Gupta, Royal Holloway University of London, Didier Reynaert, and Rudi Roose, Ghent University, Sylvie Van Dam, University of Antwerp, Jeroen Gradener, University of Applied Sciences Amsterdam, Erik Jansen, HAN University of Social Sciences

Keywords: The Capability Approach, Human Rights, Poverty, Social Justice Local welfare systems

The Capability Approach (CA) was originally developed by the Nobel Prize winning economist, Amartya Sen, and further explored by feminist philosopher, Martha Nussbaum and other academics from a range of disciplines. It provides a theoretical framework concerning wellbeing, human development and social justice. It has been argued that the CA has the potential to offer an overarching framework for socially just policy and social work practice development that challenges the ascent of neo-liberalism and the individualization of risk. The approach recognizes structural inequalities and the multi-dimensional power relationships that influence an individual's welfare in line with critical approaches to social work. The CA distinguishes between power over others and power with others and encourages relational thinking about people and their capabilities in ways consistent with ideas from strengths-based perspectives. However the CA has been subject to critique and it has also been suggested that the CA does not sufficiently provide a critical analysis of liberal individualism, especially in its less radical interpretations.

Much of mainstream CA literature is philosophical and economically oriented, and thus far apart from the everyday reality of people's lives, with an exception being development studies. In Europe the CA is attracting increasing attention in social policy discourses and research programmes, although the development of the practical application of the CA in social work settings is still relatively rare and warrants further exploration. It has been suggested that the CA offers a framework to transform fundamental social work principles of social justice human rights into concrete practices, however this remains an under-theorized field.

This symposium involves presentations from academics from the Netherlands, Belgium and England who have been undertaking varied work on the application of the CA to research, policy and practice in social work. The presentations provide examples of the possibilities the CA offers in terms of the development of social work at the levels of community, organizations and individual work with children and families, as well identifying areas for further critical exploration. The bringing together of these different perspectives offers an opportunity for debate on the utility of the CA for work with marginalised individuals and communities experiencing intersecting structural inequalities on the basis of gender, race, religion, class and immigration status. The different presentations address themes 1- 5 of the conference streams. In particular, overall, the symposium reflects the themes: 3) Comparative studies; 4) Social work and social policy; 5) Human rights and social justice.

*Presentation 1 | Anna Gupta*

Child protection responses to forced marriage: The contribution of the Capability Approach

Over the past decade there has been increasing attention paid to forced marriage and honour-based violence in the UK. Whilst both males and females can experience or be at risk of forced marriage, the majority are young women and girls, with many being under 18 years of age. This presentation discusses the findings of a study exploring child protection professionals' responses to forced marriage. The study included a literature review, an on-line survey, semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with a range of professionals. Considerable variation was noted in responses to referrals and the support provided for young people. There was evidence of a lack of confidence in challenging 'cultural' or 'religious' explanations, as well as examples of a lack of understanding of the importance of culture, identity and socio-economic deprivation in young peoples' lives, leaving many marginalised from wider society, isolated and estranged from their families and communities.

The findings highlighted the importance of a nuanced, contextualised and dynamic approach rather than an essentialist view of 'culture' that is often evident in practice. An analysis of how the CA can assist with the development of ethical social work practice that avoids both the pitfalls of cultural relativism on the one hand and cultural imperialism on the other, whilst safeguarding children. The focus on protection, however, can also eclipse the

longer term support needs of young people and it is suggested that the CA can provide an over-arching framework for guiding practice that promotes young people's well-being and human rights.

*Presentation 2 | Didier Reynaert and Rudi Roose*

Children's agency in the institutionalised youth land: Perspectives from the capability approach

Didier Reynaert and Rudi Roose will discuss 'agency', as a fundamental notion in social work with children and young people, from the perspective of the CA. How can we understand the agency of children and how can it be supported by social work practice in order to guarantee the human dignity of children? Discussing children's agency cannot be done without taking into account the historical and socio-cultural structuring of childhood in our society. This structuring can be grasped under what has been appointed as the 'youth moratorium' or the 'institutionalised youth land', the result of a historical process in which children were gradually separated from the adult world with the aim to prepare them for adult life. Until today, the institutionalised youth land remains the horizon against which childhood in the western world takes place.

Since the CA is a framework to study social justice, it is crucial to link the CA with the debate on the institutionalised youth land, as entitlements, resources and conversion factors are for, in the case of children, an important part situated in the institutionalised youth land. Facilities such as schools, childcare and youth protection services are all institutionalised arrangements that have historically segregated children from adults. Nevertheless, the way in which children's agency has to be understood in the converting process, transforming resources and commodities embedded in the youth moratorium into functionings, in a way that contributes to respecting the human dignity of children, remains an under-theorised question.

Based on research in the field of child and family social work and children's rights, the argument will be developed that the framework of the capability approach is characterized by a strong egalitarian individualism, which supports an understanding of agency as the individual responsibility of people. What this means for children and childhood will be evaluated, including how social work can acknowledge 'interrelationship' and 'solidarity' as fundamental values for an alternative understanding of the capability approach.

*Presentation 3* | Sylvie Van Dam

Challenges and capabilities of migrant organizations as new partners in local welfare systems: Lessons for interventions

The localization of welfare and rising poverty rates among people with a migration background raises questions about the role of migrant organizations in poverty reduction. This presentation discusses a framework of collective capabilities to analyze the role of migrant organizations in local poverty reduction. Based on qualitative research in migrant organizations in two major Flemish cities, the research reconstructs the process migrant organizations undergo in building collective capabilities to become stronger organizations, able to participate in local welfare systems and poverty reduction. At the same time this process enables them to strengthen the individual and social capabilities –and in turn the well-being and societal position –of people with a migration background participating in these organizations. The study compares two cases of migrant organizations to reconstruct this process in detail. More specifically, the focus is on one successful example, i.e. an organization that is capable of building collective capabilities to combat poverty among its members, participating in the local welfare system and directly strengthening individuals' capabilities. We compare this illustration with an organization that encounters many barriers in this process, unable to participate as a genuine partner in the local welfare system, and unable to address poverty among its participants. This comparison sheds light on the role of various factors advancing or impeding this process of widening collective capabilities in organizations and its effects on individual participants. As such, this presentation presents intervention tools to strengthen the capabilities of organizations and their participants in order to improve the organizations' role in poverty reduction and the local welfare system, as well as the situation of individual people with a migration background in poverty.

*Presentation 4* | Jeroen Gradener and Erik Jansen

Studying community-based social work practices, and the deliberating social worker: Lessons for further theoretical specifications

To inform social work practice, CA requires further theoretical specification. For that, it is useful to distinguish between capability theories that require

a domain-specific application of core elements and mechanisms provided in the capability approach. To assess its merits for social work research, requires thinking through these core tenets in a) work practice and b) professional deliberations in practice. We therefore present analyses of and reflections on professional practice in community-based social work in the Netherlands.

Regarding social work practice, we studied Dutch multidisciplinary social support teams that provide decentralized care and social support at the community level. We found that many teams focus on functionalities of vulnerable clients rather than on their realistic opportunities. Moreover, the role of social structures and processes on the conversion of opportunities into individually wellbeing tends to be underemphasized. That induces serious risks for overemphasizing clients' responsibility for their own wellbeing. Regarding social work professionals, we studied how Dutch social workers engage local people into participation in community projects. The focus of research was on how the social workers were able to create a mandate for their professional involvement in those projects. Results show that the capabilities of social workers to act professionally at least consist of an individual and a collective component. The individual component pertains to processes of professional deliberation; the collective component refers to processes of public deliberation. These findings stress the importance of social workers' capability to reflectively tune into the values, interests and knowledge of the local context.

We conclude that the CA's core concepts provide a valuable perspective on individual agency and empowerment of social work clients and professionals. However, the study of the relationship between social work practice and the role of social workers' deliberation requires more specific theories on for instance individual responsibility and professional agency.

*Active welfare policy: social work dilemmas and implications for vulnerable clients*

## SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convenors | Søren Peter Olesen and Dorte Caswell, Aalborg University

Keywords | ctive welfare policy, social work,unemployment,implications for vulerable clients

This symposium falls within the overall conference theme of "Social Work and Social Policy: interrelations, challenges and impacts in times of crisis". The approach to social work and social policy will be through inviting papers and discussion across different contexts, but with a shared interest in how policy is being realised by frontline workers (social workers) in interaction with clients, who are far away from labour market participation. The active paradigm permeates many areas of social work practice. It is highly relevant to pay interest in the results of this policy framework for social work practice as well as for the clients. How have active welfare state reforms in different national contexts been incorporated into social policy and social work practice? The papers address dilemmas of social work practices and implications for the most vulnerable clients. The goal is to discuss how social workers are challenged by active welfare policy, but also how they deal with these challenges when interacting with clients.

*Presentation 1* | Sophie Danneris, Aalborg University  
"Ready for work? Life course trajectories among vulnerable welfare recipients"

This paper attempts to study the relations between active welfare state reforms and the face-to-face delivery of active welfare policies by analysing assistance-seeking citizens' interactions with street-level bureaucracies. The paper is based on a longitudinal case study of 30 clients over a two-year period, where a multitude of qualitative methods such as observations and active interviews are used to collect in-depth knowledge about client agency in policy delivery processes. In order to gain this understanding and in-depth knowledge, a narrative approach is applied - focusing on short nar

ratives in which clients and/or their interactions with the street-level bureaucrats addresses the consequences of active welfare policies. The paper will thus address the latent consequences of the active labour market policies as they emerge through time in the clients' unemployment trajectories, and on this basis challenge the prevailing understanding of employability and the 'active turn' in European employment policy.

*Presentation 2* | Rik van Berkel, University of Utrecht  
"The frontline delivery of welfare-to-work: workers' preferences and their antecedents"

The frontline delivery of welfare-to-work policies is taking place by workers with a large variety of educational backgrounds who work under very diverse circumstances. This is the case when we look at frontline delivery from an international perspective, but also when we look at the national level, especially in countries where national policy makers devolve considerable room for decision making concerning activation and its delivery to local actors. The Netherlands is one of these countries: local welfare agencies have considerable decision-making room. This paper reports on a survey study among frontline workers in sixteen Dutch local welfare agencies. It analyzes the preferences these workers have regarding their work, especially concerning professional versus bureaucratic elements in frontline work. In addition, it analyzes two groups of antecedents that potentially play a role in explaining diversity in workers' preferences. First of all, it looks at two task characteristics: the target group workers work with, and the level of task specialization in their work, i.e. whether workers are solely responsible for activating their clients or combine the provision of welfare-to-work services with the administration of clients' income benefits. Secondly, the paper looks at worker characteristics, specifically the nature and level of their educational background.

*Presentation 3* | Urban Nothdurfter, Univerisity of Bozen-Bolzano  
"Social work in Italy in light of the active employment policy"

Recent developments in active employment policy in Italy show a much stricter approach to activation with an increased emphasis on individual activation plans and on the conditionality of benefit receipt. In light of this

new legislative framework and based on previous explorative research on the street-level delivery of active employment policy in the Italian context, it is of imminent interest to ask how frontline work in employment services is designed and professionalised in order to deal with the dilemmas of activation in face of individual situations and to particularly support clients further from the labour market. In this context, the paper is also intended to show, whether and how experiences and considerations on the street-level delivery of active employment policy from other countries are taken up in the Italian debate. Particular attention will be given to the reactions of Italian social work on the clear turn towards stronger activation.

Presentation 4 | Søren Peter Olesen & Dorte Caswell, Aalborg University  
"Institutional interaction at the frontline of the Danish active welfare state"

Sociological conversation analysis can contribute to describing and analysing social work practice in formal as well as informal settings. In this paper we take a closer look at the active social and labour market policy as it is being translated, enacted and realised by social worker and client in the institutional setting of the job centre. Taking a point of departure in naturally occurring interactions between social workers and clients at the frontline of the Danish active welfare state, this paper will focus on phenomenon in the interactions known to be relevant for social work at the frontline of active welfare policy, such as resistance or resignation. The professional challenges of the work will also be in focus, such as situations in which the institutional assignment is communicated with institutional authority as well as empathy for the situation of the client

*Empirical ethics in social work: possibilities and challenges*

#### SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convenors | Sarah Banks and Peter, Durham University; Ed de Jonge, Hart, Ed de Jonge and Sabrina Keinemans, Utrecht University of Applied Sciences; Kim Strom-Gottfried, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Keywords | empirical ethics, ethical action, ethical guidance, ethnography, moral agency, moral distress, normative vs descriptive ethics, social workers, youth workers

There have been significant developments in the social work profession in the past 100 years with regard to ethics. For instance, ethical guidelines and standards have been formulated, decision-making strategies for social workers have been devised and the professional literature draws extensively on ethical theories and concepts. As a consequence, the ethical core of the profession is clearly articulated (see e.g. the definition of the IFSW). However, in our current, culturally diverse and constantly changing society, social work practitioners cannot rely solely on this core for ethical guidance in their professional performance. First of all, modern society is culturally diverse and is increasingly individualized, which implies that there is no general agreement on what counts as 'the good life'. In other words, there is no public agreement on which hyper goods we value in society (see the work of Charles Taylor). Second, the ethical core of social work is challenged due to major changes in welfare state regimes. Welfare state reforms in many European countries are diminishing the availability of professional care, focusing on civil society instead (e.g. 'Big Society' in the UK, and 'Participatory Society' in The Netherlands). This puts the humanitarian core of social work under pressure.

An important aspect of the current study of ethics is the so-called 'empirical turn'. Theoretical reflection on the basis of supposedly universal principles is no longer considered to be sufficient for dealing with messy problems in a complex and diversified world. Both developments, the societal changes resulting in the lack of clear ethical guidance and the empirical turn in ethics, put the practitioner in the centre of doing 'good work' by making tough decisions in daily practice.

In this symposium we will pay attention to some recent contributions to professional social work ethics based on empirical approaches to the study of ethical issues in professional life, drawing on contributions from leading thinkers in this field from the Netherlands, UK and USA .

The symposium will be introduced and co-facilitated by the presenters, comprising a mixture of short presentations (about the subjects above), questions from participants and a dialogical engagement (in which the participants will be invited to explore reflectively ethical aspects of professional practice, based on the principles of the Socratic dialogue.

*Presentation 1 | Sarah Banks and Mr Peter Hart*  
From the armchair to the field: ethnography and ethics

#### *Background/purpose*

Professional ethics in social work traditionally applies abstract, theoretical principles and concepts from moral philosophy to real life situations. Recent developments in moral philosophy (e.g. ethics of care, some versions of virtue ethics, narrative ethics) move away from seeing ethics as about developing universal theories based on abstract principles. Rather, ethics is regarded as situated in morally relevant contexts, where traditional distinctions between facts and values, descriptive and normative ethics, are blurred. Ethics is no longer 'the view from nowhere' of the impartial spectator philosopher, but the 'view from somewhere', grounded in the lives of particular people living in social, cultural and political contexts, embedded in relations of power, with locally-generated responsibilities towards each other. This view of ethics entails that the empirical study of ethical questions in situ is both relevant and important. It naturally leads more towards ethnographic studies than, say, randomized controlled trials or attitude surveys.

#### *Main points*

We will discuss some of the advantages and challenges of ethnographic studies that focus on ethics. We will illustrate with examples from an ethnography of youth work practice in four organizations in England undertaken by Peter Hart for his PhD. This focused on ethical aspects of relationships between youth workers and young people. We will consider questions raised by this approach: What counts as ethics or an ethical issue? Who frames the issue and how? How can an issue be abstracted from context, while context still frames it? Finally we consider the concept of 'everyday ethics' as advoca-

ted by Banks and the relevance of the concept of 'ethics work' in the light of this ethnography.

#### *Conclusions/implications*

We will consider the potential for further ethnographic studies with a focus on ethics in social work and how this may support the development of ethical sensitivity and committed action.

*Presentation 2 | Ed de Jonge*  
Ethical agency: a model of the professional as ethical agent

#### *Background and purpose*

Social workers in the Netherlands experience an increase of moral dilemmas and at the same time a decrease of ethical support: their ethical frame of reference is weakened due to societal developments and there are less opportunities for collective deliberation. Therefore, in 2012-2014, a group of researchers studied how social work practitioners handle the ethical dimension of their work: What are their moral dilemmas? How do they resolve them? How can they be supported?

#### *Methods*

The research was based on a collaboration of the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands with six regional welfare organizations. The research consisted of literature research (on moral judgment, moral decision making and moral expertise), 29 semi-structured interviews and five sets of 'best practice units', in which the researchers cooperated with around 12 social workers as reflective and inquisitive practitioners.

#### *Results*

The main result of the research as a whole was the development of an integrated model of the social worker as an ethical agent (Keinemans, De Jonge & Kloppenburg, 2014). The model comprises individual aspects like competence, frames of reference, sensibility, motivation and identity as well as organizational and social contexts and developments.

#### *Conclusions and implications*

The model of ethical agency proved to be useful for practice based research, for instance for developing a theory of the practice of ethical sensibility.

Furthermore, it helped social workers better to understand and develop their ethical expertise. This also had an empowering effect. The relevance of the model for empirical research, for professional practice, and for professional education will be discussed during the symposium. This presentation is related to the conference theme: [5] Research contributions to Human Rights, Social Justice and ethical issues in contemporary Social Work.

*Presentation 3* | Kim Strom-Gottfried  
Moral distress in contemporary social work practice

#### *Background and purpose*

Ethical frameworks and decision making models provide guidance for social workers to arrive at sound decisions in the face of ethical dilemmas. Unfortunately, however, contemporary practice is fraught with situations in which social workers cannot act on what they know is ethically right. The resulting condition has been conceptualized as moral distress (Jameton, 1984). Moral distress, its causes and sequelae are well-studied in the fields of medicine and nursing, but less well-understood in social work (Førde & Aasland, 2007; Weinberg, 2009). Yet complex social and individual problems, global erosions in the welfare safety net, and other current trends place social workers at the centre of moral and ethical conditions wherein good intentions and guidelines are not enough.

#### *Main points*

This session will summarize current multidisciplinary, multinational research into the conditions and manifestations of moral distress. The presentation will introduce associated concepts, such as moral residue and moral injury, and offer illustrative case examples from recent research on social workers' experiences (Sobocan & Strom-Gottfried, forthcoming). The remedies for moral distress, from civil disobedience and moral courage to advocacy and structural change, will be examined and evaluated for their efficacy and ethical implications. Finally, the session will address the available tools and the research agenda needed to better measure and respond to moral distress as it is manifested in social work.

#### *Conclusions and implications*

Across settings, populations and continents, social workers practice under conditions that create moral distress. A campaign to educate, support, and

mobilize professionals effectively to respond to these conditions is needed. Social work educators and researchers must play a key role in conceptualizing, studying, and addressing moral distress and the associated phenomena.

*Presentation 4* | Sabrina Keinemans  
Ethics: the empirical turn and its methodological consequences

#### *Background and purpose*

For many years, a normative approach dominated the field of ethics, which considered reasoning to be the most important guideline for ethical thinking. In recent years, however, a new approach came along, which is more descriptive in nature. This 'empirical turn' in ethics raises some major questions, two of which will be the subject of this presentation:

1. What is the relation between the normative and descriptive in ethics?
2. (How) can empirical ethics research integrate normative and descriptive elements?

#### *Main points*

Over the past few decades, ethical theorists have pleaded for a more contextual approach to ethics (e.g. Margaret Urban Walker), opening the way for empirical studies of moral thinking and acting. However, there are various ideas about the relation between normative and descriptive ethics. We will argue that to elaborate on social work ethics, both normative as well as descriptive ethics are relevant.

This raises the question of how to integrate descriptive and normative elements in research strategies. Social sciences offer descriptive research strategies, yet these strategies strive for objectivity and controllability, which does not fit well with a more normative approach. Although the tendency to integrate descriptive and normative ethics is rather new, we will discuss some of the current insights and methods which are available. Consequently, this presentation is related to the fifth conference theme on ethical issues in contemporary Social Work, as it focusses on the methodological issues of performing research on ethical debates in the practices of today's social workers.

#### *Conclusions and implications*



This presentation will offer insight into empirical ethics research. Also, we want to enter into dialogue with participants, in order to formulate some (preliminary) notions about suitable research strategies when integrating the normative and descriptive.

*Talking and Listening to Children in Everyday Social Work Practice : Substantive Research Findings and Methodological Conundrums*

#### SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convenors | Gillian Ruch and Michelle Lefevre, University of Sussex; Viv Cree and Fiona Morrison, University of Edinburgh; Mark Hadfield and Sophie Hallett, University of Cardiff; Karen Winter, Queens University of Belfast

Keywords | communication, children, visual methods, ethnography, social workers, reflective practice

There is a substantial body of knowledge about the circumstances surrounding social workers' communications with children in the extraordinary contexts of children being seriously harmed or killed in the UK. In stark contrast far less is known about how social workers communicate with children in ordinary, everyday practice, the challenges they encounter in this process and the sense they (the social workers) and the children make of these interactions. Of particular note is the absence of detailed empirical data on what social workers do in their everyday encounters with children and their families. To date we have relied largely on the retrospective reflective accounts of participants in these social worker-child encounters. We have some ideas as to what happens (children are overlooked or inadequately engaged with), how it happens (parents' use of space, and physical presence to exclude child from conversation) and why it happens (time pressures, power, intimidating emotional dynamics, exposure to risk, fear of what might be said and what to do with what is said). What is missing, and the central focus of the papers reported on in this symposium, drawn from two separate but complementary research projects, is the direct observation of everyday social worker-child interactions. These two studies explore how social workers communicate with children in their ordinary, everyday practice and how the social workers and children experience and understand these encounters.

Four papers will be presented. Two papers will explore the substantive findings arising from the ESRC funded Talking and Listening to Children project conducted across the four UK nations. These two papers will focus separately on children's and social workers behaviours: the first paper will

examine the complex and contested issues of children's agency and vulnerability; the second paper will offer a theoretical framework for understanding how social workers construct their communications spaces and patterns. Turning to methodological considerations the final two papers, one from the TLC project and the other from a University of Sussex funded project, will explore the opportunities afforded and challenges encountered in utilising innovative video-based approaches to gather research data.

A golden thread woven through these four papers is the need to recognise, acknowledge and engage thoughtfully and carefully with the sensibilities that explorations of everyday social work encounters elicit. The papers highlight how, from both a substantive and methodological perspective, there is a twofold duty of care on researchers: firstly, to accurately identify and represent children's and social workers' experiences of everyday professional social work encounters, and secondly, in employing innovative research methods to generate accurate and insight-giving data to engage sensitively and thoughtfully with the practical and ethical issues that inevitably will arise.

#### Presentation 1

##### *Exploring the social worker-child relationship - issues of power and agency*

Communication with children is fundamental to the social worker role of protecting and promoting the wellbeing of vulnerable children. Communication enables social workers to form and maintain relationships with a child, learn about the child's situation and about the child's perspective. However, little is known about how social workers communicate with children in everyday practice. This paper outlines findings from a UK-wide ethnographic study on social workers' communication with children. It focuses on the dynamics of the social worker-child relationship and how through communication, the terms of the relationship are negotiated and re-negotiated by both social workers and children. The paper explores how the issues of power and agency frame social worker-child relationships. It examines how these issues manifest and how at different points, both social workers and children may be perceived to be powerful or agentic. Findings show how even in a child protection context where power and agency are constrained, children influenced and asserted their own agendas. The paper also highlights how social workers find creative ways to support children to exert power and agency. The research unsettles conceptualisations of children as always vulnerable and passive recipients of social workers attempts to communicate. Rather it highlights the importance of recognising children's agency and

power in these interactions.

#### Presentation 2

##### *Social workers, children, young people and communicative spaces*

This paper focuses on specific aspects of social workers' professional theories of how they approach communicating with young people. The nature of professional theories is that they tend to be fragmented and vary in the extent to which they can be articulated (Elbaz, 1991). In order to explore such theories, and to link them to professional actions and interactions, researchers have developed a range of reflective technologies. In the Talking and Listening to Children research project one such technology, video stimulated recall (VSR), was used to support social workers in considering the nature of the professional theories that underpinned their approach to communicating with children in the context of a scheduled meeting. The paper adopts a broadly phenomenological stance to the analysis of VSR interviews with six social workers. The analysis treated social workers' espoused professional theories as accounts of the conscious structures that shaped their experience of communication with young people and describes the types of preferred, or idealized, 'communicative spaces' (Habermas, 1984) the social workers wished to create when communicating with young people. As idealized images, of preferred ways of working, these spaces could not in reality be achieved so their accounts act as a critique of the current way they 'had to work', due to the constraints faced. The analysis concludes with an account of how different social workers managed the tensions and contradictions they face in their work. Drawing on Goffman's (1981) theory of talk, and shifts in their 'footing' - how these conversations were framed - the paper explores how social workers shifted the nature of their communications with young people, in order to raise sensitive issues. The paper draws out the implications for social work in terms of how practitioners are trained and supported to understand and overcome the complex challenges faced in everyday communicative encounters.

#### Presentation 3

##### *Seeing the extraordinary in the ordinary: video-based explorations of social worker-child interactions during home visits*

Home visits are a key arena of assessment and intervention with families where there are child welfare concerns, but there is a scarcity of literatur

relating to barriers and facilitators of social workers' engagement in communication with children during such visits (Ferguson, 2014). As yet we know little about how practitioners overcome (or are derailed by) the kinds of contextual and situational challenges within the home environment which impede information sharing, emotional expression, relationship-building and meaning-making between children and workers.

This study, funded by the University of Sussex, has sought to gain a fuller picture through analysis of real-life home visits conducted by 6-8 social workers in one local authority in England. Practitioners video their interactions with a child during a home visit as part of welfare concerns. Video-recording was considered to be a necessary aspect as so much worker-child communication is at an interactional level (e.g. body language, play, activity). There are few studies of such settings most likely because of the ethically sensitive nature and resource intensiveness of the methodology. Conversation and discourse analytic approaches (Hall et al 2014) are used to provide a turn-by-turn analysis of the talk and interaction. Separate interviews with the social worker and child enable congruences and dissonances between their accounts and the observed encounter to be explored.

It is anticipated that detailed analysis of, for example, the development of affiliation, displays of empathy, and the management of resistance will lead to better understandings of how communication in such settings enables social workers to develop trusting relationships with children which facilitate their participation and enable them to express their feelings, views and experiences. This paper will present not only the emergent findings from the study but will also discuss the methodological, practical and ethical challenges which have been experienced.

#### Presentation 4

*Researching the private in a 'public' way: exploring the methodological and ethical tensions of using video stimulated recall with children and social work practitioners*

The use of video (and video stimulated recall in particular) as a tool for professional development and research is well-established in disciplines such as education and counselling, but is new to social work practice and research. This paper draws on a research project where video stimulated recall was used as a prompt to stimulate reflection from children and social workers about their communicative encounters and experiences in a child protection

context. These encounters were filmed, and participants were invited to separately review the recording and to take part in reflective interviews about these encounters.

The paper explores the opportunities using video stimulated recall presents and interrogates the connected ethical and methodological dilemmas arising from using such a method in social work research. In particular we examine how issues around informed consent, competence, power and harm, intersect and manifest through the use of this method. We also consider how adapting the method to take account of these issues presents challenges for analysis. The paper offers insights and direction for those interested in developing the use of this method in social work settings.

*Views on Human Beings in Social Work–Historical and Present Trends in the Interplay of Welfare Policies, Forms of Knowledge and Technologies*

SYMPOSIUM

Symposium convenors | Maria Appel Nissen, Jens Kjaerulff, Mia Arp Fallovand, Rasmus H.Birk, Pia Ringø

Keywords | views on human being, social work history, welfare policies, knowledge, technologies, activation, employment, community work, mental illness, child welfare

It is generally recognized that contemporary welfare- and social policies in Europe are influenced by ideas of 'workfare', 'risk management', 'rehabilitation' and 'social capital' combined with various forms of responsabilization and activation of the citizen as ways of promoting social inclusion. Similarly, it is commonly recognized how such policies are increasingly tied to the promotion of particular forms of knowledge and technologies e.g. evidence based research and standardized methods, techniques for screening, classification, and new forms of strategies, interventions and forms of treatment in social work promising to be cost-effective. As well, it is commonly acknowledged that such trends in some way influence how human beings are viewed in social work practice – as citizens, users and/or clients. However, often those trends are viewed as 'external' factors stemming from the political, economic, social and cultural environment. It seems less debated how social work practice has contributed to this development from a historical point of view – and therefore also how social work might respond to present trends. From the very beginning, the formation of social work has been tied to the use and development of knowledge and technologies as well as to the promotion of certain views on human beings – often in relation to a political agenda. The symposium raises the question of whether our understanding of the interplay between policies, social work practices, knowledge and technologies is sufficiently complex. It suggests that studies combining in-depth historical and contemporary analyses of views on human beings in social work practice can contribute to a more complex understanding of welfare and social work.

The symposium is based on an extensive basic research project set in Denmark, presently underway (2014-2017). The project focuses on views

of human beings in social work in the interplay of policies, knowledge and technologies, and consists partly of historical research covering the period from the 1930s and up until the present decade, partly of ethnographic research in the present – both within and across 4 areas of social work related to a) family/child welfare 2) unemployment, 3) mental health problems and 4) social housing/community work. Finally, a theoretical study is conducted for the purpose of developing models of the interplay between views on human beings in social work, policies, knowledge and technologies. Thus the study contributes to the generation of new empirical knowledge as well as basic research in the shape of theory development. An important aim build into the research process is also to contribute to reflection on research, policy and practice. The papers of the symposium present findings from the historical study combined with preliminary findings and/or explorative questions of the ethnographic studies.

Presentation 1 | Maria Appel Nissen  
*The Productive Human Being – the Interplay between Policy and Social Work and the Role of Knowledge and Technologies. A Short Introduction*

In this introduction some overall findings related to the historical study of welfare policies and practices in social work are presented. The historical study shows how welfare policies in Denmark have been shaped with a strong reference to the idea of the productive human being and forms of knowledge underpinning this idea, and how this has contributed to the formation of social work as a profession. However, the historical study also shows how social work as a profession has – at least in certain periods – contributed to the shaping of policies based on the use and development of knowledge and technologies for practice. In particular the use of international knowledge and technologies combined with the use of everyday knowledge deriving from the encounter with human beings and forms of social suffering is highlighted as an important source for the development of the profession.

Presentation 2 | Jens Kjaerulff  
*Between Social Work and Action: Reconsidering the "Active Turn"*

A broad scholarship on social work and policy regards the late 20th century a watershed which marks a turn from so-called "passive to active" measures of welfare policy and practice, e.g. in the shape of workfare and activation

supplanting post-war welfare. This paper suggests that the notion of the “active” in such contexts is more complex, and has a longer history, than commonly acknowledged. Exploring how, entails appreciating the ambiguous quality of the notion of “activity”, along with the creative potentials that such ambiguity variously affords. To this end, the paper draws conceptual inspiration from Arendt’s interrogation of the significances of human activity through her tri-part distinction between “labour, work, and action”, and on scholarship extending from Arendt’s work. The conceptual framework is then engaged as a lense through which to consider debates on the significance of being active in contexts of social work in Denmark during two historical periods. One is the decade of the 1990s, during which policies of “activation” or “conditionality” became explicitly embraced in such terms. The other is the period (roughly) between 1935-45, during which elements in some respects resembling present-day measures of activation and conditionality were also pursued, although in different ways at the level of idioms, arguments and practice. We argue that at issue across this material are articulations of ideals of employment and social identity with ideals of “active life” and sociality in a broader sense - articulations which the paper argues social work has long attempted to work out or work around.

Presentation 3 | Mia Arp Fallov and Rasmus H. Birk  
*The Active Productive Citizen and Local Community Work*

Through history community work has functioned as a place of innovation of social work methods and as an arena for critique of the social consequences of social policies. In this paper, we chart the development of views of the resident in local community work in marginalized urban areas, and discuss the recurrent themes of social order, social network and social stigmatization. We show how community work has had varied roles in relation to ensuring the productive population through time. Firstly, it is discussed how community work is tied to the rationality of productive policies through different ways of mapping local communities and local populations. Secondly, it is discussed how community work engages with different forms of knowledge; there is a tendency towards increased professionalization of community workers while at the same time there is a constant loss of local knowledge about what is deemed unproductive local populations. Thirdly, we analyze the role of local community work as establishing links between the individual and society through engaging the relation between individuals and their local environments. We show that a range of more or less mundane activities

and practices are operationalized to this end. Such practices are orchestrated to two interrelated end goals, namely establishing better relations to welfare professionals, and enmeshing individuals within the ontological field of the local community. The paper ends by discussing whether the idea of the active and productive citizen is upheld or challenged by the tendency of asset-based local community work.

Presentation 4 | Pia Ringø  
*New Forms of Knowledge in the Activation of Mental Self-Realization?*

The dominance of certain forms of knowledge does not exist within an institutional and societal vacuum. It is produced and reproduced through political, managerial and economic discourses, as well as institutional solutions and organizations, which should be taken into account to gain a complex understanding of the current scientific character and transformation of our knowledge, understanding and treatment of mental and social problems in contemporary society. Using concrete examples, the focus will be on the close connection between the current debate about mental ailments and the treatment hereof and political ideologies and goals. From a previous focus on social causes, to a present focus on individual symptoms and mobilization of individual resources. Thus, the purpose is to inspire reflection on the way in which managerial forms enable the emergence of certain views of human beings, human problems, problem definitions and treatment methods, which in turn influence the scientific character, transformation, understanding and practice of social work within the broad field of social work with mental illness and diagnostics, at this time in history.

Presentation 5 | Maria Appel Nissen  
*The Activation of the Productive Family - Social Work Responses in History and Present Times of Effectiveness*

Social policies and social work practices with families have historically been shaped around ideas of productivity pertaining to challenges in reconciling the relation between body, economy and love. However, historically the perception of the family in social work has been more complex and holistic than the corresponding policies of the time. In that way social work has contributed to the broadening and thus the development of gradually more encompassing views on the family as a unit of human beings and as a provider of well-being - in particular the wellbeing of the child at risk. This has taken

place along a) the early view of the family as dependent on the activity of the productive mother to b) the broadening of the responsibility of the well-being of the family to the activity of the parents and finally c) a focus on the activation of social networks and community as a way of enabling the family. Within these processes new forms of knowledge and technologies have been used and also transformed into social work perceptions of the relation between individuals of the family and an increasingly complex society with more and more encompassing expectations for productivity. Today there is a strong focus on effectiveness in family- and child welfare policies as well as evidence based methods to promote efficient welfare services; a focus which promotes a certain idea of productivity in the shaping of human beings. It is a question how social work is presently responding to this. Is social work still aspiring to and developing more complex and holistic views on the challenges of being a family - or does the strong focus on effectiveness and thus the everlasting lack of time contribute to reductions in the view of the family?

Keywords: policy practice, social work academics, social policy

### *Relationship-Based Social Work: A 'Thirdspace' in Responding to Trauma' - A Practitioner Research Study*

Erna O'Connor | Trinity College, Ireland

Keywords: practitioner research, social work, trauma, relationship-based practice

Increasingly social workers are expected to produce evidence of the quality and effectiveness of their practice. However social work research is largely produced by academic researchers. Practitioner research remains under-utilized. This presentation reports on a practitioner research study which explores experiences of trauma leading to people's engagement with the social work service of a hospital emergency department. It further explores the elements of responsive social work in this context.

Trauma has traditionally been understood within an individualised, psychologised idiom. It has been argued that the 'psychiatrisation' of trauma as a single disorder - Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is reductionist in its neglect of the psychosocial and socio-cultural factors that shape trauma narratives. Using qualitative research methodologies, research was undertaken with service users, social workers and non-social work emergency department professionals. In total 26 people participated in the study. Semi-structured interviewing and a mini focus group were used in data gathering. The data was analysed using a constructivist grounded theory approach.

The findings indicate that trauma encompasses profound existential feelings including loss, distress, disconnection and disjuncture, a changed sense of self and changed life circumstances, giving rise to experiences of liminality.

Social work in this context was experienced as a relationship-based process whereby the significance of trauma is recognised and ways to respond are [re]viewed and made practicable. The findings suggest that despite negative preconceptions of social work held by many research participants prior to attending the service, social work had successfully established itself at the interface of medical and psychosocial realms creating an autonomous 'thirdspace' encompassing spatio-temporal, relational, dialogical, ethical and phenomenological dimensions. Through dialogue, meaning making and building on people's strengths, social work intervention was found to have contributed to people's capacity to re-position themselves in relation to the trauma, resulting in reduced levels of distress. This allowed a re-

connection with themselves, with other people and other aspects of their life, countering the sense of disconnection which is a common feature of trauma.

The research highlights the significance of psychosocial and socio-cultural dimensions of trauma and illustrates the value of social work intervention in acute healthcare settings. The study highlights issues for practitioner research more generally including its generative potential and the benefits and risks associated with 'insider status'. It illustrates how practitioner research may serve as an axis between the often separate worlds of social work practice and research and may be of particular relevance as part of quality initiatives and service evaluation.

*Contextual-transformational social work in superdiverse contexts. The perspective of clients and social workers*

Bea Van Robaeys | Karel De Grote Hogeschool - University of Antwerp  
Peter Raeymaeckers | University of Antwerp

Keywords: contextual-transformational social work, superdiversity, generalist social work, ethnographic research, practice-oriented evaluation

#### *Background & Purpose*

Social practitioners, who work in superdiverse contexts with people in conditions of social vulnerability, face many challenges and complexities: the vulnerability of clients is not an issue that can be easily solved. Van Ewijk argues that in the context of continuing transformation of societies and communities, social work should redirect towards 'contextual-transformational social work'. It should focus on 'changing situations, improving contexts, strengthening relationships' (van Ewijk, 2010). An important question is how contextual-transformational social work with vulnerable people in superdiverse contexts is perceived by social workers and clients. In this article we explore the value of such an approach in superdiverse contexts from the perspective of clients and social workers in a small generalist service organization, 'De Sloep', situated in a deprived neighbourhood in Ghent, Belgium, and providing services to clients with a migratory background confronted with 'wicked problems' on different life domains (O'Toole, 1997).

#### *Methods*

Our research approach combined ethnographic fieldwork with a practice-oriented approach to evaluation (Schwandt, 2005). It is responsive (Stake, 1991), as it takes the concerns and issues of stakeholding audiences of the organization (social workers and clients) into account (Schwandt, 2001).

#### *Results*

The practice we investigate, demonstrates how the main tasks of social workers in a contextual-transformational vision on social work, namely improving the self-reliance of people and the conditions for societal participation and social cohesion, can be combined. Interviews with clients and social workers showed that transformational practice results in: a sense of belong

ging, increased practical wisdom and feelings of confidence and empowerment. In order to achieve these outcomes, the social workers combine four practice principles. The first important principle is the investment in affective relationship-building with clients. The second practice-principle is the use of a strength-based perspective. The third practice principle valued by social workers and clients is the divers-sensitivity of the organization and the social workers. The last working-principle emphasizes that informational and practical support is essential for helping clients to acquire their (social) rights.

#### *Conclusion & Implications*

Our results show the value of generalist professionals capable of working on different levels of the client system in superdiverse and complex contexts. Further empirical research on contextual-transformational social work needs to explore in greater depth how these different practice principles result in a generalist social work approach in superdiverse contexts.

*Categorization in documentation practices: the role that gender and background can play in the clientization of older people within social work case files*

Anna Olaison | Linköping University, Sweden

Sandra Torres | Uppsala University, Sweden

Emilia Forssell | Ersta Sköndal University College, Sweden

Keywords | documentation, categorization, case files, older people, clientization

This presentation departs from the ongoing debate on the role that documentation plays in the clientization of older people within social work. It is based on a study of documentation within the context of need assessment practice in Swedish elderly care. The aim is to shed light on whether foreign-born background and gender have any relevance to the ways in which older people's needs are described in the case files that are used in this practice. The data - which has been analyzed using quantitative and qualitative content analysis - is comprised of case files (n=202) containing investigations (n=488) into requests for welfare services. Half of the case files concern Swedish-born older people and half foreign-born older people. The results of the quantitative analysis show that, women were granted home care (including practical services) more often than men and foreign born women were granted care related services more frequently. Foreign-born older people were granted home care grants to a greater extent than Swedish-born older people. The qualitative analysis shows that on the whole, the documentation adheres to a standardized template including set headings under which older people and their needs are described in a similar manner. However, in the parts of the assessment that deal with social relations and health status, there are clear differences between how Swedish-born older people and foreign-born older people are described in terms of level of detail and what information is presented. The case files that concern foreign born older people contain more extensive and detailed descriptions of their health status and social networks. The case files of Swedish-born older people are presented through descriptions that are, in contrast, more factual in tone. Regarding the parts where judgments and decisions are made, there are differences in terms of how decisions are justified and presented: foreign-born older people's assistance needs are more often connected to the additional workload that their relatives perform. The



results partially support the critical debate about how clients are constructed in social work documentation. The study also adds new knowledge to this discussion by showing that categories such as gender and having a foreign-born background makes a difference in relation to which services are being granted and to the way in which needs get documented. As such, the presentation will contribute to the debate on the challenges that institutional categorization pose for documentation practices in social work and raises questions about the manner in which welfare services are distributed.

*Reflective practice within the arena of adult social care: how do social workers negotiate the liminal space between policy and practice?*

Sarah Lonbay | Northumbria University, United Kingdom  
Arrol Southall | Northumbria University, United Kingdom

Keywords | adult social care, social policy, social work, personalisation, reflective practice

As a result of the changing legal and policy context over the last twenty years statutory social work with adults in the UK has undergone a series of radical reforms. Underpinning these changes has been an ideological shift in the way adult social care should be provided. A clear 'direction' including promotion of autonomy, self determination and personal responsibility are promoted representing changes for both social workers and people receiving services. However, some have suggested that there is an inherent contradiction between 'bottom-up' drivers for more choice and control over service provision and the 'top-down' directives that are shaping adult social care in the UK. For example, those who may be structurally excluded from accessing their rights as citizens may also be undermined in their ability to take control and manage their own needs within the context of adult social care.

This presentation will draw on findings from two PhD projects, both of which utilised in depth semi structured interviews with social work practitioners located in adult social care teams in the north east of England. The first project explored the involvement of older people in adult safeguarding and the second considered capacity assessments and best interest decision making under the Mental Capacity Act (2005).

Whilst focusing on differing topics, it was noted that similar issues regarding reflective practice were arising as strong themes within both of these projects. This paper will provide an overview of the research backgrounds and design, but the main focus will be an exploration of a common theme derived from both; social worker's reflections on their present model of working. Specifically the paper will present key findings regarding how social workers attempt, within a complex liminal space, to reconcile the construction of the 'service user' within policy frameworks and the reality of their practice experience working with individuals in need of care and support.

## *Resilience: A Genealogy of a Post-Political Concept*

Yoosun Park | Smith College School for Social Work

Rory Crath | Smith College School for Social Work

Donna Jeffery | University of Victoria School of Social Work

Keywords | resilience, risk environment, genealogy, discourse analysis, intervention, epistemology, political change, social justice, neoliberalism

### *Purpose and Methods*

The concept of resilience has risen to prominence in social work literature and become ubiquitous in the common parlance of clinical and community practice. As a concept signifying a commitment to strengths rather than deficit-based approaches to practice, “resilience” holds a kind of moral standing in the field making a critical analysis of its fundamental validity an unwarranted task. Rather than following the trend in the research focused on what resilience is and how it can be replicated, we stage a political intervention by asking another set of questions: What does the concept of resilience do in social work? What role(s) does it play, and what might be the political effects of such deployment?

We analysed the function of resilience in Social Work discourses through a close reading of 16 peer-reviewed articles. The articles, written by social work scholars for predominantly social work audiences, were purposively sampled to be representative of what is now commonly understood as 4 different psychosocial theoretical approaches to the definition and measurement of resilience. A critical discourse analysis of the particular ways in which resilience is positioned and deployed across these waves of research reveals the following:

- The study of resilience is always a post-facto analysis; that which we mark as signs of resilience is, always and already bound within a hierarchical taxonomy, constructed and constricted by dominant ideas of the normal and the normative subject, and conversely, the pathological subject. The object of analysis is the individual understood to be in a perpetual state of recovery from the conditions of its perceived threat or suffering.
- Resilience has a professional utility for social work. It is, in Foucauldian terms, a technology of the neoliberal self that allows social workers to construct and manage subjects and communities capable of self-management and productive self-sufficiency. To function as such, resilience must be

commodified –constructed and deployed as a type of naturalized object that can be measured, acquired, learned, and inoculated into individuals.

- Even in its most theoretically complex formulations—where pathways to resilience are understood locally and contextually—resilience remains stubbornly lodged in the social work imaginary as a form of individual capacity building. Thus understood as an ontological condition of certain legible subjects, the study of resilience occludes the need for analysis of and intervention in the risky environments constituting individuals and their propensity for resilience in the first instance.

### *Conference aims and relevance*

Despite social work’s commitment to social and political change, resilience naturalizes neoliberal paradigms of the self-regulating individualized subject capable of managing continuing risk and adversity. Risk environments are understood as conditioning properties and processes, yet remain in themselves, an unproblematized constant. The discourse of resilience thus narrows social work’s aims for social justice by focusing on individual’s and community’ capacity to accommodate, not actively change, their social/political environments. The discourse of resilience is a depoliticized enterprise, a “post-political epistemology.” The examination of such discourses for their implications for practice, education, and research is a political imperative for social work.

## *Personal and Social Resources Contributing to Functioning and Well-Being among Young People Aging out of Residential Facilities in Israel: A Longitudinal Study*

Tehila Refaeli | Bar Ilan University  
Rami Benbenishty | Bar Ilan University

Keywords | care leavers, longitudinal study, Functioning, Well-Being, Structural equation modeling

### *Background and Purpose*

Studies around the world report that young people aging out of residential facilities (care leavers) experience difficulties in multiple life domains. Previous studies also explored some of the background characteristics and social resources as contributors to the young people's resilience in the years after leaving care. The presented study followed Israeli adolescents from their last year in residential facilities through their military service, up to about four years after leaving care. The study tests a comprehensive model that examines how personal resources (optimism, self-esteem, self-efficacy and future orientation) and support resources (parents and peer support) at multiple points in time are associated with functioning and well-being four years after leaving care.

### *Methods*

The sample included 276 adolescents who answered a questionnaire during their last year in care institutions (T1), 234 of them were interviewed one year later (T2) and 220 were interviewed again four years after leaving care (T3). The response rate was 79.7%. Structured and validated questionnaires examined social support from parents and friends as well as use of social services (T1-T3) and personal resources while in care (optimism, self-esteem, self-efficacy and future orientation; T1). In T2, instruments measured adaptation to work/school/military service and well-being (including life satisfaction and mental distress). In T3, instruments assessed functioning (including accommodation, employment and economic situation, education, use of alcohol and drugs) and well-being. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with autoregressive paths was conducted to examine the theoretical model

### *Results*

Results indicate that, although struggling with difficulties in multiple domains, Israeli care leavers were experiencing better life situations than described in much of the American and European literature. Only a few reported homelessness, a low percentage experienced unemployment and poverty and a high percentage obtained a full matriculation diploma. The SEM model had reasonable fit to the data  $\chi^2(552, N= 208)=724.33$ ,  $p=.00$ , TLI= .921, CFI= .934, SRMR= .068, RMSEA= .039 (90% CI=.030; .046). It indicated that personal and social resources were associated with current functioning and well-being in a complex pattern: Higher personal resources were associated with lower economic and lower mental distress and higher work stability. Support from parents was associated with lower economic and lower mental distress, but also with fewer activities toward higher education. Support from friends was a predictor of multiple variables including: lower economic and lower emotional distress, higher work stability and life satisfaction. In contrast to findings from other countries, adaption soon after leaving care had a minor contribution to the functioning and well-being four years after leaving care.

### *Conclusions and Implications*

The results suggest the importance of combining personal and social resources to make young people resilient when facing the challenges of transition to independent life. Hence, the recommendations to prepare the young people for the transition from care and to accompany them after they leave. In addition, the results indicated the significance and the contribution of the relationship with parents. These results highlighted the need for working with parents to improve the relationships while in care and in follow-up programs.

*What predicts adolescent antisocial and criminal behaviour? Research findings from a school based assessment procedure*

Julinda Cilingiri | University Aleksander Moisiu, Albania

Keywords | Albanian adolescents, prevalence, antisocial and criminal behaviour, risk factors, prevention

During the last years, Albanian population, with almost a third aged younger than 19 years old is experiencing numerous difficulties due to demographic changes, as well as social, cultural and economical distress. Of the most country emergent age groups, adolescents are showing symptoms of this pressure. Although in a lower level compared to their European peers, Albanian minors are engaging in a range of 'new' and unsafe behaviours such as substance use, early sexual initiation, violence, gambling and other outlaw activities.

On the other hand, little has been done by researchers to explore the prevalence and to understand the development of such behaviours.

This present study aimed to examine the prevalence of antisocial behaviours among adolescents and assess the influence of micro and macro antecedents on such behaviours and therefore, to suggest effective prevention actions focused in community context.

This presentation shares findings from a school based cross sectional study which included 1300 female (N = 783) and male students (N = 517) of 13-17 years old (Mean age  $\pm$  SE 15.1  $\pm$  1.4) from three of the most populated areas of Albania.

A multistage stratified random sampling technique was used to select students of grades 7 through 11 from middle and high schools. Data was collected using an adapted and pre tested youth survey Communities that Care (CTC) version. Measurements, in Likert scale, covered self reported information related to adolescents' attitudes, perceptions and both past or actual behaviours. Family, school, peers and community risk factors (independent variables) were measured by sets of items in scale, which level was calculated in a percentile score from 0 to 100. The dependent variable is made up of 11 items referring to annual engagement in behaviours such as: being

suspended from school, carrying and bringing to school cold weapons and guns, selling drugs, intentionally attacking someone, gambling, bullying and gang participation.

Descriptive (frequency and percentage) and inferential statistics were used to analyse data. For the purpose of the study, all ordinal data was dichotomised and coded as 0 as no involvement and 1 for the presence at least once of the correspondent factor/behaviour.

Significantly more boys and older students ( $p < 0.001$ ), recorded a high prevalence of lifetime substance use (tobacco 34.7% and alcohol 55.2%). Among the annual prevalence rate of other antisocial behaviours resulted bullying (19.3%), being suspended from school (13.1%) and gambling (13%). The highest level of risk, adolescents were exposed to resulted the perceived availability of drugs and weapons in community (47%), friends' drug use (48%), family history of antisocial behaviour (48%) and low level of parental monitoring (48%).

Logistic regression marginal effects showed that being a male, early onset of criminal and antisocial behaviours, living with a single parent, favourable attitudes of antisocial behaviour, friends' antisocial history, family conflict and poor monitoring are among most significant predictors of involvement in future criminal and antisocial behaviours.

Considering the relationships found, further research is indispensable to explore phenomena in country level and to implement early preventive actions in community context.

## *Bridge to change? Youth Organizing as method of professional youth work*

Judith Metz | Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences

Jolanda Sonneveld | Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences

Said Awad | Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | youth work, youth organizing, deprived youth, method development, practice based research

### *Background and purpose*

As a result of the economic crisis combined with shifting ideas about welfare state, professional youth work in the Netherlands is only funded when their target group, youth from deprived neighbourhoods, participate in the provision of youth work. In reaction to this, youth workers start with bottom up development of the method: Youth Organizing (YO). Aim of YO is to enlarge the participation of young people in both the provision of youth work and their communities. This through the invitation, activation, motivation and support of youth to develop ideas, take initiatives and organize action. Central question of this paper is: in what way and with what results does Youth Organizing contribute to the empowerment of young people?

### *Method*

The paper is based on a mixed method design of literature review, document analyses, observations, in depth interviews with youth workers (21), and questionnaires (38 with youth that participate within youth organizing (YO) and 81 with youth that stay in the same neighbourhoods and do not participate within YO). 25 students in six professional Youth Work settings collected data from six different youth work organisations in Amsterdam, Zaandam and Haarlem, the Netherlands. The analysis is done both by student and researchers. The outcomes of the research were validated in six focus group with youth workers, lecturers, students and researchers.

### *Results*

The results of this research are the identification of five methodic steps and five method principles as well as an indication of the impact of YO on the personal and social development and the participation of youth. A comparison of the tasks performed by youth active within YO projects compared

to tasks performed by youth active in other contexts like sport clubs or neighbourhood organisations shows that young people within YO-projects participate more and perform more diverse and more important tasks like decision making. When we look at the results of YO, the comparison of youth participating in YO-projects with youth that are active in other contexts shows that YO contributes to the development of social skills, organizing skills, civic skills and self confidence.

NB: only 21% (n=17) of youth that do not participate in YO participate in other contexts, compared to 45% of youth active in YO-projects.

### *Conclusion and implications*

There are indications that YO as method strengthens the participation of youth living in deprived neighbourhoods. Also it becomes visible that actual youth participation is still a matter of gradation that also depends on the opportunities for youth participation, provided by youth workers and their communities.

*Excavating the past: 'Unmarried Mothers' and practices of containment and control in the Republic of Ireland*

Paul Michael Garrett | NU Galway

Keywords | mother and baby homes, Ireland, social class, child adoption, 'repatriation'

During the summer of 2014 reports that a 'septic tank grave' containing 'skeletons of 800 babies' had been discovered on the site of a former home for 'unmarried mothers' in Tuam, County Galway appeared in the international press and social media. Doubts quickly began to surface questioning the idea that the remains of children had, in fact, been 'dumped' in a 'septic tank, but it is still important that responses to 'unmarried mothers' and their children are subject to contemporary scrutiny because substantial concerns clearly warrant investigation. In June 2014 the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, in the Irish coalition government, announced the setting up of an inquiry.

Underpinned by an awareness of the significance of historical and archival research for social work, the paper provides a more expansive context account than that featured in the media coverage. The main focus is on policy and practice in relation to 'unmarried mothers' in the early years of the state and the establishment of quasi-penal Mother and Baby Homes. The lack of legal child adoption also restricted the meaningful choices available to expectant, unwed women in Ireland. Many, known to social workers as P.F.I.s ('pregnant from Ireland'), decided to flee to England to give birth and have children placed for adoption. Drawing on the annual reports of the Catholic Protection and Rescue Society of Ireland (CPRSI), it is revealed that these women often faced being 'repatriated' back to Ireland.

The paper will emphasise the vital significance of social history in comprehending ways of working with 'troublesome' populations.

*Perception and Usage of Online Social Networks in Youth Work and its influence on educational relationships?*

Daniela Cornelia Stix | Universität Potsdam

Keywords | youth work, online social networks, relationship-based social work

*Background and purpose*

Human relationships are of paramount importance in social work in general (Trevithick 2003, Ruch 2010) and in youth work in particular (Müller et al.). They serve as foundation and medium for pedagogical interventions. The use of Online Social Networks (OSN) affects human relationships (Farrugia 2013, Kneidinger 2010, Döring 2003). Since 2010 there has been an increasing number of youth workers using OSN in professional context in order to make contact with young people (Korfmacher 2011). Accordingly we can assume that the use of OSN also affects educational relationships, which we define as relationships between youth workers and young people. Therefore it is important to use OSN methodically, purposefully and in a reflective manner. To examine this hypothesis I pose the question: To which extent do youth workers 1) perceive OSN as a tool that can be used methodically for pedagogical purposes, and in how far do they 2) use OSN to positively influence educational relationships?

*Methods*

To answer this question a qualitative study design seemed appropriate: The study is based on Reflexive Grounded Theory Methodology (Breuer 2010). Breuer developed this research style close to Strauss/Corbin (1996) but puts more weight on the researchers' reflexivity.

Data were collected through the participant observer technique & ero-epic talks (Spradley 1979; Girtler 2001), and episodic interviews (Flick 2011). I used triangulation in order to narrow down my focus on topics that are really relevant in the youth worker's everyday work. Moreover, triangulation seemed the most suitable to answer my research's subquestions properly. For observations and interviews I contacted volunteers from an online survey conducted by my colleagues in spring 2011 (Korfmacher 2011). The observations and interviews took place in youth clubs in or nearby Berlin. The

collected dataset currently comprises one participant observation including eight talks with four youth workers, as well as ten episodic interviews with twelve youth workers.

I analysed the data using open coding, axial coding and selective coding as described in the Grounded Theory Methodology. Therefore I used the coding paradigm developed by Strauss/Corbin (1996) and the case-oriented quantification (Kelle/Kluge 2010), which are both recommended by Breuer (2010).

### *Results*

It became apparent that most youth workers share comparable definitions of relationship-based work. But not all see implications on relationships by using OSN. Some even do not see any pedagogical aspects or pedagogical value in using them. Some describe their own use of OSN as public relations activities and advertisement, as information sources, or as an administrative tool. The next steps will include to differentiate and describe these types more exactly and to identify correlations between the 1) perception, and 2) usage of OSN.

### *Conclusions and implications*

Effectively using OSN can be a challenge for youth workers' praxis. With the aim of quality service the usage of OSN should not be dominated by feelings and special interests of individuals. OSN should be used methodically, purposefully and in a reflective manner. On the conference I would like to show how OSN can be used professionally, and to discuss how usage of OSN may be incorporated into the professional canon of social work knowledge.

## *Evaluating Practice: arts and reminiscence practice for people with dementia*

Frank Keating | Royal Holloway University of London

Keywords | evaluation, dementia, arts and reminiscence

This oral presentation will present findings from a study to evaluate a reminiscence and arts intervention in dementia care settings in London. The study was informed by a relationship centred approach to care. The study fits with the conference theme by suggesting that creative approaches to care can contribute to a more socially just practice for people with dementia.

### *Research questions*

- a) What difference, if any, does arts and reminiscence practice make to the quality of life, including well-being for older people with dementia?
- b) What difference does arts and reminiscence practice make for social care?

### *Study Methods*

The study used a comparative and time series design to collect data on well-being and quality of life (QOL) using Dementia Care Mapping (DCM) as the primary data collection instrument.

### *Results*

- Twelve care settings were included in the study and 77 residents and 39 care staff participated respectively. The results showed the following:
- The QOL and behaviour both increased sharply during the session, and reached a plateau after about 50 minutes,
  - Immediately after the session, QOL was lower than at the start, but behaviours were more alert, engaged and communicative. On a longer timescale, behaviour and QOL increased slowly but steadily from each session to the next.
  - However, at follow-up after the sessions had finished, we found no significant difference from baseline. In a degenerative condition, this is potentially quite positive,
  - These trends were statistically significant ( $p < 0.01$ ).

### *Conclusion*

We conclude that arts and creative practice have potential to improve quality of life for residents in care setting and the quality of relationships between staff and residents. This presentation will provide suggestions as to how DCM can be used as an evaluative tool in social work research with people with dementia.

### *Bereavement interventions in Northern Ireland and Uganda: a comparative qualitative study of professional therapists' perspectives*

Lorna Montgomery | Queen's University Belfast

Keywords | cross-cultural comparison, Northern Ireland, Uganda, therapeutic interventions, bereavement

### *Background*

All social workers confront the impact of loss and bereavement throughout their practice. However, although responses to loss are culturally determined, there is a dearth of theorising around bereavement practices in non-Western and pluralistic settings, and an acknowledgement that further research is needed in this area. In addressing this gap, the researcher's experience of living and working in two sharply contrasting Western and non-Western cultures facilitated a comparative analysis. The empirical research presented here explores therapeutic interventions for bereavement in two contrasting settings. The research questions asks 'What are the similarities and differences in the practice of therapeutic interventions for bereavement in Northern Ireland and Uganda, as perceived by therapists in both settings?'

### *Methods*

The study adopted a broad investigative strategy since little prior research of this nature has been carried out. In total, 41 qualitative interviews (38 participants) were conducted with purposively selected bereavement therapists across settings, exploring their perceptions and experiences. These were audio recorded, fully transcribed and thematically analysed. Secondary data was gathered from desk research and participant observations. As cross-cultural studies are particularly vulnerable to the influence of researcher bias, which can lead to a distortion of findings, obvious and avoidable sources of bias were identified and challenged.

### *Results.*

The findings focused on the presenting problem brought by service users, and the ways in which service users make sense of their loss and express their grief. Dynamic aspects of the therapeutic process, including the



therapeutic relationship, are also highlighted.

An analysis of findings has provided insights into therapeutic practices for bereavement in each setting. In Uganda, Western bereavement models proved to be ethnocentric, because they are based fundamentally on working with Western notions of the presence of an individualised ego. Key features of these models appeared to require adaptation to non-Western settings. In Northern Ireland, therapists were found to acknowledge the importance of interpersonal factors in bereavement reactions whilst working, almost exclusively, with intra-psychic processes. The levels of complexity of interdependency networks in the two settings appeared to influence therapeutic processes in substantially different ways.

#### *Conclusions and recommendations*

These findings can provide insight into how existing therapeutic social work approaches might best be modified for use in non-Western and pluralistic societies. Among groups with a predominant collectivist identity, individual one-to-one therapeutic interventions may be problematic and should be modified. Interventions should involve others, and in particular, extended families. Existing therapeutic approaches for bereavement favour a focus on the emotional component of the loss; however, a focus on the practical aspects of the loss may need to predominate in some settings. In collectivist societies, illness and death may be understood within a framework incorporating magic and religious belief. In such settings, therapeutic models should anticipate collective, syncretistic belief systems.

#### *Community Resources as Moderators of Post-traumatic Distress*

Lea Zanbar | Ariel University & Bar Ilan University

Menachem Ben-Ezra | Ariel university

Navit Ben-Zur | Ariel university

Keywords | macro intervention social work, PTSD, trauma, psychological distress, community resources

Living in the shadow of terrorism has become a reality for many citizens in certain areas in Israel. This routine includes a constant state of attempting to defend oneself against missiles and attacks, as well as uncertainty regarding the duration of each offensive. Social capital theory argues that communities that enrich themselves with community resources, such as a high sense of community cohesion, high community involvement, and a high level of trust in the local leadership, may cope better with ongoing stress and traumatic situations, thus increasing the welfare of their members (Billig, 2008; Putnam, 2000). The present study sought to examine, for the first time, whether community resources can moderate the impact of exposure to trauma, reducing its effect on post-traumatic symptoms and psychological distress. The study was conducted after Operation Protective Edge in the summer of 2014, which threatened the security of many southern communities in Israel. The sample consisted of 1014 respondents who completed self-report questionnaires that examined the independent variable of exposure to traumatic events, the moderating variables of community resources, and the dependent variables of post-traumatic symptoms and psychological distress.

The findings indicate that community resources indeed moderated the impact of exposure to trauma, reducing its effect on the development of PTSD. Thus, the values of the interactions for the variable 'sense of belonging to the community' (community cohesion) were:  $b=-0.26^{**}$ ,  $SE=0.09$ ,  $t=-2.87$ ; for 'community involvement':  $b=-0.13^{***}$ ,  $SE=0.04$ ,  $t=-3.41$ ; and for 'trust in the leaders':  $b=-0.28^{**}$ ,  $SE=0.11$ ,  $t=-2.46$ . Similarly, community resources moderated the impact of exposure to trauma, reducing its effect on the development of psychological distress among the respondents. The values of the interactions for 'sense of belonging to the community' were:  $b=-0.09^{**}$ ,

SE=0.03,  $t=-2.71$ ; for 'community involvement':  $b=-0.52^*$ , SE=0.23,  $t=-2.21$ ; and for 'trust in the leaders':  $b=-0.10^*$ , SE=0.04,  $t=-2.22$ .

The results suggest that social workers who work with populations under constant security threat should focus on developing and increasing community resources in order to enhance the well-being of the citizens. Several recommendations for macro-level social interventions will be offered.

*'No matter how much intervention may be offered, it will happen': Social workers sense making of suicidal service users.*

Thomas Slater | Cardiff University

Keywords | suicide, parasuicide, self-harm, qualitative data

#### *Background/purpose*

In 2013, there were 6,223 recorded suicides in the UK (ONS, 2015); over three times the number of deaths from road accidents for that year (DFT, 2014). Whilst there has been a general downward trend in rates of suicide in the UK over the past fifty years, the recent economic downturn has led to a rise in the number of suicides across Europe (Stuckler et al., 2011).

Suicides represent a major source of preventable deaths and social workers often work with those at elevated risk. Despite this there is a relative dearth of literature available on the role of social workers in suicide prevention (Joe and Niedermeier, 2008). This paper helps provide some insight into this under-researched topic area by exploring how social workers understand and respond to service users with suicidal thoughts and feelings. The perspective of service users and nursing colleagues who work alongside social workers are also examined.

#### *Method*

This paper reports on qualitative data gathered as part of a mixed methods doctoral study in 2013. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with social worker (n=17) from a range of practice backgrounds, service users with a history of parasuicide (n=3) and community psychiatric nurses (n=3). Transcripts from these interviews were thematically analysed.

#### *Findings*

Two interlinked themes that emerged from this study are discussed in this paper: (i) working with uncertainty; and (ii) evidence based practice and the importance of peer learning.

Social workers often described working in highly complex situations plagued by issues of uncertainty. This, perhaps inevitably, exacted a strong emotional toll on them. One mechanism employed by social workers to help them manage this emotional labour was to conceptualise some suicides as

'inevitable'. This enabled them to create a professional distance, or 'clinical gaze', when working with those deemed to be high risk. Further to this it acted as a buffer to help manage the blame/shame that might result from a service users' death.

Further to the theme of inevitability, many of those interviewed expressed empathy towards those who had made attempts to end their lives. However, this empathy was tempered by the comparative lack of affect displayed to those who were not felt to be 'genuine' in their attempts to end their lives. The desire to help manage the emotional labour inherent in their work was also fuelled by a lack of formal knowledge on the topic of suicide. While social workers appreciated the multi-faceted nature of suicide prevention they often relied on peer learning as a medium for knowledge acquisition.

#### *Conclusions and implications*

This research provided a unique opportunity for social workers to reflect on their experiences of working with suicidal service users. Through the interviews the vital role that social workers play in preventing suicide was readily apparent. Equally the tactics employed by social workers to manage their complex and stressful work were unpicked. This study had implications for how social work, particularly those working in interdisciplinary teams, should be supported in their work with suicidal service users.

#### *Understanding adolescent suicidal groups: linking research and practice*

Stephen Briggs | University of East London

Thomas Slater | University of Cardiff

Jonathan Scourfield | University of Cardiff

Julia Bowley | Barnet Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust

Keywords | adolescent suicide, self-harm, group suicidal behaviour, social media, practitioners, practice-near research, qualitative research

#### *Background/purpose*

Preventing suicide is a high priority social policy in Europe and Worldwide, and an important task for social workers in all sectors. Rates of self-harm appear to be increasing for young people, amidst worldwide concerns about group suicidal behaviour. The rise of self-harming behaviour is particularly concerning given that a self-harm episode increases the risks of suicide by up to 49 times (Hawton et al 2015). Suicides have devastating effects on individuals, families, communities and professionals. Currently, little is known about the causes of group suicidal behaviour, how it spreads, how to effectively intervene, or the role of social media in facilitating groups (Haw et al 2013; Daine et al 2013).

This paper discusses the methods used in, and findings from a study of practitioners' experiences in working with young people involved in group suicidal behaviour. This project aimed to reduce the perceived gap between research and practice through the use of 'practice-near' methods (Froggett & Briggs 2012).

#### *Method:*

This paper reports on new empirical data gathered during 2015. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with practitioners in a multi-disciplinary adolescent mental health service in UK. The service was selected following concerns expressed about group suicidal behaviour by young people using this service. 10 individual interviews were conducted with practitioners of different disciplines; psychiatrists, psychologist, social worker, family therapist, nurses.

Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed, and transcripts were shared with participants for feedback and comments. Thematic analysis was

used to analyse data, followed by a group discussion of themes with participants.

#### *Findings*

Findings, which will be discussed and illustrated with examples from the data, included (a) practitioners' descriptions and discussions of young people's group suicidal behaviour and (b) therapeutic interventions and dilemmas.

Practitioners provided vivid accounts of current and past examples of suicidal behaviour in these groups. They saw the intentions of young people in these groups as having a (self) destructive aim, but also as 'wanting to help, support and protect each other'. Communications took place in schools, on-line through websites and other social media, and in mental health service waiting rooms. Young people frequently involved practitioners in their self-harm episodes, through calling before or after an episode.

The impact of a suicide on practitioners was deep and long lasting, even irresolvable. There were many practice dilemmas: whether to offer group or individual interventions, managing confidentiality. Practitioners were anxious about their lack of knowledge of social media and found the seamless merging of online and offline worlds by young people hard to comprehend.

#### *Conclusions and implications*

The study showed that group suicidal behaviour by young people can be contextualised and thus better understood through this method of linking practice and research. Practitioners welcomed and felt they benefitted from the attention to this concern; in return they provided nuanced accounts, which could be compared and contrasted. Practice innovation and guidance for assessing and intervening with these young people can be based on these findings. Future research will aim to directly interview young people service users involved in groups.

*Translating Human Rights: Creating culturally-relevant human rights measures for social work in Spain, Taiwan, and the U.S.*

Jane McPherson | University of Georgia

Carla Cubillos Vega | Universidad Complutense de Madrid

I-Chen Tang | Chung Shan Medical University

Keywords | human rights, social work, measurement, cross-cultural measurement, cross-national measurement, international social work, international collaboration

#### *Background/purpose*

Two scales, Human Rights Exposure in Social Work (HRXSW) and Human Rights Engagement in Social Work (HRESW), have been validated in U.S. samples of social workers and social work students (McPherson & Abell, 2012). These scales are the first to measure social workers' human rights attitudes. Though these scales address critical, globally-relevant social work concerns, their applicability is limited due to language (English) and national/cultural context (USA). To address these limitations, scholars in Spain (Cubillos Vega) and Taiwan (Tang) undertook translation/validation projects to make these tools available in Spanish and Traditional Chinese. This presentation will review the HRESW/HRXSW, and then focus on the culturally-specific aspects of translation. Special focus will be given to the challenges of translating these rights-focused scales and the cultural adaptations we made to assure local relevance of the measures. This presentation will (1) provide insight into the cultural specificities inherent in translating human rights across political boundaries, and (2) provide scholars with insights they might use when undertaking cross-national work.

#### *Main points*

Diverse human rights climates in our home countries led to concerns about the statistical performance of rights-related items. Spain's citizens may know the European Convention on Human Rights, includes all the rights in the Universal Declaration; in the U.S., these rights may be less familiar, since the U.S. has not ratified core human rights treaties, e.g., the CRC, the ICESCR, and CEDAW. In the US, many social workers are unclear whether they've read the UDHR. Chinese opposes Taiwan's recognition by the UN creating a unique rights-related environment; still, Taiwan independently ratified the ICCPR and ICESCR.

Forward and back translation were used to draft the initial scale translations, and items that did not make cultural sense were identified. For example, Item 3 of the English-language HRESW addresses the rate of incarceration among African-American men in the U.S., which was not identified as a problem in Spain or Taiwan. Thus, Item 3 on the Spanish scale questions the treatment of Roma women, while the Taiwanese version addresses the social exclusion of female immigrants. In another example, the US-based National Association of Social Workers was replaced by the IFSW (Taiwan) or the Consejo General de Trabajo Social (Spain).

#### *Addressing conference themes*

This presentation bridges critical conference themes: (1) the importance of respectful research across linguistic, cultural, and political borders; and (2) the need for research to promote human rights in social work.

#### *Conclusions/implications*

These scales allow researchers to measure human rights commitments among social workers whose predominant languages are English, Spanish or Traditional Chinese, the world's most widely-spoken languages with almost 2 billion native speakers. Care must be taken not to assume that these tools will be appropriate for use across political borders, however. For Spanish speakers in Mexico or Argentina, for example, further changes may be necessary to accommodate differences in dialect or usage, as well as human rights climate. For use in China, the scales may need further translation into Simplified Chinese. Cultural, political and linguistic factors should all be considered in translation.

#### *Victim Support as a New Organisation based on Human Rights: A Case Study from Sweden*

Kerstin Svensson | Lund University

Carina Gallo | Lund University

Keywords | victim support, human rights, human service organisation, changing welfare state

One of the basic principles in social work ethics is to uphold and defend each person's physical, psychological, emotional state, along with their spiritual integrity and well-being. This is a central part of respect for the inherent worth and dignity of all people. Victims of crime sometimes experience a loss of respect due to victimization, which can make them vulnerable in their contacts with supporting bodies. Human rights have been one of the driving forces behind the formation of victim support organizations in many countries.

In Sweden, a national non-governmental organization for Victim Support was established in 1988 and is now an umbrella organization for nearly 100 local victim support centres. The foundation of Victim Support Sweden (VSS) was based on Human Rights principles and the organisation developed as a response to a changing welfare state. The way VSS was organised show a turn in the way to organise human service in Sweden.

This presentation is part of a project on the origins and development of VSS. The presentation will give a picture of how the organisation has focused on Human Rights throughout their development as well as how it has taken a position alongside the welfare state organisations. This is made with the use of rich material from VSS's national archive and interviews with the key persons in the organisation. Included in the study are documents dated back to 1988, when the organisation was formed, up until 2013. We will pinpoint how VSS has regarded victims and offenders and how Human Rights has been a main argument. We will also present the ideas that formed the organization at the start, how it has found its place in the organisational landscape and give an overview of how VSS has worked to uphold a joint perspective in the local organisations.

To put it shortly, we will present how VSS understands and applies the concept of Human Rights in the perspective of victim support, as well as how

they have worked to establish a human rights perspective in their organization and practice alongside traditional human service organisations.

### *Responding to the Health Needs of Young People Trafficked into the UK*

Nicky Stanley | University of Central Lancashire  
Sian Oram | King's College London  
Joanne Westwood | University of Stirling  
Sharon Jakobowitz | King's College London  
Rohan Borschmann | Murdoch Childrens Research Institute  
Cathy Zimmerman | London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine  
Louise Howard King's College London

Keywords | trafficked young people, mental health, trauma and abuse

#### *Background and purpose*

The movement of refugees into and across Europe is swelling the numbers of young people vulnerable to trafficking. Social workers are increasingly involved in supporting this group who may have experienced high levels of trauma and violence. This study aimed to identify the health and support needs of young people who had experienced trafficking and make recommendations about their needs for support.

#### *Methods*

Twenty-nine young people aged 16-21 trafficked into the UK were contacted through voluntary organisations and children's social services. All had exited trafficking and were receiving support from relevant agencies. Interviews were undertaken in a safe setting with trained interpreters where required. A health needs survey was administered face-to-face in addition to open questions exploring access to healthcare and other support. These were supplemented by 52 qualitative interviews with professionals. The survey data were analysed using STATA 11 and a Framework approach was adopted for the analysis of qualitative data.

#### *Results*

Over half the young people had been trafficked for sex work but sexual violence had also been experienced by those trafficked for domestic servitude and labour exploitation, meaning that over three-fifths of young women and men had experienced sexual violence while trafficked. Physical violence, threats, restrictions of liberty and deprivation were also widespread, as were

experiences of physical and sexual violence prior to being trafficked. Five young women had become pregnant whilst trafficked and three had children living with them at the time of interview. Two-thirds screened positive for high levels of psychological distress, including PTSD. Twelve reported suicidal thinking and two described attempting suicide.

Whilst some were keen for opportunities to talk confidentially about their experiences and wanted professionals to listen and treat their ACCOUNTS as credible, others found it too difficult to talk and wanted to forget abusive experiences. Practitioners attributed young people's concerns about not being taken seriously to their experiences of repeated age assessments. Complex gatekeeping systems, language barriers and practitioners who failed to take them seriously meant that young people experienced difficulties in accessing health care post trafficking. Support workers, social workers and foster carers could play a key role in advocating for young people's health needs and assisting them to navigate services.

#### *Conclusions and Implications*

Social workers need to recognise trafficked young people's high levels of mental health needs and ensure their mental health is assessed with a view to providing relevant services both immediately and also later in time when young people may be more ready to receive such support.

Evidence from other research suggests that appointing legal guardians for trafficked young people can offer a continuing trusting relationship which provides emotional and practical support in accessing services.

Since some trafficked young people are parents, the trauma experienced may impact on parenting and on children's development. Offering appropriate support services may represent early intervention in families with histories of exploitation and violence. More research is required to identify effective mental health interventions, when they should be delivered and what contributes to resilience for trafficked young people.

#### *Emerging Research on Decision-making in Social Work Practice*

Jeanne March | University of Chicago, SSA

Keywords | decision making, judgment, heuristics, risk assessment

Background and purpose: For the last forty years in the U.S., social workers have been concerned with reflective practice, with decisions and decision-making processes that can reduce bias and improve service delivery. Decision science shows that humans often engage in ways that deviate from a logical, linear model and that these deviations result from systematic and predictable cognitive processes. Typically under the rubric of critical thinking and judgmental heuristics, social work scholars have identified the systematic and predictable deviations affecting practice decisions as the social worker moves through phases of assessment, deciding how to intervene and service evaluation. Although decision research has been incorporated into business, law and medicine in a variety of ways, the focus in social work has been on practitioner decision-making toward the end of enabling practitioners to incorporate recent developments in decision science into their work in order to improve the quality and effectiveness of service delivery.

Presentation points: First, basic cognitive structures, informational cues and decision heuristics that may operate in a practice setting will be reviewed including confusing cause and chance, fundamental attribution error and loss aversion. Second, specific examples will be provided as to how principles and processes emerging from this work can be used to improve decision-making and to structure service delivery strategies. Included in these examples are use of these strategies to increase practitioner use of data to inform decisions, increase client access to and engagement in services across fields of mental health, child welfare and income maintenance.

Conclusions and implications: The implications of decision science for social work policy and practice will be summarized and directions for future research described.

*Performance theory and discretion – researching creativity in professional practice*

Antony Evans | Royal Holloway University of London

Keywords | discretion, creativity, performance theory, practice research

In this paper I want to draw on insights from arts performance theory and practice to suggest a research agenda recovering the examination of professional discretion as a creative process mediating policy and service delivery. Historically, professional discretion was seen as a creative process in the delivery of services and the development of policy in the welfare state. However, over the last thirty years the rise of Managerialism has been associated with increasing distrust of frontline discretion and the separation of professional practice and policy practice. Performance theory, I will argue, offers new ways of conceptualising and theorising professional discretion in the policy process, which connects with the re-emergence of the idea of discretion as a site of creativity in service delivery. Exercising judgement within constraints is a common experience across the apparently different domains of policy and arts practice. Within welfare services, professionals operate within rules, policies and procedures to deliver services which are intended to be responsive to citizens. In the performing arts, actors and musicians perform from texts and manuscripts. They do not simply replicate words and notes, but have to lend them their own interpretation and express them through their own performances.

Alongside the similarities between the two situations, the different ideas of the relationship between professionals and policy, and performers and their sources, open up an important area of practice for critical exploration. In welfare services the creative dimension of frontline discretion tends to be constrained by ideas of top-down policy, whereas, in performance, the manuscript and text are recognised as opportunities for creativity and interpretation that can bring out new meanings and speak in different ways to specific contexts. This sense of the external nature of policy and the constraint it exercises over professional judgement and practice is exemplified in professional critiques of Managerialism. In contrast, in the arts the relationship between performers and source is much more intrinsic. The text and the

manuscript are a starting point that performers seek to bring to life, recognising it as something that both limits what they can do and, at the same time, guides and facilitates their performance.

In summary, in this paper I want to suggest that arts practice theory offers insights into an aspect of policy work that can recover professional discretion as a creative process, and also offer tools to research frontline discretion as a creative process. This could, in turn, provide new insights into the dynamic relationship of professional discretion and policy as a fundamentally innovative process in making policy live, and as an imaginative and sensitive approach to making services work for service-users and carers.

This presentation addresses the conference's goal of exploring creativity and innovation in practice. In relation to theme 1 and 4 it seeks to stimulate a critical dialogue between research, policy and practice drawing on performance theory; following theme 8, it proposes an approach to researching practice that envisions social work as a creative and imaginative practice.



*Given the circumstances: how to optimise practice-oriented social work research*

Martine Ganzevles | HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht  
Wilma Numans | Tranzo / Tilburg University

Keywords | PhD research, practice-oriented research, balance rigor and relevance, research design, intrinsic research motives, practitioners' participation, user participation / user led research

As of September 2013, the Research Group Applied Research Methodology at HU University of Applied Sciences Utrecht helps researchers to optimise their research methods for practice-oriented research. This presentation introduces the main elements of a PhD study on methodology in the field of Social Work by one of the research group members. The preliminary results of another PhD study are presented as an example on how to involve citizens, in particular vulnerable target groups in a SW-research design (Wilma Numans: science practitioner at Tranzo/Tilburg University - The Academic Collaborative Center Social Work).

After a general introduction of the research outlines, all participants will be invited to share ideas and engage in a plenary discussion regarding the context, purpose and methods of the intended study.

### *Background*

Traditionally the gap between theory and practice in social work is seen as a problem of bringing the results of academic research to the world of practice. This assumes that academic researchers know what problems in the field of social work are and can develop explicit knowledge that is useful for practitioners. However, we know that this linear model of innovation is often not the most effective one. A useful alternative has been developed over the past years in the form of practice-oriented research in which the research goal of developing new knowledge is often combined with the goal of improving practice in local situations. However, it is a challenge in this type of intervention and evaluation driven practice-oriented research to manage the balance between rigor and relevance. This research aims to contribute to the elaboration of methodologies that are both rigorous and able to produce results with viable validity that are useful in practice.

### *Research questions*

- What research methods are used in social work research at universities of applied sciences
- How do these methods live up to scientific and practical claims? (rigor and relevance)
- What further development is to be made to strengthen both claims?
- What underlying motives do SW-researchers at UAS have to choose a certain method?

### *Aim*

Contribute to an insight on dilemma's and motives of social work researchers in choosing and applying research strategies that live up to scientific and practical claims(descriptive); defining promising research methods and strategies and; provide guidelines how to choose the most appropriate design given the circumstances.

### *Methods*

- Systematic literature review
- Analysis of publications of research by UAS; create an inventory and typology of the methodologies used
- Online asynchrone focus groups
- In-depth interviewing (via self-confrontation method)
- Analyzing and defining promising strategies
- Observing and participating in strategies

### *Hypotheses*

- Due to a strong link with the professional field researchers at UAS not only have methodological motives / considerations when choosing research strategies but also practical motives / considerations
- There will be a strong participation from practice in the research in various roles
- The research designs used will be highly qualitative or mixed

*Lost in Translation? A mixed methods practice-near study of social work using interpreters*

Rebecca Jones | University of Bedfordshire  
David Westlake | University of Bedfordshire  
Donald Forrester | University of Bedfordshire

Keywords | Interpreters, Relationship building, Communication, Skill, Children, Families, Quantitative, Language, Migration

*Background and purpose*

Mass migration across Europe means that social workers are increasingly confronted with the challenge of engaging service users with whom they do not share a common language. Meaningful engagement depends on developing collaborative relationships across these language barriers. Social work research has started to explore how interpreters influence the client-worker dynamic but most studies have relied on self-reported accounts of practice. This mixed methods study uses a unique dataset of over 200 recordings of practice to measure how skills associated with positive relationship building are affected by using interpreters. The study is part of an on-going programme of research evaluating communication skills in social work. It focusses on child and family social work in the UK but has wide-ranging and highly topical implications for practice across Europe.

*Methods*

Data was collected through observations of social work visits with both native speaking clients and those requiring an interpreter. Seventy percent of families agreed for their meeting to be observed. We analysed recordings of these conversations to assess workers' capabilities across a series of skills that have been found to be predictors of positive engagement. These include empathy, collaboration, and purposefulness. Recordings were quantitatively coded for these skills on a five-point scale. Focus groups with practitioners generated emerging findings (described in more detail below) that have fed into on-going statistical analysis comparing results from interpreter cases with those of the wider sample. This analysis will provide statistical comparisons of practitioners' skill levels with native speaking and non-native speaking families. During the presentation we will present this analysis, as

well as using qualitative data from focus groups and interviews to contextualise our findings and illustrate their relevance to contemporary practice. By combining quantitative and qualitative approaches we aim to understand the practical, strategic and relational impacts of using interpreters.

*Results*

Findings from focus groups suggest there are significant challenges associated with working effectively with interpreters. Reasons for this include issues of professionalism and the practicalities of accessing interpreter services. Most notably, practitioners cited the impact of interpreters on conversation dynamics as a barrier to relationship building. Practitioners perceived the presence of an interpreter as a barrier in the majority of cases, despite high levels of engagement in some instances. This may be due to the complex power dynamics involved in introducing a second "professional" into the client-worker relationship. We have concluded thus far that effective use of interpreters requires considerable planning, where possible in close collaboration with interpreters. Further findings relating to the influence of interpreters on specific social work skills are expected when statistical analysis of recordings is complete.

*Conclusions and implications*

Our findings illustrate how social work practice differs between native and non-native speaking families. This has implications for the training and recruitment of interpreters in social work, and informs best practice on the use of interpreters. Findings are relevant to practitioners working with non-native speakers, managers, and social work educators.

*Relationship between research and practice: a qualitative study with Portuguese social workers*

Daniela Monteiro | Faculdade de Filosofia e Ciências Sociais, Universidade Católica Portuguesa

Keywords | social workers, research, practice

This paper focuses on the relationship between research and practice in social work, particularly in the understanding the motivations and the place assigned by the social workers on this relationship. The main study shafts are: 1) constraints to investigate in daily work; 2) potentialities of such research; 3) motivations to research.

In this exploratory study we opted for qualitative methodology. Data collection was conducted in 2011, with the application of semi-structured interviews to eleven Portuguese social workers with BSW and MSW in Social Work and a minimum of three years of practice.

All interviewed social workers consider that research is one of the dimensions of Social Work, but the relationship established between research and practice was covered from different nuances, from those who claim to establish this relationship to those that punctually did (on the MSW).

Social workers pointed out more the constraints (i.e. paucity of time in daily work) than the potentialities of relationship between research and practice, but the potentiality repeatedly enunciated from all of interviewers is the key: improve practice. Improving practice, its the main reason and motivation that led the social workers to do research, but they highlight that it is necessary create a set of conditions that allow and encourage professionals to do itq, particularly in organizations where they work.

The interviewees pointed out reasons to explain the lack relationship between research and practice: 1) historical reasons; 2) the separation between scientists and practitioners; 3) small practitioner investment in postgraduate training, particularly in social work in order to contribute to increased knowledge in this area; 4) lack of critical thinking; 5) focus in daily work; 6) routinized practice.

It is fundamental in Portugal a higher investment in the discussion of the re

lationship between research and practice that includes more research about this theme, and an evaluation about the integration of research and practice in social work education. This preoccupation in the training was refer in the interviews like a key element in encouraging an effective relationship between research and practice, and this requires: 1) investing in postgraduate studies in Social Work; 2) encourage the importance of research in Social Work (since the BSW); 3) create or promote an investigative culture in students/practitioners; 4) break with the dichotomy between practitioners and academics; 5) bring together the academic and professional spaces (organizations).

## *Service User Knowledge and Troublesome Pedagogy*

Joe Duffy | Queen's University

Jean Pierre Wilken | Utrecht University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | Service User Knowledge, Pedagogy, Involvement

### *Background*

This paper will highlight the work pioneered in Northern Ireland to help social work students address the skills and knowledge they require to work with service users affected by Northern Ireland's history of conflict. This type of knowledge is referred to in the paper as Troublesome, aligned with Meyer and Land's (2005) work on Threshold Concepts. The involvement of service users, with lived experience of conflict, has assisted students in their grasp of these key curricular concepts.

### *Content*

Social workers can struggle to identify the political aspects of their role. They are also presented with different types of knowledges throughout their experience of social work education. This paper will highlight these key questions of epistemology and where service user knowledge is positioned within hierarchies of knowledge and standpoints. In referring to these issues, evidence will be provided from student evaluations to illuminate how service users have contributed to students in their grasp and understanding of challenging curriculum content.

### *Conclusions*

Service user/experiential knowledge has been a recognised and core component of the UK curriculum since 2002 and quite a lot has been written about how this has been approached in the social work curriculum. The concept of Involvement itself is however undertheorized. In reference to the work being undertaken in Northern Ireland and elsewhere, this paper will highlight the key questions of epistemology which need to be considered and reflected upon in a quest to ensure that service user involvement in social work education continues to grow and develop in a way which recognises its unique contribution in helping students to learn and acquire key pedagogical concepts

## *Improving child care social work: the contribution of a cognitive and affective supervision model*

Danielle Turney | University of Bristol

Gillian Ruch | University of Sussex

Keywords | supervision, cognitive and affective approach, practice-based research, knowledge exchange

Over the past two decades UK child care - and particularly child protection - social work has been characterised by recurrent concerns about the quality of assessment and decision-making and the capacity of social workers to demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills. These issues have been identified in inquiry reports following child deaths, in research findings and in local and national reviews of practice, prompting widespread debate about how improvements to practice can be introduced in ways that are both effective and sustainable. Despite extensive organisational and procedural changes intended to address these concerns the problems persist. Innovations in practice therefore need to be identified and explored that can help practitioners 'think about their thinking'.

A number of writers have drawn attention to the connection between the nature and quality of thinking and the emotional content and context of childcare practice. Supervision provides a key forum in which thinking processes and practices can be explored, so has a critical role to play in providing a safe space where practitioners can identify the emotional content of their experience and reflect on its meaning. Given the centrality of the supervision-practice feedback loop for sound practice it is important that staff providing supervision have the competence to do this to the highest standards. To support their work, they need accessible and reliable methods and resource materials that can be readily used in practice.

Responding to these concerns a distinctive collaborative knowledge exchange research partnership comprised of social work faculty and practice colleagues, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council in the UK, has been established. The partnership's aim is to develop and pilot a supervision model informed by cognitive interviewing techniques. Working collaboratively with social work practitioners in the partner organisation, a modified and customised approach - the cognitive and affective supervision approach (CASA) - has been designed that homes in on cognitive

understandings of practice but in so doing also heightens practitioners' awareness of the affective dimensions of practice and of their thinking. The model aims to encourage a more holistic supervisory engagement with practice experiences with the intention of enhancing supervisory practices as critical mechanisms for examining the thinking processes and practices that underpin effective assessment and decision-making.

In the context of this project the paper will:

- a) explore the methodological and practical challenges of establishing a knowledge exchange project with practice colleagues operating in settings characterised by anxiety and conditions of austerity
  - b) discuss early findings from the project and their implications for improvements in social work education and practice in the academy and in the field.
- The paper will conclude with recommendations for overcoming challenges associated with practice-based research in pressurised workplaces and propose some emergent ideas about the scope for innovative approaches to supervision that can contribute to improvements in practice and practitioner efficacy.

*Strengthening expertise - identity work of child welfare social workers in the context of further education in Finland*

Aino Ritala-Koskinen | University of Tampere  
Hannele Forsberg | University of Tampere

Keywords | professional identity, social work, child welfare, further education

The purpose of this presentation is to examine 'identity work' of social work professionals in one-year further education program of child welfare in Finland. Identity work is for us identity-constitutive work, inspired by ethno-methodology and social constructionism. The idea is to examine how the participants of the further education program themselves produce professional identity and relevant elements of it. Our specific focus is on the positive and strengthening aspects articulated in the end of the further education program by the social workers.

The required degree for the social workers' professional qualification in Finland is master in social work. The participants of the further education have been working in social work practice at least two years after having finished their master education. In the end of the further education program the participants were asked to write a reflective text concerning the development of their practice expertise during the program. We use these texts from three separate programs (run one after another during 2011-2015) as our data for the analysis of professional identity. In total 36 participants gave permission to use their text as research data. The texts vary 10-20 pages in length.

We "read" the texts as mutual sense making, narrative reasoning and justifications of child welfare expertise and relevant aspects of it in the context of further education. Especially, we pay attention on how social workers produce elements of strengths (needed) in child welfare work and how this is interpreted to raise the professional identity.

As a result, the positive, strengthening elements of practice are embedded in the narration of poor conditions of child welfare work. However, social workers recognize three different strength giving elements as very important for their professional identity as child welfare social workers. They interpret that: (1) new research-based knowledge helps them to challenge their routines and give new tools for the everyday circumstances of action, (2) the

professional-client relationship serve them as an endless empowering part of the work, (3) mutual and shared expertise produce collegial knowledge and respect for the child welfare social work.

To conclude, on the basis of social workers reasoning, quite basic things, such as having enough time to client work, possibilities to follow development of research, and space for social work communities are relevant for the expertise of child welfare. Too simple elements in our neo-liberal time?

*Talking or writing? The reflective strategies of choice for social work students engaged in developing skills of professional judgement*

Joanna Rawles | London South Bank University

Keywords | Reflection, Professional Judgement, Social work student  
Professional authority, Social work education

This paper will focus on results from ongoing Doctoral research into how social work students develop skills of professional judgement. Grounded in principles of practice based research (Dirkx 2006) the study explores how Masters level social work students in England developed skills in formulating, communicating and defending their professional opinion and judgement as they evolved into nascent social work professionals. The study also considers what helped to support this development.

Using an Appreciative Inquiry framework (Cooperrider and Srivastva 1987), with a critical incident method, the aim was to find out 'what works' in enabling students to develop an analytical approach to their practice and a confidence in their own professional authority. Findings indicate that engaging in strategies that facilitate reflective deliberation was fundamental for students as this enabled them to learn how to transform knowledge and evidence into professional opinion. There was, however, limited emphasis placed by the participants on prescriptive and established reflective frameworks but rather on a diverse range of strategies. These strategies included self-reflection - 'playing it over in my head'; guided reflection - 'drawing it out of me' and informal peer base discussion 'talking it over to help me reach my decision'. Notable was a divergence in preference for writing or for conversation as a conduit for formulating and developing ones professional judgement. Conversely some participants found it necessary to use both these strategies in tandem. A key factor in the successful use of these strategies by the participants was their development of a cognisance of their role as professionals whose judgement and opinion was sought and required. One participant described this as the realisation that he had to move from 'what I see to what I think'.

The Health Care Professionals Council, the body that registers social workers in England, requires them to "be able to practice as an autonomous profes

sional exercising their own professional judgement" (HCPC 2012 p8). Yet this becomes increasingly difficult in a contemporary landscape of blame and bureaucratization that characterizes the organisations where most social work takes place. I would argue that in such a climate it becomes even more important to enable and encourage students to develop confidence in their professional authority and learn to approach professional opinion and judgement in a critically analytical way. The findings from this study indicate students are making active choices about the most productive reflective strategies for them. A focus for social work education could therefore be to assist learners and practice educators to explore divergent approaches to critical reflection as well as creating an environment where different forms of reflection are positively encouraged and facilitated.

Cooperrider, D, & Srivastva, S (1987) 'Appreciative inquiry in organisational life' in *Research in Organisational Change and Development* 1 pp129-169

Dirkx, J. M. (2006). Studying the complicated matter of what works: Evidence-based research and the problem of practice.

*Adult Education Quarterly*, 56(4), 273-290.

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*The workplace as a meeting place between research, education and practice*

Sigrid Nordstoga | Universitetet i Agder

Keywords | workplace, learning arena, the knowledge triangle

The paper examines the interaction between research, education and practice on the basis of a learning network where social workers work with development projects based on issues and knowledge interests in the workplace. The learning network lasted over one year and social workers received training from the university on their research process and the network's theme. Each project received guidance from a researcher. Similar networks have been tried out in Denmark, New Zealand and England (Lunt m.fl.2011). Our network differs from the others because the participants have possibilities to receive 10 ECTS credits through an exam at the master level. These projects have elements of practitioner research, education and service development. The elements are called the knowledge triangle and synergies between these are seen as a prerequisite for a knowledge-based practice and on a larger scale, a knowledge-based society.

On the basis of four such annual networks in mental health / substance abuse and child welfare I will show the challenges the social worker faces with regards to being a part of the knowledge triangle in this learning network. The data are based on interviews of some of the participants after finishing projects and an analysis of the final reports. Structure and guidance as the education demanded that there was a framework around the development that ensured a certain progress. For social workers it was hard to keep up with development projects as well as their ordinary tasks as a service provider. The participants tell of huge learning outcomes, but there seemed to be a challenge in developing services more structurally.

Finally, I shall discuss the possibilities and limitations of the workplace as a learning arena and simultaneously as an arena for service development.

## *Co-producing research with communities: issues of ethics and politics*

Sarah Banks | Durham University

Keywords | community campaigns, community development, community organising, co-produced research, financial inclusion, politics of research, research ethics

### *Background/purpose*

Co-production of research by universities and community partners is increasingly popular - as a way of democratising research, improving design and maximising impact. This presentation discusses the varieties of co-production, problems and possibilities of power-sharing, and dangers of co-option by university agendas.

### *Main points*

Discussion of two community-university projects:

1) Debt on Teesside: Pathways to Financial Inclusion - action research on debt in low-income households in North East England.

It was a collaboration between Durham University's Centre for Social Justice and Community Action, Thrive Teesside and Church Action on Poverty. It entailed: collecting financial information from 24 household; money mentoring; and campaigning to reform high-cost lending. Using a community organising approach, the project mobilised people to take action for social change. I will discuss the strengths of the project as embedded, locally-initiated action research with a national impact, whilst outlining some practical and ethical challenges of community-university partnerships with a social justice agenda.

2) Imagine - connecting communities through research - a large Economic and Social Research Council-funded project.

The work package I coordinate involves re-visiting the sites of radical Community Development Projects of the 1970s in North East England and Coventry. These were action research projects involving university-employed researchers and local authority-employed community workers, who developed a structural analysis of the causes of 'deprivation' and mobilised residents in local actions. Our current project in Tyneside involves Durham

University working with 11 community organisations to explore the past, present and future of these areas, focussing on community participation in local social/economic development. I will discuss conflicting interpretations of lessons and legacies of the past, understandings of research and hopes for the future.

### *Conclusions/implications*

I will evaluate the strengths and limitations of community organising/ community development approaches and offer guidance for preparing for ethico-political challenges in co-produced research.



*With whose consent? Decision making in Research Ethics Committees (RECs) in the United Kingdom on research with 'vulnerable' research participants*

Julie Morton | University of Salford

Keywords | research ethics committees, research, vulnerable groups, capacity, decision-making

*Background and purpose*

Ethical research is fundamental for the continued development of social work practice. However, the extension of biomedical systems of ethical review to research in the health and social care fields (including social work) in the United Kingdom has potentially limiting effects on the type and scope of research which may be undertaken. This is a particular difficulty when research includes 'vulnerable' groups. Researchers from qualitative and quantitative paradigms have raised legitimate concerns about the procedural nature of review and the dominance of consent requirements when people are deemed to lack capacity for a range of reasons such as learning disability, mental distress and dementia as well as physical conditions which can impair capacity.

The aim of this study was to discover what happens at National Health Service (NHS) Research Ethics Committees (NHSRECs). RECs in the United Kingdom are charged with making decisions about what constitutes ethical research and have the power of veto over whether research takes place. They consider all research in health and social care domains where participants lack capacity. However, there is limited research on the real-life, every day negotiations which take place at RECs where such judgements are made. Observation of the processes of decision-making and the conceptualisation of consent and capacity in RECs were crucial aspects of this project.

*Methods*

An institutional ethnographic methodology was used and methods included observations at nine NHSRECs with follow-up interviews undertaken with committee members and researchers. The focus was on RECs which were 'flagged' to review studies involving 'incapacitate' research participants. Data was initially coded using NVivo software. Subsequently interpretation of findings connected the everyday debate and discussion in the RECs to wider institutional and social categories and concepts such as 'protection'

and 'safeguarding'.

*Results*

The sequencing in committee meetings is crucial in shaping discussion leading to a decision; the 'texts' (procedural requirements) are used in particular ways in the REC to justify decisions; decisions are not based solely on the requirements; a range of 'concrete' strategies are adopted by RECs in order for members to make sense of abstract ethical principles and requirements.

*Conclusions and implications*

Ethical review systems are challenging for RECs whose members have to make sense of abstract principles in concrete ways. REC members express uncertainty about decisions. Research procedures and the REC system may assure the protection and safeguarding of institutions. It is questionable whether current systems protect vulnerable research participants.

Consent requirements may limit research undertaken with vulnerable groups which potentially renders those groups more vulnerable. This is important for social work, a profession which works to improve the lives of marginalised and vulnerable service-users.

Critique of the current systems exists but this study provides rich description and offers valuable insights into the everyday practices of NHSRECs. This may assist institutions to consider the consequences of procedurally-orientated approaches and encourage alternative forms of decision-making in RECs.

## *User involvement in research – conflicts, management and empowerment*

Sidsel Natland | Oslo and Akershus University of Applied Sciences  
Jean Pierre Wilken | Utrecht University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | service user involvement, partnership, conditions for user participation, empowerment

### *Background*

Collaboration and partnership involving providers and users of social services is highly valued as means to inform research and practice, yet its effectiveness in terms of realizing and documenting goals and concrete outcomes is debated. Frameworks for measuring and evaluating partnerships are increasingly being developed, but still there is a need to investigate what happens in partnership that marks its advantage.

### *Content*

The paper will present findings from a qualitative study that investigated conflicts in a partnership project that became hindrances for succeeding with concrete outcomes. The study context is the governmental funded program 'HUSK', established by the Norwegian Directorate of Health and Social Care (2006-2011), where one goal was the promoting of structures for equal collaboration between social work education, research, service providers and users. Participation on equal terms was a prerequisite for the project. Through an in-depth analysis of the interaction between practitioners and users in one of the HUSK project groups, the study focuses conflicts related to conditions for the users' participation.

### *Conclusions*

The findings show how the conflicts affected the management and concrete outcomes of the partnership project. The conflicts are interpreted as markers of the users' empowering processes as the project went along. By focusing day-to-day management of a partnership project, conflicts and empowerment is understood as complex intertwined, affecting conditions for users involvement, and consequently concrete outcomes of the partnership.

## *Biographical interviewing with juveniles from disadvantaged social settings*

Michaela Koettig | Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | disadvantaged Juveniles, qualitative research, reconstructive social work, biographical narrative interviews, biographical narrative counselling, transmission school to work

Within the context of a research project 'Biographical case studies of young persons in the transition from school to vocational training', I conducted biographical-narrative interviews with young persons who most often do not have any school-leaving qualification or school diploma and who participate in a pre-vocational training scheme. Most of the interviewed young persons come from disadvantaged social settings or families. Besides reconstructing the social and life-historical constellations that supported or hampered the development of these youth it is the aim of the project to develop a grounded interview guide for a biographical-narrative interviewing that facilitates a practice of counselling and anamnesis in the context of integration into the job market that is focused on the individual case.

The interview show, the young persons concerned are not used at all to talking about themselves and their previous lives. At the same time it becomes clear that the use of narration-generating techniques of interviewing, if applied consistently, induces the interviewees to become increasingly involved in the interactive setting of the interview and thus to produce increasingly detailed presentations of particular situations or phases in their lives. By using my empirical material I want to show, on the one hand, how the consistent use of a narration-generating approach by the interviewer facilitates the empowerment of self-presentation and leads to an increasing detail of the self-presentations. On the other hand I shall discuss the various possibilities of an interview guide that is attuned for this method of interviewing.

## *The use of vignettes as a reflective and reflexive research method*

Megan Robb | University of Kent

Keywords | vignettes, research method, domestic violence and abuse

This paper will explore the use of vignettes in social work research. I will argue that vignettes can be used as an effective tool to encourage study participants, as well as the researcher, to reflect on their own decision making processes, assumptions and values. The presentation will be based on the findings from a small UK based pilot study conducted as part of my PhD research exploring social workers' conceptualisations of people with learning disabilities who experience domestic violence and abuse (DVA). The study sought to explore the following: how social workers conceptualise the individuals who experience DVA, what they see as the determinant factors for the DVA and what discourses impact on social workers' decision making in cases of DVA against people with learning disabilities. The study was comprised of a two stage interview process. The first stage was a semi-structured interview where participants were asked to discuss an actual case. The second interview required participants to respond to vignettes. The vignettes were designed to describe cases involving actions and behaviours which may be considered abusive. Participants were asked whether they considered the cases to be examples of DVA and why. Participants were also asked to respond to a longer vignette, where information was revealed in stages. At each stage the participants were asked to consider concerns and risk factors, as well as what interventions should take place.

This paper considers the benefits of using vignettes to explore how participants operationalise their concept of DVA as well as how they reflect on their decision making processes. Furthermore, I will explore how the researcher must apply reflexivity to the process of developing their vignettes in order to recognise the impact that their own understanding, values and biases have on the data collection and in turn the findings.

## *Prevention of Dating Violence among Adolescents*

Tordis Kristine Sovde | Uit The Arctic University of Norway

Keywords | adolescents, awareness-raising, dating violence preventing, mediators, mentors

1. I want to present an Eu project amongst the UK, Bulgaria Spain and Norway, called Daphne SHER 2011-2013,. SHER stands for Safe, Healthy, Equal, Relationships. The project was a two-year information and educational project for young people, preventing dating and gender-based violence and abusive behavior.
2. The aim of the project was about including, supporting, and empowering young people:
  - Increase awareness and understanding of what is and is not a healthy relationship enabling young people to self-assess their own relationships.
  - Promote understanding that they have choices about making positive changes of unhealthy relationships and how to access advice
  - Provide help and support if they are in abusive relationships or witnessing domestic violence at home
3. The project was piloted to a sample of 1042 young persons. The design was in the form of a toolkit ,aimed at young people 13 to 24 years in schools and other youth group settings whether they had experienced violence themselves or not. The toolkit was developed to provide a vehicle for young people to learn and talk about relationship abuse within the safety of a classroom environment. It consisted of three sessions each lasting two hours with specially designed program, films, photos, questions etc. The information was delivered in the classroom by skilled external youth workers and peer consultants in conjunction with peer mentors and mediators of similar age to the young participants. In addition to the training, regular supervisory meetings and practice sessions for trainers, mentors, and mediators took place throughout the project.
4. Data collection procedures, measures and approaches to analysis

Rather extensive Pre-questionnaires and post- questionnaires from every the participants as a part of the toolkit

Participant focus groups feedback  
Peer mentor focus groups feedback  
Peer mediator focus groups feedback

The evaluation was triangulating the data from the questionnaires, risk assessments, peer mediators, and domestic violence professionals

5. The toolkit was translated and delivered to 1042 young people across Europe: Southwark in the UK, Murcia in Spain and Haskovo, Bulgaria. 50 young people were trained to be peer mentors. 20 youth trained as mediators and 30 teachers participated during dating violence sessions. There were 60 abuse referrals to professional helpers and 60 hours of mentoring one-to-one. In the class rooms discussions of relationships, the young persons seemed to be very engaged .

The evaluation showed overall success and great interest from the young participants in assessment of their own relationships and overall positive attitude changes.

6. The results of change in attitudes were amazing. The aim was through the self-assessment of their own relationships to obtain safe, healthy and equal relationships and not abusive ones

The success of the information and education awareness project was largely due to the involvement of peer mentoring and peer mediation in identifying with others and exploring and manage their feelings and also by the help with referrals to professionals.

About implications focus on awareness-raising and on preventing violence among the quite young persons ought to be a priority for every community.

*Method fidelity and cultural adaptation - reflections about the implementation of the manualized American Kids' Club for children exposed to domestic violence in the Swedish social services from a researcher's and a practitioner's perspectives*

Åsa Cater | Örebro University  
Sabina Gomez Jansson | Kristinehamns Kommun

Keywords | children, domestic violence, method fidelity, cultural adaptation

In 2011, an evaluation of Swedish methods for supporting child witnesses to domestic violence in social services settings showed modest results. Therefore, four methods that had showed promising results in other countries were tested in Sweden in another research project 2012-2015. One of these was the Kids Club group method, developed by Dr Graham-Bermann in Michigan, USA. In the project, group leaders in four Swedish communities were trained in the method and implemented the Kids' Club-method. After having tested the method, group leaders were interviewed in a group format about their experiences and how the method fit the prerequisites that the Swedish context forms.

The purpose of this presentation is to present experiences and reflections concerning how to balance method fidelity and cultural adaptation from a researcher's and a practitioner's perspectives using the implementation process of the Kids' Club method as an example. The reflections are based on what the group leaders described as beneficial and difficult to handle when implementing the method in the interviews and how these experiences can be understood in relation Swedish social service culture.

Main points are that balancing method fidelity and cultural adaptation is a challenge for both practitioners and researchers and that there are several aspects that need to be taken into consideration.

By addressing the issues of fidelity and adaptation in implementing a method in a new cultural setting, this presentation addresses the conference theme no 6. "The quest for quality and service evaluation: New challenges for praxis and research in social work."

Main implications for social work practice is that collaboration between practitioners and researchers may be helpful in finding an adequate balance

between method fidelity and adaptation. This, in turn, demands that both researchers and practitioners see the benefits of collaboration and find well-functioning forms for it. The presentation is given jointly by one of the researchers and one of the group leaders in the project.

*Understanding, assessments and help-giving: Gender sensitive social work with men who are victims of violence*

Christian Kullberg | Mälardalen University  
Mikael Mikael Skillmark | Linneaus University

Keywords | gender sensitive social work, men, male victims of violence

#### *Background and purpose*

Despite good intentions in many countries concerning the rights for both men and women to receive gender-appropriate protection and help when being exposed to violent victimization research indicates that preconceived notions exist among professional helpers (such as social workers, psychologists, and physicians) concerning for instance male victims responsibility for the violence they have been exposed to, the degree of harm they have been inflicted and their possibilities to cope with the distress they are in. Despite tendencies in society that contributes to men's supremacy over women such preconceived notions put victimized men in a vulnerable position. On the basis of results from research on the treatment of victimized men, the aim is to deepen the understanding of how gender sensitive social work can be designed in order to help men to better cope with their distress and at the same time contribute to counteracting gender inequality

#### *Summary of main points*

When trying to perform gender sensitive social work with male victims of violence or other vulnerable individuals or groups there is always a risk for "categorical thinking" which risks leading to either reification (treating all men as equivalent representatives of males as a group) or biologization (treating men's actions and feelings as products of their inherent disposition or nature).

In the presentation it is argued that social workers, despite the risk of falling into "categorical thinking", in their work with victimized men should try to balance knowledge on men as a group with an understanding of universal human needs that victimized men are likely to have and the specific individual expectations and needs that they have as individuals with a unique masculine "configuration".

In the presentation it is shown how social workers can balance knowledge

from the three different mentioned domains and at the same time form the help in accordance with three distinct perspectives a feminist perspective, a rights perspective and a pedagogic perspective which all can be used to form practice which contributes to counteracting gender segregating, and hierarchializing as well as heteronormative tendencies in society.

#### *Addressing the conference aims and themes*

By highlighting the need to seriously take into consideration victimized men's need for adequate help for their distress the presentation connects to the conference theme "Empowering practices".

#### *Conclusions from and implications of the presentation*

The presentations contributes to a discussion on how professional helpers can help men who have been victims of violence to cope with their distress and at the same time contribute to counteracting gender inequality.

#### *Metaphors of transformations: Change in batterers*

Eli Buchbinder | School of Social Work University of Haifa Israel

Keywords | intimate partner violence, batterers, change

#### *Background*

People actively symbolize and give meaning to reality through language. Metaphors play a special role in communicating one kind of phenomenon or experience in terms of another. The use of metaphors is not random, but rather reflects the existential and social meanings of the user that cannot be understood in any alternative thinking mode. As such, metaphors can be very useful in qualitative research in understanding people's meaning making.

#### *Methods*

The presentation will describe and analyze the role of metaphors in pooled sample of four qualitative studies based on qualitative in-depth interviews with male batterers who undergo therapy for intimate partner violence in Israel. All the studies were based on the phenomenological-hermeneutic paradigm. The first study was based on 12 batterers, aged 30-58 who had been treated at a family violence treatment center regarding their perceptions of the process and results of their treatment. The second study of 25 men ages between 26 to 48 years, who had completed treatment program in domestic violence centers for domestic violence for approximately 25 sessions. The third study was based on 12 batterers aged between 35 to 37, and perception of change two to five years after completion of treatment. The fourth study is based on interviews with 13 men of Ethiopian origin aged 35 and 66 years, who went a court-mandated therapy with social workers for at least three months.

*Results* The analysis is based on qualitative methodology, in which the researcher uncovers the essence of the interviewees' experiences, as expressed in narratives and linguistic constructs

In all four studies metaphors served a major role in constructing meanings to men's existential changes following intervention. Metaphors were existential bridging between their pervious violent identity and the perceived rehabilitated self. Analysis of the metaphors revealed transformation from a

sense of vulnerability and threat in relation to the self and to interpersonal relationships, to a metaphors that of coherent and empowerment identity boundaries.

#### *Conclusions and implications*

Metaphors are powerful indicators in how "reality" is perceived and carried out in male batterers in constructing their selves. As such metaphors can be useful as a heuristic instrument for understanding and evaluating batterers' behavioral changes, attitudes and emotions, both in the personal and the interpersonal spheres.

#### *Social Work and Social Entrepreneurship: a new framework for practice?*

Antonela Jesus | ISCTE-IUL, Portugal

Maria Inês Amaro | ISCTE-IUL, Portugal

Keywords | social work, social Entrepreneurship, innovation, unemployment

In the current context conceptualized as a society of uncertainty and risk, exacerbated by the impacts of social, global economic and financial crisis, we are witnessing the wider debate around the entrepreneurial activity as a privileged strategy to address the scenarios of structural unemployment and precariousness labor.

The present research, takes place under the PhD in Social Work in ISCTE-IUL, aims to contribute to the understanding of the Social Entrepreneurship as a strategy in the integration of the most vulnerable social groups in the (re) discovery and development of (new) potential and capabilities of the population, as part of the mission of the social worker. The aim is also to develop a thorough discussion of the limitations of this approach in solving such problems and how this can be seen as a further expression of individuation policy trends.

It recommends, in terms of methodology, the use of a mixed approach, to make a triangulation of qualitative and quantitative methods, and in deepening understanding of the social worker practices supported in Entrepreneurship logic. In particular, we intend to study the Entrepreneurship programs with participation of social work developed in Portugal.

The presentation will fall on an exploratory analysis of the first data collected.

*Criteria of ecosocial sustainability of social innovations and income security*

Tuuli Hirvilammi | University of Jyväskylä  
Ingo Stamm | University of Jyväskylä  
Aila-Leena Matthies | University of Jyväskylä  
Kati Närhi | University of Jyväskylä

Keywords | income system, youth unemployment, social sustainability, ecosocial

The common understanding of social sustainability usually includes three principles: social justice, the right to lead a decent life and participation of all stakeholders. The goal of social sustainability is also linked to the emphasis on social cohesion and social inclusion in EU policies. In various social indicator sets developed by UN, EU and OECD, social sustainability is assessed with themes like education, housing, poverty, public health, and good governance. These indicators can be used when assessing the outcomes of national or local social services, the sustainability of income schemes or when evaluating the achievements of various social projects. However, these indicators ignore the environmental impacts. This can lead to social service systems dependent on ecologically questionable economic growth or contradictory situations where, for instance, people are enforced by activation policies to participate in production which has ecologically harmful impacts. This paper is discussing ecosocial criteria of sustainability, which include both the notion of ecological and social sustainability. The paper presents the preliminary results of the first work package of a 4-year (2015–2019, funded by the Academy of Finland) research project in which the overall research task is to deepen knowledge on the contribution of social work and systems of income security to ecosocial transition of societies towards sustainability. We argue that individual and collective solutions created by and with young people who are already living in de-growth circumstances are worth investigation as potential sustainable models, and can possibly contribute to transform social work practise and systems of income security. The empirical data will consist of case studies in FI, DE, BE, IT, social workers focus group interviews and narratives of young people living on the margins of labour markets (work package 2 - 4 of the research project). In order to identify empirical cases the criteria of ecosocial sustainability has to be clarified. Since WP 2 will start 2016, only an overview of planned case studies

can be presented.

This paper presents a priori definition of the criteria of ecosocial sustainability as a research tool and as an evaluative concept. The definition and more specific criteria for indicators are based on a deductive content analysis of textual material consisting of selected international interdisciplinary journal articles, the policy area publications of relevant policy agencies as well as the publications of the leading research units.



## *Are local civil societies in need of social broker professionals?*

Dirk Postma | HU University of Applied Sciences  
Pim Van Heijst | HU University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | citizens' participation, social brokers, social professionals, transitions of welfare states, civil society, network society, social entrepreneurship

In contemporary civil societies social work is no longer the exclusive prerogative of social work professionals. Active citizens, their networks, associations, social entrepreneurs, corporations and professionals with a different background take up professional social work responsibilities as well (Gemeente Utrecht, 2010). In this complex field of multistakeholder involvement, conflicting interests and dynamic processes of self organisation social work professionals tend to operate more and more as social brokers; they are no longer indispensable by virtue of the services they offer to citizens in need of help or empowerment, but they are indispensable because of their ability to activate supportive networks and connect the needs of citizens in vulnerable circumstances to the supportive opportunities of others. Simultaneously, they mediate between the needs of citizens and the bureaucratic demands of (local) government institutions.

As streetlevel bureaucrats social work professionals pick up coordinating responsibilities where government withdrawal from welfare state arrangements becomes problematic. Is this shift from social service to social broker professionalism an appropriate answer to transitions in our welfare states? This question has been central in our research. Specific for our approach was the interactive methodology (Tavecchio, 2008) also described as 'collaborative evaluation' (Sullivan, 2012). The current perspectives at roles of involvement of involved actors has been incorporated in the research. (Tavecchio, 2008) of 'collaborative evaluation' (O'Sullivan, 2012). Networks of citizens, social professionals and local government professionals have played an active role in data-collection, interpretation and analysis. This creates changing perspectives and interrelationships between governments, citizens en professional organizations in the field of research and social work. During our presentation we want to explore the new conditions for meaningful dialogue between all these actors.

## *Participation and change in hybrid practices*

Sine Kirkegaard | Roskilde University

Keywords | citizen participation, social change, hybridity, narrative ethnography, partnerships, co-production

In this paper, qualitative data are presented and analyzed to comprehend how social workers, volunteers, and users participate and construct change within hybrid practices. In the Nordic countries, there is an increasing concern about the stability of the social cohesion and the welfare states' ability to secure inclusion and participation of people in marginalized positions. There is a growing interest in individuals being able to play a more active part in society and local communities as citizens, service users, and co-producers. In recent years, we have seen the growth of hybrid arrangements in the provision of public services – particularly in the field of social services. This hybridization does not only affect the delivery of social services, but studies also show that it has an impact on the people participating in these hybrid zones. These trends have created a situation where it is important to further investigate co-operations across sectors to understand what is happening in the intersection.

In this study, collaborations between the public sector and third sector organizations, supporting young adults with mental health problems, are investigated. The methodological approach combines ethnography and interview data collected in three different cases – two in Denmark and one in Sweden. The data consists of ethnographic field notes and 60 interviews with actors from different sectors: social workers, volunteers, and users. Theoretically, the investigation is inspired by theory of social interaction situated in discursive environments. Theory of storytelling and positioning are used as analytic tools to understand how the actors construct narratives and create meaning within the hybrid practices (Gubrium & Holstein, 1998; Harre & Davies, 1991). The paper introduces the strategically selected cases which enables the empirical data production and present some preliminary analysis and findings from the study. The analysis shows that the hybrid practice, as a discursive environment, produces and controls certain kinds of conflicting narratives, meanings, and understandings of selves among the actors. In the attempt to cope with these contradictions and conflicting logics, the actors' position and understanding of selves as social workers,

volunteers, and users are renegotiated, challenged, and constrained. The findings of the study contributes to the field of social work by suggesting how change is constructed through multiple and more boundless types of actor positions that emerge within the institutional complexity of hybrid practices.

### *Volunteers and social workers: what is professionalism?*

Sabrina Keinemans | Utrecht University of Applied Sciences  
Raymond Kloppenburg | Utrecht University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | civil society, professionalism, volunteer work, cooperation, social work identity

### *Background and purpose*

Welfare state as we know it is changing. Several European societies are subjected to major welfare state reforms, which should contribute to activation and participation of citizens. In the 'new' welfare state, citizens are more and more held responsible for their well-being, and civil society should support them. These changes affect the social work profession tremendously. Instead of helping vulnerable citizens, the social worker has to organize support by involving family care givers and volunteers. Our research project focusses on the cooperation between social workers and voluntary work: How do professionals cooperate with volunteers? What are the difficulties of this cooperation?

### *Methods*

Our study was comprised of two steps:

1. Literature study and interviews with 7 key informants from two social work agencies in Utrecht (one of the 'big four' cities in the Netherlands) to assess the nature and scale of the professional-volunteer cooperation in this city, and the concerns associated with this cooperation. Together with representatives of the two participating agencies, we made a design for the second step of the research.

2. Together with the two participating agencies, we selected relevant (professional and voluntary) stakeholders, active in community work in Utrecht. An invitation was sent to these stakeholders, inviting their workers to attend to focusgroup meetings about professional-volunteer cooperation. 77 people participated in six sessions: social work practitioners (40), volunteers (19, both (5), policymakers (4), unknown (9)

During these sessions, we discussed the concerns with regard to professional-volunteer cooperation, discovered in the first step of the project.

All the sessions were taped and discussion reports were written. We used MaxQDA to analyze these reports and discern central themes in the coope

ration of practitioners and volunteers. Also, 68 participants filled in a short questionnaire about professional-volunteer cooperation.

### *Results*

The majority of the research participants were positive about professional-volunteer cooperation. Concerns and difficulties were elucidated concerning delimitation of tasks, differences in responsibility and mutual expectations of social workers and volunteers. However, one of the most striking findings was that most participants had a hard time explaining the difference between voluntary work and professional social work. The boundaries between social work and voluntary work are becoming much less clear.

### *Conclusions and implications*

Especially the fact that research participants found it difficult to explain the difference between professional and volunteer work, raises fundamental questions about social work and social policy: What exactly is the professional core of social work and how does it differ from civil society initiatives? How does the social profession relate to voluntary work and civil society in the 'new' welfare state? Does current social policy still allow social workers to contribute to 'traditional' social work values?

Following on this project, we will study theories on professionalism to analyze our findings, resulting in a paper which will be presented in Lisbon, together with findings from our initial research. Our aim is to present a (preliminary) understanding of the role and position of social work in the 'new' welfare state.

### *Researching Social Work Academics*

Steven M Shardlow | Keele University  
Marian Foley | Manchester Metropolitan University  
Gabrielle Hesk | Salford University  
Su McCaughan | Salford University

Keywords | social work academics, research output, publication by social work academics, comparative, journal publication, research selectivity

### *Background*

In many countries across Europe and on other continents, Universities are subject to governmental scrutiny about various aspects of their performance. Various approaches to measure the quality of Universities have been developed using an large range of indicators, for example: numbers of students recruited; number and quality of publications by staff; or amount of grant income raised. These disparate elements become a proxy for the quality of education either at the subject or institution level. Measurement of individual research output has been aggregated using various algorithms to generate tables that contribute to ordinal rankings of universities and departments. Frequently, these indicators are compiled as tables, which may be used by applicants. Hence these indicators that measure research performance of academic staff have become an increasingly common element of university life.

In the US, there has been a long and well-established tradition of analysis of social work academics productivity in respect of key journals. This approach, as a measure of research output, has not been widely used elsewhere. Following the protocols established by Ligon, Jackson, and Thyer (2007), the productivity of social work academics that have published in UK social work journals between 2004 and 2008 has been compared with that of US Academics. Reference will also be made to ongoing work on journals published from 2009-15.

### *Methods*

The study has examined publications by social work authors in five UK Journals one a period of five years, these are British Journal of Social Work; Children and Family Social Work; Journal of Social Work; Qualitative Social Work and Social Work Education. The academic affiliations of authors

publishing in these journals was identified and recorded, from this data the certain characteristics of the authors were described.

### *Findings*

From a the data a number of tables have been produced; these give details of a number of comparators, for example, the Universities that most frequently publish in these journals, the country of origin, the ratio of female to male authors, the ratio of practice to academic authors. In addition to a descriptive ACCOUNT of these characteristics, the data from UK journals has been compared with data from US journals over a similar period. Some differences are evident, for example the UK journals contained a proportionately larger number of articles published by authors from countries other than where the journal was based than did the US journals.

### *Applications*

The advantages and disadvantages of this method of measuring research productivity are explored and the implications for the development of social work academic life investigated. It will be compared with other mechanisms to measure research output. Consideration will be given to the importance of research selectivity.

### *Practicalities and theorization of Roma Children's participatory action research*

Roth Maria | Babes-Bolyai University  
Cath Larkins | UCLAN  
Mihai Bogdan Lovu | Babes-Bolyai University  
Abel Beremenyi | UAB  
Andy Billson | UCLAN  
Barry Percy-Smith | Huddersfield Univeristy

Keywords | participation, action research, empowerment, Roma youth, reflections of participants, social change

The analysis of disadvantaged Roma children's participation in decision making and social action shows low involvement, insufficient support and low investment throughout Europe. The presentation introduces initial findings from the PEER project (funded by Directorate of Justice) which uses participatory methods and engaged young Roma people from 9 European countries as co-participants in action research processes. The goal of the project is to stimulate empowerment and participation in actions that shape their lives and bring about positive change at local, regional or national levels. This is being achieved by: 1) Supporting Roma children to develop and deliver training to build capacity; 2) Engaging Roma children as co-inquirers sharing and critically reflecting on learning from existing practice in schools and organisations working with Roma; and 3) Developing follow-on action research initiatives. The objective of the presentation is to explore our initial findings on key factors influencing effective training by, with and for Roma young people. From an analysis of documents produced by participant countries, our results centre on: 1) the evaluation instruments developed to register reflections of young people and their trainers; 2). Country specific suggestions coming from trainers and participant young people on how to improve training by incorporating these suggestions; 3. Challenges and tensions stemming from the methodology and/or ideology shift required by the project; 4. Emerging contributions to the theorization of participatory methods and their effects on disadvantaged children, their trainers, and on the relationship between these two main agents of change and education; 5. Key learning from the process so far about how an action research approach can make a difference in empowering young Roma.

*Back to the future: the role of the literature review in research responses to practice challenges*

Isabelle Brodie | University of Bedfordshire  
Lisa Bostock | University of Bedfordshire

Keywords | literature review, child sexual exploitation, research into practice

*Background*

The role of applied research in social work is subject to continued change in the context of Europe-wide policies of austerity, resulting in both cuts to public services and new types of service delivery. The question of what represents 'evidence' and the resources available to undertake empirical research become a matter of ever more subject to resource constraint. There is therefore a need for more critical, 'smart' approaches to research methodologies that avoid reinventing the wheel, but at the same time enable the generation of robust and timely evidence. At the same time, the emergence of new forms of social problems require researchers to be nimble in providing a rapid and informed response for policy makers and practitioners. This presentation considers these dilemmas in the context of a literature review of community awareness raising in regard to child sexual exploitation in the UK, undertaken as part of a wider project for Barnardo's (D'Arcy et al, 2015). Child sexual exploitation has become a matter of considerable concern, with growing evidence of both the scale of the problem and the challenges in providing an effective practice response.

*Methods*

The literature review was undertaken using systematic methods. An important feature of the methodological approach was the sampling of information from a range of service areas where community awareness is an important element in service delivery, for example initiatives relating to health promotion, sex education and early years education. This resulted in a cross-disciplinary sample of literature for analysis.

*Results*

The review established the lack of clear definition of practice associated with community awareness raising as an element in practice. It demonstrated that there is evidence for the efficacy of a community awareness raising

approach. Key features were identified as enhancing effectiveness included having clear aims and objectives; understanding the needs of the target audience; engaging wider stakeholders; and using designated workers to promote awareness.

*Implications*

Methodologically, the review demonstrated the fruitfulness of a theoretically driven and multi-disciplinary approach to literature review strategies in relation to new problems in practice. The literature review also subsequently informed the development of further empirical research and has contributed to the further development of effective, community based practice in awareness raising in child sexual exploitation services.

*Transitional Experiences and Implications for Social Life - Challenges for Social Work research*

Gerd Skjong | Volda University College

Keywords | transitional experiences, social security dependence, life course, narrative analysis

Individuals in their mid-thirties are expected to be employed and economically independent. This is at least the case in present-day Norway. However, people with disabilities and health problems may have some problems in this domain of adult life. Then they have to rely on social security and support measures from NAV (The Norwegian labor and Welfare Administration). This paper is a qualitative analysis of life course trajectories among men who in their mid-thirties are dependent on NAV-measures.

The life course approach with an emphasis on social transitions is the main theoretical point of departure. Specifically, the study is based on a model and analysis originally developed by Glen Elder and later presented in slightly different versions (Elder and Giele 2009). Four life principles are particularly relevant; Historical time and place, timing, linked lives and agency. These perspectives and concepts will be applied in the analysis, combined with theories of resilience and cumulative disadvantage (O'Rand 2009). A study of adaptation to social security and dependence among vulnerable young people benefits from adopting a process perspective. A narrative approach is therefore useful. According to Donald Polkinghorne (1995:5), it is necessary to distinguish between two forms of narratives; analysis of narrative (i.e. analysis of histories) and narrative analysis (i.e. constructing a history based on actions and critical life events that are registered through interviews and information delivered by informants). This latter approach has been my choice in this paper.

From a Norwegian longitudinal research project (Myklebust and Båtevik 2012) seven men have been selected for qualitative analysis. Information based on informant interviews in various phases of life, combined with data delivered by parents and teachers, provide the material from which seven narratives have been constructed. These narratives will be systematically compared in order to reveal similarities and differences, for example to determine to what degree they represent chaos- or restitution narratives (Vroman, Warner and Chamberlain 2009).

This special form of narrative analysis has been used by Kelly and Howie (2007) who describe how to use narrative analysis in nursing research. This variant of narrative analysis was also used by Clough in his *Narratives and Fictions in Educational Research*, where he draws "on the events of lived experience to create fictional stories of lives lived" (Clough 2002:9). Another example is McNaulty (2003) who constructs and presents 12 narratives of individuals with dyslexia. For a discussion of numbers of cases in narrative analysis, see McCance, McKenna and Boore (2001:335) referring to Polkinghorne who suggests that around six cases should be sufficient.

So far, this special form of narrative analysis does not seem to be so widely used. However, I think that this is a fruitful approach in social work to get a better understanding of the life of vulnerable people with complicated transitions to adult life.

*“Being a Case among the Others” - Experiences of Young People on Social Work Interventions*

Elina Pekkarinen | Finnish Youth Research Network

keywords | youth, child welfare, critical realism, societal reaction, experience-based knowledge, individuation

Young people form a special group in social work context. In countries like Finland, vast portion of child welfare interventions are aimed at young people with challenges at home, difficulties at school, mental issues, offending behaviour, or substance abuse. Balancing between care and control is significantly challenging among this era of growing independence and simultaneous need for support. Research knowledge on young people’s experiences on social work interventions is, however, insufficient. This presentation is based on experiences of young adults that have grown up in state owned reform schools due to multiple difficulties in their childhood and early youth. The theoretical framework of the study is based on Roy Bhaskar’s critical realism and Edwin M. Lemert’s societal reaction theory. The aim of merging these two theoretical viewpoints is to formulate a structural, relational and dynamic way of defining the positioning of the children in the institutional settings with which they are involved. Lemert’s societal reaction theory claims that people or their actions are not intrinsically deviant, but become deviant in a social process in which they are defined. Thus the informal and formal reactions to deviance are relevant. The theory is particularly known for the concept of secondary deviance. Based on the Meadian concept of interaction, the theory claims that deviance is primary for as long as it is situational, but may become secondary through a symbolic interaction with others: some interactions lead to a reorganization of one’s identity around a self-understanding as deviant. These factors shape the life history of a person, and may be critical factors in the phenomena of marginalisation. This reorganization of identity is a central focus of this presentation. This study is based on phenomenological interviews that were carried out with seven young adults that had lived for several years in reform schools. In addition, the researcher participated in a development group of eighteen experience-based experts for two years. The participants were 19 to 28 years old. The data was analyzed with interpretative phenomenological analysis IPA.

The experiences of these young people indicate that although child welfare interventions may be lifesaving, they may also cause serious threat to the self-understanding of a person with cumulated experiences of neglect. Within the institutional settings of social work, the participants had experienced insufficient support, lack of information, bypassing of their needs, and outright neglect, but also vital and empowering elements. The outcomes of the study challenge social work to pay careful attention to the way the interventions are experienced by young clients, and to their effects on the process of individuation. The results contribute to the need of experience-based knowledge and participation of clients in the construction of social work research.

## *International perspectives on children's participation in child protection court cases*

Jonathan Dickens | University of East Anglia

Marit Skivenes | University of Bergen

Tarja Poso | University of Tampere

Jill Berrick | University of California, Berkeley

Keywords | child protection, child participation, court proceedings

### *Background and purpose*

Courts and court-like bodies are an important element of formal child protection systems across Europe and the world; and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child requires that children shall 'be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body' (Article 12). Courts have to balance the rights of children to express their views, to be brought up safely, and to be brought up by their family, alongside their parents' rights, and the responsibilities of child welfare agencies. The dilemmas are common to all countries, but the legal and welfare systems and practices that have evolved to deal with them can differ greatly. The aims of this paper are to describe and assess cross-national differences in the ways that children's views and wishes are heard in child protection court cases, and consider the challenges of international research on this topic.

### *Methods*

This paper draws on findings from an ongoing study of social work and judicial decision-making in child protection cases (2013-16), comparing policy and practice in Norway, Finland, England and the USA (specifically, California). The study used online questionnaires for child protection workers and court decision-makers (judges and others, according to the different systems). The questionnaires included (amongst other things) questions about children's participation, either in the pre-court social work processes, or in the child protection court hearings.

### *Results*

This paper focuses on findings from the court decision-makers' questionnaire, about the ways that children's views and wishes are heard in child protection courts, directly or indirectly, and about the 'child friendliness' of the legal processes in the different countries. The data show differences of opinion between and within the four countries. In all of them, the cases which get to court are the most serious and intractable, and children's participation is freighted with high expectations and contradictory requirements. Children's protection and best interests are to the fore, but so too are the rights and interests of their parents. As well as exploring the data, the paper also discusses the challenges and insights of international comparative research.

### *Conclusions and implications*

Welfare and legal systems come together in child protection court proceedings, and the issue of children's involvement brings out the overlaps and the tensions between them. Furthermore, differences between countries in policy perspectives, the underlying philosophy of child welfare services, and court approaches to child protection and family support, mean that even where they share ostensibly similar values, there may be considerable differences in practice. This creates challenges but also stimulating potential for cross-national learning. Paradoxically, looking abroad can both question and reinforce preconceived ideas and routine ways of serving families and protecting children.



*'It's against the rights of the family!': Negotiating access to service users within local authority children's social work services*

Louis Patrizio | University of Bedfordshire

Lisa Bostock | University of Bedfordshire

Keywords | research ethics, professionalism, research access, reflective practice, social work education

In the UK, there is increasing recognition of the need to develop research capacity in social work in order to meet the needs of service users, communities, practitioners and policy makers (Department of Health/Department for Education and Skills, 2006). While well intended, these calls often fail to recognise the precarious position of contemporary social work, with a prevailing performance management culture and wider public controversy creating an atmosphere of defensiveness and a widespread need for workers to protect themselves as well as their children (Munro and Hubbard, 2011, Munro, 2005). Social worker research operates in a similarly contested framework of expectations; to better-inform and get close to practice, but to cause no interference or inconvenience in the process. Particularly, the proliferation of competing, and often contradictory, policies and procedures in relation to accessing data is cited as a core tension between researcher and practitioner (Munro, 2008; Roesch-Marsh, Gadda, & Smith, 2012). Given that each of these respective professionals share a common goal - to improve the lives of children and their families - and are often considered as being two sides of the same coin, this dichotomy is problematic for the discipline as a whole. Therefore, exploring such tensions is an important step in developing social work as a distinct and purposeful discipline.

This paper explores the above issues, as located in the everyday spaces of local authority children's services offices and in the everyday interactions between social work researchers and social work practitioners. It reports on data from four major evaluations of children's services in the UK and focuses specifically on the role of social workers as gatekeepers to families. All four evaluations were commissioned to investigate the impact of recent service reforms, funded via the Innovation Programme, a £130m fund to transform

children's services in the UK. All use the same core data collection method: direct observation of social work practice and interviews with parents/carers and children about their experiences of children's services. To this end we have twelve researchers of varied backgrounds 'embedded' full-time across ten local authorities in order to build relationships and encourage social workers to 'grant' access to families to ask for their participation. Very quickly, it became apparent that social workers were reluctant to have their private practice observed in this way and to have families 'interfered' with by 'outsiders'.

Data collected from quantitative research records, researcher field notes and researcher/practitioner debrief sessions has been analysed to offer a grounded account of how researchers and practitioners negotiate the complex territory of research access. Early findings suggest that worker engagement is influenced by individual, interpersonal and wider organizational factors; both on the part of the researcher and the practitioner. These are presented using a systems framework to best illustrate the multi-layered nature of interactions. These findings contribute to an informative discussion of how the social work profession can begin to address this characteristic duality between research and practice and more confidently focus on core, common goals - improving outcomes for children and young people.

*From big data to big impact: Secondary data analysis as method of inquiry in child welfare research*

Dinithi Wijedasa | University of Bristol

Keywords | secondary data analysis, big data sets, child welfare research, adoption and fostering

Secondary analysis of big data is still an emerging method of inquiry in child welfare research in the UK. This paper will focus two research studies that utilised two different types of large secondary datasets in child welfare research.

The first study [1] analysed data from the longitudinal study of young people in England (LSYPE). LSYPE began in 2004, with a representative sample of 15,770 young people aged 13-14 years. Data has been collected annually through structured interviews with young people and their parents/carers and six waves of data were analysed for this research. For the study, all the adopted (n=34) and fostered (n=55) young people in the sample were selected and were compared with a group of disadvantaged young people (n=55) and the young people in the general population (n=15,626). The aim of the study was to compare the experiences of these different groups of young people as they moved from adolescence (13-14 years) to young adulthood (18-19 years) using an ecological framework. Given the uneven sample sizes and the sampling strategy used in the survey, the study utilised a complex samples method to analyse the data.

The second study [2] analysed data obtained from the government on all children adopted between 2000 and 2011 and all children looked after by the state between 2002 and 2011 in England. The aim of the study was to establish the adoption disruption rate compared with two other types of permanent orders available for children in England: Special Guardianship orders and Residence orders. Data were available on all adoptions (n=37,335), special guardianship orders (n=5,921) and residence orders (n=5,771) made during this period. The data were analysed longitudinally, using event history analyses methods.

Examples from the two studies will be used to discuss the advantages and complexities attached with secondary analyses of big datasets in child welfare research.

*Managing the stigma of foster care with the support of friends*

Justin Rogers | University of Bath

Keywords | stigma, foster care, social capital, looked after children

This paper presents findings from a doctoral study that explored the experiences of young people living in foster care in the United Kingdom (UK). In 2014 there were over 93,000 children and young people living in public care across the UK, with 79% of them placed in a foster care setting.

The concept of social capital underpinned the theoretical framework of the study. Social capital is a concept that has previously been utilised in childhood studies and it is described as a useful heuristic to examine practices and processes in social networks (Holland 2007; Morrow 1999). The concept has particular usefulness for understanding experiences of young people in foster care, as their social networks have been disrupted, at an early age, because of their entry into public care. This disruption is often compounded by placement instability and multiple moves during their time in care.

Qualitative methods were chosen to examine the practices that young people in foster care engage in with people in their social networks. The data was collected across two qualitative interviews with ten participants, which resulted in a total of twenty interviews. These twenty interviews gathered rich, descriptive and contextualised data and produced over twenty three hours of recorded conversations and over four hundred pages of transcription. Task based visual methods were also utilised, which produced valuable data to analyse with eco-maps and over eighty photographs.

During the thematic data analysis the concept of stigma emerged as a key theme. The stigma of being 'in care' significantly impacted on these participant's relationships with people in their networks, which subsequently affected their ability to access social capital. Previous studies have already highlighted that young people growing up in foster care experience stigma (Ridge & Millar 2000; Schofield et al 2000). This study makes an important contribution to this existing literature, with findings that provide insights into the ways young people cope with the challenges of stigma. For example, findings show how the support of friends played a crucial role in enabling

these young people to be able to manage their stigmatised 'in care' identity. Findings also demonstrate how the participants in this study particularly valued support from other fostered young people, as it enabled them to form an in-group that provided them with a sense of belonging.

In light of these findings this paper proposes two key ways to better support young people in foster care who are experiencing stigma. Firstly, by recognising and valuing the importance of friendship groups and enabling young people to maintain their existing friendships across their social networks. Secondly, by developing more opportunities that bring fostered young people together, which enables them to interact with their peers without the pressure of managing stigma.

## *The Experiences of Non-Offending Mothers Whose Children Disclosed Sexual Abuse*

Hanife Serin | Jyväskylä University

Keywords | non-offending caretakers, child sexual abuse, disclosure, phenomenology, experiences, emotions, feelings, life changes, feminism

### *Background and Significance*

The role of non-offending caretakers in the disclosure of their children's sexual abuse experience is significant since they can be defined as the most reliable people in the family, however, previous research demonstrated that caretakers mostly involving non-offending mothers may have ambivalent feelings such as shame, anger, distress, self-blame when they gain awareness on their child's abuse while it is known that they can also provide support in their child's recovery process.

Not only the number of studies focusing on external life changes in non-offending caretakers' lives is insufficient, but also phenomenological studies on this topic are rare. It is anticipated that this research will improve the quality of social services for non-offending family members and the children if service providers including social workers and mental health professionals develop awareness on this group's needs, life changes, feelings and experiences.

Non-offending caretakers have a significant role in their children's later adjustment, recovery and protection in the post-disclosure. It is indicated that discovering abuse is a long, gradual and overwhelming process initiating high level of emotional distress especially if it occurs in family. After the abuse is disclosed, the caregivers mostly need support as they face many psychosocial difficulties encompassing psychological distress and family maladjustment.

### *Purpose*

This aim of this research is developing insight into the subjective experiences of non-offending caretakers regarding their children's sexual abuse. It is recently underlined that most studies related to this topic focus on the emo

tional aspects of caregivers' lives, however, studies considering life changes in external circumstances (such as location of residence, work and family structure) are scarce.

#### *Methods*

This qualitative study adopts phenomenological approach. Data collection tool consists of face-to face, semi-structured, in-depth interviews constructed with Feminist Theory. Purposive sampling consisting of 15-20 non-offending mothers whose children were sexually abused will participate in the study in Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. The participants will be accessed via governmental social services in North Cyprus and data collection will be initiated in November 2015. Data analysis will be made based on interpretative phenomenological analysis. If there are willing participants, further information could be gathered via diary method including mothers' narrative life stories. They may also be suggested to answer some of the interview questions by writing if they feel more comfortable in doing so and give consent to that. All necessary ethical applications are submitted and ethical statement received from Ethical Committee of University of Jyväskylä prior to conducting the research.

It is believed that this conference will provide a vital opportunity for presenting the preliminary research findings since the theme called "Research contributions to Human Rights, Social Justice and ethical issues in contemporary Social Work" seems to be quite relevant for consideration of this topic.

#### *On Moralism, Individualism and Consumerism in the wake of the Financial Crisis*

Ulla Rantakeisu | Karlstad University

Keywords | financial crisis, attitudes, consumption, vulnerability

The financial crisis starting in 2008 was global. Sweden is generally considered to be one of the countries least affected at the macro level, but the effects can take different shapes at the regional level and the crisis can impact on individual households and persons. Concurrent with the financial crisis, there is a development indicating that social problems have increasingly been displaced from being a public service responsibility to being an individual responsibility. This shift is taking place while the income gap is widening and more so in Sweden than in other OECD countries.

The aim of the study is to increase knowledge of the ideological and material changes that are displayed in the wake of the financial crisis. The changes are explored through studying the prevalent negative and individualised perceptions of groups now rendered vulnerable as a result of the financial crisis, how perceptions are experienced by the afflicted and which groups are now at a disadvantage in a growing consumer market.

The analysis utilized a population survey "In the wake of the financial crisis" from 2010, involving 2039 adults, ages 18-64, in the county council of Varmland, Sweden. The survey investigated aspects of changes due to the financial crisis, asking the respondents to compare their life situation before the crisis with their situation at the time of the survey, that is, two years later. The analysis shows that negative and individualised perceptions of the unemployed, social benefit receivers and the sick listed are common, in particular of the unemployed. However, a negative attitude is less common if the respondents have an unemployed or otherwise afflicted next-of-kin. Those afflicted by unemployment, having to live on social benefits or being on long-term sick leave also bear witness to having been treated negatively by others while the non-afflicted respondents do not have the same negative experience. The three vulnerable categories are also at risk of being excluded from consumption. The study shows that ideological and material displacement tendencies entail a greater risk of deprivation for those affected by the financial crisis.

*Entangled Relations – an analysis of the discrepancies in public and private labour market services for socially marginalized citizens*

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Keywords | welfare, social work, labour market policy, neo-liberalism, social and economic marginalization unemployment

The aim of this paper is to expose and analyze a paradox in the recent developments of Danish social and employment policies for long-term unemployed people with severe social problems in addition to unemployment. The paradox is that policies with the ultimate purpose of producing continuity, coherence and regular employment in the lives of marginalized people threaten to produce exactly the opposite, i.e. to increase insecurity and instability driving people into further economic and social marginalization. This paper investigates and discusses how social workers and marginalized people in two private social work organizations deal with the paradoxical political and administrative framework for their activities and manage to make sense of their daily practices.

In Denmark, over a couple of decades, social policies for adults have been gradually woven together with active labour market policies (ALMP's). In recent policy reforms (Beskæftigelsesministeriet, 2013), even the most marginalized people are categorized as 'activity ready' (as opposed to 'job ready'), meaning that they are obliged to participate in active measures with the purpose of integrating them in the regular labour market. In the same period, employment policies have taken a neoliberal turn with increasing focus on economic incentives to work and punitive measures (sanctions) towards noncompliance in the ALMP measures (Kvist & Harsløf, 2014). Within this framework it can be difficult to devise meaningful policy measures for the marginalized.

Our paper is based on an ongoing long-term ethnographic fieldwork (since 2014) in two private social work organizations with origins in Christian community work. The users are people with extensive social problems in addi-

tion to unemployment (eg. homelessness, alcohol and substance abuse, mental and physical illness), and probably belong to so-called advanced marginality (Wacquant, 2007, p. 233). The fieldwork consists of participant observation amongst users and social workers and interviews with key interlocutors: users and social workers from the case organizations, and case workers from the State's employment institutions who refer marginalized unemployed people to these organizations in lack of other options. Our case organizations offer work activities such as laundry services, removal services, general maintenance and housework such as cleaning and cooking, but most of all they offer a place for the users to spend their daytime and create social networks. Few of the users get a regular job as a result of attending the activities, but they gain social skills, stability in life, friends and a daily structure. These places create a local space of work for people who are in a sense unemployable. Our empirical material has yet to be analyzed but points to limited employment effects of the activities. As a result social workers, public case workers, and users enact out a combined game of sensemaking and (re-)describing the activities, balancing overt with covert purpose descriptions of individual users. In many ways the services provided by the case organizations offer a welcome if not necessary possibility for the marginalized users. However, the services cannot be legitimately described for what they are inside the confines of the official social and employment policies.

## *Ableism at (social) work*

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Keywords | social policy, swiss disability insurance, vocational rehabilitation services, critical disability studies, ableism

Swiss Disability Insurance (DI) has undergone three major revisions since 2004. In line with active social policies, these reforms are aimed at increasing the so-called "employability" of some of the persons asking for, or entitled to a DI pension (especially those with psychic problems). The declared goal of these reforms is to reduce the disability pensions number (new and currently being paid).

The objectives of the ongoing research project entitled "Living under the new paradigm of Swiss Disability Insurance" (2015-2017) are first to investigate how legal revisions of DI have redefined (dis)ability as well as vocational rehabilitation, and second to highlight their social effects. It further questions how the redefinition affects the experience of people undergoing vocational rehabilitation programs and their relatives.

Taking the canton of Vaud as a case study, this paper focuses on how these new social policies affect social work. The analysis relies on two types of qualitative data: 1) legislative sources (laws, bills proposed by the Federal Council to the Parliament); 2) semi-structured interviews with DI officials at cantonal and federal levels, and with social workers in charge of training programs in vocational service providers to which the task of improving beneficiaries' employability is mostly delegated by DI.

Using the concept of ableism (Campbell, 2009) as an analytical framework, we show that the new policies blur the boundaries drawn between people considered as able (to work) and those considered as dis-abled. The original concept of rehabilitation was to repair the earning ability of some (but not

all) of the disabled persons, through medical rehabilitation, auxiliary means or occupational measures (career advice, vocational training, re-training in the same field of work). New rehabilitation policies are different: they target the subjective evaluation of the work capacity and the mobilization of a person's potential through measures such as early detection and intervention, endurance training or gradual job training targeting people with mental illnesses, coaching in the workplace, and rehabilitation measures for people receiving disability pensions. On the one hand, this means that DI measures are developed even in the absence of reduction of the earning ability and are proposed/imposed to persons integrated into employment. On the other hand, the pension received by DI recipients is methodically questioned: disability has become revocable.

We analyze how this new ableist understanding of (dis)ability and rehabilitation is implemented and understood in cantonal disability offices and vocational rehabilitation services. Drawing from Critical Disability Studies (Davis, 2013; Goodley, 2014) we suggest that recent reforms have consequences which go far beyond their stated goals of increasing the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation and of reducing the costs of pensions. They affect social work through ableist assumptions which underlie our understandings of ability and disability.

*How to study transforming welfare service system from the standpoint of women in vulnerable life situations*

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Elina Virokannas | University of Jyväskylä  
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Ulla Salovaara | University of Jyväskylä

Keywords | welfare service system, institutional ethnography, women, vulnerability, Finland

The aim of our paper is to introduce the theoretical framework and research agenda of our ongoing research project studying the transforming Finnish welfare service system from the standpoint of women in vulnerable life situations.

The Finnish welfare service system is undergoing a major transformation to gain better cost-effectiveness, quality and regional availability. It includes stronger integration of social and health services, centralisation and a move to larger service-provider areas. Service users are increasingly seen as consumers that are expecting to choose and purchase the services and who are aware of their legal rights. This requires knowledge, social and economic resources that people in vulnerable life situations do not often have. Thus, the ongoing transformations might make access to and availability of services even more difficult for them. The needs of people in vulnerable life situations have not been the priority in planning the service system reforms. The research focuses on women because gender specific issues are often ignored when social problems, welfare services and vulnerable groups are studied. Unlike for men, there are strong cultural and moral expectations regarding adequate womanhood and motherhood of these women.

In our paper we argue that there is a missing link between research studying experiences of women in vulnerable life situations and research analysing structural transformation, policies and practices of the welfare service system, and it is important to find new ways, theoretically, methodologically and empirically, to connect these and thus to combine social work and social policy approaches. We suggest that a possible approach to achieve

this is institutional ethnography (IE), a research strategy developed by a Canadian feminist sociologist Dorothy E. Smith. IE means a commitment to beginning the inquiry from the standpoint of women and analysing how experiences and actualities of their everyday world are organised by social relations, structures and institutions, such as the welfare service system, to make this organisation visible and help them to understand “how it actually works”. The standpoint of women means very concretely, a local and particular place where people are physically and socially situated, thus shifting the ground of knowing. In IE, experiences of women are not studied as such but as the “point of entry” to social relations and structures. Institution in IE is not just a specific local setting (e.g. school, hospital or prison), but it is used to identify a complex of relations forming part of the ruling apparatus that is organised around a distinctive function in society.

What we are aiming to show with this research approach is that there are ruptures between women’s own understanding of their situation and service needs and the logic and the functioning of the welfare service system in how these women are seen and met, their life situations defined and services provided, how women’s local and particular experiences are transformed into abstract definitions of social problems and vulnerability that lose connections to their everyday world.

*Digital citizenship in local memory websites from a narrative perspective on empowerment*

Mike Kreek | University of Applied Science, Amesterdam

Keyword | digital citizenship, community memory, collective empowerment

In this presentation we will illustrate how an online community collecting local memories exhibits social power by looking from a narrative perspective at collective levels of empowerment. As value orientation, empowerment departs explicitly from capabilities and resources, commonly present among the citizens in local settings, to improve quality of individual, organizational and communal life. As a theoretical model, it helps to understand "the process and consequences of efforts to exert control and influence over decisions that affect one's life, organizational functioning, and the quality of community life" (Zimmerman, 2000, p. 43). Both processes and outcomes can manifest themselves on the individual level, the organizational or group level and the community level, also called micro, meso and macro level. In addition, empowerment on micro, meso and macro levels are usually regarded as mutually interdependent. The narrative approach also exhibits these aspects. "It explicitly recognizes that communities, organizations, and individual people have stories, and that there is a mutual influence process between these community, organizational, and personal stories" (Rappaport, 1995, p. 796).

Collective empowerment refers to processes on the meso level that are related to outcomes on macro levels (Hur, 2006; Zimmerman, 2000). Individuals organize themselves to "break their solitude and silence, help one another, learn together, and develop skills for collective action" (Hur, 2006, p. 530) in order to improve the quality of life in the community. Collective action is not necessarily the same as authoritative power, instead it might be more related to social power which involves "the capability to reward (or punish) causal agents, influence public debate and policy, and shape community ideology and consciousness." (Zimmerman, 2000, p. 57). In our analytical empowerment model for local memory websites, three concepts are present to describe changes in the quality of life on the community

level: community memory, cultural citizenship and community capacity (Kreek & Zoonen, 2013c). These concepts can be regarded as a perspective from which processes and outcomes in terms of lower level concepts can be framed and explained empirically. In the following we will apply these macro level concepts (community) to the meso level concepts (organization) in discussing aspects of the memories as narrative resources for collective empowerment and relate this to digital citizenship.



## *The importance of organization to social workers discretionary judgment*

Inger Oterholm Diakonhjemmet University college

Keywords | social workers judgement, importance of organization, leaving care

### *Background*

Will there be any difference for young people leaving care if they get support from Child Welfare Services or Social Services? The theme of my PhD research is social workers considerations regarding support for young people leaving care in transition to adulthood. Many youths leaving care struggle in this transition, and their needs are often not met by their families, and they are therefore in need of public support.

In Norway the youth can get after care services from Child Welfare Services until they reach 23 years of age. However several young care leavers are only given support for a short period of time after turning 18, even though they often struggle with difficulties which could imply a need of further assistance. When reaching 18 it is also possible to get support from Social Services, both as a supplement or as a replacement for support from Child Welfare Services. A high percentage of care leavers get support from Social Services, especially in comparison to other young people. Child welfare services and social services have two different target groups; vulnerable children and youth, and welfare services for adults. The guidelines of the services give a large room for discretion as to which of the organization should have the responsibility for the youth and the support given to care leavers has been criticized for being random and not sufficient.

### *Method*

My study is based on qualitative interviews with social workers from both Child Welfare Services and Social Services. The focus of the interviews is the considerations made by the social workers regarding support for young people leaving care. Vignettes, short stories, the social workers were asked to consider, were used as part of the interviews.

### *Results*

The analysis revealed three main elements that were of special importance

when the social workers examined the situation of the youths and considered giving support.

The process of categorization, the objectives of the work and to what degree the social workers considerations was influenced respectively by a public or a private logic. The interview data is analyzed in accordance with an institutional logics perspective. The differences in judgments between the social workers in Child Welfare Services and Social Services are perceived to be related to the services being dominated by different institutional logics.

### *Conclusions and implications*

The thesis provides insight into important differences about what is emphasized in considering careleavers need of support. Based on the understanding that different logics guide the social workers considerations, the two organizations focus on different aspects of the young peoples lives. The findings implies differences in support provided, and gives reasons to discuss which services should provide support for youth leaving care, as well as how the organization matters to social workers discretionary judgement.

*Documentation requirements in social work with children - When an increased documentation requirement implies a problem-oriented approach*

Signe Fjordside | Roskilde University

Keywords | social work, documentation requirements, problem-oriented approach, vulnerable children and youth

The aim of this paper is to present empirical findings on how social workers in Danish childcare units (foster care units and residential homes) work with the increased documentation requirements that entail a problem-oriented approach, and the implications of this. One of the hypotheses is that the documentation tools imply a problem oriented approach, which can influence the view on these children and youth.

Several cases of neglect and abuse of children have in the past years hit the headlines in the Danish media. This has inter alia resulted in an increased demand for documentation in social work. Social workers have to prepare action plans, development plans, status reports etc. These demands are based on the assumption that by documenting their work the performance of street level organisations can be measured and that measurement ensures quality. A similar development has, Nigel Parton argues, occurred in the UK. According to Parton, a number of serious cases of child abuse in Britain in the 1990s has been part of the reason why there is now an increasing demand to collect, share, classify and store information on all cases. Documentation is seen as the answer to how to identify and thereby avoid such cases. This increased documentation requirements have often been criticized for being time consuming and taking time from the face-to-face interaction with the children. But it is also relevant to discuss the implications of the problem-oriented focus these tools imply and hence the views of children they implicitly suggest.

The paper draws on findings from a larger qualitative organisational field study in two Danish municipalities (their foster care units) and two residential homes for children and youth, carried out as part of my PhD on social work with vulnerable children and youth. The fieldwork primarily consist of; shadowing (participant observations) of employees during their work days, interviews with executives and employees and document analysis of official

case files.

The aim of the PhD is to analyse how the organisational frame-work, professional logics and practices enable and/or limit social workers' opportunity to implement a new approach to working with these children; an approach where children's 'deviation from normality' is seen as a potential resource instead of 'developmental disabilities', 'mal-development' etc. In the paper this approach will be discussed using Sharon Wright's conceptualization of the active welfare subject. Furthermore, the paper will, with inspiration from Michael Lipsky and Evelyn Z. Brodtkin, discuss social workers opportunities to influence this work and how the interdependence between "doing policy" and "policy delivery" shows in these specific organisations. The paper will primarily contribute to the conference theme number 4 and 6. By discussing the documentation requirements the paper will raise the question about how this New Public Management thinking influences Social Work practices and thereby the clients - in this case children and youth in vulnerable situations. And furthermore the paper will focus on the social workers opportunities to influence and work with these documents and thereby discuss the relation between Social Work and Social Policy.

*The influence of organisational culture on decision making: Accountability at all costs?*

Andrew Whittaker | London South Bank University

Keywords | accountability, decision making, child protection, ethnography

*Background and purpose*

The field of child protection presents key challenges to the relationship between social policy and social work practice. In England, this is particularly visible as child protection policy has been characterized by cycles of crisis and reform for four decades. These are most commonly in response to high profile child deaths, which lead to intense, negative media coverage, public outcry and pressure for politicians to hold those responsible to account. The dominant approaches to accountability within public services reflect New Public Management philosophies and exist at the interface between the wider social policy environment and everyday social work practice. This paper reports the findings of an observational study of English child protection services that examines how organisational culture influences practitioner judgments and decision making.

*Methods*

The study has an ethnographic design with two sites, a local government child protection service and a family court assessment service. The sites were chosen as contrasting organisational settings to study how social workers made decisions. Forty days of observation and twenty-four interviews with practitioners were completed across the two sites over a two-and-a-half year period. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data and transcripts and observational field notes were coded using NVivo software.

*Results*

Comparison of the two sites identified the following three themes:

– The influence of timescales. The timescales of the court assessment service were challenging but not reported as problematic. By contrast, local government social workers reported considerable time pressures with limited resources. In response to these pressures, practitioners used a range of

operational strategies aimed at either reducing demand upon the service (operational defences) or completing work within timescales by creating shortcuts (speed practices).

– The influence of the opportunities for case discussion. Opportunities for case discussion supported a dynamic interplay between intuitive and analytical reasoning processes and provided space for practitioners to make sense of their emotions. In particular, peer discussion was central for both services but was rarely recognised within organisational cultures.

– The cultures of accountability. The family court assessment service had a distanced accountability, where their work was closely scrutinised by the court when it was completed. By contrast, local government social workers experienced a pervasive accountability culture, where their work was heavily scrutinised by a range of stakeholders who could challenge at any point. This pervasive accountability culture inadvertently led to local government social workers being more likely to manage anxiety through pre-emptive exoneration aimed at protecting them from potential future criticism.

*Conclusions and implications*

In conclusion, further debate is needed about accountability in local government child protection social work. If the approach to accountability diverts attention away from children and reduces the capacity of the practitioner to perform the task, it stops becoming a means of promoting good practice and merely becomes a means of allocating blame for the poor practice that it has unwittingly contributed towards. This is not an argument against accountability, but for better accountability that serves to promote rather than inhibit or distort good practice.

## *Decision-making Tools in Social Work: a Matter of Transparency or Blind Spots*

Jochen Devlieghere | Ghent University, Depart. Social Work and Social Pedagogy

Rudi Roose | Ghent University, Depart. Social Work and Social Pedagogy

Keywords | child welfare and protection, decision-making tools, transparency, semi structured interviews

Over the last decade, western child welfare and protection has been subjected to many reforms. This is no different in Flanders - the Dutch speaking part of Belgium - where child welfare and protection has been reconstructed by integrating the various child welfare and protection services into one shared organisational framework. This reform has been defined as a way forward to a more efficient and effective child welfare and protection system. It even has been called a Copernican Revolution towards a more responsive social work. One of the driving forces of this Copernican revolution - which lies within the lines of thought of contemporary developments such as New Public Management - is the enhanced introduction of a diversity of 'decision-making tools'. These tools are developed and used by government agencies to provide direction for decision-making procedures as well as for the development of data recording systems which provide a digital recording platform for casework. As such, the aim is to create more transparency, objectivity and predictability in capturing and responding to the needs of children and families.

In this presentation we draw on results of an empirical study where we performed qualitative semi structured interviews with front line practitioners which have to evaluate and interpret the content of these decision-making tools in order to assign the appropriate help. These results give us insight in the challenges and issues these decision-making tools pose for a transparent social work practice by showing show that (1) most practitioners express a critical and sceptical attitude towards the idea of using decision-making tools for developing a more responsive social work. As a consequence, they develop various strategies within their social work practice (e.g. filling in some text fields by themselves and taking the phone) to cope with the

pre-structured and standardised tools. Furthermore, our results show that (2) these same practitioners are experiencing a lack of openness within their own organisation and towards the government to discuss the strategies they develop. As a result, while these tools were actually developed to create more transparency, there is not only a lack of transparency, but even blind spots are created. As such, on the one hand all stakeholders (clients, social work organisations, frontline practitioners and policy makers) keep the delusion alive that these tools are actually enhancing the development towards a more transparent and responsive social work, while on the other hand it are actually the strategies, developed by the frontline practitioners to cope with the pernicious effects of these tools, which are stimulating the development towards a more responsive social work. We discuss the consequences of this tension for social work practice and research with special attention for the relation between policy and practice and the role of social work as a force for social transformation.

## *Conceptualising risk: making sense of the initial home visit*

Laura Cook | University of East Anglia

Keywords | professional judgement, risk, assessment, home-visiting, reflection, analysis, narrative

Since the publication of the Munro Report (2011), the UK has seen a renewed interest in the concept of professional judgement. Policy-makers have become increasingly concerned with the question of how social workers can be effectively supported to make sound decisions in relation to children and families. The proposed presentation will outline findings from a research project examining the way in which social workers reason, reflect and make sense of the home visit in child and families social work. This qualitative, interview-based study has employed a psychosocial methodology, examining both social workers' reasoning and affective processes in relation to their encounter with the family during an initial home visit to assess risk. The project has identified that social workers are engaged in three key areas of activity when visiting the family at home: sense-making; self-regulation; and managing the encounter. The presentation will outline findings from the first of these areas. During the initial home visit, social workers in the study made sense of the parent's narrative in order to assess parenting capacity and risk to the child. Five key aspects of the parental narrative were regarded by social workers as salient in terms of risk: coherence, emotional congruence, personal responsibility, awareness of the child's experience and openness. The presentation will explore the way in which these dimensions might be developed into a reflective aid, or a practice tool, in order to enhance professional judgement.

## *Accessibility to Social Services: the Paths of Migrants*

Carla Moretti | Polytechnic University of Marche

Keywords | Social Policies, Migrants, Social Workers

In recent decades, the development of the welfare system in Europe has been characterised by an increasing differentiation of the demands, a fact to which immigration has strongly contributed.

The study of how the welfare responds to the immigrant presence helps us to understand its distinctive features and specific characteristics of its operation, as well as to grasp the broader changes taking place.

In Italy the access and usability of health and social services, according to the law, are often compromised by the lack of information and/or awareness of their rights by migrants. Moreover operators have little knowledge of current legislation and the different application of the latter in the different regions has led more and more operators to make discretionary decisions.

The paper we are about to present is a study on access and use of social services in a municipality in the Marche Region. This study has been conducted using qualitative and quantitative tools; the context in which this study was carried out is the Group Practice of General Practitioners. A social worker was present in three group practices for eight months, in the period between November 2013 - June 2014, within a project of the European Fund for the Integration, carried out with the collaboration of the Polytechnic University of Marche (Department of Economics and Social Sciences), some Municipalities of the Marche Region and the Social Co-operative COOSS Marche Onlus. The goal was to experiment an innovative service of guidance and support, to ensure better access to social services by the migrants. Additionally, the social worker handed out a questionnaire, which was then filled out by about a hundred migrants, aimed at analyzing the demands and the type of services mostly requested, the opportunities and the difficulties with regards to access to social services and finally the degree of satisfaction of the responses received.

The overall results of the research showed the need to find new ways of intervention of the social worker, allowing on the one hand to facilitate the

meeting with the migrants in contexts already known to them, and on the other to promote access to services in the territory.

A significant issue which should definitely be taken into consideration, at local level, is the relation between public services and non-profit social organizations, since the latter play an important role in offering solutions the various problems of migrants. This is due to the fact that often, in the territory there is no shared planning about the intervention methods, and as a result there's a high risk of fragmented and ineffective interventions. The study helped to identify the best practices that need to be validated and reinforced; to implement, with regards to migrants, a political and social action of broad spectrum, including: hospitality, integration, housing, employment, constitutional rights in general, as requested by the Presidency of the Council of Europe.

*Lost in transition; Exploration of the experiences of Afghan unaccompanied asylum seekers in Greece*

Vasiliki Theocharidou | University of Edinburgh

Keywords | forced migration, displacement, war-affected children, dehumanization human rights, childcare and asylum policy, social work

#### *Background and Purpose*

Europe is witnessing major challenges as forced migration and mass displacement evokes considerable debate and concerns about the response to the problem regarding the reception, protection and care of people on the move. Yet there is lack of attention and a paucity of qualitative research exploring the experiences of children and young people on the move who escape turbulence in search for a safer life (Dunkerley et al. 2006; Chatty et al. 2005). This qualitative study addresses the gap by exploring the per-departure, journey, in transit and upon arrival experiences of young Afghan boys who are known in the refugee jargon as 'unaccompanied minors'.

#### *Study Objectives:*

The study sets out to explore the meaning young people make of their experiences as they head from Afghanistan to Greece. It is thus explored how they are perceived, treated and governed as a group of young asylum seekers inside and outside of the reception centers in Greece. The intersection of childcare and asylum is also examined as there are assumptions that the special needs of children and young people are ignored when the dimension of migration and asylum exists (Mitchell 2008). Another important dimension that the study seeks to reflect upon is to identify prevalent Greek attitudes towards unaccompanied minors.

#### *Research Questions*

1. What are the experiences of Afghan unaccompanied asylum seeking minors in Greece?
2. How do Greek professionals and officials contribute to the promotion of unaccompanied minors' well-being?
3. What is the nature of the existing Greek asylum and childcare regimes towards Afghan unaccompanied minors and what differences if any, do legal

status and asylum policy make for unaccompanied minors?

4. What are the Greek attitudes towards Afghan unaccompanied asylum seeking minors?

### *Methodology*

The research presented here is rooted in a case study which was conducted in five reception centers dispersed in different parts of Greece within six months in 2012 and involved: semi-structured interviews, focus groups and participatory activities with 30 Afghan young people, semi-structured interviews with 12 professionals (including social workers) and semi-structured interviews with 9 officials.

### *Results*

Overall, the findings revealed that the continuous status of 'illegality' as a side effect of transnational developments at a global and European level has a major impact on the construction of the experiences of unaccompanied minors and in particular on shaping their identities and sense of self-belonging in the host country. These young people become commodified and dehumanized, thus experience emotional, physical and social abuse. On the other hand they develop robust resilient mechanisms along the way and form important social networks for their survival that overall underscore the inadequacies to be found in the asylum and child protection policies. Their presence as children in care incurs both sympathy and prejudice by the professionals and their presence in public generates mostly hostile attitudes and some welcoming responses.

The study seeks to contribute empirically to discourses on welfare and asylum policy, to develop an understanding on the well-being of unaccompanied minors and thus make a contribution to the wider social science debate about migration and childhood.

*Four stages in the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers from Darfur in Israel: A qualitative study*

Vered Slonim-Nevo | Ben Gurion University of the Negev

Maya Lavie-Ajayi | Ben Gurion University of the Negev

Keywords | refugees, asylum seekers, trauma, forced migration

The study explores the perspectives of asylum seekers from Darfur with regard to four stages of their journey: before leaving Sudan, their journey to Israel, living in Israel, and future's plans. Group interviews were conducted with 8 male participants. During the first stage themes included: the urgent need to run for your life, and the transition from family life to being alone. During the second stage themes included: experiencing extreme conditions and intense emotions. During the third stage themes included: experiencing positive and negative experiences. During the fourth stage themes included: keeping hope alive under uncertainty. Implications for practice are suggested.

### *Findings and discussion*

Throughout the four stages in the participants' lives, they experienced struggle for survival, fears, and insecurity. The first two stages - life in Darfur and the escape - are particularly traumatic and intertwined with horrifying experiences, such as kidnap and murder. In Israel, they were finally able to practice a relatively routine life. However, this period was over when they were forced to enter the Holot detention center - a place in which they feel humiliated, lacking control over their lives, bored, and desperate. The stories reveal high hopes and desires for finding a place in the world - a safe place in which a person can receive basic human rights, study, reunite with his family, and continue with his life. Participants constantly alternated between feelings of despair and hopelessness on the one hand, and times in which they are actively working towards improving their conditions and fight for their rights on the other hand. The despair is associated with traumatic events, discrimination, injustice, and the inability to plan for the future; hopes and resilience are associated with the support of family, friends, and members of local NGOs. In addition, social activism and community orga

nization are also helpful and contribute both to practical achievement, such as influencing public opinion with respect to the refugees' plight, and to the lifting of their spirit.

The findings presented here have important implications for social work practice in Israel and globally when considering the plight of asylum seekers. Social workers and other social practitioners are essential in providing refugees and asylum seekers with both practical and mental support. On the practical aspect, practitioners should connect asylum seekers with local NGOs and social welfare agencies who could provide information, legal assistance, healthcare, child care, housing and employment. This is particularly important as these people arrive to the new country confused and scared. But, practical assistance is needed on the long run as well. Establishing human rights clinics, together with local NGOs, could be a good way to offer practical and accessible support.

On the psychological aspect, social workers and other social practitioners should offer professional counseling to those who suffered traumatic events in their journey to a safe place. People who had experienced torture, murder, rape, and other horrible experiences should not be left without treatment and support. Clinical work should include the opportunity to process traumatic experiences; the ability to understand these experiences in the political and social context in which they occurred; address concern for family members; and discuss fear for the future, plans, and hopes. While assisting this vulnerable population, it is also important to acknowledge their inner and outside resources, including social support, ability to function under extreme conditions, cooperation with local NGOs, and improving their knowledge and skills. Thus, any professional help should focus on these abilities and work hand-in-hand with asylum seekers to improve their legal, social, and personal conditions (Hernández & García-Moreno, 2014).

In terms of the Israeli government's policies, immigration laws should be established to define who is entitled to asylum in the country, what are the civil rights and duties of refugees, how they can support themselves financially, who will care for their health - all questions that are not currently addressed in an organized and legal manner. Without well-established immigration laws, the conditions of the refugees and asylum seekers change from month to month and they cannot take care of their daily lives and plan their future.

## *Care relations of resettled refugees after arrival in Finland*

Kati Turtiainen | University of Jyväskylä, Kokkola University Consortium

Keywords | refugees, care, resettlement

The situation of forced migrants is unbearable in the many parts of the world and therefore people escaping, for example, war and armed conflicts are increasing radically and rapidly. The number of asylum seekers is increasing also in Finland. Asylum seekers and refugees may live in a temporary situation without any state protection for decades. For refugees, one possibility is to get resettled to the developed countries. Finland has been traditionally such a resettlement country for many refugees who has been recognized by UNHCR. Refugees are often selected on the grounds of vulnerabilities, such as chronic illnesses, woman at risk or age.

This abstract addresses the resettlement of the refugees to Europe and especially to Finland. Resettlement does not necessarily solve the problems of refugees if the settlement and integration process are not successful. In the early stages of settlement, refugees become often fundamentally dependent on the stakeholders of the host society. My starting point is that for the better resettlement, refugees and the host society must form positive care relationships. By care, I mean those formal and informal relationships where people are dependent on each other. Besides, the care is understood basically as a social and emotional mutual relationship, which concern all people, not only those who are considered to be the most vulnerable ones. In social work, such a dependency is one bases, which should be taken into consideration in its everyday practices.

The data consist of 13 interviews of resettled refugees. The main interest is to know to whom the informants form the primary formal and informal care relations in early stages after arrival to Finland. Preliminary results of this study includes six different kinds of experiences of care relations. These relationships are formed between the own ethnic community or association, Finnish civil servants, religious communities and Finnish people, such as neighbors. There are also refugees, who do not find any people outside their family, whom to rely. Besides, there are experiences where the prior dependency relations are between those, who are still living in their countries



of origin. In the latter situation, the own settlement and integration seems to be in the secondary place in their lives. The only difference is that single mothers and victims of torture were benefitting the strong presence of public settlement and integration services. As a conclusion, civil society seems to be an important partner and independent agent in the settlement and integration social work with refugees. Therefore, the co-operation between settlement social work and immigrant associations and communities is vital in order to meet the needs of resettled refugees.

### *Immigrant Youth Resilience Intervention Study*

Alexa Smithosborne University of Texas at Arlington

Keywords | resilience, immigration, youth, trauma-exposed, reflectivity, social engagement, legal status

#### *Background and Purpose*

While there are a number of interventions to sustain resilience among children living in adversity, there is a shortage of evidence-based prevention programs for specific bicultural sociocultural groups, particularly immigrant newcomers whose legal status is questioned and whose permanent residency is challenged and therefore uncertain. On the premise that existing bureaucratized programs serving this population may benefit from alternative intervention paradigms, this social work research team used Simmel's conceptualization of the construct of "The Stranger" to inform a resilience theory framework as the basis for developing a brief preventive service for this target group.

Consistent with Simmel's formulation of simultaneous nearness and distance, the intervention design focused on building the skills of reflectivity and selective engagement/disengagement with social networks in the mainstream cultural context. Consistent with resilience theory, the intervention design privileged the building of information about and access to external resources which were empirically supported as protective mechanisms. Skill-building and protective factor access among the youth was echoed in empowerment of their parents to extend the resilience process across multiple contextual levels (e.g., school, church, legal advocacy).

This mixed methods study investigated this manualized brief resilience theory-based parent/child program designed to assess differential susceptibility to trauma and to support resilience among Spanish-speaking immigrant youth, compared to non-immigrant bicultural youth.

#### *Methods*

The manualized intervention protocol for parallel child and parent sessions was tested using a mixed methods multiple case study design. The sample

(n=68), included 28 parents and 40 children ranging in age from 6 to 12. Children were screened at pretest to ensure they did not meet criteria for a stress/trauma disorder diagnosis. Baseline data were collected at two data points using parent and child self-report instruments, structured observation of participants, and assessment of their community settings by at least two independent observers. These included resilience and environmental measures. Intervention phase observational data were collected at each session using standardized observational behavioral rating scales and narrative progress notes by at least two independent raters for parent and child sessions.

### Results

Participants completed at least 3 sessions. All children showed an increase in prosocial and self-regulated behaviors across multiple settings. An increase in engagement in positive ecosystems and decrease in risky settings occurred for 30%. Parents reported an increase in their use of social reinforcement and reduction in punishment. Parents were also observed to increase their knowledge of environmental resources, advocacy, behavioral management strategies, and resilience factors.

### Conclusions and Implications

Brief, targeted preventive services may offer cost-effective benefits to immigrant youth. Domains of benefit address long-term risk areas of environmental resource access, self-regulation, social behaviors, and behaviors related to academic persistence and success.

### *Crossing the boundaries in research, practice and education: a case of a special course*

Raija Koskinen | University of Helsinki

Keywords | boundary-crossing, education, innovation, multi-professionalism, practice, research

The need for interdisciplinary and multiprofessional approaches is often emphasized in the field of social work. In order to implement these kind of approaches in research and practice, this need should be addressed also in education. In this study, a special course realized in the university of Helsinki in the spring 2015, is described and analyzed. The content and the structure of the course is shortly described and an evaluation is presented. The aim was to examine to what extent the innovative elements of the course helped to meet the aims: to cross various disciplinary and professional boundaries and to do developmental work in practice during the formal university studies.

The course was organized with an aim to bring together actors from various fields with an interest for work with young people in risk of marginalization. 30 students majoring in social work, social psychology, sociology, journalism or pedagogy participated in the course. In addition to university students the course was also offered as a form of further education for interested. As a result 10 professionals participated bringing in their practical experience. The course provided them all an opportunity to both learn and to do developmental work together.

Organizing the course was initiated in collaboration between a developmental project DelSam and the Swedish school of social sciences in the University of Helsinki. Social work was the discipline responsible in organizing the course and inviting students from various disciplines to join in. Other than lectures, the course consisted of a developmental work done in groups. The groupworks were presented for all the course participants and an expert panel during one intensive day. Additionally, all the participants wrote individual essays. The data of this study consisted of all the planning documents of the course as well as all the course material and the feedback gathered. Additionally the notes of the responsible teacher were used. In

the analysis both content analysis and process evaluation were used in order to detect the critical elements.

To conclude, bringing together actors from various disciplines and fields resulted into fruitful knowledge production processes. When addressing their chosen themes in group work the participants learned from each other. Among other things, it was considered useful to learn of the ways others conceptualize the same phenomena. To realise this kind of an educational setting demands more preparatory work than traditional lectures. However, it was worth testing new ideas in teaching to create innovations for learning and developing. The experiences of this course are to be used as another special course with the same theme is organized in spring 2016.

Social workers meet increasing demands to cross boundaries in their practical work. This need should be recognised also in research and education. This study contributes with concrete, hands-on description of an innovative educational setting. The results indicate that many of the solutions used when realising the course, could be utilized also when addressing a different topic.

### *The role of research in social work perceived by Slovak students*

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Jana Levicka | University in Trnava

Keywords | social work research, research roles, social work students  
social work education

#### *Background*

Research in social work is seen as an integral part of the curriculum in the university training of future social workers. By getting to know research methods and procedures during the study and student participation in research activities the school has to prepare the students for the implementation of individual or collective research activities in practice. Social workers in practice are expected to regularly carry out research on the evaluation of their own professional conduct, or the quality of social work or social services. NASW Standards and CSWE emphasize not only the importance of teaching research and scientific skills, but also demand study programs to clearly define how research curriculum contributes to the student's use of scientific knowledge for practice.

In Slovakia only occasionally social workers in practice use research to evaluate their interventions or to evaluate program outcomes. This could be due to the fact that students consider courses dealing with research as necessary for the successful processing of the final thesis. To verify this assumption, we thus seek answers to the following research questions: How do students perceive the role of research in social work? How do students view the use of research in practice social worker?

#### *Methods*

Quantitative research strategy was used. 450 students completed the questionnaire with Likert type questions, which focused on the perception of research and its possible applications in social work. All respondents were social work students from several universities and colleges in Slovakia. Research took part in the full-time and part-time students, of Bachelor's or master's social work program. Statistical analysis using SPSS was provided to compare students of different levels and schools of social work.

### *Results*

Students mostly view research as separate and not directly related to the practical execution of social work. The possibility of applying research in social work are not perceived in traditional social work, but for students is almost exclusively associated with the notion of academia. Even smaller application of research in social work practice saw part-time students. Significant differences between schools were not found.

### *Conclusions and Implications*

Based on the research findings we see as important that students not only presented information on how to carry out research, but that the greater emphasis in particular on how to implement research practices in direct social work practice. One of the options to achieve this ambition, we see the participation of students in the research process throughout the study, not only during courses dealing with research. Another possibility would be to require schools to students filed during practice carried out an assessment of its procedures as it would one day be used when evaluating interventions.

### *The space in between. Preparing students for social work practice*

Lorna Montgomery | Queen's University Belfast

Katharine Dill | Queen's University Belfast

Joe Duffy | Queen's University Belfast

Gavin Davison | Queen's University Belfast

Keywords | social work education, preparation for practice, module evaluation, service users and carers

### *Background*

Preparing social work students for practice is a global challenge for all social work educators. This analysis explores Queen's University Belfast's efforts to prepare students in their educational transition into social work practice. This Northern Irish University, and its collaborative partnership with local social work organizations, has generated a comprehensive educational model for novice social work students. The inclusion of field educator, academic teaching partnerships and service user involvement are unique features of a 12 week Preparation for Practice model. This qualitative exploration seeks the multidimensional perspectives of students, service users, practice teachers and academic tutors.

### *Methods*

The research aims sought to explore if the course content of the Preparation for Practice module helped students develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required to move into a practice learning environment.

All 112 first year students were recruited and were asked to participate in the on-line survey and focus groups. All of the field educators, academic teaching staff and service users involved in this module were invited to participate in the study.

An on-line survey was sent to the students, with a separate link to the field educators and academics at the beginning and end of semester. This was done to elicit perspectives of the module content at the beginning of the learning journey and then again, post semester, when perspective and ideas may have shifted. The questions which emerged from the recurring themes in the initial on-line survey response were used to develop semi-struct

tured questions for the focus groups. Three focus groups of students (total number = 20) and one of service users (N= 8) were completed during the semester. The service user group consisted of individuals with experience of both caring and being in receipt of social work services. Focus groups were audio- recorded, fully transcribed and thematically analysed.

### *Results*

The main overarching themes were: 1) Setting the Stage: Creating the Right Learning Environment 2) Becoming a Social Work Professional 3) Making Learning Real. The term 'self-belief' highlighted a perspective from students that this academic journey was both a personal and professional transformation that required examination of inner values, and belief in one's sense of self. For academic staff and field educators, the learning environment was closely aligned with supporting the student, and building confidence in their role transition. The service users situated themselves as the catalyst for change: conduits for transformative learning opportunities for the students.

### *Conclusions and recommendation*

The meta-themes of creating the right learning environment and transitioning into the professional role speak to the broader and complex navigation between academia and the practice world. The conclusions require us to acknowledge that students may enter the social work programme with little knowledge of the social work role. It is incumbent upon social work educators to cultivate a learning environment that is robust with real world examples, and provides a learning environment that promotes engagement, effective use of feedback in relation to social work engagement with service users, and promotes resilience.

*Does Service User and Carer involvement in social work education promote person-centred social work practice? An examination of student discourses*

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Keywords | service user involvement, social work education, discourse analysis

As service user and carer involvement is forming an integral part of social work educational programmes in the UK the evidence-base for its impact and potential outcomes is still growing. Support and commitment towards such activities is widespread, but the evidence-base as to outcomes for students is limited. Some of the direct feedback from students, lecturers and service users in the literature points to values being central to this educational exchange. Yet, an important question in this area, and a subject that warrants rigorous research is whether these 'attitudes' and 'abilities' can be taught on social work courses.

This research aims to examine the involvement of service users and carers in the classroom and the impact on students' values in more depth. In particular, the research will adopt a discourse analysis approach, focusing on the ways in which students use language to express and construct their understanding and relationship to the people they will work with. Are these discourses informed by person-centred values (empathy, use of self) or do they tend to be dominated by professional jargon? Are elements of the power interplay clearly articulated, or are potentially oppressive attitudes present? The research data have been collected from one BA social work student cohort at CCCU in the UK. As part of their second year, the students attend the module 'Citizens, Service Provision and Society'; service user and carer involvement is integral in the planning, delivery and assessment of the module. The research data include a) students' initial statements on what is a 'service user' and a 'carer', b) their reflective essays, c) their end-of-year Assessment of Practice Tools, d) a focus group a year later.

Some initial findings point to professional discourses informing the students' writing around service users and carers. The initial statements around service users represent them as needing support, as empowered and knowledgeable, as burdens and as complex ("difficult but inspiring"). The stu

dents' reflective essays are characterised by emotional language (i.e. 'I was shocked', 'I felt ashamed', 'surprised'), pointing to an emotional response to the service user narratives. The emotional language is not so evident in the end-of-year practice documents, yet reflective writing is present, alongside strong commitment to social work values. Finally, the focus group discussion confirmed the emotional impact of service user and carer narratives, and the difficulty in maintaining the purity of social work values when in practice. The analysis of the data is ongoing; nevertheless, this research can shed some light on areas of professional discourses and how these are shaped, affected and influenced by service user and carer involvement in social work education. Furthermore, I will argue that discourse analysis can further influence social work research, as it can shed light to issues around professional power, values and practice. The dominance of rigid professional discourses can potentially perpetuate stereotypes and stigma; we need to establish whether service user and carers as co-educators can challenge some of these tendencies.

*Evidence based practice in social work. Perception and attitudes among Norwegian social workers*

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Vidar Myklebust | Volda University College  
Randi Bergem | Volda University College

Keywords | evidence based practice, social work, neoliberal governing

### *Background*

The concept "Evidence based practice" (EBP) has traveled from medicine into any kind of practice in the welfare state. As such it is framing professional practice also in social work. But, what is EBP, and how does social workers perceive it? Although the concept escapes a precise definition, it is used as a trade mark label, to ensure that practice is based on science, and thereby effective and of high quality. In medicine, the concept was originally defined as "The integration of best research evidence with clinical experience and the users preferences" (Sackett et al, 1996), and as such hardly controversial. However, it has been contested within most professions, also in social work. The reason for this variety seems to be two-fold: i) an unclear and unreflected use of the concept, and ii) the fusion between this concept and neoliberal governing. Concerning the first: EBP makes epistemological claims about theory and practice in two ways: defining the criteria for what should count as knowledge, and predict that this knowledge will give "best practice". Best knowledge should follow a methodological "gold standard", where randomized controlled studies (RCT) are on top of the hierarchy. Simplified, this tells us that a treatment works well for an average patient within a diagnostic group. The next level is the implementation of this knowledge. While the original definition presupposes professional discretion in deciding the influence from the three elements (research evidence/experience/user preferences), it seems that EBP now has merged with neoliberal governing and performance technologies (Dean, 1999) which are promoting standardization and a "one size fits all" attitude. In treatment, standardization of practice could be unproblematic where the relationship between measures (input) and effects (output) is stable and the predictive validity is high. However, when quality heavily depends on relationships and contextual factors

(as in social work), adapting to the specific situation presupposes discretion and individualization, not specified in manuals. While EBP may support practice in some situations, uncritical adherence to EBP in social work could undermine the serviceusers right to be met as subjects within their own life-world. What might be at stake is the understanding and definition of the professionals' mandate and loyalties. Against this background, it is important to explore the way practitioners within social work understand, make use of, and evaluate the concept and rethoric of EBP.

#### *Methods*

As part of a comprehensive survey to social workers in four counties in western Norway, recruited by their labor-union (N=2060), the informant was asked if thy knew the concept EBP, and to rate (agree/disagree) 11 statement about EBP, some critical, som positive and some neutral.

#### *Results*

While most of the informant (90%) has some knowledge about the concept, very few endorsed the original definition based on RCT as gold standard. Analysing the statements about EBP, about half of the sample has a neutral stance, while the other half are almost equal divided between criticals and followers. Interesting, older and well-educated social workers has both more knowledge about the concept, and a more critical attitude.

#### *Conclusion*

There is a need to raise the social workers awareness about challenges implied by EBP.

*The use of the Participative and Transformative Evaluation in the P.I.P.P.I. programme in Italy: introducing a performance-based culture within the Child Protection Sector empowering families and professionals as co-researchers*

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Marco Ius | University of Padua  
Diego Di Masi | University of Padua  
Ombretta Zanon | University of Padua  
Paola Milani | University of Padua

Keywords | participative evaluation, co-researchers, child protection system

The Italian Ministry of Welfare, in association with University of Padua, promote an intensive-care-programme called P.I.P.P.I. that stands for Programme of Intervention for Prevention of Institutionalization. It is inspired by the fictional character Pippi Longstocking, whose life is an amazing resilient metaphor. The first and the second stage of the programme's were carried out two year period each (2011-2012; 2012-2013) in 10 Italian cities. Moreover, in 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 the first and the second steps of scaling up has begun, where 82 new cities and approximately 1000 children are involved. The P.I.P.P.I. aims to prevent out-of-home placement and to respond to problems linked to child neglect in view of all children's right to quality care. The presentation will consider the first and the second stage of the programme, that involved 836 professionals (social workers, psychologists, home care workers, neuropsychiatrists) working in 10 Child Protection Services. The study used a pre- and post-test design incorporating both quantitative and qualitative approaches (questionnaires and documentation analysis). Data concerned overall 320 children (233 families) between 0-14 years of age.

Data collection procedures of the programme, realized a path called participative and transformative evaluation (P.T.E. - Serbati, Milani, 2013). Data were collected directly by professionals with families, considering all of them as co-researchers. P.T.E. used measures and data in a double function: (1) of accountability, in order to collect information about the quality of interventions; (2) of negotiation (Guba & Lincoln 1989) between all the people

who are important to the child's development. They were expected to work together around data and measures, that were used as means to identify both the strengths and the difficulties. Practitioners become co-workers and co-researchers with parents, teachers and other actors in helping to foster positive child developmental pathways.

Measures that were used are: (1) our Italian adaptation of the British Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families, including (1a) the related questionnaire to measure family-functioning and (1b) the grid useful to build the shared assessment and care plan, and (2) SDQ and (3) MsPSS questionnaires, that measure respectively children's behavior and families' social support.

Results of P.I.P.P.I., that will be presented, are encouraging. They are organized in three categories, in order to monitoring the double function of P.T.E.: (1) final results, highlighting any changes in the children's functioning or welfare and (2) intermediate results (parenting practices and, family and environmental conditions) both monitoring the accountability of the programme; (3) proximal results (participation experiences of children and parents, integration among different practitioners, intensity of support offered by programme) monitoring negotiation processes introduced by P.T.E.

Through the P.T.E., the P.I.P.P.I. has experienced, a double interrelated outcome: (1) to identify and widespread ways to respond to problems linked to child neglect; (2) to start to realize a performance-based culture within the Italian Child Protection sector, requiring practitioners to focus on results in order to determine the quality of social interventions bearing in mind the points of view of all people who are important to the child's development.

## *The sources of knowledge needed for the development of social workers' intuition: a tentative typology*

Yekoutiel Sabah | Hebrew university

Keywords | knowledge use, organizational learning, intuition, tacit knowledge, hybridization

The commitment of social workers is to the needs of their clients in the context of their community and society. As such, they must base the decisions they take on the best available professional knowledge. As this knowledge evolves, practitioners must regularly learn new methods and update the arsenal of the interventions they use. Consequently, social agencies managers have to set the conditions that guarantee that practitioners are able to do so. To this point, it seems that the managerial attempts to achieve this goal consist primarily in the transfer of knowledge to practitioners either directly, by promoting evidence-based practice and by smoothing the access of social workers to research findings or, indirectly by imposing guidelines and protocols. However, practitioners all too often disregard evidence and instructions and allow their actions to be guided by intuition, notably in complex and uncertain situations. Managers should therefore support the capacity of practitioners to build an expertise-based intuition. They need to encourage deliberate practice and to support the use of different sources of knowledge as social workers reflect on their patterns of action. Moreover, managers need to guarantee that these practitioners have access to the varieties of knowledge in the knowledge hybridization process whenever hybridization refers to the combination of different forms of knowledge that are acquired and applied during the practitioner's professional action. However, very few efforts have been made to map knowledge sources for practice in a way that incorporates different forms of knowledge and seeks to represent the complexity and dynamism of knowledge use in practice.

My presentation - which is based on a PhD thesis I am completing - will be a preliminary attempt to map those sources of tacit and explicit knowledge that may be used by practitioners. The typology I will suggest, although it acknowledges the central role of evidence in effective practice, aspires to assist managers and educators by mapping the different ways practitioners



may use and create knowledge for practice. It is inspired by experiential learning theory rather than by a “transmission” model of adult learning. Accordingly, the typology perceives learning as a continuous process of examination of beliefs and ideas and as the resolution of the disagreements this examination may initiate during professional experience. This typology aims to be a managerial tool, although it can be also useful in social work training. It can help managers and trainers to design interventions in order to promote the intentional examination of tacit knowledge, stimulate the construction of knowledge repositories and foster the creation of actionable knowledge.

### *Researching invisible things in social work*

Kelly Smith | The University of Waikato

Keywords | grounded theory, critical incident technique, social work values, critical reflection

There is growing concern that the current social and economic environment makes it difficult for social workers to adhere to traditional humanitarian principles that underpin professional practice. As a consequence of austerity the values that orient social work are problematically located within the current climate of increased bureaucratization and neoliberalism. In this locale values can become intangible and creativity is needed to research them below the surface of appearances.

Research into abstract concepts like values, power and risk is challenging as it involves a movement away from topics that can be objectively classified by their defining features. This presentation reports on the methodology of a project that investigates how social workers understand and negotiate professional and contextual value demands. To do this I summon a critically reflective approach in order to discern the abstract value concepts embedded in social work practice, as rights related values such as human dignity and liberty involve abstract thinking and aren't easily perceived in everyday practice.

A grounded theory methodology is utilised as it is an 'excellent tool for understanding invisible things' (Star, 2007, p.79). Grounded theory enables researchers to move beyond description into context in order to develop theoretical knowledge. By utilising grounded theory methods I describe how I am able to render a holistic interpretation of events as they unfold to illustrate value demands and develop an increased understanding about influences, motivations and contexts (Charmaz, 2013). This on-going PhD research into the practice experiences of 15 health social workers will gain insight into how social work values are perceived, negotiated and experienced in practice. This research utilises a critical incident technique (Fook & Gardiner, 2007) to generate meaning about value demands through a series of qualitative interviews.

Professional social work values are a fundamental and cohesive ingredient in

social work practice. Values inform the identification of the right action for a given situation. Social work values guide competent practice, so continued understanding about the influence of values on social work knowledge and skills is needed. More research into social work values will improve understanding about how the acknowledged value base of social work is reflected in social work practice in this time of rapid social change.

This presentation will contribute to the conference themes through its dual emphasis on reflectively examining the impact of the current working environment on the ability to adhere to core social work values and the acknowledgement that while research into abstract concepts can be challenging, with creativity and innovation further understanding and insights can be developed. At the conclusion of this presentation the attendees will have a better understanding of researching invisible things.

### *Reform of Social Work Education in Switzerland: What Implications for the Practice of Social Educators Working in Institutions for Persons with Disabilities?*

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Valérie Perriard | University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland - School of Social Work, Fribourg, Switzerland

Keywords | social work education, social educators, work organization

#### *Background and purpose*

Over the past 15 years, the Swiss social work education system has undergone profound transformations, including the multiplication of education levels. In the field of social education in particular, there are now three different levels of diplomas: socio-educational assistant with a diploma of vocational education and training (SEA) (upper secondary level), social educator with a diploma of higher vocational education and training (SEH) (tertiary level B) and social educator with a Bachelor of Arts (SEU) (tertiary level A). This reform has resulted in major transformations of social work professions, professional practices, work organization in social institutions and labour division. In this context, this study investigated the relationship between social educators with different levels of education (SEA, SEH, SEU) working in institutions for persons with disabilities in French-speaking Switzerland. What does this study tell us about professional profiles and practices (activities, responsibilities, competencies) of social educators with different levels of education (SEA, SEH, SEU)?

#### *Methods*

In this 2-year qualitative study (2014-2016), 46 semi-structured interviews were conducted with employers (n=13) and the social education professionals concerned: SEA (n=11), SEH (n=10) and SEU (n=12). The interviews assessed their representations and experiences regarding the labour division between these professions, in particular their specificities and potential overlaps in terms of professional activities, responsibilities and competencies. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed using a thematic

analysis approach.

### *Results*

The findings show that, despite the reform of social work education, only a fraction of institutions make any distinctions at a formal level between professionals from different educational backgrounds. The main difference lies in responsibilities and competencies. Employers tend to assign tasks linked to the residents' everyday care to the SEAs and responsibilities and activities linked to the residents' reference, to the residents' group organisation, and to the socio-educational team management to social educators with higher levels of education (SEH and SEU), particularly when recruiting. This reveals a certain number of issues for social work practice, as this paper will point out, such as the gap between the formal divisions and the way are being implemented within institutions.

### *Conclusions and implications*

The work organisation observed and the competencies expected from professionals with different levels of education (SEA, SEH, SEU) raise questions about the relevance and feasibility of implementing a social work education model with three levels of education. Further analyses will inquire about the views and experiences of all actors (SEA, SEH, SEU, employers) regarding the collaboration between these professionals.

### *Evaluation of alignment between social work education and social work practice*

Raymond Kloppenburg | Utrecht University of Applied Sciences  
Ed de Jonge | Utrecht University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | innovation of social work education, alignment between education and practice, reinventing learning outcomes

### *Background and purpose*

Over the past decade, the system of social benefits and social security in the Netherlands has undergone a dramatic change. A dominant trend is the decentralization of social policy from national government to local communities with the aim to bring social care more integrated and closer to citizens. These changes are coincided with drastic budget cuts and with increasing demands on citizens to take more responsibility for their own and each other's lives. Social workers have to act according to the changing relationship between citizens, government and social agencies. For social work education this raises the question whether students are properly prepared for the rapidly changing society and professional practice. Do learning outcomes and curriculum content still align with the demands of current professional practice?

### *Method*

An evaluation study on the alignment between social work education and current practice has been conducted at the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences in Netherlands. The results of a literature study on social system review and trend studies in the field of care and well-being were presented at two round table meetings with 40 field experts. The field experts were selected as a representation of the whole social work domain. The report of the literature study and outcomes of the meetings was presented and discussed in a general meeting with 67 lecturers/researchers, 25 field experts, and 7 students. In workshops the following questions were discussed: 1) what are the main developments in the domain of social work; 2) to what extent do these developments lead to changes in tasks and challenges for

social professionals; 3) to what extent are new competencies expected; 4) to what extent do these developments alter the identity and core (values) of social work in the Netherlands? The results were analyzed on new demands to social work education and translated into new learning outcomes for social work education. A final report was submitted for validation to all stakeholders.

#### *Results, conclusion and discussion*

The evaluation showed that social workers in the Netherlands are confronted with new tasks, for example: acting as a liaison in complex networks of interdisciplinary teams of professionals, policy makers and citizens and working as prevention workers in several areas of life. Within this altering constellation, more than ever before do social workers have to clarify their role and position and use the values of their profession as a compass. These and other principles are the basis for a profound.

#### *Learning from Social Workers Experiences of Engaging in Reflection on a new MA Programme*

Carmel Halton University College Cork

Keywords | reflection, Social Work education, reflective learning journals, peer groups.

#### *Background and Purpose for the Study:-*

As the complexity of the social work role has grown, so too has the requirements of social workers, whose work is situated within changing and competing contexts and where presenting problems reflect both the complexity and variability of human nature. The author contends that the provision of appropriate learning contexts and structures to support and scaffold students to engage in educational opportunities is key to promoting professional regeneration. In this paper, the author proposes that reflection is a critical component of all learning in social work education. Drawing on the results of a small qualitative study of graduates of a new MA programme,

the author researches graduates (n=3) experiences of engaging in reflective learning on the MA program. A key feature of the program is the utilization of reflective learning tools i.e. learning journals and peer groups, to promote, and scaffold reflective inquiry in social work research. The research focuses on inquiring into graduates' experiences of using these reflective learning tools, while participating on an MA programme. The author contends that professional educators need to engage students in reflective processes in the classroom, so as to promote the kind of systematic, evidence-based thinking that both challenges and supports professionals to exercise responsible professional judgment. Making clear links between reflective inquiry and evidence based research is key. The author believes that the processes involved in reflective inquiry and the tools that support it need further examination.

#### *Objectives of Research*

1. To inquire into graduates experiences of using reflective learning tools i.e. peer groups and reflective journals, while undertaking practitioner research on an MA programme.
- 2) To apply the data emerging from the research to the design of professional and continuous professional development programs (CPD) in social work.
- 3) To progress teaching and learning models and pedagogies in social work education that respond to learning and professional development issues identified in the research.

#### *Methods of Inquiry*

In 2015 the author set out to investigate graduates experiences of engaging in reflective inquiry and of using the tools of reflection, while participating on an MA programme. She was interested in developing a greater understanding of how graduates learned, while participating on the programme. A qualitative study has been designed to assist the author in her investigation of participants' experiences of engaging in reflection and reflective inquiry, while participating on the MA programme. Data will be collected using interviews and participant written reflections. Participants will include all graduates of the first programme 2014-2015 (n=3). As this is an exploratory study, thematic analysis as represented by Braun and Clarke (2006) will be used to examine the data. It will provide the author with an 'accessible and theoretically flexible approach to analysing qualitative data' (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.77).

#### *Results*

The data is currently being collected. The study is expected to be completed in early 2016 and the results available for presentation at the conference.

#### *Discussio:*

Reflection is recognised today as a necessary component of social work practice (Munro, 2011) and of social work education (Murphy et al 2010). The disciplines of Nursing, Teacher Education, Medicine, Law and Occupational Therapy have also embraced reflection as part of their graduate and postgraduate educational programs (Lyons, 2010). This paper will be submitted under Theme 8 Research in Social Work Education. The results of this research will contribute to the development of our knowledge and understanding of how reflective learning tools i.e. peer groups and reflective jour

nals are used in educational programmes to enhance participants learning experiences. The author intends to disseminate the results of this research in an international educational/social work journal. She will utilize the results of this research in reviewing and revising models and methods of teaching and learning currently in use on the MA programme. Researching the processes and outcomes of reflection, when used as a method and model of social work education, is a primary objective for this research.

*Social work as a practice based academic discipline: Postgraduate studies in social work in Estonia*

Reeli Sirotkina | University of Tartu  
Hans van Ewijk | University of Tartu

Keywords | social work research, postgraduate studies, PhD theses, Estonian social work.

Social work research is establishing its place among the social sciences defined as context and practice research or practice-based research. This presentation deals with the development of academic social work in Estonia by analysing all doctoral dissertations in social work which have been undertaken by Estonian social work scientists since 1991. During the period 1991-2012 ten students graduated at doctorate level (Ph.D) in social work. The analysis focuses on the questions how those doctorate studies perceive social work as a profession and field for practice based research. Although most studies are not explicitly dealing with epistemological questions or with positioning social work as a profession in Estonian society as such, eight out of ten studies are geared to social work practice and all studies explain the research methodology. The eight practice oriented studies are qualitative studies, without outspoken clear idea about the specific character or epistemology of social work research. PhD studies perceive social work professional development from a helping profession into a more self -confident profession with its own core values, tasks and position next to other front line professionals.

The academisation of social work has not yet been analysed in Estonia. Not all European countries are ready for social work postgraduate programs seeing this as `a key gap in research surface` (Böhler, Fredersdorf, 2014: 28). According to Labonte-Roset (2005), PhD studies in social work are unthinkable without research. The presentation aims to study 'the academisation of social work' in Estonia exploring and describing the perceptions in post-graduate theses on social work as a profession, science and social work research.

We analysed all Estonian postgraduate social work dissertations. Reading them again and again we have developed a framework to analyse them

based on thematic case analysis which is, according to Yin, the best solution for research using questions "how" and "why" (Yin, 2009:10).

We can conclude that social work research in PhD level is seen as inter-disciplinary empirical practice based research using mixed methodology. Social work scientists are very reflexive and research ethics is seen as very important component during the research process. Basically social work research stretched on the timeline of twenty years showing that the profession starting from "nothing" has grown stating its own competencies among other professions.

The first postgraduates carried out their research in rather isolated positions. But now Graduate schools are there, promoting exchange and inter-vision, but not yet embedded in broader social work research programs, hence bringing together their cumulative knowledge and filling in the gaps in (Estonians) body of knowledge.

*Researching social work education in times of crisis in Greece: Dilemmas, challenges and reflexive praxis*

Sofia Dedotsi | University of Manchester/TEI of Athens  
Alys Young | University of Manchester

Keywords | social work research, reflexive praxis, crisis, social work education

*Background*

My PhD research focussed on the process and impact of anti-oppressive social work education in Greece. During the course of the data collection, the social work department that was the context for the research was abolished within the wider context of oppressive austerity measures, violation of human rights and deconstruction of social welfare that is being experienced by Greece today. My already complex position of insider researcher (a social work educator studying social work education) took on an additional dimension as I experienced professional and personal oppression arising from the context in which I was both researching and working. My early results from my research were indicating a poor understanding amongst social work students of the structural components of oppressive processes, yet I found myself standing united with the student and staff body against the proposed abolition of one of only 4 places of social work qualifying in education in Greece.

*Methods*

In this presentation I will explore three issues: (i) the unexpected ethical dilemmas that arose from an unanticipated event during my doctoral research that was simultaneously an example of one of the central concerns of thesis – personal responses to structural oppression; (ii) the impact of my own intellectual growth in understanding of the dynamics of oppressive practices on my response to these events; (iii) the learning I am taking forward from these experiences in how I will be supporting and enabling anti-oppressive educational practices in my future work as a social work educator.

*Results*

I will explain how living through the abolition of the social work department and the day to day austerity that accompanied my research work, cannot be separated from the approach I took to the analysis of my formal doctoral data and I will explore how it influenced my interpretation of my data and thinking at the time. I will consider the importance of this public reflexive account for the validity of my doctoral work. In so doing, I will draw on the work of Foucault and Freire as I have done in my thesis.

*Conclusions and Implications*

A series of dilemmas and challenges can occur during social work research indicating the need for researchers to be reflexive on their subjectivity and the wider socio-political context. This consciousness can not only contribute to the rigour of social work research, but also to the mutual learning from the voices and reality of our research participants and the people we work with, especially in times of crisis.

*Mothers' voices: hearing and assessing the contributions of 'birth mothers' to the development of social work interventions and family support*

Linda Bell | Middlesex University  
Sarah Lewis-Brooke | Middlesex University  
Rachel Herring | Middlesex University  
Lynne Lehane | London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
Sioban O'Farrell-Pearce | Middlesex University  
Karen Quinn | London Borough of Tower Hamlets  
Theresa So | Middlesex University

Keywords | mothers, family support, social work intervention, successive child removals, child safeguarding, service user perspectives

In this paper we discuss full findings from our recent project involving interviews with mothers who have had children successively and permanently removed from their care in one local authority in London (England). This in-depth, qualitative study takes a feminist approach both in terms of our research processes and in terms of data analysis. In a previous paper, we discussed the development of our wider partnership project between the London Borough of Tower Hamlets and Middlesex University; that partnership began by exploring the background issues, human and financial costs relating to mothers who repeatedly lose children to care, and the possibilities for offering more support to these families. Ethics approval was obtained for the whole project from both Middlesex University and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets Research Governance Panel.

In order to allow mothers' own voices to influence the development of family intervention(s) in this local authority, we aimed in this second project stage to interview in-depth up to 20 mothers who had previously had children removed locally. Our sampling strategy involved identifying key workers of potential interviewees and a member of our team with extensive family support experience held briefing sessions to explain the project to these workers. We then asked for key workers' assistance in approaching women as we believed that, for ethical reasons, it was preferable to approach mothers initially via a contact with whom they were already familiar. The challenges

involved in approaching and successfully interviewing these mothers, making use of a sensitively worded information sheet and interview schedule, should not be underestimated. We have been able to interview 10 mothers in depth, which we can now report on fully here.

All interviews were audio recorded and then fully transcribed; they lasted from 25 minutes to about one and half hours. Using a 'voice centred relational method' of analysis (Mauthner and Doucet, 1998) derived from the work of psychologist Carol Gilligan (1983), we have been able to explore in detail the various dimensions of these mothers' voices including:

- how they perceive the experience(s) of having children removed from their care
- how they speak about themselves
- how they speak about relationships, in both personal contexts and with professionals

We also identify how social constructs including gender, social class or ethnicity can emerge within these mothers' narratives.

We intended that on a local level initial project findings would inform development of family support interventions within the local authority, and that is already taking place. By presenting our full findings here we now highlight the potential of this kind of in-depth interview material, focused on mothers' own perspectives, to suggest how social workers, other professionals and researchers may hear these sometimes inaccessible voices more clearly. This is important firstly to enable users of social services to make a contribution to social work action, as well as to research; equally, to allow professionals to respond effectively to difficult and complex welfare concerns, particularly successive removal of children from birth mothers and their families.



## *Relationship work and older adults: The role of gender in negotiating enduring coupledoms*

Jill Chonody | Indiana University Northwest  
Jacqui Gabb | Open University  
Priscilla Dunk-West | Flinders University

Keywords | gender, older adults, couples, relationship work

### *Background and Purpose*

Increased longevity and higher health status means that many couples will be together for long periods of time. However, most research focuses on middle-aged couples; hence, less is known about older couples. It is often assumed that relationship factors found important for middle-aged couples are also applicable to older people (Walker et al., 2013). For example, everyday behaviors that reinforce the importance of the relationship have been found to contribute to the sustainability of the relationship for middle-aged couples (Dainton, 2000). The assumption is that these same behaviors are important for older couples, but a dearth of research evidence exists to substantiate this. Moreover, the way in which relationship behaviors may be gendered for older couples is virtually unstudied.

This qualitative study of intimate relationships amongst older adults focuses on how participants' maintain their partnerships on a day-to-day basis. Specifically, we sought to understand relationship work and the extent to which it is gendered amongst older couples, including the ways that couples negotiate aspects of the aging process.

### *Methods*

Data for this study were collected via an online survey from more than 8,000 participants residing primarily in the United Kingdom, United States, and Australia, but people from 60 different countries participated in this study. Older respondents made up 19% (n = 1,565) of the sample and only their data are utilized for the current study.

In addition to sociodemographic variables, participants were presented with open-ended questions related to how they feel about their partner/relationship.

Three of those questions are utilized for this analysis, and included the identification of things you like best and least about your relationship and things your partner does for you to make you feel appreciated. In addition, interviews with older couples were completed with a small sample of UK residents who also diaries kept. Descriptive statistics were used for background variables, and thematic analysis was completed for the qualitative data.

### *Results*

Our sample was primarily married (86%) and in a relationship for 20+ years (83%). Qualitative results suggested that everyday relationship maintenance behaviors are used to reinforce coupledoms, such as laughing together and shared interests. Between country differences highlight nuances of participants' responses that are particular to their cultural background like appreciating when one's partner brings "a cup of tea." In terms of the negative aspects of the relationship, themes included not enough sex and poor communication. The analyses of interview and diary data found that accounts of couple intimacy and the ageing body were often highly gendered, but these couples used a range of strategies to address changes, including laughter, resignation, and separate sleeping arrangement.

### *Conclusion*

Our study focus on relationship work sheds light on how partners negotiate life changes, including those that happen to the body. For example, sexual difficulties associated with aging were negotiated in ways that worked for both partners, which suggests that enduring couples meet life challenges together. Our findings also echo previous research with regard to relationship maintenance behaviors and their role in sustaining coupledoms.

*Traditionalism or professionalism? Social workers' considerations when recommending parental custody in Arab society*

Guy Enosh | University of Haifa  
Hani Nouman | University of Haifa  
Rafah Anabtawy | University of Haifa

Keywords | decision making, divorce, parental custody, arab society

In divorce cases, the opinions of expert social workers serve as an anchor for the judge's final decision regarding parental custody. This opinion, however, which needs to be based on rational consideration, without prejudice, while preserving the principle of the best interest of the child, might be influenced by societal values, social workers' personal and professional characteristics, as well as by their values, attitudes, and stereotypical perceptions. To examine this issue, an experimental study design was implemented by means of a survey, using descriptions of a case that incorporated experimental manipulations, which corresponded to the research variables. Quantitative data were collected from 137 social workers who were employed in social welfare departments in local municipalities in Arab society in Israel. The study findings indicate that the social workers' personal and professional characteristics, as well as their stereotypical perceptions, cause bias in their recommendations for parental custody in favor of the mother over the father. Nevertheless, it is important to note that the parent's high level of education as well as a higher education level among social workers, older chronological age, greater seniority in the profession, and being in the role of protection officer influence the recommendation of joint custody. The study findings emphasize the importance of developing and assimilating organizational mechanisms that include supervision and training, and that set standards to channel professionals' decision making when recommending joint custody. They also point to the change that has occurred in Arab society regarding the old conventions that naturally favor the mother as the custodial parent. Apparent openness can be observed to the choice of an alternative custodial arrangement, such as joint parental custody.

*Gender differences in women's and men's ways into debt problems*

Christian Kullberg | Mälardalen University  
Pernilla Liedgren | Dalarna University

Keywords | gender differences, debt, debt relief applications

*Background and purpose*

Research on women's and men's debt problems is a neglected area. The research available shows that women and men's gender typical behaviours and gender-related dynamics in close relationships that reflect societal power structures (for instance women's subordination under men) are relevant to understand what creates and is the cause of economic inequality in households. The limited research that exists suggests, for instance, that women's debts to a greater extent derives from consumption or student loans, while men's indebtedness to a greater extent is caused by misguided ventures in their own businesses and car purchases. In close relationships, women's indebtedness also more often seems to be rooted in solidarity actions, such as entering as a creditor of loans that their men have taken, to get the opportunity to develop their own business. In this sense, men's debts are more often directly related to their own business and personal projects. The aim of the current project is to deepen the understanding of gender differences in women's and men's descriptions of ways of getting into debt problems.

*Methods*

The study is qualitative and has a gender comparative design. A strategic sample (concerning gender, age and family constellation) is made of men's and women's "personal letter" that are appended to debt relief applications sent to the Swedish Enforcement Authority's (Swedish: Kronofogden). Approximately 50.000 debt reconstruction applications that includes a personal letter are received by the Authority every year. Around 10% of these letters from 2015 are analyzed using a combinations of content and narrative analysis. This is done by searching for the applicants' descriptions

of circumstances that has led into their debt problems as well as their explanations to the causes for the problems

### *Results*

Preliminary results confirm that women and men's gender typical behaviors and gender-related dynamics in their close relationships can be used as explanations for the debt problems that are at hand.

### *Conclusions and implications*

Further research is needed on how indebted identities are formed in interaction with others. Such research should examine how women and men are categorized and treated by professional helpers (social workers and other professionals) as well as how the indebted on the basis of this form their self-image and ultimately shapes their actions. On the basis of the results it is recommended that professional helpers pay closer attention to and try to prevent that men's gender typical behaviors and power relations between women and men in close relationships causes debt problems.

## *Concept of "the Poor" and "Social Worker" in Antipoverty Policies in Taiwan: A Discourse Analysis Inquiry*

Yi-Shih Cheng | Department of Social Work, Tunghai University

Keywords | antipoverty policies history, discourse analysis, reflection on social work knowledge, Taiwan

Past analysis of antipoverty policies has largely considered policies and programs as substantive subjects. Most such analyses have involved examining the formulation, process, performance, or effects of antipoverty initiatives. Consequently, the knowledge base and analytical tools for this type of analysis are relatively comprehensive. However, few studies have examined the discourse of these policies regarding poverty and social workers. We assert that because of the lack of discourse analysis, welfare policies and programs contribute to poverty rather than offer an effective solution. Therefore, we applied a discourse analysis approach to examine three major antipoverty programs in Taiwan: the Sheau-Kang Welfare Program of Taiwan Province (in the 1970s), the Taipei Family Development Accounts (in the 1990s), and the Cooperative Credit-Private Banking Trial Program (in the 2010s). This study identified the dominant discourses and explored how they dominated, competed with, reconfigured, absorbed, and restructured different types of poverty and social work discourse in various periods. How were these types of discourse maintained and managed? What were the subject positions of impoverished people and social workers? What are the implications of the evolution of these discourses? This study aimed to obtain a deeper understanding of the semantic structure and order that drive Taiwanese antipoverty programs. Furthermore, we hoped to encourage reflection by social workers on reforming the perceptions of poverty and creating a more meaningful arrangement that closely incorporates impoverished people. Finally, we aimed to use this reflection to facilitate the creation of multidimensional knowledge, policy programs, and practical actions.

## *Power to the Poor? The General Report on Poverty in Belgium, 1994*

Heidi Degerickx | Ghent University  
Griet Roets | Ghent University  
Angelo Van Gorp | Ghent University

Keywords | poverty, self-advocacy paradigm, social policy, social activism, historical document analysis, oral history

### *Background*

Conceptualisations of poverty are never neutral but always constructed in a specific context and relating to historical, cultural, economic, demographic and political developments. Since the 1990s, support occurs in European welfare states for a poverty approach attaching explicit importance to recognising the voice and life knowledge of people in poverty themselves (Beresford, 2002; Bouverne-De Bie, Claeys, De Cock, & Vanhee, 2003; Krumer-Nevo, 2005, 2008; Lister, 2002). The idea of talking 'with' the poor came to prominence instead of talking 'about' or 'to' people in poverty. In that vein, Bouverne-De Bie (2003, p 10) stresses the importance of having "a shared knowledge production and problem definition in which everyone recognises oneself as well receives recognition". Beresford and Croft (1995) refer to the possibility of a shift from advocacy to self-advocacy in academic research, social policy and social work practice. The implementation of this self-advocacy paradigm was also supported by actors in professional social work and civil society, in a collaborative process which proved to be, however, not without challenges.

### *Purpose*

In our paper presentation, we (1) examine the ways in which the diverse actors (representatives of people in poverty, social work professionals and civil society) were involved in the implementation of the self-advocacy movement in Belgium, (2) attempt to untangle the historical factors and complexities involved in this implementation process, and, eventually, (3) try to capture the value and implications of this paradigmatic shift for current conceptualisations of anti-poverty strategies.

### *Methods*

We will use a historical document analysis of two archives (Foundation King Baudouin and ATD Fourth World Belgium) and a qualitative content analysis of in-depth interviews with ten key actors involved in realising the report.

### *Results*

In our paper presentation, we discuss the results of a case study on the constitution of the General Report on Poverty (GRP, 1994), a policy document which refers symbolically to the historical moment that the self-advocacy movement of people in poverty was formally recognised in Belgium in the 1990s.

### *Conclusions and implications*

This research is still work in progress. Following on its historical perspective our paper presentation aims at (1) contributing to the acquisition of knowledge about the political dimension of social work with specific focus on the link between social activism, civil society and professional social work, and (2) highlighting the importance of studying historical trends in social work.

*Fitness for citizenship: A social work history of the intersecting discourses of race and gender in the laws of immigration and citizenship in the US*

Yoosun Park | Smith College School for Social Work

Keywords | citizenship, naturalization, Social Work history, gender, race, exclusion, immigration

*Background and Purpose*

Until mid-20th Century, two sets of immigration and citizenship laws guarded the gates to the US. New immigrants from Europe were consistently maligned and considered inferior to those already in the US; their entry became increasingly restricted in early 20th century. They were, nevertheless, always considered white, racially eligible for US citizenship by naturalization under the 1790 Act which limited naturalization to “free white” persons. Far harsher set of laws, leading to a total exclusion from entry in 1924, restricted Asian immigrants, a population racially excluded from naturalization, and whose birthright citizenship was established only through a Supreme Court decision. The 1922 Cable Act, which made a woman’s citizenship an independent status was formulated on the same bifurcated logic of racial, cultural, and gendered calculations of fitness. Until that Act, an American woman’s citizenship automatically followed that of her husband; a woman who married a non-citizen lost her US citizenship. A victory for activists, including many prominent social workers, the change enacted by the Act benefitted many women, but not all. That which Jane Addams called a “curious inconsistency” was the fact that American women who married alien men ineligible for citizenship (e.g. Asian men) were excluded from the changes instituted by the Act. This intersecting discourse of race and gender played out similarly in World War II when nearly the whole of the national population of Japanese Americans, 75% of whom were US-born citizens, was incarcerated by the federal government. Among the few exempted from the internment were women married to Caucasian men.

This historical study analyzes the ways in which the intersecting discourses of race and gender (and culture) that shaped the laws and practices of immigration and citizenship in the early part of the 20th century were understood

and acted upon by immigrant-serving social workers of the period. While work with European immigrants was a major preoccupation in early years of the profession, issues of Asian immigration and immigrants were sites of total neglect. Evident in the profession’s selective attention is the uncomfortable fact that the racism undergirding the treatment of Asian immigrants in US law was mirrored in social work.

*Source Materials*

Primary archival data for this study include materials from: the National Archives and Records Administration, the University of Chicago and the University of Illinois, Chicago archives, the Social Welfare History archives at the University of Minnesota, the University of California, Berkeley archives, and the California, Washington, and Oregon State Archives.

*Implications*

Bills to strip citizenship from US-born children of undocumented immigrants are introduced yearly in the US congress. The fear-imagery behind the bills, that of young, hyper-fertile Latinas and cunning Asian women attaching “anchor babies” on to an unwary national soil, attest that raced and gendered notions about the kinds of bodies to be excluded and regulated to protect the nation remain remarkably intact. Despite the many shifts toward inclusion that the past decades have brought to social work, it is a question worth pondering whether access to its attention also remains similarly exclusionary.



*Responses to ethnic and 'racial' diversity in social work practice - The Swedish development in historical perspective*

Eva Wikström | Umeå University  
Erica Righard | Malmö University

Keywords | social work, Sweden, ethnic relations, racial relations, historical development

Social work responses to ethnic and 'racial' diversity vary over time and between places. In some countries it is mainstreamed; in others it tends instead to be side-lined to 'cultural experts' and 'culturally matched' social workers. The existing - but very limited - research drawing on the situation in Sweden, suggests that in Sweden ethnic and 'racial' diversity tends to be side-lined in social work practice. This is typically understood as related to the universal and extended Scandinavian welfare state regime that frames the social work practices; universalism seems to emphasize universal standards in front of particularism. The universal standards assume that the legislative and theoretical framework are so called (culturally) 'neutral'. In practice this sometimes equals 'colour or ethnic blindness' with 'whiteness' as present but invisible. This presentation contributes to this research field, analysing how different meanings given to ethnic and 'racial' diversity in social work have developed over time in Sweden.

The empirical material is drawn from the main Swedish professional journal of social work (Socionomen). The journal is considered an important platform for debating social work practice in Sweden and has existed for almost sixty years. We have systematically searched all volumes from the first publication in 1958 up until 2014. Methodologically we rely on text and content analysis. This includes how issues on ethnic relations are presented, framed and what particular words that are used. This implies analysis of choices of words and representations which carry underlying assumptions about the issues addressed. By way of analysing the content of the debates in this journal, we can show the varying meaning that has been given to ethnic and 'racial' relations in social work practice over time in Sweden.

The analysis indicates that throughout the years, there is a paradoxical

interest in the international dimension of social work. However, for many decades, international dimensions in social work was understood as something situated 'there', not 'here'. While social work practice early on was understood as (culturally) neutral, from the 1970s cultural representations of the 'other' begin to appear. While the representations of the 'other' vary over time, the cultural representation of 'whiteness' remains invisible. Hence, this study supports earlier studies arguing that the ethnic and 'racial' relations are side-lined in social work in Sweden. Its particular contribution lies in that it highlights how this has shifted over time.

## *Concepts in Translation*

Siri Fjeldheim | Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences

Keywords | social work, translation, borrowing field, hermeneutics, social work base of knowledge, metaphors, social diagnosis, theoretical contributions, medical model

This paper is concerned with the relation between classical texts within social work, and interpretation of these classics in contemporary literature. It aims to explore how classical texts influence and work in our perception of and writing about our history, but also how it influences our perception of social work today. Within Gadamerian hermeneutic philosophy this is described as effective history, combining the present and the past through tradition. It is the thesis of this paper that research into authorities within the discipline and early contributions to the development of social work, strengthens the disciplines insight into the theoretical contributions within the discipline itself and the knowledge base of social work. The handing over of knowledge between past and present, may also be viewed within a translation perspective. Thus supporting my hermeneutic approach, translation theory is applied to study transference of ideas and concepts into social work, and how these processes later are perceived. A study of translations of concepts aims at questioning a grand narrative within social works effective history; social work as a "borrowing-field". Using translation theory to study transference of concepts, rather than a "borrowing-field" perspective, might contribute with new perspectives on social work within a more dynamic interdisciplinary field.

In this paper, I will perform a hermeneutical close reading of Mary Richmond's classical text, *Social Diagnosis* (1917). My concern through this reading, is an open engagement with the text, to study the author's descriptions and other linguistic means to communicate to us the meaning of the concept "social diagnosis", and in particular how Richmond translates this concept into a social work context. On the basis of this study, I analyse her treatment of the concept "social diagnosis" in relation to interpretations of her work in secondary literature and aim to challenge one of the dominant

perceptions of social diagnosis within a "medical-model". Three main arguments used to support the medical analogy are highlighted; use of terms, basic model/method and network of professional cooperation. Based on these arguments, I am looking for expressions and ideas in Richmond's text that might challenge, correct, ignore or support the presentations of her work within the medical analogy. Richmond made a translation of diagnosis to describe the investigation process in social work. However, secondary literature over time seems to have ignored the recontextualizing work being done to fit "diagnosis" into its new context. Commonly it is instead described as an adoption, or borrowing, of a medical term "as is" with no adjustments being done. Social Diagnosis thus keeps affecting contemporary social work in ways not necessarily intended. As a result, important theoretical contributions made in *Social Diagnosis* might be overlooked and lost.

## *Promoting Progress or Maintaining Stability? Practitioners' Dual Roles in Home-Based Mental Health Services*

Kirsi Juhila | University of Tampere  
Suvi Raitakari | University of Tampere

Keywords | mental health, deinstitutionalization, home visiting, interaction analysis, responsibilities, managerialism, accountability

### *Background and purpose*

During recent decades we have witnessed in the Western world a turn in mental health from institutions to communities. Deinstitutionalization started with the decreasing the number of psychiatric hospital beds. The beds were first compensated for by residential care homes or supported housing units, and more recently with floating support services, provided in service users' own homes. This 'home turn' in mental health is an under researched area in social work studies. Ferguson (2014: 2-4) writes that since services are often provided in natural settings (including home-spaces), researchers should also be mobile and go to the places where service interactions occur. This paper focuses on mental health service interactions in home-spaces and asks what kinds of roles workers' have in these interactions.

### *Methods*

The data comprises 32 audio-recordings of mental health home visits (accompanied with ethnographic field notes) collected in four floating support services targeted to people with mental health and related housing problems (2 in Finland and 2 in England). The data has been analysed by using ethnomethodologically informed interaction analysis (Hall et al 2014). The data and its analysis is part of a larger research project 'Responsibilization of professionals and service users in mental health' (2011-2016).

### *Results*

The results show that the practitioners have dual and conflicting roles in home visiting interactions. On the one hand they promote service users' progress towards more independent way of housing and living in general.

On the other hand they focus on maintaining stability (Brodwin 2013: 66-69) meaning efforts to avoid mental health relapses and failures in living in own homes.

### *Conclusions and implications*

Despite of conflicting aims, both roles assigned to mental health practitioners conducting home-based work are partly grounded on managerialist accountabilities and responsibilities. Practitioners are expected by commissioners and service purchasers to support service users' recovery so that they are after reasonable time able to live without floating support (and regular home visits) and to become self-responsible citizens. However, practitioners are also defined as responsible for providing such continuous care and control for service users that prevents serious setbacks leading to treatment periods in psychiatric hospitals or to living in 24/7 residential care homes. Both expectations are linked to the endeavors to save public costs in mental health (reducing home-based support or treatment and care in institutions). Our results demonstrate that home as a place of service interactions in mental health (and in adult care more generally; cf. substance abuse treatment in home-spaces) is dilemmatic in contemporary welfare societies and needs to focus more in social work research.



*Females suffering both from mental health problems and intimate partner violence in Taiwan: an anti-oppressive perspective*

Chu-Li Liu | Dept. of Social Work, Tunghai University

Keywords | anti-oppression, mental health problems, intimate partner violence, discourse, human rights

*Introduction*

In the perspectives of social model for mental health, anti-oppression and human rights are emphasized; the rights of persons with mental health problems to equality, freedom, safety and social inclusions should be protected; the professionals' discourses of mental health problems should be examined. This study aims to adopt this lens to examine the experiences of females both suffering from mental health problems and intimate partner violence in Taiwan that is patriarchal and gender inequality is prevalent.

*Methodology*

A grounded theory research method was adopted. Individual in-depth interview was adopted to collect data. 7 Taiwanese females who had suffered both from intimate partner violence and Major Depression, aged 40 to 70, voluntarily participated in this study. Open coding, axial coding and selective coding were adopted to analyze data. Peer debriefing and comparing to literature served the purpose of research validation.

*Results*

The main research finding of this study is that there is a hierarchy of problems in the mind sets of abusers and practitioners in Taiwan. In this hierarchy of problems, mental health illness overrides other problems that participants experienced, including intimate partner violence. This hierarchy allows abusers and practitioners to simplify the causes of multiple problems and to simplify the complicated problem solving process.

In Taiwanese context, mental health problems are considered to be different from physical illnesses. Mental health problems are still considered as "madness" and thus are granted overriding power over other problems. Moreover, patriarchal values are still prevalent in Taiwan, female intimate

partner violence survivors often experienced being blamed for causing the violence. These discourses exist in individual, group and cultural levels. Participants in this study reported that they had suffered from intimate partner violence first and were diagnosed as depression after the long-term suffering. However, the interactional effects of depression and intimate partner violence were ignored. Participants reported that the mental health problems (depression) served various purposes for the male abusers and became the focus of every professional or person who intervened in the situations. For example, their male partners utilized it (depression) to either legitimize the male violence or re-story the violence as participants' distortion. Mental illness symptoms rather than participants' suffering experiences were the treatment concerns of medical staff. Medical treatments rather than the intervention for violent issues became the concern of professionals who intervened in the violent situations, including police officers, court judges and some social workers. Eventually, mental health problems become the only visible problems and female intimate partner violence survivors with mental health problems should be responsible for all other problems. In this paper, I will adopt the anti-oppression lens to analyze the multiple oppressions (from individual to cultural levels) participants were trapped, as well as how the male abusers were free from their abusive behaviors in the context of patriarchy and mental illness' overriding power. I also will discuss how the overriding power of mental health problems influences policies and thus ignores survivors' needs in Taiwan.

*Implication:*

Implications for future actions will be addressed

*Enhancing the ability of the people : an evaluation of an innovative training program in mental health*

Silvia Clementi | Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milano

Keywords | mental health, recovery, evaluation, working responsibly together, relational paradigm of social work

"F.a.Re. – Fare Assieme Responsabilmente" (Working Responsibly Together) is a training program promoted by the Mental Health Department of Trento in the period February 2015 - June 2015 and addressed to the citizens of the province of Trento. The goal of the program is to promote a culture of mental health that contributes in reducing shames and fears still present about mental illness. The approach that guided the creation of these training sessions was the orientation to recovery, following the idea that people who have been considered as "problem" could be valorized in redefining their life challenges. In this program, the life knowledge of service users, family members and citizens is combined with the professionals ones. In the project "FaRe" people have been encouraged and stimulated to consider mental health service users as people experts of their life experience, from which is possible to learn. In this sense the difference between learners and educators is overtaken. Service users involvement as "Experts by experience" occurred in several stages of the project, from the planning to the realization of the meetings. An evaluation of this program has been conducted in the period from February to July 2015. The aim of the evaluation was to understand the trend of the experience identifying positive and negative aspects for future editions. The evaluation process involved all the participants of the experience and was divided in two steps: the first one to collect data through a survey constructed ad hoc; the second one to realize 4 focus groups. The focus groups were composed by participants, speakers, expert service users and organizers of the various meetings. The collected data (quantitative and qualitative) were then analyzed and interpreted following the relational paradigm of social work (Folgheraiter, 2011). The idea of this approach is that social workers are not able to solve problems and to find solutions for the life problems; in the contrary professionals need to be

helped from the same service users. From the results emerged two particular aspects:

- The simultaneous presence of users, family members and operators as "teachers" was a value and allowed to users and family members to feel recognized for their resources;
- The participation of service users (as experts by experience) in the organization of these trainings allowed to reach an emerging need in the local community met other people interested in learning more about this theme.

The program "FaRe" thanks to the involvement of the people of the community in giving value to the experience of mental health opened to democratic perspective avoiding the risks for mental health services to work without success.

*Access to what? Contextualizing 'diagnosis', 'recovery' and 'access to care' in northern India*

Sumeet Jain | University of Edinburgh

Keywords | global mental health, culturally sensitive mental health care, mental health social work, global social work, access to care, recovery, diagnosis

*Background and Purpose*

'Global mental health' (GMH) discourses argue for universal certainty about categorization, diagnosis and treatment of mental illnesses (1). GMH seeks to improve 'access to care', interpreted as increasing availability of mental health personnel and pharmaceutical and psychosocial interventions (2). An implicit assumption is made that diagnosis leads to treatment and re-emergence of a 'recovered' subject. This linear trajectory fails to consider the subjectivities and experiences of individuals, families and communities who seek to 'access' these interventions. While social work has had limited engagement with GMH discourses, the discipline's more 'situated' perspectives could contribute to re-shaping GMH to accommodate local voices (4). This paper examines how 'diagnosis', 'access', 'care' and 'recovery' intersect in the long-term experiences of individuals and families affected by mental health difficulties in northern India. The paper further considers the potential role of social work values and knowledge in informing a culturally sensitive and locally rooted 'global mental health'.

*Methods*

This paper draws on ethnographic research (2004 - 2014) that maps understandings of 'mental distress', help-seeking trajectories, and engagement (and non-engagement) of rural people with a multi-disciplinary government community mental health programme (3). This paper specifically reports on a data-subset of longitudinal ethnographic interviews with individuals and families engaged with the programme and local service providers (n=10). Results: Mapping the relationships between 'access to care', 'diagnosis' and 'recovery', requires an understanding of the local particularities shaping

'access' and 'care' and tracing of how the production of diagnosis impacts recovery journeys. A central question that emerges from the data is - access to 'what'? In the absence of culturally accessible mental health provision, the 'what' that people access are the inner resources of their selves, families and communities to creatively seek multiple forms of care. The research suggests the importance of examining meanings of care through lenses of social exclusion, including gender and caste.

*Conclusions and Implications*

Technical and universal conceptualizations of 'access' and 'care' obscure the circumstances that shape individual & collective decisions and actions in response to psychological distress. Contextualizing the local significance of concepts such as diagnosis, access, care, and recovery may open up new ways of engaging with those suffering from mental health difficulties, their families and communities. Social work's contributions may lie in developing approaches that reconcile a 'generalizable' research knowledge base with the specificity of implementation of policy and practice in diverse locals (4).

## *Social workers' views of psychiatric reforms in Greece: Positive and negative outcomes*

Maria Douka | T.E.I. of Athens

Keywords | mental health, social workers, psychiatric reforms, Greece, qualitative research

### *Background and purpose*

Over the past four decades there have been increasing efforts in Greece to effect vital psychiatric reforms which would not only improve on existing models of service in the community for people with mental health problems but would also develop new ones. The conceptual model of mental health service based on medical treatment in psychiatric hospitals has proved outdated and new person-centred approaches have started to emerge. The main purpose of this research is to elucidate how social workers manage their work within the reality of these psychiatric reforms. The study aims to cover the psychiatric reforms in Greece, the history of the reform and deinstitutionalization process and also explore the dynamic role of social workers within mental health care provisions.

### *Methods*

I have developed a qualitative methodology, laying emphasis on a grounded theory approach. The philosophical perspective of the study was drawn from social constructivism theory. Grounded theory requires detailed coding procedures to arrive at saturation, such as open coding, focused coding and theoretical coding. Participants in this study were social workers employed in various mental health care settings. Data collection based on conducting semi-structured interviews with twenty social workers. The research sample was purposive and the interviews were carried out in a variety of state and private mental health services.

### *Results: (positive and negative)*

There's clearly the need to move from:

- Bureaucratisation of the profession

- Issues of recognition and self-efficacy

- Insufficient staff

to:

- Empowered role of social workers

- Effective integration of services, sectorisation and sustainability

- Continuity of care for people with long term mental health needs

### *Conclusions and implications*

This project has enabled me to dig deeper into the thoughts, views and perceptions of social workers with regards to the existing psychiatric reforms. Mental health care in Greece is one of the areas of health care provision that has remained in the shadows of the health care system. In Greece, the discussion is not about change being effected smoothly but about the tremendous pressure that is being put on mental health services to introduce changes that the government will not be able to afford in the future. Social workers have long been aware that people with long-term problems need ongoing assistance from professionals. Unfortunately, social workers have talked about there being rigid boundaries between health and social services, resulting in a lack of referrals from one service to another as well as in a lack of planning regarding the treatment of patients. Social workers in mental health services have a distinctive role. This role is due to the fact that they have unique knowledge of how to deal with red tape and legislative procedures, how to claim benefits and help people with mental health problems adjust to policy priorities as well as advocating human rights, for example on behalf of patients. As a profession, they exercise their influence by supporting patients in making the right decisions about their mental health problems, but also by negotiating friendlier policies. Additionally, their role makes mental health services more responsive and humane and helps to reduce the distress of individuals and their carers. The strengths of this research lie in the exploration of the views of social workers and the potential to contribute to the debates on how mental health care is provided.

## *Impact of residential child care on life trajectories*

Clara Bombach | Zurich University of Applied Sciences ZHAW

Thomas Gabriel | Zurich University of Applied Sciences ZHAW

Keywords | residential child care, biographical interviews, life trajectories

Social science and historical research on experiences of children being placed residential care has, Europe-wide, been started comparatively only recently. In Switzerland, tens of thousands of children and juveniles were placed in out of home care between 1950 and 1990. As in other European countries too, residential and foster care in Switzerland has been harshly criticized. Due to scandals and the subsequent revision of history of child care, the following question became more and more virulent: What are the effects and impacts on the life trajectories of juveniles or young adults after leaving the institution? So far, the impact of child care on life trajectories of the residential child care population, if at all, marginally studied, refers to effects such as homelessness, lack of education, suicidal tendencies, early motherhood and often shows that that public interests are not necessarily identical with those of children, juveniles, professionals and families. Long-term studies in Germany and England also show, that after-institutional life trajectories of those who, during their stays were described as challenging and unstable, often had much more long-term success, than those who complied with their behaviour and had positive prognosis (Bullock et al. 1993, Hartmann 1995).

The presentation gives insights to an ongoing research project on the effects of placement decisions on the biographies of juveniles in residential care between 1950-1990 in the Canton of Zurich. It is part of the research network "Placing Children in Care: Child Welfare in Switzerland (1940-1990)" funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation. The contribution refers to first findings by biographical interviews with former children in residential care. The selection strategies for interviews were the following: stay as a child, young person in institutional care between 1950 and 1990 in the canton of Zurich. So far, 32 people - a balanced group in terms of gender and decades of stay in institutional care - were willing to share their

life stories in narrative-biographical interviews. In the presentation, different typologies of processing the individual experiences in biographies will be outlined and overall collective experiences and impacts on life trajectories will be discussed along the following questions:

- What is the subjective meaning and the impact of residential care experience in life-trajectories?
- What becomes a biographical topic?
- How does the individual subject occur within his/her life history?
- Are there connections between the life before being placed, growing up in institutional care and the life situation after? How can the transitions be understood?

Research methodology of the project refers to reconstructive biographical research and grounded theory, aiming at investigating in intersubjective collective significance of meaning from social science perspective. Conclusions and implications: Simply constructed correlations between institutional interventions and effects of institutional care do not reflect the complexity of individual life trajectories. Unintended effects of residential care should be considered, superficial causalities avoided and the complexity of effects has to be taken into account. Therefore, conventional impact research should take into consideration supplement effects such as resilience, vulnerability or the meaning of significant others.

*Reflecting on Social Work Practices with User Experience: Parental Experiences of Child Welfare Services. An Integrative Review*

Memory Jayne | Tembo University of Stavanger

Keywords | user perspectives, child welfare, parental experiences

*Background*

Reflections in social work allows for improvement of service delivery to the society. One way of reflecting on social work practices is to seek experiences or perceptions of service users. The word service user is however, debated, in social work practice. This is more salient in child welfare services where children are users together with their parents albeit with blur positions. Lack of free choice to accept or deny help brings into question the status of parents as users. The focus in the child welfare system is to protect the child even if this might distress parents sometimes. This study looked at how parents experience their contact with the child welfare services in different countries by doing an integrative review. This study is part of a broader project looking at immigrant parents' experiences and perceptions of the child welfare services in Norway.

The purpose of this presentation is twofold; it first presents the findings related to the experiences of parents who have been in contact with child welfare services. It then, contrasts these experiences to the position of the parents as service users and discusses how the concept of 'wicked problem' and parents as service users in child welfare, presents a challenge when reflecting on parents experiences.

*Method*

An integrative review method was used to review the literature. The study selected fourteen articles on the theme parental experiences with child welfare. The review and analysis of these studies forms the data for this study. Results; the findings reveal that parental experiences in child welfare takes three forms, emotional experiences, relational experiences and procedural experiences. These experiences reveals complexities in child welfare practices and points to what might be barriers to addressing these complexities.

The findings also reveal that different statuses of parents lead to different experiences as seen from the cases of battered mothers and immigrant parents as shown in some studies. This calls for more research into specific groups of parents and their experiences to tailor specific solutions that fit specific groups of people.

*Implications for social work practice*

The findings from this integrative review indicate that parental experiences of child welfare are embedded with the complexities of the nature of practice in child welfare. Research into users' experiences aims at improving services by incorporating lessons learnt from research into practice. This is however not straight forward in child protection cases because of parents' unclear position as users. Addressing these complexities might inform better reflections in this field. This study sheds light into the ambiguities that exist between parents and the child welfare system and how this hinders effective reflection in child welfare services.

*Requirements to concepts and practice of mother-child-institutions in Switzerland. Results of an evaluation study*

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Samuel Keller | Zurich University of Applied Sciences ZHAW Social Work  
Clara Bombach | Zurich University of Applied Sciences. Social Work

Keywords | mother-child-institutions, well-being, child protection, evaluation study, Switzerland

In Switzerland, respectively in the canton of Zurich, a range of temporary placement of mothers and children, who, for different reasons, are not capable to manage their everyday lives, have been implemented in the past few years. These institutions in the field of child protection are imposing social workers and social work in general with high demands. This is because of the double target group mother and child and the aim of implementing and protecting the well-being of the child as well as promoting and evaluating the competences and upbringing skills of the mother when managing the everyday life. Hence, social work is facing the normative question about conditions and requirements of the protection of the child's and mother's well-being during the stay in the institution and after.

In Switzerland, so far there are no investigations available about the content alignment and the implementation of concepts of mother-child-institutions. Regarding the supervision and further development of the mother-child-institutions, the Department of Youth and Vocational Guidance (Amt für Jugend und Berufsberatung of the canton of Zurich commissioned a research project for evaluation, aiming at gaining information about the quality of the mother-child-institutions available. The questioning focussed on the content alignment and implementation of concepts and the linked developments of mothers and children during the stay in the institution.

Different perspectives are included in the study design; qualitative and quantitative methods of survey and analysis be used. Institutional framework conditions were analysed via concept analysis, group interviews with managing staff and analysis of available statistics. The information about the development of mothers and children during the stay in the institu

tion were identified via qualitative semi-structured interviews during three different points in time. For standardised survey of the mothers validated survey instruments (e.g. PedsQL, Well-Being WHO) were used. Additionally, the perspective of the responsible social worker was identified by written, case-related online-survey about aims and process of the stay in the institution of mothers and children.

The findings of the different analysis enable us to present evidence about the quality of the different range of institutions for temporary placements of mothers and children at the levels of structure, process and results. On the other hand the findings refer to challenges that are of importance concerning optimisation and further development of mother-child-institutions regarding their need for transparency and concretisation. The presentation aims at giving insight into the background, designs and results of the study. Special focus will be the findings concerning the development of children and mothers during the stay in the institution as well as challenges for the further developments in this field.

*Mapping Children's Narratives of Permanence in Ireland: Evidence from a Mixed-Method Study of Outcomes for Permanence and Stability of Children in Care*

Lisa Moran | UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre NUI Galway  
Caroline McGregory | School of Political Science and Sociology, NUI Galway

Keywords | permanence, stability, narrative, discourse, storyline, children, participatory action research (par)

This paper reports on qualitative findings of a collaborative research project on outcomes for permanence and stability of children in care involving social work teams from TUSLA, the Child and Family Agency in Ireland and researchers at the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, NUI Galway. Drawing on data garnered using Participatory Action (PAR) approaches and narrative interviewing techniques (cf. Wengraf 2001) with children in care and their families (i.e. parents of origin and foster parents), this paper focuses principally on the concept of permanence which in the literature is typically delineated as encompassing three strands; legal, relational, physical and ecological permanence (Stott and Gustavsson 2010). Applying social theoretical approaches to narrative, knowledge and discourses, we argue that children and young people's interpretations of permanence frequently embody emotive stories about family and friends and are indelibly linked to 'place' and concepts of 'felt security' and 'insecurity'. We argue that how and where these narratives are spatially situated is also significant for understanding how they make sense of permanence in everyday life. In other words, the routine spaces and places alluded to in their stories about relationships, people and events are necessary for understanding how children and youth (re)-create and share various meanings and discourses of permanence in everyday life. We argue that children's narratives of permanence should be interpreted as emotive, knowledge-based and inherently spatial experiences. Such an approach to understanding permanence, it is argued, is highly significant for the effective planning and implementation of policies and programmes aimed at children and youth in care. The paper also points to the significance of PAR and narrative-based research approaches for (inter)-national policy and practice involving children and youth in care.

*"We don't have a plan. We should be working on a plan": Obstacles to care-giver transition planning for individuals with Fragile X Syndrome*

Rebecca Feinstein | The Hebrew University of Jerusalem of Israel  
Harold Pollack | The University of Chicago

Keywords | intellectual disability, transition planning, fragile x syndrome, long-term care

*Background*

Fragile X syndrome (FXS) is the most common heritable form of intellectual disability in the United States. Adults with FXS vary in their health status and functional capacity and require a range of caregiving activities, including full-time supervision, help with activities of daily living, and coordination of daily activities and services. As adults with FXS mature and develop different needs, their aging caregivers face multiple barriers to obtaining long-term care in the community; they fear what will happen when they themselves can no longer provide care. This study investigates why long-term planning is so difficult for caregivers of adults living with intellectual disabilities, and how policy might improve the way families interact with the choice architecture of social services.

*Methods*

Between May 2014 and February 2015, two focus groups (N=11) and 26 open-ended, phone interviews (45-60 minutes) were conducted with caregivers of adults living with FXS. Respondents for the focus groups were recruited from an academic medical center's Fragile X clinic. Respondents for the phone interviews were recruited from a Fragile X clinic, parent listserv, and Facebook group. All interactions followed protocol approved by the University of Chicago Institutional Review Board. Preceding the interview, caregivers were asked to fill out an online quantitative survey to capture descriptive characteristics. They were then invited to share their perspectives about the challenges of caregiving, transition, and long-term planning for adults in the focus group discussions or interviews. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed with thematic, open and matrix coding.



### *Results*

Data from a total of 39 caregivers respondents was gathered together from the online survey (N=36), focus groups (N=11), and phone interviews (N=27) regarding 46 adults with FXS. Respondent narratives offered a window into the everyday realities of caregiving adults with intellectual disability. Three specific constraints faces by caregivers of adults with FXS were identified: the distinctive symptomology of FXS itself, the family context, and the bureaucratic complexity of their local social assistance system. Further, caregivers described four reoccurring themes that hinder efforts to obtain services and services: transition planning is an ongoing process over the course of the life cycle; constrained resources amplify other existing challenges and lead to rationing and waiting lists; each social service system has its own configuration of bureaucratic complexity; and crisis-allocation of resources is not conducive to long-term planning. These factors impact caregivers' ability to formulate and executing long-term plans, hindering transitions out of the family home into residential placement, and transitions from one service to another.

### *Conclusions*

The compounded impact of caregiving constraints with multiple issues surrounding bureaucratic complexity provide a valuable context to consider broader challenges facing adults with often-severe disabilities, their families and caregivers, and medical and social systems. While aware of long-term challenges, lack of specific deadlines and milestones make it easy for hard-pressed caregivers to delay painful conversations, or to fall prey to the planning fallacy. Public policies can improve the choice architecture of social services for caregivers to plan more effectively and explicitly in our current environment of scarcity.

### *The professional architecture of informal support in 'district teams' in Amsterdam*

Rosalie Metze | Amsterdam University of Applied Science  
Lex Veldboer | Amsterdam University of Applied Science

Keywords | district teams, civic society, recovery approach

### *Background*

With the decentralization of the welfare state, the Dutch government is betting on vulnerable citizens to decreasingly call on social professionals. Professionals in so called 'district teams' are supposed to provide citizens in their district with preventive, limited and result focused support. In collaboration with informal care givers, volunteers and neighbors, they ought to work on enhancing the self-mastery of families with multiple problems. According to experts, however, professionals only half-heartedly try to shape this collaboration with the civil society. They seem to focus on family members and well-established voluntary organizations, while largely ignoring other social support structures such as neighborhood organizations, peer organizations, and religious communities. Moreover, even the collaboration with well-establish voluntary organizations is said to be challenging.

### *Research method*

In this study, we explore the views of social professionals - working in district teams in Amsterdam - on their collaboration with social support structures in their district. In this multiple case study, we monitored the teams in three different districts through observations, interviews and focus group sessions. Results: The data analysis showed that our respondents are predominantly focused on collaboration with other professionals. They turn to family members for practical and emotional support. When family members are unavailable, trained volunteers are the next option, and on rare occasions professionals rely on ethnic-religious communities for support. Some individual respondents do, influenced by their own personal background, more strongly collaborate with informal groups in the district. In general, the respondents view collaboration with informal groups, even with well-established voluntary organizations, as complicated and time-consuming. Due to

a lack of time and the complexity of their clients' problem, they limit their work to professional support.

### Conclusions

Our main conclusion is that the employment of district-based informal support by professionals is strongly individual. District teams as a whole seem to lack a focus on the civic society, and are hardly rooted in their district. However, a focus on long-term support and civic participation seems to be crucial for the stabilization of the multi-problem families these professionals have to deal with. Collaboration with informal support structures in the district might be key in achieving this goal. The recovery approach, derived from the field of mental health care, might be helpful in shaping this focus on long-term support and participation, in collaboration with the civic society. The recovery approach emphasizes the importance of accepting limitations and learning to live with them. This way, people can start focusing on (re)occupying a valuable place in society. Professionals pay more attention to helping people to take small steps towards long-term goals such as participation, stability and recovery, than to short-term goals such as averting crises and solving acute problems. To be able to do this, professionals need to be supported and facilitated by all the different organizational layers, such as neighborhood organizations, managers and policy makers.

### *The Problems And Burnout Levels Of Elderly Caregivers*

Vedat Isikhan | Hacettepe University

Keywords | old care personnel, caregiver, burnout

Care of elderly family members by close friends, relatives, and institutional care has an important place, sense of professional experience, ideas and issues the quality of services offered to the elderly affects the structure and content of the elderly services. This study of caregivers providing services to the elderly in institutional care in the literature on a topic that is not too much work on the issues they care burdens.

Study included seven nursing homes and elderly care institution, and the problems experienced by caregivers providing services to the elderly hospitalized in rehabilitation centers in Ankara, Turkey and was performed in order to determine the factors that influence their levels of burnout. Research was carried in Ankara between October-November 2014, and it was on 202 caregivers working in the Rehabilitation Centers in Nursing & Elderly Care institutions. An interview questionnaire and Zarit Care giving Burden Scale (ZCBS) were used. For analysis of the data, Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS- version 20.0) was used.

The mean score obtained from ZCBS of caregivers surveyed was 43 (range: 0-88). The obtained results indicated that caregiver's care burden was at a moderate level. Burden of care was related with the age and job satisfaction. However, sex, marital status, education level, and income of the employee were found to be ineffective. Among caregivers, sleep disorders, physical fatigue, back pain, headaches, ulcers and gastritis were found to be common. Elderly care is a difficult task. Caregivers are faced with various problems in terms of psychological, social, economic and health aspects. To improve the quality of elderly care services, it is necessary to eliminate the problems experienced by caregivers.

This study was supported by Hacettepe University Scientific Research Projects Coordination

## Quality, Self-Care and Compassion Fatigue

Josefa Cardona | Universidad de las Islas Baleares  
Maria Elena Cuartero | Universidad de las Islas Baleares  
Joan Albert Riera | Universidad de las Islas Baleares  
José Francisco Campos | Universidad de las Islas Baleares

Keywords | compassion fatigue, self-care, quality, predictors

The quality of social services does not depend solely on the organizational work of social assistance, financing or its adaptation to the social demand expressed. A component of quality care services is directly related to the skills of the professionals who develop the programs and projects. The capacity and quality of the human capital is measured in relation to their competence, their experience and their psycho-physical and relational skills to work daily with clients and reach agreements and set goals. We believe that social workers of community and specialized services who develop their activity face to face with their clients may experience symptoms of physical, psychological and emotional exhaustion, since they intentionally activate their capacity for empathy. As Figley demonstrated (2002, 2007), the development of empathic attitude has an energetic and emotional cost which is unavoidable if you want to ensure an efficient practice. This cost has been called "Compassion Fatigue" and sometimes has been associated with the phenomenon of secondary traumatization and burnout syndrome, still keeping the theoretical and conceptual confusion in scientific literature. We hold that the Compassion Fatigue has enough theoretical and empirical consistency to be considered a form of occupational risk to social workers. We consider compassion fatigue as an inevitable and necessary phenomenon to the extent that is inherent to the activation of empathic ability. However, if not countered or prevented by professional and organizational conditions of professional activity in the services, it can lead to disorders of secondary traumatization or Burnout Syndrome (Rothschild, 2006). The process of coping with Compassion Fatigue is varied It includes intentional professional self-care measures and personal self-care measures which, without being intended to counteract the discomfort generated in

## Flexner's speech 100 years later ... What now?

### SYMPOSIUM

Symposium Convenor | Francisco Branco, Catholic university of Portugal

Keywords | Flexner Report, social work professionalism models, contemporary societies

The well-known Abraham Flexner's conference given before an audience of social workers, not only foretold the impossibility at the time of Social Work to reach the status of a profession, but also settled an agenda for the necessary conditions for the acknowledgement of the social work profession. The recent centenary of Flexner's Report, which questioned social work's standing as a profession, is a heuristic milestone to promote the reflexion and debate on social work pathways in contemporary societies. In this framework the objective of the Symposium is to reopen the questioning of social work as profession nowadays facing the Flexner's report. In this direction the symposium presents three different angles of Flexner's speech analysis. The first one privileges, in a historical approach, the implications of the Flexner Report in the model of professionalisation of social work in the US and its repercussions on social work professional development. The second one, intends to revisit the original Flexner's meaning of the concept of professionalisation namely the recognition by peers and by the community at large and the called "professional spirit". The third one focus on the accomplishment of Flexner's agenda and on what kind of new challenges the profession is confronted with on the present circumstances characterised by austerity policies and the retraction of public policies.

Abstract 1 | *Everyday I have the ... Flexure Speech*  
Francisco Branco | Catholic University of Portugal

Giving continuity to historical research on the relationship social work-social policy in Addams and Richmond, and the the involvement of academics and social work professionals in social policy (policy practice in social work) the communication crossing these research axes with the Flexner Report.

The communication discusses the implications of the Flexner Report in the models of professionalisation of social work.

Keywords: Professionalism models, Flexner report, social work, policy practice.

Abstract 2 | *The foundations of social work professionalism reinterpreted in contemporary societies*

Cristina Albuquerque | University of Coimbra / CICS.NOVA

The revocation and centrality, even in today's societies, of the centenary questioning of Abraham Flexner about the professional status of social work should raise many perplexities. In fact, perhaps what is mainly in appreciation, when the question of Flexner was and is placed, is not so much the doubt about the professional status of social work, but rather the underlying issues that reflect concerns of a different content associated namely with the sources of legitimacy and intentionality of the practices.

What somehow got lost in the debate was the original meaning of the concept of professionalization: a co-construction contextualized, duly recognized by peers and by the community at large. In fact, Flexner ends the article pointing out that what matters mostly is what he calls the "professional spirit".

To discuss the meaning of the professionalization of social work today requires thus the development of the reflection and reinterpretation of two axes already pointed out by Flexner: the construction of a critical and scientific thinking and the conquest of centrality in the decision-making process. In our communication we will seek to discuss how these axes can and should resize themselves, as well as the processes to be implemented accordingly.

Keywords: Social Work, Flexner, professionalization, practice, research, contemporary foundations

Abstract 3 | *Answering Flexner 100 years later: reproduction, change and threats to social work in the 21st century*

Maria Inês Amaro | CIES / ISCTE-IUL

The well-known Abraham Flexner's was a cornerstone for an intensive pro-

duction and debate on the nature of Social Work and in 1996 prompted a very well systematised response by Malcolm Payne, in his *What is Professional Social Work?* Nonetheless, the debate was never concluded and the discussion on the professionalism of Social Work, together with the discussion on its scientificity, is still dynamic.

In this sense, it is relevant that, one hundred years after that conference, an analysis is undertaken on the accomplishment of Flexner's agenda and on what kind of new challenges the profession is confronted with on the present circumstances characterised by austerity policies and the retraction of public policies.

It is such a task that the present communication intends to endeavour, as a way of stimulating reflection and debate on unsolved and emergent issues of contemporary social work.

Keywords: Social Work Profession; Social Work; Flexner; Social Professions

Abstract 4 | *Dialectic Social Work: a new critical paradigm*

John ter Horst & Ronald Wolbink | Windesheim University Zwolle

In 1915 the American education expert Abraham Flexner studied critically whether social work was a profession or not. His answer was no. To be a practical profession, he argued, one needed a scientific basis to legitimize itself methodologically (Flexner, 1915). Civil engineers, bankers, doctors and nurses according to Flexner met those requirements. Social workers, how merciful their activities were, not. The most worrying according to Flexner was the indifferent attitude of social workers to act on a scientific base. 'The social worker is at times perhaps somewhat too self-confident; social work has suffered to some extent from one of the vices associated with journalism, excessive facility in speech and in action' (Flexner, 2015).

One century later we still see social work struggling with its scientific legitimation. This has to do with two reasons. First "the inner-conflicts" of social work. And second its lack of social, philosophical and anthropological embeddedness. Using the Hegelian dialectical model (cf. Gadamer 1999; Gray and Webb, 2014) we distinguish five conflicting post second world war social work phases; the thesis "normative social work", its antithesis "political social work", its synthesis "positive neo-liberal social work" and its inadequate antithesis, "populist, victim-based social work". Introducing dialectic social work as a new syntheses, we have the ambition to legitimize

the in-between- position of the social worker, in-between the lifeworld of the client and the systems of power that surround him.

In doing so we approach the community as a borderland. According to Gloria Anzaldúa (1999) we are always on the borderlands—between people, between races, between genders, and between classes. Her insight challenges atomistic understandings of personhood by providing a useful metaphor for analyzing individuals in relation to one another, to interconnected communities, and to systems of power and privilege. To bridge the lifeworld-system gap, we distinguish four theoretical and methodological positions. From anthropology we borrow the ethnographer. From philosophy Socrates and the solitary ironist. And from sociology the Stranger of Georg Simmel (1908). Together these phenomenological figures legitimize the theoretical and methodological in-between-position of the dialectic social worker, who, in this model, is both no extension of the system, as well as of the lifeworld of his client.

Keywords | dialectic social work, critical social work, borderland

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*Social Work and Extreme Events - challenges to social work research on disasters and complex emergencies*

#### SYMPOSIUM

Symposium Convenors | Reima Ana Maglajlic, University of Sussex & Jim Campbell | Ireland University College Dublin

Keywords | social work, extreme events, disasters, complex emergencies political conflict, social development

The proposed Symposium is related to the Special Interest Group on Social Work and Extreme Events and is proposed by the Group initiators. Over the past year, we witnessed an almost unprecedented movement of people due to political conflict. Based on the figures by the EU Border Agency (Frontex), more than 500,000 refugees were detected at EU external borders in the first eight months of 2015. In the Spring of 2014, large scale and repeated flooding in South-East Europe (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia) caused damage similar to that experienced during the political conflicts in the same region in the early 1990s.

The purpose of the Group and the proposed Symposium is to explore how and whether the impact of political conflicts and/or national disasters on social work can be explored through a joint title of 'extreme events'. This is relevant not solely because many countries experience one or even both types of extreme events, as noted above. The relevance and parallels are also encapsulated in the impact of such events on the variety of social work resources (from infrastructure to loss of life and limb) and the difference between the urgent/immediate responses during the extreme events and during long-term recovery.

Recently, a group of social work academics from a variety of countries affected by political conflicts and/or natural disasters in Europe and Asia (Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, UK/Northern Ireland, Slovenia and Sri Lanka) initiated a network to explore this theme. In parallel, the network also explores the frequently contested and difficult relationships between the local social work practices and traditions with those of international development organisations, frequently active in countries affected

by extreme events. It is hoped that the work within the network can inform and improve the emergency protocols and subsequent post-extreme event reconstruction and development practices in relation to vulnerable groups (e.g. women, children without parental care, people with disabilities, older people), as well as contribute to the growth of social work disciplinary knowledge on this theme. The Symposium is to help outline some of the thinking and work within the network to date, based on the studies conducted by the participants in their own contexts and as a group.

The focus of the Symposium will be on the methodological challenges this theme poses for research, both within particular countries, as well as through cross-national and/or comparative research. The current group is comprised of scholars from the countries affected by extreme events who hope to build on their current studies, explore them within the wider framework of extreme events and to initiate future joint research. The rationale for local scholars' participation stems from the need to enable mutual learning process, not aiming for a single, unified, outcome or finding - based on the lessons learnt to date from cross-national action research (Matthies et al., 2000).

The key findings from group discussions to date indicate concerns whether and how international, cross-country methodology can be developed which would allow for more meaningful knowledge sharing between social workers and development practitioners in different countries. Possibilities to use 'green social work' and critical theory as relevant theoretical frameworks for international collaboration on this theme will be outlined. The findings to date also highlight a range of roles that social workers do or should employ during and after the extreme events, from targeted assistance to vulnerable groups to involvement in peace building and reconciliation.

#### *Presentation 1*

Jim Campbell | Ireland University College Dublin

Revision of the literature on social work and political conflict in Northern Ireland, tracing the history of the profession and the impact of violence over the last forty years. This review will reveal a relative absence of empirical studies about the social work role and interventions, but some evidence of theory building about the position of social work within the state and in re-

lation to civil society and new approaches to social education and learning. He will also report on a new study that examines legacy issues as perceived by social workers currently working in Northern Ireland.

#### *Presentation 2*

Vasilios Ioakimidis | University of Durham, UK

Exploration of the characteristics, opportunities and limitations of "transitional" social services and social work. Transitional social work refers to the range of (official) social work approaches adopted in conflict/ post conflict contexts. In this presentation there will be a focus on statutory social services. Questions related to the hidden militarization of social services, the issue of victims' reparations and the fallacy of "liberal peace" will be critically evaluated and challenged. This presentation will argue that peace is "much more than the absence of conflict" and therefore transitional social work approaches should be firmly rooted in social justice and structural changes within the affected societies.

#### *Presentation 3*

Lesley Cooper | University of Wollongong, Australia  
Lynne Briggs Griffith University, Australia

Presentation of the findings from a qualitative study exploring the practices of volunteer counselors (doctors, nurses, psychologists and social workers) working at the Charity Hospital in Christchurch, New Zealand immediately following the February 2011 earthquake. In doing so the model implemented by the Charity Hospital immediately following the earthquake is explored. The outcome of the study showed that there is a need to offer brief problem solving strategies and practical assistance to people following a natural disaster. In this way the study extends the current understandings as to what processes and helping strategies can assist individuals and communities following a natural disaster. Although there are specific helping strategies post-disaster, the challenges for the longer term remains. This paper concludes with a discussion of social and community recovery, the role of government and the Third Sector in positively contributing to the longer-term recovery of individuals and communities and the links between

therapeutic work and social development.

#### *Presentation 4*

Reima Ana Maglajlic | University of Sussex  
Mojca Urek | University of Ljubljana, Slovenia)

will present the work of the network to date in relation to methodological challenges regarding cross-national and comparative research on extreme events, as outlined in the Symposium introduction. Language as one of the major obstacles when planning or implementing comparative or cross-national research is to be scrutinised (Hantrais, 1995; Hetherington, 1998; Shardlow and Walliss, 2003), as well as complexities of the North-South collaboration, due to the tensions stemming from the 'donor-recipient habits' (Etmanski and Pant, 2007) and other power-related issues. Possible methodological frameworks are to be explored which aim to avoid the 'safari' approach to comparative, cross-national research, which perceive it as universalist and culture-free in nature (Hantrais, 1995) or may simplify the complexity of social work in a particular context (Meeuwisse and Sward, 2007).

#### *Presentation 5*

Marijana Kletecki Radovic | University of Zagreb  
Sanela Basic | University of Sarajevo

Presentation of the work of the network to date in relation to theoretical approaches and themes for future research on social work and extreme events (also as outlined in the Symposium introduction), including green social work, critical theory and key lessons from other disciplines, particularly critical development studies (Mosse, 2013).

*How to Apply Realist Evaluation Combining Epidemiology and Effectiveness Research Traditions in Human Services Utilizing Data From Management Information Systems: Demonstration With Real Data From Chautauqua County, NY and Scotland*

#### *WORKSHOP*

Workshop organizers | Mansoor Kazi and Yeongbin, University at Albany, State University of New York; Rachel Ludwing, Chautauqua County Department of Mental Hygiene; Marie McLaughlin, Manchester Youth Justice Service

Keywords | Realist evaluation, Epidemiology, Effectiveness research, Praxis and researchg

This is a workshop demonstration of award-winning realist evaluations across two continents, with live data analysis of real big data from Chautauqua County (New York State) and Moray Council (Scotland). Research methods drawn from both epidemiology and effectiveness research traditions are demonstrated in a realist evaluation in partnership with human service agencies from both countries to investigate what programs of intervention work and for whom. Real live data from management information systems (schools, social services, mental health, youth justice) is used to investigate the effectiveness of the human service interventions. As the emphasis is on data naturally drawn from practice, quasi-experimental designs will be demonstrated using demographic variables to match intervention and non-intervention groups. Binary logistic and linear regression will be demonstrated as part of epidemiologic evidence based on association, environmental equivalence, and population equivalence. Evaluators and agencies can make the best use of the available data to inform practice.

Realist evaluation essentially involves the systematic analysis of data on 1) the service users' circumstances; 2) the dosage, duration and frequency of each intervention in relation to each user; and 3) the repeated use of reliable outcome measures with each service user. Live data will be used from human service agencies in both USA and United Kingdom, including mental

health, social services and schools. The demonstration will show how evaluators work in partnership with these agencies, to clean the data, undertake data analysis with them at regular intervals and not just at the end of the year. In this way, the evaluators and the human service agencies can work together to evaluate the impact of interventions on the desired outcomes utilizing innovative methods and addressing issues relevant for practice including diversity, investigating where and with whom the interventions are more or less effective in real time. Establishing cause and effect is a particular theme of this demonstration. As the data mining includes all service users (e.g. all school children in school districts), it is possible to investigate the differences in outcomes between intervention and non-intervention groups, and these groups can be matched using the demographic and contextual data.

The innovative methods demonstrated using the same data would include those that are part of the family of methods used to determine epidemiologic evidence based on association, environmental equivalence, and population equivalence. For example, the presenters will use datasets from their completed evaluations from New York State and United Kingdom, and discuss real-world applications of the analyses. The didactic approach will be interactive, guiding the workshop participants through the requirements and limitations of each method. Binary logistic regression will be used to investigate what interventions work and in what circumstances. In each example, the variables that may be influencing the outcome will be identified through bivariate analysis and then entered in a forward-conditional model. The variables that are actually influencing the outcome are retained in the equation, and those that are significant provide an exponential beta indicating the odds of the intervention achieving the outcome where the significant factor(s) may be present.

professional practice, have a clear impact on the well-being of professionals. We believe that both have a role and a significant impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of programs that are implemented by the services. We have studied the specific and intentional self-care measures in a sample of 84 social workers in community-based primary care in the Autonomous Community of the Balearic Islands (Cardona, 2012). The results indicate that the monitoring of practice is a marginal and exceptional form of self-care. However, there are two types of self-care, case discussion sessions and postgraduate training, operating as predictors of better and higher levels of professional intervention with clients. These specific practices have an impact which we believe is especially important: the perception of self-efficacy is raised to such an extent that it becomes a new predictor of higher levels of intervention.



## *The ethical sensitivity of social workers*

Ed de Jonge | Utrecht University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | morally charged professional situations, ethical sensitivity, best practice unit, reflective and inquisitive practitioners

### *Background and Purpose*

In the period 2011 to 2015 research was conducted in the Netherlands into the ethical aspects of the occupational practice of social workers. The research was performed by the Research Center for Social Innovation of the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences in collaboration with six regional welfare institutes and co-funded by SIA-Raak. The research was motivated by the fact that professional workers in the front line of social work are increasingly confronted with morally charged situations, while a shared ethical frame of reference as a source of support and direction has increasingly faded away. One of the aims was to develop a first step towards a theory of practice concerning the ethical sensitivity of social workers in morally charged professional situations.

### *Methods*

The research was performed as a small-scale qualitative study of a phenomenological nature within a best-practice unit, which is an inquisitive modification of a community of practice, in which twelve social workers participated as reflective and investigative professionals. One important reason for this research setup was the consideration that we can learn from frontline professionals. In our research setup we have sought especially to create room for the perspective of the workers, and then both their conscious experiences and their tacit knowledge.

### *Results*

According to the findings in this study, ethical sensitivity concerning morally charged situations seems to consist of three aspects. The first one is the breakdown of flow and virtuosity, which these workers describe with regard to the main aspects of their expertise (deliberation, decision-making, action) and with the aid of morally relevant concepts (like: values, norms, virtues,

conflicts of interest). The second aspect is professionally being moved, and here we can distinguish between, on the one hand, primary signals that precede action and then either have a basic signalling function (such as disquiet or ambivalence) or have a more specifically informative character (for instance anxiety or concern), and secondary signals which follow after the action and are of either a retrospective nature (such as guilt) or a prospective nature (for example despair), on the other. The third aspect concerns collegial support, either in response to a worker's appeal to colleagues, or as a pro-active intervention by an ethically sensitive colleague in response to the blind spot he or she recognises in the worker concerned.

### *Conclusions and Implications*

Participants in the study reported increase of sensitivity, reflexivity and quality in their professional performance. The study also yielded insight in important preconditions for ethical sensitivity. Personal conditions for ethical sensitivity are personal engagement as well as assuming responsibility for, openness towards and genuine contact with service users. Safety within and support by the team are important contextual conditions of ethical sensitivity.

*The ethical challenges of defensive practice: She who is without sin?*

Andrew Whittaker | London South Bank University

Tirion Havard | London South Bank University

Keywords | defensive practice, accountability, anxiety, new public management, focus groups

*Background and purpose*

The concept of defensive practice presents ethical challenges that exist at the intersection between social policy and social work practice. While the wider socio-political climate that gives rise to defensive practice has been explored within the literature, little attention has been paid to the everyday realities of defensive practice.

This paper reports the findings of a study into final year social work students' attitudes towards defensive practice within social work. The study objectives were to examine how participants perceived defensive practice, both in general and when faced with real-life vignettes.

*Methods*

The mixed methods study used an innovative design that combined large focus groups with survey-style data collection. During the focus groups, participants were given an individual handset that enabled them to 'vote' anonymously to questions presented within a PowerPoint presentation. These responses were analysed immediately and presented to the participants in an aggregated format. Once participants had seen the results, this led to focus group discussions that provided qualitative data in which participants explained the reasons for their choices.

The study considered two main research questions. First, how did participants understand defensive practice and what were its main features? Second, how did they rate specific vignettes? Students were presented with four vignettes providing real-life scenarios of potential defensive practice and asked to rate them.

Three large focus groups were recruited with a total of ninety final-year students out of 119 students from two cohorts. Quantitative data were inputted into SPSS and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics (t-tests,

chi-square and Cramer's V statistic). Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data using NVivo software.

*Results*

- Participants distinguished between behaviour that related to direct work with service users, such as overestimating risk or avoiding contact; and those that related to working within the organisation, such as avoiding supervision or upward delegation.
- Participants distinguished between proactive behaviour ('sins of commission') and passive behaviour ('sins of omission').
- Sins of omission were generally regarded as less serious because the behaviour was less tangible and easier to attribute to more positive motives.
- Whilst the literature identifies defensive practice as deliberate behaviour, the focus group discussions suggest that it is a subtler and less conscious process.
- Whilst there was a general consensus about the nature of defensive practice, there was considerable disagreement about specific vignettes and several competing explanations will be explored.

*Conclusions and implications*

The paper will discuss the implications for social work practice and education. In particular, it will focus upon the challenges that face us as social work educators because defensive practice faces us an uncomfortable dilemma. If we take the position of condemning defensive practice, we risk alienating students who may regard us as being out of touch. If we regard it as understandable, then we risk colluding with unacceptable practice. The paper will discuss how we get beyond this dilemma by creating an ethically nuanced perspective rather than retreating behind the comfort of entrenched positions.

*Value tensions and ethical dilemmas in Social Work practice. A study from an international post-graduate context*

Fernando Serra | CAPP/ISCSP

Paula Pinto | CAPP/ISCSP

Maria Nuncio | CAPP/ISCSP

Ethical dilemmas  
Social Work practice  
Ethical reflexivity

*Background*

The socially determined nature of the Social Work profession and its focus on human interactions and social well-being, constantly involves judgments in which competing values have to be weighed up. Literature about Social Work ethics shows the relevance of analyzing this professional ethical space, as an arena in which different value forces are in tension, namely: (a) legislation, policy and mission statements of agencies; (b) agency priorities; (c) professional ethics and professional values; (d) personal values and beliefs; (e) societal value-orientations. In trying to come to the right decision in a particular situation, social workers face limited options and competing values.

*Method*

This paper is based on a research-action study, developed in the context of an Erasmus Mundus master course. The Advanced Development in Social Work is a postgraduate course coordinated by Lincoln University (UK) and has been designed as an in-depth study program of professional development, for qualified and experienced social work practitioners from around the world.

Participants (two cohort students, N=30) were asked to explore real-life cases related to their social work practice which could be considered particularly challenging, dilemmatic or tense to them. The real cases were analyzed and discussed in focus-group seminars, concentrating on five categories: overall context of the case; main issue under debate; ethical and Human Rights dimensions involved; challenges for social workers; lessons and recommendations

*Results*

Preliminary results reveal that the cases are developed in a context of structural constraints and possibilities/opportunities (power, culture and community, interests, resources). Facing a tension between ethical ideal codes and daily practice contexts, practitioners often decide in favor of a "reasonable" ethical practice, that balances relativism with ethical conviction.

Further, only few of the value tensions identified can be called "pure" ethical dilemmas (two or more social work ethical standards applying to a particular situation), since much of the conflicting situations, experienced by practitioners, are rather "approximate" dilemmas (conflict between societal values, laws and policies).

*Conclusions and implications*

This ongoing research-action project is relevant at two levels: (1) at a theoretical level, to enrich the debate around the main analytical approaches around professional ethics - Utilitarianism; Deontology; Virtue Ethics); (2) at a practical level, it is relevant for supervision and in-service training, promoting reflexivity and the development of professional values and a sense of social and ethical responsibility among practitioners.

*How global the IFSW global standards are? Exploring the penetration of Social Work referential guidelines into professional field*

Regina Ferreira Vieira | CLISSIS-Universidade Lusíada de Lisboa; Instituto Politécnico de Castelo Branco  
Maria Inês Amaro | ISCTE-IUL

Keywords | social work practice, global agenda, practitioners' standpoint global standards

Since 2010, the International Federation of Social Work, together with the International Association of Schools of Social work and the International Council on Social Welfare, launched a Global Agenda for Social Work, which set up a number of goals and principles to which Social Work should aspire in order to achieve the central aims of social justice and development.

The first cycle of this process (2012-2016) elected four main areas of attention: 1) Promoting social and economic equalities; 2) Promoting the dignity and worth of peoples; 3) Working toward environmental sustainability; and 4) Strengthening recognition of the importance of human relationships. In July, 2014 a first report was released on the progress of such agenda, namely the contribution for the reduction of social and economic inequalities, and have reached some conclusions based on examples of effective social work practices around the world.

The world has been changing dramatically over the past few years with major consequences for the "European lifestyle": the euro crisis, the austerity policies, the mass migrant and refugee movements, to name a few, emerges as new challenges for the global agenda and test the limits of social workers agency and power.

But to what extent Portuguese Social Workers are aware of these challenges? How do they feel about the Global Agenda? Are they familiar with it? Do they emphasize any of the four main areas? To which of these do they feel more engaged in their daily practices? How have they been promoting these principles in the field? What kind of constraints, obstacles and limitations do they encounter when trying to put in practice such standards? Do they think there is any correspondence between those general principles and their daily professional practice?

The purpose of this paper is to approach an answer to these questions by presenting the results of an exploratory research work with professionals, supervisors of social work practice placements, engaged in practice in the urban area of Lisbon.

Data is being collected through an on-line survey and we expect will give us grounds to understand the penetration of the global agenda issues into the professional world, as well as its relation with practice daily realities in an European country under austerity.

## *Rethinking Discretion: Managerialism and Entrepreneurial Practice*

Tony Evans | Royal Holloway University of London

Keywords | discretion, managerialism, entrepreneurialism, street-level bureaucracy

Lipsky's theory of 'Street-level Bureaucracy' is influential in the study of front-line social work. Central to his analysis is a concern for the implementation gap in welfare policy, particularly the 'problem' of the discretion of front-line practitioners. Front-line professionals, such as social workers, he argues, extend and use discretion to advance their own interests. In contrast, he presents managers as simply concerned with resolving policy chaos in the face of the recalcitrance of street-level bureaucrats, in order to make policy work.

In this paper I want to focus on Lipsky's uncritical treatment of management in his theory of Street-level Bureaucracy, arguing that there are good reasons to question his assumption of the saintly nature of managers as obedient policy servants. Literature suggests that the interests and concerns of senior managers are not necessarily synonymous with strategic organizational and policy concerns, and that managers, far from being policy servants, are better understood as a new group of elite professionals with its own concerns and priorities such as a claim to discretion - 'the right to manage' - and technical and moral commitments - particularly ideas of effectiveness, economy, efficiency and parsimony.

Drawing on a case study of a Street-level Bureaucracy organization I argue that Lipsky's analysis distorts our understanding of organizational discretion giving insufficient attention to the discretion of senior managers in the policy implementation process. And because of this he underplays the extent to which managers' discretion not only influences policy implementation directly but also contributes to the difficult context of front-line discretion encountered by practitioners such as social workers.

The case study deploys qualitative data - observational, documents and interviews (with ten practitioners and five managers) - to examine the extent and nature of management discretion, and develop a more critical approach to understanding the context of front line discretion. Data were analyzed

thematically - reflecting emerging themes and testing theoretical assumptions underpinning the case study.

The study suggests the need for a nuanced and critical evaluation of Street-level Bureaucracy theory's account of managers non-discretion and front-line discretion and policy implementation, pointing to: the need to engage with the discretion of senior managers as a significant but seldom considered dimension of the policy context of practice; recognizing the ways in which managerial discretion contributes to the conditions of front-line discretion such as resource inadequacy and policy confusion; and the promotion by senior managers of discretion, but as a form of entrepreneurial practice (transforming discretion into a managerial technique).

This paper addresses two conference topics. First, it explores the interrelationship of social work practice and social policy within the broader context of managerialized welfare services (topic 4). Second, it looks at the ways in which NPM is influencing the context and nature of front line discretion for social professionals (topic 6)

*Welfare nationalism and Finnish welfare state: the example of migrants positions as users of basic services*

Eveliina Heino | University of Helsinki  
Laura Tarkiainen | University of Helsinki

Keywords | Finland, welfare state, welfare nationalism, families with a Russian background, discourse

In the 21st century, public and political discussions surrounding migration often lead to questions regarding the financing and future of the Nordic welfare states. On the one hand, migration is presented as a threat to the welfare state, while, on the other hand, discussions center on the increasing need for additional members of the labor force and the benefits that accompany multiculturalism. Within the context of this discussion, studying how migrants discuss their own use of basic services, how they position themselves vis-à-vis basic services, and what positions they are granted in public and political discourse remain particularly interesting.

In our research project (Reciprocal Relationships and the Construction of Well-being during Critical Periods of Everyday Life), we examine how migrants and long-term unemployed welfare recipients position themselves as service users and members of socially and culturally stigmatized groups. In this presentation, we focus on the example of how families with a Russian background discuss their experiences with basic services in Finland. The study consists of data from interviews with 25 families, for which discourse analysis is used as a methodological tool. Russian-speaking migrants represent the largest migrant group in Finland. Furthermore, such families include underage children who use many basic services simultaneously, thus providing a wide-angle perspective of the social security system. This justifies the selection of this specific group for study.

As a result of the analysis, four positions were identified and named: grateful, wrongly treated, active, and dependent. There were tensions within and between the identified positions. The results show that the respondents negotiated types of stigma attached to being migrants and the cultural expectations they must face. First, respondents faced stigmatizing ideas about

them, such as being “lazy migrants, who enjoy social benefits”. Second, they must also confront failures in basic services, such as difficulties with accessibility, unclear service information, and the “clientization” of migrants. This results in feelings of obligation among migrants to use basic services in order to participate in Finnish society. In addition to attaining autonomy, achieving solid agency emerges as a goal across all of the identified positions. security system. This justifies the selection of this specific group for study. As a result of my analysis, I identified and named four positions through which respondents discussed their use of basic services from various perspectives. These positions consist of grateful, disappointed, active, and dependent. I found tensions within and between the identified positions. My results show that the respondents negotiated types of stigma attached to being migrants and the cultural expectations they must face. First, respondents faced stigmatizing ideas about them, such as being “lazy migrants, who enjoy social benefits”. Second, they must also confront failures in basic services, such as difficulties with accessibility, unclear service information, and the “clientization” of migrants. This results in feelings of obligation among migrants to use basic services in order to participate in Finnish society. In addition to attaining autonomy, achieving solid agency emerges as a goal across all of the identified positions.

*Delayed deinstitutionalisation in postsocialism: UNCRPD as the tool for critical social work*

Darja Zaviršek | University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Work

Keywords | deinstitutionalisation, UNCRPD, persons with disabilities, justice and social inclusion, community care living.

The concept of deinstitutionalisation which stands for moving of the people out of long stay institutions into the community, and the development of sufficient welfare programs and services for those who need them either on daily basis, short-term basis, or indefinitely, is neither unknown or novel in the countries of postsocialism. Debates on deinstitutionalisation began by the end of 1980s, at a time when it was an accomplished process in some Western countries. In the then Yugoslavia, especially in Slovenia, Croatia and Serbia where many institutions of the asylum type were established between the 1950s and the 1970s, the notion of deinstitutionalisation was understood to pertain especially to the abuse suffered by the people with mental health problems who were segregated into large, remote dwellings such as castles or ex-military barracks. During the 1990s, the post-socialist states reached a more democratic understanding of the needs of disabled people among others also the understanding of the structural obstacles such as physical segregation and institutionalisation of disabled persons. The presentation focuses on the case of Slovenia that finds itself in an interesting process of transition since the Slovenian government pledged to effect deinstitutionalisation in 2014. In the empirical research conducted in 2015, the object was to determine how many disabled people actually live in institutions, their living conditions, the processes of institutional transformation and the prospect of deinstitutionalisation. All existent long-term care institutions were counted in, 146 in all. The mixed qualitative methodology included: 30 structured interviews with long-term residents; comparative discursive analysis of institutional documentation; the available quantitative data, and questionnaires that were sent to old peoples' homes, to the special and combined long-stay social institutions, to shelter workshops and to centres of permanent care. Some situations required to employ detective

techniques, especially in instances of unpleasant actions on the part of the institutions, e.g. accommodating young people with disabilities in old people's homes. The research presents the system of institutional care for people with disabilities which comprise five types of diverse institutions that accommodate adults between 18 and 65 years of age. Despite the fact that Slovenia signed the UNCRPD, no less than 4186 people age from 18 to 65 with various disabilities live in institutions (a country of two million people). An additional 15,000 of this age group live at home and receive various financial support. People of all ages that live in long-term institutions comprise over 20,000 persons, positioning Slovenia among those countries in Eastern Europe that maintain the strongest tradition of institutionalisation and spatial segregation of the disabled. Deinstitutionalisation is always culture-specific, contextual, dependent on ideation, politics and financial means which is explored in the research. In Slovenia, the mere fact that the government describes deinstitutionalisation as a strategy to enact the recommendation of the European Commission about sustainability of public finances concerning aging is very troubling.

## *Social workers providing 'activating welfare': the need for a research agenda*

Paul van der Aa | Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences - KCTO

Keywords | activating welfare, professionalization, social policy  
social work, research agenda

The shift from 'passive' to 'activating' welfare states has made labour market participation of citizens a core objective of contemporary European social and welfare policies. This shift is reflected in the nature of social services and, by consequence, the roles and responsibilities of social workers in the field of (activating) welfare. Nowadays, social workers in various public, private and non-governmental contexts have to deal with issues of labour market inclusion and exclusion of their clients, with managerial and political imperatives to find the shortest pathway to work and to implement disciplinary policies such as financially sanctioning certain behaviours of their clientele.

Available studies on this field of practice point to tensions between social work ethics and standards and 'welfare to work'-policies, de-professionalising tendencies within service organisations and the problematic accountability of decision-making.

This paper argues that this is related to the fact that it is not sufficiently clear yet to what extent social work as a profession is adequately 'equipped' for this new field and for dealing with the pressures and ambiguities this work brings along. This inhibits social workers from taking a self-conscious professional stance in this field, increases managerial control and compromises the professional quality of their work. In other words, the case for social workers' involvement in this work is far from clear-cut.

The main purpose of this paper-presentation therefore is to propose and substantiate an agenda for research and practice learning, aimed at clarifying the role and competence of social workers in the field of 'activating welfare'.

Preliminary relevant questions guiding this agenda would be:

1. Why would or should social work be involved in this social service,

aimed at promoting durable labour market inclusion of vulnerable groups?

2. What kind of professional competence in terms of skills, knowledge and ethics are actually needed for adequately supporting (vulnerable) citizens' trajectories towards sustainable labour market integration?
3. What kind of competence is needed in this field to deal with managerial and political pressures in relation to professional legitimacy?
4. To what extent does social work competence 'match' this required competence and to what extent should this competence be further developed through (re)professionalization strategies?
5. The paper presentation aims to stimulate both researchers as well as practitioners to start investing in extension of the body of knowledge of social work concerning inclusive labour market integration. The presentation will do this by addressing the following points:
6. The (uncomfortable) involvement of social workers in 'welfare to work'-services;
7. The lack of agreement about required worker competence in this field of practice vis-à-vis social work competence;
8. Knowledge gaps and the need for systematic, comparative research and learning;
9. A provisional outline of the agenda for research and practice-based learning.



## *Theorizing professional discretion processes at local welfare services*

Siv Oltedal | University of Stavanger  
Rolv Lyngstad | University of Nordland

Keywords | discretion, theories, system, interaction, conflict, welfare services

NAV (Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration) is administering one-third of the Norwegian state budget through a multitude of work and welfare related services. The recent evaluation of NAV from the expert group (April 2015) report that the scope of action for NAV counsellors are greatly hampered by rules, regulations, policy guidelines, procedures, governing mechanisms and reporting requirements. To handle an unsecure knowledge base, the report states that this is best and most flexible managed at local NAV offices. In an ongoing NAV research project hosted by the University of Stavanger, focus is upon approaches that can improve the situation for young people (18-30 years) at NAV, and thus reduce the number who receive disability pensions. Based upon 25 transcripts from conversations between NAV counselors and youth at two local NAV offices, we will explore how interactional-, system- and conflict practice theories may illuminate professional discretion. While the interactional approach highlights the dynamic person who emphasizes the possibility and social constructions, system approaches focus on institutional roles and how the organization have impact on what people can do or not do. Conflict approaches focus power relations and hierarchies. We will explore how these theories can contribute to the identification of complexities and increased professional awareness in the everyday practices.

## *The Values of Assessment: recipients of social care assessments as partners in the research process*

Jon Symonds | University of Bristol  
Caroline Miles | University of Bristol  
Val Williams | University of Bristol  
Sue Porter | University of Bristol  
Mike Steel | University of Bristol

Keywords | assessment, disability, co-production

### *Background*

In the UK, adult social care services are experiencing unprecedented pressures on their capacity to deliver personalised services to disabled adults. The combination of an ageing population and real terms reductions in budgets to local authorities has resulted in greater numbers of people contacting adult social care services, but services raising their thresholds and reducing the number of people receiving services (National Audit Office, 2014). At the same time, recent legislation has widened the range of people who are entitled to an assessment and requires practitioners to adopt a more personalised approach to assessing people's social care needs. The assessment meeting is therefore a critical encounter between social care services and disabled people, but one which has rarely been the topic of academic inquiry.

Literature that has considered the conduct of assessments in adult social care services has tended to reflect the perspectives and interests of practitioners (Whittington, 2007) or focus on the organisational culture that shape assessment processes (Chevannes, 2002; Foster, 2008). More recently, a small body of literature has studied adult social care from the perspectives of disabled people (Williams et al, 2014; O'Rourke, 2014) and this has provided important insights into how adult social care processes are experienced by those receiving them. .

### *Methods*

This paper will report on the Values of Assessment study that was co-de

signed by the West of England Centre for Inclusive Living, a user-led organisation of disabled people and the Norah Fry Research Centre at the University of Bristol. The study collected data in three phases including narrative group interviews with two groups of disabled adults; interviews with practitioners and managers in four English local authorities; and recordings of assessment meetings conducted by services. Each stage of the data collection and analysis was also conducted in partnership between the university and disabled people with experience of being assessed. In this way, the study has aimed to reflect the values it seeks to promote at each stage of the study.

### *Findings*

Our findings in this paper relate as much to the process as to the results of the research. We know for instance that disabled co-researchers in this study have emphasised the depreciative effects of continuous assessments of need, at a personal level, but are aware that practitioners themselves face constraints from the system within which they work. This study brings together disabled service users with practitioners, to explore good practice and to find ways forward. We will present our findings about how this process of open collaboration can make a difference to practice.

### *Conclusions*

Our results have implications for the way we think about the organisation and positioning of social services in our society. We conclude with a reflection on the value of assessment, and the re-framing of the concept as a collaborative process.

### *Improving child care social work: the contribution of a cognitive and affective supervision model*

Danielle Turney | University of Bristol

Gillian Ruch | University of Sussex

Keywords | supervision, cognitive and affective approach, practice-based research, knowledge exchange

Over the past two decades UK child care - and particularly child protection - social work has been characterised by recurrent concerns about the quality of assessment and decision-making and the capacity of social workers to demonstrate analytical and critical thinking skills. These issues have been identified in inquiry reports following child deaths, in research findings and in local and national reviews of practice, prompting widespread debate about how improvements to practice can be introduced in ways that are both effective and sustainable. Despite extensive organisational and procedural changes intended to address these concerns the problems persist. Innovations in practice therefore need to be identified and explored that can help practitioners 'think about their thinking'.

A number of writers have drawn attention to the connection between the nature and quality of thinking and the emotional content and context of childcare practice. Supervision provides a key forum in which thinking processes and practices can be explored, so has a critical role to play in providing a safe space where practitioners can identify the emotional content of their experience and reflect on its meaning. Given the centrality of the supervision-practice feedback loop for sound practice it is important that staff providing supervision have the competence to do this to the highest standards. To support their work, they need accessible and reliable methods and resource materials that can be readily used in practice.

Responding to these concerns a distinctive collaborative knowledge exchange research partnership comprised of social work faculty and practice colleagues, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council in the UK, has been established. The partnership's aim is to develop and pilot a supervision model informed by cognitive interviewing techniques. Working

collaboratively with social work practitioners in the partner organisation, a modified and customised approach - the cognitive and affective supervision approach (CASA) - has been designed that homes in on cognitive understandings of practice but in so doing also heightens practitioners' awareness of the affective dimensions of practice and of their thinking. The model aims to encourage a more holistic supervisory engagement with practice experiences with the intention of enhancing supervisory practices as critical mechanisms for examining the thinking processes and practices that underpin effective assessment and decision-making.

In the context of this project the paper will:

- a) explore the methodological and practical challenges of establishing a knowledge exchange project with practice colleagues operating in settings characterised by anxiety and conditions of austerity
- b) discuss early findings from the project and their implications for improvements in social work education and practice in the academy and in the field.

The paper will conclude with recommendations for overcoming challenges associated with practice-based research in pressurised workplaces and propose some emergent ideas about the scope for innovative approaches to supervision that can contribute to improvements in practice and practitioner efficacy.

*Understanding group supervision: reflective practice, sharing risk and making a difference?*

Lisa Bostock | University of Bedfordshire

Louis Patrizo | University of Bedfordshire

Keywords | supervision, group supervision, reflective practice, risk management, decision making, children and families, child protection, evaluation

### *Background*

It is widely assumed by policy-makers, educators and practitioners that supervision is a good thing. Yet, the international research literature on the effectiveness of supervision has been described as 'surprisingly weak', largely consisting of correlational evidence which means that it can tell us about the associations between supervision and various 'outcomes' for workers and organisations but it can't prove that supervision causes these outcomes. There's a further problem in that most research studies fail to describe what kind of supervision is actually on offer, with few providing information on the nature, quality and regularity of supervision. Where it is identified, the majority of studies focus on one-to-one supervision. This makes it very difficult to assess the effectiveness of supervision, what models work best, whether workers get enough and in what ways supervision can be improved (Carpenter, Webb and Bostock, 2013). In the UK, there has been a shift toward group supervision within children's services, yet there is almost no empirical research on whether this type of supervision is effective.

This paper reports on data from two major evaluations of children's services within the UK. Both evaluations were commissioned to look at the impact of recent service reforms, funded via the Department for Education Innovation Programme, a £130m fund to transform children's services. The first looks at reforms of the Family Safeguarding Service within a large English county; the second assesses the impact of the national roll-out of the Reclaiming Social Work (RSW) or 'Hackney model' in five local authorities across the UK. In both models, group supervision is described a key platform for reform, supporting reflective thinking, shared decision-making and within the RSW model, encouraging practitioners adopt a 'safe uncertainty' approach to risk.

### *Methods*

This presentation reports on a mixed methods study of group supervision across these six local authorities. It presents data on the nature and quality of supervision, quality of practice and experiences and outcomes. It is based on survey data, structured observations of group supervision and interviews with staff and service users. It compares and contrasts the experience of group supervision across projects and local authorities and will report on the first 12 case studies that explore the relationships between supervision and worker and service user experiences.

### *Findings and Conclusions*

Emerging findings suggest that the nature, quality and regularity of group supervision varies considerably both across local authorities but also within local authorities. When done well, group supervision is valued as a reflective space that promotes open and honest dialogue and supports practitioners think through dilemmas, hypothesize and make positive decisions about how best to work with children and families. Where poorly conducted, group supervision is formulaic, constrained by unnecessarily bureaucratic requirements with few opportunities for reflection or to explore the emotional and psychological impact of child protection work on practice. This paper concludes that group supervision has the potential to support reflective social work practices but this is dependent on context and organisational commitment.

### *The strengths perspective: possibilities of an empowering approach in Social Work*

Ana Maria Oliveira | Catholic University of Portugal

Keywords | strengths perspective, social work theory, social vulnerability empowering intervention

This Communication intends to center, on the one hand in the current debate about the place of theory in social work as a 'theory to practice' from which should emanate benchmarks for action, but on the other hand, in a broader perspective, in the debate on empowerment of the individual in the current societal context. The proposal is to try to understand how we can build the capacity of the subjects to act in vulnerability context from the framework of the strengths theory to the social work.

The relevance of the strengths theory for social intervention stems from its purpose to contribute, subject to consideration of the problems, for reversing the logic of action, by emphasizing the strengths and positive dynamics of individuals. The focus on the strengths and empowerment met an increasing popularity in recent decades and can be considered a rupture with the traditional practice in social work and in the professions of social intervention, by providing a new way of looking at people and their circumstances. This view was formally developed in the late 80s, especially in North America, with professionals and researchers of social work in mental health contexts.

Framed in a doctoral thesis, the research developed intended to understand the limits and possibilities of the strengths perspective for social work in Portugal in a context of social vulnerability. The methodology adopted is within the perspective of the qualitative investigation, having used as main procedure the multiple case study and as study unit the processes of professional intervention. There is a theoretical sample of eight social workers who in different areas of social politics interact with individuals in social vulnerability situations, in a total of sixteen cases. Adopting a semi-experimental approach, the empirical investigation was developed in three phases: the analysis of the selected cases based on social processes and on the individ

ual and group interviews, the presentation of the Strengths perspective, and at last, a second set of individual and group interviews.

This study allows us to conclude that an intervention developed according to the Strengths perspective, becomes a multiple movement reaching the process of intervention, the professional and the client, enabling a different approach to social problems and also a reconstruction of the professional culture. The cooperative relation and the vision of project consent the Strengths based approach as a unlike proposal in the constitution of empowering processes, simultaneously outstanding the strength of the theory as an action guide.

Therefore, this communication sets out to present the strenghts perspetive as one of the current theoretical perspectives, aiming to understand how to build an enabling intervention in vulnerable individuals and what are its implications in the context of societal relations, in a space of confluence of tensions and constraints.

*"You do what you have to do" Home - Visiting Work in rural áreas*

Sarah Lungen | Lungen University of Applied Sciences Neubrandenburg  
Barbara Bräutigam | University of Applied Sciences Neubrandenburg  
Matthias Müller | University of Applied Sciences Neubrandenburg

Keywords | rural areas, home -visiting work, research study, qualitative research, quantitative research

There is a clear distinction between Social Work in rural areas and Social Work in urban areas. Social Workers in urban areas for example have a different role in the community and a more non-specific and generalist practice (1) than their colleagues in urban areas. Broader special needs and individual problems exist in the rural areas, differentiating from region to region due to the diversity of the communities; "If you've seen one rural community, you've seen ... one rural community" (2).

In Europe, the considerations of rural social work has only just begun when compared to the research and programs that currently exist in the USA, Canada and Australia, the only exception in Europe being Scandinavia. (3) Home-Visiting Work represents an expanding, extremely promising and commonly practiced approach that can be seen in the areas of social work (e.g. social pedagogical family assistance) as well as health care (e.g. family midwives and doctors). (4)

The research study „'Home Treatment' - transdisciplinary research in home visiting work" which was conducted in January 2011 till December 2013 by the University of Applied Sciences Neubrandenburg, was already presented at the ECSWR 2015 in Ljubljana. One special Aspect in the results of the study was to gain an idea of the differences and similarities of Homevisits, especially in the rural areas of Germany and USA. On this aspect, we would like to focus this time.

At the workshop the results of the investigation will be presented and discussed.

## *Research Teaching and Learning in Qualifying Social Work Education: A Review of the International Literature*

Barbra Teater | College of Staten Island/City University of New York  
Elaine Sharland | University of Sussex

Keywords | research teaching, research training, social work education

### *Background and Purpose*

A globally recognised aspiration for social work education is to produce practitioners who have knowledge, skills, and critical appreciation of research. This presentation is based on a review of the published international literature that describes, evaluates, or debates the teaching and learning of research in qualifying social work education. Specifically, it examines commonalities and diversity in the purposes and approaches taken to social work research training, by examining what the literature tells us in relation to the following questions: Why teach research? What is taught in the name of 'research'? When, how and where is research taught? Who teaches it?; and What are the key issues and challenges encountered?

### *Methods*

An original review, conducted in 2008, of the literature published between 1987 and 2008, was recently updated to extend the publication window to 2015. The literature search used search strings and screening strategies to capture relevant research in UK, North American, Australian, European and other international outlets published in the English language, which gave substantial attention to the teaching and learning of research for qualifying social workers. The review drew on a range of bibliographic databases, including Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts, Social Care Online, Academic Search Complete and Social Sciences Full Text, and also on hand-searches of key international and national journals. All papers were coded using a common schema designed to capture key themes to answer the core review questions.

### *Results*

A total of 93 publications were identified and included in the review. The

significant majority of papers (63) were from the USA, with just 11 from the UK and the remaining 19 variously from Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and India. Among them are descriptions and/or evaluations of specific programmes or initiatives, reports from surveys of education providers and/or students, and discussion pieces about research teaching in qualifying social work education. They demonstrate an impressive array of approaches to research teaching and learning now in evidence, albeit that the preponderance of American publications may reflect the consistently higher profile given to research criteria in social work accreditation in the USA. Findings are tentative, but suggest that integrative approaches combining research with other curriculum elements, formal with experiential, and classroom with practice-based learning, can nurture critical consumers and competent practitioners of social work research. There remain challenges, among them constraints of time and resource, staff expertise, logistics, and a continuing climate of research resistance or ambivalence towards research within the social work community, affecting students' ability to recognise the relevance of research to practice.

Conclusion and Implications: Although research knowledge and skills, along with critical appreciation and ethical use of research, is a globally recognized standard for social work education, social work may have some distance to travel before this aspiration becomes a reality. Nonetheless, there are encouraging indications. Further critical evaluation is needed of the effectiveness of different approaches to research training towards realizing these internationally endorsed aspirations.

*Students' conceptualisation of 'ethnic relations' in the Swedish social work education*

Erica Righard | Malmö University  
Norma Montesino | Lund University

Keywords | social work education, ethnic relations, Sweden, students

The demographic development and the globalization of society, have transformed the conditions for social work in Sweden. The presented study asks how the social work education has adapted to these changes. In spite of various attempts to incorporate cultural diversity in debates and analyses of social vulnerability and social problems, Swedish welfare state normativity has continued as a taken-for-granted perspective in these debates and analyses. This development has contributed to the re-/production of social hierarchies with ethnic markers, prevalent also within the social work education in Sweden.

Research that combines educational science, social work research and migration studies, shows that 'ethnic relations', and other related concepts such as 'culture', 'ethnicity', and 'race', tend to be filled with different and sometimes even contradictory contents; it shows that the construction of 'ethnic relations' in relation to social work varies over time, as well as between, for instance, steering documents, literature, and teaching and learning situations. This research also shows how 'ethnic minority cultures' often are described in stereotypical ways and tend to be connected with social problems, while 'ethnic majority culture' remains invisible. Moreover, it shows how minority students experience this negatively. While this research is mainly based on the US context, the study presented here raises questions about 'ethnic relations' in the Swedish social work education.

The presentation set focus on the content social work students give to 'ethnic relations'. It draws on narrative interviews with students in their last year of the Swedish social work education and sees to the varying contents that is given to 'ethnic relations'. The interviews regard both how the students describe what content that is given to 'ethnic relations' in the education, and what content they themselves give to it. The interviewees, as the student

group in large, have both ethnic minority and ethnic majority backgrounds. Expectedly, the interviews indicate that students give different content to, and have different experiences of how 'ethnic relations' are approached and manifest in the education. To some extent, this is related to their backgrounds, such as minority and majority background but also other dimensions such as 'international experiences', for instance in the form of international studies. For many students, popular and media discourses seems to have more effect on the content they give to 'ethnic relations' in the social work education, than theoretically grounded perspectives drawn from their higher education. Importantly, this study underscores that Swedish social work education, but presumably also other social work educations, is in need of development in order to respond to the cultural diversity it faces among the students in the classroom, as well as in order to prepare these students for social work in the globalized society.

## *Decolonizing Social Work Education: Where Can This Take our Pedagogy?*

Donna Jeffery | Univeresity of Victoria

Keywords | social work education, decolonization, indigenous

The concept of decolonization is enjoying a high profile these days in Canadian universities and this is no less true within schools of social work. A decolonizing process is announced through exhortations to “Indigenize our curriculum” or “decolonize social service delivery.” What remains unclear is just exactly what this can mean, particularly for non-Indigenous critical educators who see ourselves as allied with Indigenous recognition and resistance struggles in universities yet wary of the potential for decolonization efforts to become the latest diversity strategy in the neoliberal academy. Decolonization isn’t a new idea and an “analysis of Indigenous peoples’ entry into the field of human rights is bound up with the story of decolonization, the reorganized capitalist forces released at the end of the Second World war” (Million, 2013, p. 13). However it remains to be seen what its impact will be on social work curricula and programming.

The recent report and call to action by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) serves as a galvanizing force for social work education and curricular change. For example, item 1. iii. in the Report calls for a commitment to “ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the history and impacts of residential schools” (p. 1). There is, it seems, an opportunity now to make something happen. My goal in this paper is to initiate an exploration of the intention and impact of decolonization efforts in social work pedagogy: as conceptualized, what does decolonization do in terms of the social work imaginary? As a profession steeped in modernity, what are the violences that are to be resolved through a decolonizing purge of the curriculum? In other words, what work is the discourse of decolonization carrying out in social work education today? Through an analysis of the concept of decolonization in recent social work literature alongside writings by key Indigenous scholars on the topic of decolonization, I will conduct a critical discourse analysis with the purpose of exploring the functionality

and positioning of decolonization as a pedagogical goal. As Andreotti et al. (2015) note, not only do the “violences of colonization affect nearly every dimension of being” but decolonization itself “has multiple meanings and the desires and investments that animate it are diverse, contested, and at times, at odds with one another” (p.22). The social and health issues faced by Indigenous communities are entwined with the realities of poverty and dispossession and they require students in our university programs to gain a sound foundation in working with and alongside these communities, cognizant of colonialism and its violences as well as contemporary resistance movements. With uneven effects, appeals to a practice of decolonizing social work education are conflated with calls to “Indigenizing” professional education and it remains unclear how this will serve a more accountable social work educational process.



*“What exactly are you trying to tell me?” An evaluation of the use of Forum Theatre to develop skills and confidence in giving feedback on performance to supervisees.*

Alix Walton | Royal Holloway, University of London

Keywords | forum theatre, evaluation, pedagogic approach

Supervisors of qualified social workers and students are expected to provide honest and constructive feedback on performance to their supervisees (Ofsted, 2012; TCSW et al, 2013; DfE, 2015). Pousette et al (2010) identify the difficulties supervisors experience in giving feedback to supervisees which may be perceived as negative. These difficulties mirror the concerns and challenges regularly expressed by students on the post-qualifying supervision and practice education courses which I lead.

This study sought to explore whether the use of Forum Theatre as a pedagogic approach could in any way assist supervisors to address these challenges and develop skills and confidence in giving supervisees feedback on performance. Forum theatre (Boal, 2008) has been used as a tool in different areas of health and social care education to explore aspects of practice that students may find challenging (Middlewick et al, 2012). However the literature evaluating Forum Theatre as a pedagogic approach remains limited. Students were invited to take part in a three hour Forum Theatre workshop which was evaluated using pre and post workshop questionnaires. Post workshop questionnaires were administered immediately following the workshop and again 3-4 months following the workshop. The workshop was run on three occasions using the same poor practice scenarios. The workshops involved a total of 29 participants who held roles as practice educators, newly qualified social work assessors and line managers of social workers.

Results from the evaluation will be presented and will specifically address:

- Participants views of Forum Theatre as a pedagogic approach
- The impact of the workshops in respect of participants confidence in having conversations about performance with supervisees
- The impact of the workshops in relation to perceived skills development
- Transfer of learning from the workshops into the workplace

The paper will conclude by considering use of Forum Theatre as a pedagogic approach and implications for social work educators.

Conference Themes

This paper directly addresses theme 8: Research in Social Work Education and also links with theme 6 through its focus on social work supervisors working within New Public Management contexts

## *Making Social Work Count: A Curriculum Innovation to Teach Quantitative Methods to Undergraduate Social Work Students*

Jessica Roy | University of Bristol  
Barbra Teater | City University of New York  
John Carpenter | University of Bristol

Keywords | teaching quantitative research, research training, research self-efficacy, attitudes, curriculum innovation

### *Background and Purpose*

One aim of social work education in the United Kingdom (UK) is to provide students with the knowledge and skills to become 'research-minded' where, as future practitioners, they are able to critique and use research to inform their social work practice. Although research methods teaching should give equal consideration to qualitative and quantitative methods, students are found to particularly lack knowledge and skills in regard to quantitative method (QM).

This presentation reports on an Economic and Social Research Council (ES-RC)-funded project to develop, pilot and evaluate a QM curriculum for use by social work academics in UK universities teaching undergraduate social work students. A curriculum of 10 QM teaching inputs and an accompanying website was developed. The materials were piloted and evaluated at two universities between 2012-2014 to test the following three hypotheses: (1) students' self-efficacy in QM will increase; (2) students' knowledge of QM will increase; and (3) students' self-reported attitudes towards QM in social work research will be more positive.

### *Methods*

A pretest-posttest design was used to test the three hypotheses. A questionnaire aimed at assessing self-efficacy, knowledge and attitudes was administered to participating students (N=81) pre (T1) and post (T2) teaching input. Questionnaire data were analysed by descriptive and bivariate statistical tests. Analysis was also undertaken to determine whether participants' academic background or age were associated with self-efficacy, knowledge, or attitudes.

### *Results*

The evaluation had three main findings. Firstly, students were significantly more likely to report higher levels of self-efficacy at T2 than at T1. Secondly, there was a slight, but non-significant, increase in students' knowledge of QM between T1 and T2. Thirdly, and in contrast to the first two findings, students' attitudes towards QM were found to be more negative at T2 than at T1. Aside from one statement in relation to measures of central tendency, there were no differences in level of self-efficacy, knowledge, or attitudes from T1 to T2 based on students' science background or age.

Conclusion and Implications: Although self-efficacy was found to significantly increase amongst social work students, changes in knowledge and attitudes were found to be non-significant. This presentation will draw on the findings of the evaluation and relevant literature to make five practical recommendations in relation to teaching research methods and implementing the 10-input QM curriculum. They are: (1) Teaching should meet students where they are academically and encourage them to move at their own pace; (2) The relevance and importance of QM skills in social work should be emphasised; (3) Formative and summative assessment should provide opportunities for students to practice applying research skills in 'real-life' situations; (4) A culture of research should be developed within social work programmes; and (5) New and creative means of evaluating the outcomes of research teaching should be explored.

*Between Social Services and their Beneficiaries in a Transition Society*

Sanja Milutinović Bojanić | University of Rijeka, Croatia

Mirjana Nećak | University of Rijeka, Croatia

Keywords | social services, social service beneficiaries, transition society research project, rural population, barriers in approach

The two year (2014-2016) and four stage research project "Gender that Matters: Poverty and Social Inclusion – Social Protection Status in Rural Kosovo and Serbia" with policy, actionable and scientific ambitions aims in presenting and understanding the current situation in the field of social services with a strong emphasis on the gender aspect of the rural population. The main objective is to examine the availability and quality of social services provided by the government and the nongovernmental sectors in Serbia and Kosovo and to determine the barriers rural population faces in accessing social services. First stage of the research began with a desk analysis of the social system from the available secondary data, followed by the qualitative social research combined with ethnographic materials that include visual data (photographs) and observation. Quantitative research takes part from October to December 2015. Finally, the structured findings of this project are going to be used as part of the material for advocating for the improvement of the social protection systems in Republic Serbia and Kosovo. Desk analysis has shown that the social and economic change in Serbia, augmented by the economic crisis from 2008 to present time, led to reduction of investments in social services. Thus the post-socialist transition of social services from state to the individuals in NGO sector became even more challenging. It was also a preparation stage for the qualitative research with 60 in-depth interviews for the sub-sample of social services clients that we intend to present in this paper. We have mapped the relationships between beneficiaries of social services in the situation of new social services approach paying attention to the most vulnerable group in rural regions – women and their approach to social services in the environment of traditional society. Findings from the field indicate that in light of constant unstable political and economic atmosphere, there is a long list of barriers prevent

ing communication and understanding between social services and social service beneficiaries. We thus created a set of recommendations that should enable easier approach to social services for the beneficiaries and facilitate efficacy of the social services.



*Bridging the gap between strategic social policies and their local implementation: the Regione Puglia as a case study for the evaluation of the effectiveness of social work.*

Luigi Spedicato | University of Salento  
Mario Quarta | University of Salento  
Andrea Forte | University of Salento  
Anna Maria Vitale | University of Salento  
Marileda Vergori | University of Salento

Keywords | Social policies evaluation, Evaluation theories and methodologies, Social services evaluation

#### *Background and purpose*

The Puglia region has the task to plan and coordinate the integrated system of social intervention and services, through the Regional social policies Masterplan. The strategic objective of the Plan is the social advancement of individuals and communities, as an alternative to purely economic support measures and intervention assistance-oriented. Our research aims to verify whether and to what extent, Area Plans, that represent the instrument for the implementation at local level of the strategic directions of the Puglia region in social policies, manage to achieve the goal of promoting social welfare and combat marginalization.

#### *Methods*

Starting from the theory of Realistic evaluation proposed by Pawson and Tilley (1997), we now adopt a model of evaluation of Area Plans capable of tackling the systemic complexity of this instrument of social policy, with respect both to their coherence with the strategic planning adopted by Regione Puglia and to the outcome of their actions. We have built an evaluative model based on five dimensions of data collection and analysis: a) needs analysis and the quality of the programming process; b) the quality of organisational and management processes; c) the quality of the actions taken; d) the quality of the participation of local actors; e) the quality and use of evaluation as a strategic tool for local social policies organizations.

Each dimension is broken down into indicators, to which the model assigns a specific evaluative weight.

#### *Results*

What emerges is a relatively high degree of discrepancy between the social policy guidelines promoted by the Regione Puglia, aimed towards innovation, empowerment and an inclusive and participatory welfare, and what in practice is done in almost all Area Plans: an important role in their action today seems, in fact, mostly based on disbursement in cash to targeted subjects.

#### *Conclusions and implications*

The most critical factor until now emerged is the existence of a gap, demonstrated by our research, between the general orientation of the regional policies and their implementation at the local level, due mainly to the lack of tools and methodologies for evaluation. This gap results in a negative impact on key elements of social policies like needs analysis, optimization of resources, organizational learning reflex circuit of Area plans offices through ex post evaluation. Strategic actors of social policy are therefore called to verify the possible existence of a gap between them and the institutions that at on local level have as their mission to apply those strategic policies in the form of social services.

*Dynamic development or social stability? An anthropological analysis of how Danish Labour Market Policy effect socially marginalized citizens in Copenhagen, Denmark*

Julie Rahbæk Møller | Metropolitan University College  
Jan Bjerregaard | Metropolitan University College  
Mikkel Bo Madsen | Metropolitan University College  
Michael Münchow | Metropolitan University College

Keywords | welfare, social work, labour market policy, marginalization  
neo-liberalism, stability versus dynamics

The aim of this paper is to explore the everyday life and the social work taking place at two private social work organizations offering activation to marginalized citizens of Copenhagen, Denmark. The users of these organizations suffer from comprehensive social, mental and physical problems such as alcohol and substance abuse, psychiatric diagnoses and ensuing physical disabilities as well as homelessness.

It has been claimed that the Danish Welfare State has undergone a transformation to a form of neoliberal Competition State thereby shifting focus from solidarity amongst its citizens to a focus on freedom for the individual to carry out its own needs. Instead of striving for stability the Competition State enhances dynamic processes (Pedersen 2011: 12). Even marginalized people are perceived as being in a temporary state of crisis regarding their social problems, and many forms of interventions (including motivational strategies by reducing social benefits) are stipulated on their behalf by the public employment system. However, these interventions become incomprehensible and detached from their target groups.

Our paper is based on a long term fieldwork amongst social workers and users at two private social work organizations in Copenhagen involving participant observation and interviews conducted with users, social workers and case workers. Historically these organizations were founded before the emergence of the Welfare State, and they have origins in Christian community work. However, at present they are in collaboration with and economically dependent on the state.

Few of our interlocutors get a regular job within the ordinary labour market as an outcome of these interventions. Instead the vast majority of the users are experiencing a type of meaningfulness, structure and stability in their daily life through participation in cleaning, removal services, cooking, laundry services, secondhand-shops, meal sharing or simply hanging out – all of which are daily activities in these organizations. Whilst policy makers in Denmark do not acknowledge this as a legitimate strategy, the State's street-level bureaucrats (Lipsky 2010 [1980]), eg. case workers, do acknowledge the strategy and collaborate with these organizations. Yet, formally, they stipulate a dynamic development of the citizen. This raises the questions: How do the private employment organizations evaluate the achievements of a social intervention whose aim cannot be stipulated explicitly by the organization? How is social stability recognized as being of value for people who are considered to be unemployable? And what are the consequences for these people in terms of acknowledgement and dignity that their achievements in terms of social network and stability cannot be recognized by policy makers?

Do these organizations – and the street-level bureaucrats – in fact maintain a form of social order thereby strengthening the very same system they attempt to challenge?

## *The alienated self of shame?*

Veronika Magyar-Haas | Universität Zürich

Keywords | social work theory, alienation, shame

Sociological studies conceptualize shame as an emotion that reflects a loss of self-respect within social relations and contexts. They point out that shame and the experience of lack of dignity emerge from individualization and from constructions of social disadvantage in terms of an individual failure. Analysing shame as expression of social stigmatizing against the background of a power relationship, this contribution will focus - from a socio-pedagogical point of view - on two main questions. Firstly, on the question how shame can emerge and how the participants handle such shame-situations in pedagogical settings. Secondly, it will be asked what shame reveals about the subject. What does the emotion of shame signify about the self and about the social relations within a certain pedagogical context?

These questions will be discussed with reference to a video-recorded sequence. The ethnographical study was conducted in a youth centre for girls aged 10 to 16 that emphasized the relevance of practicing democratic participation in form of girl-parliament-meetings. It will be shown how the latitude of the participating girls and professionals are getting narrowed in blaming situations. In the emotion of shame the ashamed person confirms the validity of the norms. Shame seems to be the phenomenon, which is getting evoked in pedagogical situations through blaming to demonstrate that the norms of the social group have high relevance for the person. Further, it will be argued that in the emotion of shame the self reveals itself as a «broken», corporeal and vulnerable self, which is in various relationships to others and to their normative expectations.

## *Poverty and social exclusion as shame and attacks on subjectivity. The case of food bank users and the transformation of the German welfare state.*

Holger Schoneville | TU-Dortmund

Keywords | social work theory, alienation, shame

What does it mean to be poor and to be affected by the processes of social exclusion? What does it mean to individuals when they rely on the support of a food bank? This frames the central empirical question of the paper. It focuses on the consequences for the subjectivity of individuals when they use the services of food banks.

In the last twenty years social support by organisations beyond the welfare state has risen and now plays an important role in the provision of support for people in need.

At the forefront of this development are food banks, found all over Europe and in particular in Germany. The key characteristics of food banks in Germany are that they provide support by voluntary work. The products are donated goods that are no longer of value within the primary market and the service is provided alongside the welfare state. The users of food banks have no rights to claim any of the goods. The goods are given as an act of charity. Food banks therefore mark an important transformation of the welfare state in Germany.

The empirical findings, the paper will present, were conducted through narrative-biographic interviews with food bank users. The interviews are understood as narrative constructions of identity.

One central finding of the project is that food bank users not only receive social support they need, they are also simultaneously confronted with emotions of shame. They face constant attacks on their subjectivity. The findings of the project inform the discussion about food banks in particular, as well as about the consequences of the transformation of the welfare state in general.

*Ignoring intersections between disability and homelessness for youth: challenges and impacts*

Tina Wilson | McMaster University  
Ann Fudge Schormans | McMaster University  
Stephanie Baker Collins | McMaster University  
Becky Idems | McMaster University  
Lisa Watt | McMaster University

Keywords | youth, disability, homelessness, policy

*Background and purpose*

Social work may strive to work with the whole person but the needs-based design of social policy in the declining Canadian welfare state is more likely to parse out one experience from another. Ignoring the intersectionality of social problems and social identities at the level of social policy makes it much more difficult to support people to access entitlements, supports, and services. At the level of direct service delivery, there are rarely consistent mechanisms for acknowledging or tracking problems or experiences classified as outside the formal mandate of a particular service area or organization. In this context, partnerships between social work researchers and community organizations are a means to gather evidence and think collectively across funding and service sectors, and ensure pressing concerns make it onto policy agendas.

The research project reported on in this session explores the intersection of intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD), homelessness, education, and employment among young people living in three Canadian cities. We are looking at both the experiences of young people navigating these various sectors and the experiences of social workers in organizations who support them. Our aims are to make visible to policy makers the prevalence of youth with ID/DD who have experienced homelessness, map the referral pathways and blockages between discrete support sectors, establish ongoing partnerships between sectors, and make recommendations for improving service delivery.

*Methods*

This is a mixed method project designed around a site-anchored community partnership and peer researcher model. Sites have been established in three Canadian cities, with each site supported by a committee of agency staff and peer researchers recruited from local homelessness, disability, education, and employment services. Three types of data are being collected: quantitative intake and program data on youth characteristics gathered from local partner agencies in each of the three sites; an environmental scan mapping referral pathways, connections, gaps, and consequences for youth and agencies, and; key informant interviews with front-line staff and exploratory interviews with young people with ID/DD who have experienced homelessness.

*Results*

This is a three-year project and data collection is ongoing. The focus of this presentation will be on preliminary findings from the environmental scan. We anticipate that this data will help illuminate the effects of eroding social supports on young people with ID/DD who have experienced homelessness and on the social workers who strive to support them. We suspect this data will also illuminate confusing service pathways between too-distinct service sectors, gaps in services, wait lists, and the need for formal assessment in order to access needs-based supports. Finally, this data may also hint toward the ways in which narrow neoliberal definitions of productivity and work are shaping service delivery, and the consequent limited forms of inclusion offered to homeless and insecurely housed young people with ID/DD in Canada.

*The contractual state and welfare for people with intellectual disabilities: A comparison of England, Norway and Sweden*

Linda de Chenu | Independent scholar  
Dag Daehlen | Oslo and Akershus University College  
Jude Tah | University of Stockholm

Keywords | intellectual disabilities, contractual state, CRPD

This paper is based on a comparative study of welfare benefits and welfare services for people with intellectual disabilities. The aim of the comparative methodology was to understand the similarities and difference of characteristics and trends of services for people with intellectual disabilities in the three countries and to identify possible causes. The method used was to develop country specific case studies through a review of secondary literature in each country and the application of typological categories to enable comparison.

The study reviews a period when international policies of work activation and of privatisation and the individualisation of services has taken place in the context of countries implementing the CRPD. The application of two typologies of welfare states relevant to transfer payments and to social services and social work enabled the identification of country specific mediations of international policy developments.

The study found that there were substantial differences in the rights to social services for people with intellectual disabilities between the Scandinavian countries and England. The differences in rights to services are discussed as well as the effects of austerity programmes in the three countries. Similarly the 'activation for all policy' peculiar to the UK has rendered people with intellectual disabilities vulnerable to poverty. Institutional differences between the three countries and their effects on services and social work for people with learning disabilities are also discussed. Finally the paper considers the different models of disability that influence services in the three countries and their implications for the CRPD.

*Can sociological theory and/or labor market theory explain the workforce participation of people with disabilities receiving public benefits?*

Mike Edwards | University of Bedfordshire

Keywords | disability, employment, welfare benefits, social networks

People with disabilities have high rates of exclusion from the labour market in all industrialised countries. Social workers and others attempt to assist people with disabilities to enter, and remain in, the workforce through a variety of interventions, including individual and group support, benefits advocacy, and negotiating with employers. To generate knowledge of the factors that are associated with successful job hunting by people with disabilities, this study uses perspectives from sociological and economic theory to explore the workforce participation of 1166 disability benefit recipients who wish to work or continue to work. The following factors were hypothesised to be associated with entry to employment if unemployed, or remaining active in the labour market if employed:

- Satisfaction with close networks
- Range of networks
- Perceived consistency in the role expectations for employment held by close networks
- The potential to gain higher net income by working (for entry to employment only)
- Belief that the actual impact of earnings on net income is positive

Separate analyses were conducted of those unemployed and those employed at entry to the study. For the unemployed, the dependent variable is any employment over the following two years. For those employed, the dependent variable is some employment in every quarter of the following two years. Life tables were used to examine time to employment or unemployment. Survival analyses and logistic regression analyses were used to test the effect of the 5 independent variables. Relevant control variables were included. Separate analyses were conducted for sub-groups that might respond differently to the independent variables. The results for the unem



ployed indicate that entry to employment was associated with 'Network range' for the whole group and across most sub-groups. The results for the employed indicate that remaining active in the labour market was associated with 'Satisfaction with social support' for the whole group and most sub-groups.

Implications of the results for social work practice and disability benefit policy will be explored.

*Securing quality of transition after secured residential care: no sinecure*

Andrea Donker | Utrecht University of Applied Sciences

Joep Hanrath | Utrecht University of Applied Sciences

Liesbeth Krol | Utrecht University of Applied Sciences

Lisette Bitter | Utrecht University of Applied Sciences

Keywords | trajectory, residential, transition

### *Background*

In the Netherlands, secured residential youth-care institutions for so called high-resource using children were commanded to improve quality of care by increasing collaboration with all organisations involved. In comparison with the old program, in this new program (called Trajectory care) there is more focus on the future steps towards independence, starting very soon after entering the institution and continuing on the outside during approximately two years. One professional is to guide the youngster during this whole trajectory. Top priority was the improvement of the transition phase that takes place when a youngster is leaving the secured residential care and returns home or moves to a non-secured residence where they learn to live on their own. The support and (therapeutic) care around these transition phases involves multiple service providers and consequently different management.

### *Methods*

Research questions addressed the method of support and care for these youngsters during the transition phase and the way service organisations facilitate professionals to improve this process and evaluate the quality. A combination of action research methods, focus groups and multiple case studies were conducted during one and a half year from the start of the new care program. Using a longitudinal design 26 youngsters were followed during their trajectory care, over 150 interviews were conducted with youngsters, their parents, and with professionals from the secured residence and from other service providers.

### Results

Collaboration between organizations improved up to a certain point but the aim to appoint one professional for the complete trajectory proved in most cases a bridge too far. Nevertheless, the improved program did result for some youngsters in seemingly high quality transition phases but most transitions did not take place according to plan. This raised new questions like: "What are the implications of an unfolding supportive pathway for the management of trajectory care?" How deal with, in avertedly, interrupted care that provokes indecisiveness amongst the multiple service providers involved? Who takes responsibility to move on?

### Conclusions

The intensified collaboration between the secured residential institution and other organizations did not fully result in improved transition phases. Suggestions were raised that one professional should be appointed as primarily responsible for a transition phase. High quality of transition phases seems to require explicit emphasis on its relevance from higher management as well as their actions to enable options to overcome lower management posing practical obstacles to achieve high quality transition phases.

### Child sexual exploitation in Britain

Kish Bhatti-Sinclair | University of Chichester

Bridget Ng'Andu | Ruskin College, Oxford

Keywords | child sexual exploitation, victims, perpetrators, social work racialisation, critical multi-culturalism

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) is a growing area of concern for child protection agencies within the UK. Conversely the focus in other European countries is on refugee and trafficked children within the universal framework of the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Data collected by the British Government in 2013 identified 2,092 known victims of CSE. Four English regions reported a minimum of 1662 recorded cases of CSE during the 2013/2015 period. The response by the British Government is critiqued as reactive and too closely aligned to policies on immigration, radicalisation and anti-terrorism. Reports on CSE are locality based, written in an individualised format with limited empirical evidence. There is an over-emphasis on the number of Pakistani men as perpetrators. The paper is based on a thematic analysis of the major national enquires, reports and documents which have charted CSE in England during the 2005-2015 period. Critical multi-cultural theories are used to analyse models of CSE and victim/perpetrator profiles.

Evidence suggests that CSE is linked to emotionally vulnerable children who are coerced into activities of sexual nature in exchange for goods and/or affection. Gifts, drink and drugs are used routinely. Perpetrators often operate in gangs or networks and are skilful in understanding and responding to the physical, psychological and emotional geography of the victims. The children involved are often looked after by local authorities and their cases fall within child protection laws and procedures.

British strategies, policies and procedures to combat CSE have direct relevance for social workers seeking to develop good practice across the world. The focus on the racialisation of CSE has a particular relevance for European social workers seeking to engage with 'race' and immigration.

*Towards Welfare Rights in Youth Justice: an evaluation*

Roger Smith | Durham University

Keywords | participation, youth justice, organisational change, young people's voices, rights

This paper will give an account of a longitudinal evaluation of a very distinctive initiative in youth justice. The initiative itself (UR Boss) aimed to incorporate a participatory element into service development and advocacy work in a non-governmental organisation (the Howard league) with an established role in promoting young people's rights in the criminal justice system.

The organisation had no prior experience, though, of participatory work with young people, and had to deal with both the practicalities of adapting its way of working and the challenges of promoting participation in criminal justice settings, including custody.

The evaluation was commissioned to provide developmental insights into the project as it developed, as well as an overall summary of the achievements and challenges encountered. The evaluation team adopted a range of methods, including interviews and observation, to try and understand the processes by which the initiative was developed by the parent organisation and aligned with its established structures and practices. In particular, we sought to understand how a participatory approach could be incorporated into its work, given the organisation's lack of prior experience and the inbuilt resistance to giving young people a voice in the criminal justice system itself. As we observed, this necessitated the utilisation of a considerable degree of skill and persistence by the series of participation workers employed by the project, as well as a difficult process of organisational learning and change on the part of the host organisation. The eventual outcome, though, was the establishment of a highly effective voice for young people who had experienced the justice system. We were able therefore to begin to articulate some of the factors which may at least assist in generating this kind of success in participatory initiatives: such as the skilled input of experienced participation workers, the readiness of the organisation to learn from its experience, the skills and commitment of existing staff, a willingness to take

risks, and above all, the effective inclusion at the heart of the project of a group of knowledgeable and committed young people.

As a result, we believe that we are able to report on some of the factors which do facilitate participatory and rights-based work in potentially unpromising circumstances, such as those outlined; as well as reflecting briefly, and without claiming too much, on the value of taking a developmental approach to evaluation so as to ensure lessons can be learned and incorporated 'along the way'.

*Street connected Children and Youths in Republic of Georgia, the HIV risks and challenges they face as citizens of the country*

Teona Gotsiridze | Georgian Association of Social Workers

Keywords | street connected children, interview, risk, HIV, AID, youth research, adolescents

There is no precise data on how many children and youths are living and/or working in the streets of Tbilisi despite the fact that numerous organizations are working with them and on their issues.

Globally, adolescents and young people experience high levels of HIV vulnerability and risk. Estimates suggest that AIDS related deaths among young people are increasing, suggesting poor prioritization of adolescents in national plans for HIV testing and treatment services. HIV/AIDS is currently the sixth leading cause of death in people. (1)

Adolescence (10 to 19) and youth (ages 15 to 24) is the time when the majority of people become sexually active. The reality is that many adolescents engage in risky sexual behavior—having their first sexual encounters at an early age, not using contraception correctly and consistently, or using alcohol and drugs prior to engaging in sexual activity (3)(4). Adolescent sexual risk behaviors are associated with elevated rates of teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and HIV/AIDS. Among young people, street connected youth, who are defined as youth for whom the “street” is a reference point and has a central role in their lives (2), are clearly distinguished as being among those most at risk for HIV infection through both risky sexual and drug-related behaviors

The purpose of this paper is to present a better understanding of street connected youths’ social capital, its influence on their risk behavior and what social work interventions are implemented to address the needs of them.

The study will use the qualitative data from 60 youths: 30 in depth interviews with 30 youths (65 % boys; 45% girl) and 4 focus group discussions with children and youths (12-18 years olds) and 2 focus group discussions with professionals working with them. In addition, at least 5 interviews will be conducted with representatives of NGOs working on the issues of chil

dren and youths associated with streets in Georgia.

Moreover, the findings of study will be used to design an instrument for a subsequent quantitative study to assess the situation of the youths, their risk behaviors and health and social needs.

The first findings of the study will be published in February 2016.

*Promotion of positive ethnic minority youth development assessment in Hong Kong school social work practice: A conceptual framework*

Gizem Arat | The University of Hong Kong

Keywords | positive youth development, ethnic minority, social justice, social harmony, resilience, school social work, Hong Kong

Hong Kong is a self-proclaimed international city at the heart of Asia. However, this territory has lagged behind in response to culturally-competent school social work service delivery for school-going ethnic minority compared to other global cities. This paper describes where ethnic groups are situated within local social work practice, reviews the Hong Kong context on culturally-responsive social work profession, and proposes a framework for the promotion of multilevel positive youth development for school-aged ethnic minorities.

The social work profession in Hong Kong has been predominantly serving local citizens (Hong Kong Chinese) and non-local immigrants (e.g., mainland Chinese, Europeans, Americans) through a hybrid approach combining European values imported from Britain, the former colonial administrator and with Confucian values from China underpinning social harmony rather than social justice. Although ethnic minority students have frequently reported their struggles in Hong Kong's mainstream society in terms of discrimination, segregation and bullying, the importance of cultural competency is overlooked in the current school social work practice in Hong Kong. Based on the existing studies and scholars' observations, school social workers tend to fail meeting ethnic groups' needs or best interests due to the extensive emphasis on the maintenance of harmonious school environment based on Chinese societal values.

Similar to the lack of culturally competent social work practice with ethnic minorities, the unofficial segregation in schools still exists. Such segregation may have an adverse impact on the development of ethnic minority students regarding mental health, life satisfaction, and well-being. However, both local empirical research and school social work service provision are solely confined to academic performance and schooling processes of

ethnic minorities, a single dimension of youth development, and focus on risk assessment rather than protective resources. Such limitation is not only a concern for ethnic minority student youth development but also a matter of social justice which is a universal core value of the social work profession. This paper proposes a conceptual framework of practice incorporating: (a) 'social justice in social harmony' for school social work practice with ethnic minorities, (b) promotion of culturally relevant school social work practice with ethnic minorities, (c) articulation of resilience-based research for ethnic minorities' best interests, and (d) integration of social cohesion.

This paper is in accordance with the theme of 6th European Conference for Social Work Research given this paper addresses the urgent need for the universal principle of social justice as a human right regardless of individual's race, gender, or religion differences in the Eastern context.

In conclusion, being aware of societal values and protective resources couched in socio-cultural settings of ethnic minority students will help social service providers and researchers increase the promotion of social justice as a component of social harmony in Hong Kong. Consequently, this proposed framework will not be beneficial for scholars to work with diverse populations but also policymakers to design and implement youth-friendly policies underpinning cultural diversity. Ethnic minority young people should be seen as an asset or a resource for Hong Kong's future rather than a burden on social welfare.

## *How are emotions constructed in the discourse of new public management?*

Louise O'Connor | Royal Holloway, University of London

Keywords | emotions, discourse, reframing

Emotions are intrinsic to social work and a central dimension of the relational, human encounters which form the basis of practice. Social workers use emotions intuitively and dynamically in everyday practice, yet the place and role of emotions within professional practice remains ambiguous and uncertain (Ferguson, 2011, Ruch, 2012). The emphasis on regulatory systems, performance monitoring and audit within new public management approaches has increased this ambiguity.

This presentation will draw on a literature review of empirical studies whose findings demonstrate that practitioners' experience of emotions is an essential area for consideration in social work research and practice. Findings from a range of international studies will be presented thematically. These include discourses of negativity, professionalism and organisational culture. The ensuing analysis will examine the costs, benefits and contradictions of emotions in everyday practice. It will be argued that each of these impact on practitioners, people who receive social work services and employing organisations. By problematizing contemporary discourses and responses to emotions in social work practice it will be argued that alternative disciplinary approaches to emotion could be developed. Reframing perceptions of practitioner emotions to develop our understanding of emotions as a resource and form of knowledge has potential to challenge and strengthen practice for the profession. This represents a challenge for social work practice and research operating within new public management systems. This paper concludes with a call for more nuanced responses to emotions within the social work profession. This study is developed from ongoing Ph.D. studies.

Ferguson, H. 2011. *Child protection practice*, Palgrave macmillan.

Ruch, G. 2012. *Where Have All the Feelings Gone? Developing Reflective and Relationship-Based Management in Child-Care Social Work*. *British Journal of Social Work*, 42, 1315-1332.

## *Public relations in social service organizations a democratic challenge*

Stefan Sjöström | Umeå University

Jesper Enbom | Umeå University

Keywords | social work, public relations, media, news management risk management, reputation, child protection

Social service organizations often perceive that they have a problematic relation to news media. Research into media coverage of social work has found that news report tend to be negative, oriented towards scandals in which social workers are either portrayed as "bullies" or "wimps." Moreover social workers at grass-root level sometimes experience considerable pressure from news media. Partly, social workers become vulnerable targets for journalists due to the nature of their work. They are faced with difficult decisions where mistakes may have severe consequences. Furthermore, it is difficult for social service organizations to explain the rationale behind decisions because of far reaching secrecy rules.

Although there is a body of research about media portrayals of social work and also about social workers' perception of media coverage, there is no empirically-based research concerning public relations activities in social service organizations. This paper presents findings from a large research project comparing PR activities in three types of public sector organizations: social services, schools and the police. The aim of this paper is to analyze how social service organizations strike a balance between democratic openness and organizational/professional self interest their PR activities. The paper draws on two types of data. First a survey of a national representative sample of municipal social service organizations (n=91) (attrition rate<10%). The survey questions have been answered by the person with operative responsibility for media relations within each authority and have been gathered via telephone interviews lasting between 20 and 55 minutes. Second, case studies in two municipalities. On each site, interviews have been carried out with staff at different levels in the organization about their everyday approach to media and PR. In addition, retrospective data (interviews and media material) will also be collected with regards to a media crisis in each

municipal social service organization.

In the analysis, a typology of four types of institutional conditions that are particularly vital for news management in public sector organizations is applied: governance, public interest, transparency and mission. In terms of governance, social services in Sweden have a strong involvement of politicians in decision-making regarding individual clients and they are subjected to competition from private service-providers. As regards public interest, social services do not meet traditional news criteria unless something goes wrong. Far-reaching secrecy rules impede the possibilities to feed media with information at the same time as Swedish public servants have extensive legal protection for providing news media with information. A further complication is that the mission of social services is difficult to define and evaluate.

At this stage, results are only preliminary. However, results from the survey suggest a strong tendency to prioritize organizational self-interest and to protect the organization from critique. This may jeopardize the general public's interest in being provided with relevant knowledge into all aspects of organizational activities.

## *The Quality of Social Work Report Writing: An Analysis of Social Work Social Circumstances Reports for First-Tier Mental Health Tribunals*

Jane Shears | St Andrew's Healthcare

Keywords | mental health, legislation and tribunals, social work reports

### *Background*

When service users appeal against being detained in a psychiatric hospital for assessment or treatment, social workers play a critical role in the UK assisting Mental Health Tribunal Panels to decide whether or the service user could be discharged from their detention. The content of Tribunal reports is laid down in Practice Directions, which were developed by the UK government Courts and Tribunals Judiciary.

### *Methods*

The study aims were to audit the quality of Social Circumstances Reports written by social workers and prepared for service users detained at a psychiatric hospital before and after the introduction of this Practice Direction. The objective was to assess if the Practice Directions, setting out what should be included in the report template improved report quality. Eighty reports were audited in 2013 and a further 80 in 2014 against 28 key items derived from the Practice Direction.

### *Results*

The data was analysed using SPSS. Reports prepared in 2013 contained on average 13.1 of 28 key items increasing to 19.1 in 2014. The template was used for 60% of reports in 2014 and resulted in better quality reports. In the repeat audit more reports contained recommendations, mostly advising the service user's continued detention, though some recommended discharge to a less restrictive placement.

### *Conclusions*

Such professional judgements take place at the juxtaposition of the Mental

Health Act (1983) and the Human Rights Act (1998), in which risk management and risk taking are key to decision-making. Although the findings of the second audit identified that there was an overall increase in social workers making recommendations as a conclusion to the evidence presented in their reports, and an increase in recommendations for alternatives to inpatient detention, this still seems to be an area which is ethically challenging for social workers.

*An alternative approach to traditional methods for counselling in social work practice*

Kirsti Gjeitnes | Norwegian University of Science and technology (NTNU)

Keywords | reflection, critical thinking, reflective learning , reflexive practice

#### *Background and purpose*

The presentation is based on my Phd-project which is an action-research project in The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Services (NAV). The purpose was to explore possibilities and barriers in implementation of approaches and perspectives on reflective learning and interaction.

NAV is the new organizational frame for a significant part of social work practice in Norway, and this new context represents challenges. Generally, in times of rapid changes and New Public Management trends, the context of social work practice is continually characterized by its complexity and competing demands. High expectations of efficiency and measurable results are often combined with restricted resources and high personal responsibility for the professional performance. This is putting pressure on practitioners and clients. The context of social work practice is also increasingly interdisciplinary compounded, which requires high ability to understand and handle praxis from different perspectives.

#### *Hypotheses and research question*

Hence this situation, social workers need support in their daily practice to maintain quality standards and to keep up with professional core ideals and competencies. Critical thinking is necessary in order to understand the complexity in practice, and to strengthen professional self-confidence and creativity. Reflection is in general crucial to identify constructive and flexible strategies in problem-setting and in designs for problem-solving (Shön 1983, 1987).

A central question, however, is how theories of reflective learning and thinking can be implemented in the daily practice?

#### *Methods*

The data in this project are qualitative and based on field notes and inter



views. A central part of the field work was to explore methods for reflective practice in groups of practitioners in two departments of NAV. At the end we interviewed the participants about their experiences. A similar research process was also carried out in groups of clients. The experimental periods lasted for 1 – 2 years.

### *Results*

Theoretical perspectives were useful as guidelines for implementation, but did not replenish the picture. We met several challenges during the project which had to be handled to attend to practitioners demands, such as continuity and practical profit from their use of time in the groups. We identified several core elements, which represented premises for implementation of reflection as a methodological approach to learning and counselling. These were important elements we had to consider when we adopted and adjusted relevant theories of reflective learning and practice.

### *Conclusion and implications*

We identified benefits from the explored methods of reflection 1) as a process for design-strategies (problemsetting and strategies for professional action) and 2) as a strategy for interaction in practice (communication and dialogue between practitioners and with clients).

In this paper I will focus on how reflection can be implemented as a useful and productive method for practical support and professional development. What adjustments are required to organize and activate reflective learning and practice?

I will present some of the solutions we have found successful in this project.

### *The strengths and limitations of the solution-focused approach in criminal justice social work*

Johan Boxstaens | University College Karel de Grote & University of Antwerp

Vicky Lyssens-Danneboom | University College Karel de Grote

Keywords | effective practice, criminal justice social work, solution-focused approach

Research in the Flemish Houses of Justice and the prison-based Psychosocial Services consistently shows that forensic social workers are struggling to refer certain types of offenders to specialized forensic services or social services in general (Boxstaens, 2013). For example, in Flanders, offenders with problems concerning aggression regulation or frustration tolerance have very little or no access to organizations that provide support and counseling for their problem. This can be explained by the lack of financial means, the phenomenon of ‘creaming’ and the fact that these organizations apply very strict rules and criteria to allow service users with a criminal justice background.

An ongoing research project in Belgium (Flanders) focuses on the effectiveness of the so-called ‘solution focused approach’ in dealing with this problem in a very specific group of service users with a criminal justice background, i.e. (ex-)prisoners. The ‘solution-focused approach’ (de Shazer, 1997) is a strengths-based method, that emphasizes the resources people invariably possess and the way these can be applied to initiate and guide individual processes of change. Instead of focusing on problems or deficits the approach stresses the strengths and life goals of service users: what are the service user’s main goals and what is needed to reach these goals? Service users are considered experts of their personal situation, able and willing to determine and create their own life path. The solution-focused approach aims to increase the autonomy of service users. Its emphasis lies on uncovering experiences of success, individual strengths and aspirations. If we approach aggression from this perspective, it can be seen as a force that can also be used in a positive way. Hence, the solution-focused approach aims

at canalizing the energy behind aggressive behavior and redirecting it in a quest for constructive social change in the lives of service users. The goal of our research is to examine the strengths and limitations of the solution-focused approach in the context of criminal justice social work. In particular, we want to measure the effectiveness of the solution-focused approach. Therefore, we combine a quasi-experimental research design with a qualitative approach. In this paper we present the methodological framework of our study and discuss the first results of the semi-structured interviews that were carried out with (ex)prisoners and their counselors.

## ACCEPTED POSTERS

*Ethno-cultural differences in infant vaccination in Israel | Orly Sarid and Yana Shraga*

*Social Work and evaluation of Family Atmosphere of people with mental health problems after attending rehabilitation programs | Sophia Martinaki, Charis Asimopoulos and Aggeliki Papaioannou*

*Assessing Risk for Violence of people with Mental Health Problems. A new field for the development of Forensic Social Work in Greece | Sophia Martinaki, Charis Asimopoulos and Aggeliki Papaioannou*

*Economic Crisis and Mental Health in Greece | Angeliki Papaioannou, Sophia Martinaki, Charis Asimopoulos and Dimitris Bourikos*

*Students' and Teachers' Knowledge and Beliefs about Bullying in Greek Primary Schools: Implementations for Social Work | Charis Asimopoulos, Theologos Chatzipemou, Sophia Martinaki and Aggeliki Papaioannou*

*Institutional Abuse of Children with Learning disabilities in Greece: Challenges for Social Work Practice | Charis Asimopoulos, Sophia Martinaki and Theologos Chatzipemou*

*How face-to-face interactions in an international educational context may broaden students' perspectives on human rights and public health | Monica Kjorstad and Maria Wolmesjo*

*Anna - Potential and risks of using narrative biography as method of research in social work | Eva Klimentová and Zdeňka Slámová*

*Out-of-home children placements: prevailing problems, types of placements and outcomes | Francesca Corradini*

*Research on managerialism and reflective intervention in Social Work | Carla Ribeirinho, Isabel Vieira and Maria Irene Carvalho*

*Exploring the role of ethics in decision making: A comparative analysis of child protection social work in England and Finland | Rachel Falconer*

*Realizing the Human Right to Community Living for Persons with Disabilities: Challenges for Social Work in France and the United States | Nancy Mudrick and Béatrice Schmitt*

*The usability of ICT in social work practice for prevention of loneliness and social isolation of elderly people: A Systematic Review | Qingyun Fan*

*Innovative Methods of Effects Research in Inpatient Addiction Treatment - Measuring Changes of Quality of Life | Lucy Bayer-Oglesby, Holger Schmid and Ursula Hellmüller*

*Flourishing in Marriage among Couples from the Arab Society in Israel: Capitalization and Accommodation as Processes that Increase Positive Emotions and Decrease Negative Emotions | Niveen Hassan Abbas*

*An Analysis of the Mission Statements of Schools of Social Work in the U.S.A.: Assessing How Educational Policy Standards Are Addressed | Michael Holosko, Julian Allen and Orion Mowbray*

*Happiness and aging: a comparison of Portugal and Spain | António Calha*

*Organizational features and the role of service users in ensuring quality social work information on submission | Jan Depauw and Kristel Driessens*

*Policing mental health: A realist evaluation of a mental health diversion scheme | Alice Park*

*Social support networks and needs of aging informal caregivers of adults with disabilities | Élia Costa and Sonia Guadalupe*

*Are Family policies responding to family changes in Iran? A review of 30-year family welfare policies and its challenges | Mohammad Reza Alipour*

*Thinking about the future: Modeling psychological and sociological factors in predicting positive expectations of Romanian youth | Mihai-Bogdan Lovu, Maria Roth and Paul Hărăguș*

*Using the Circle of Courage Youth Development Model to Predict Satisfaction and Success for LGBTQ Students in Undergraduate Social Work Programs in the U.S. | Kevin Jones, Sophia Colletti and A.J. Muth*

*Living alone in old age: challenges for the social network intervention in gerontological social work | Sónia Guadalupe, Zélia Reis, Fernanda Daniel and Henrique Testa-Vicente*

*Mirror Mirror on the wall:Chronicles of a cross-cutting experience with undergraduate students of Journalism and Social Work | Esther Mercado García, Emilio Jose Gomez Ciriano and Jose Maria Herranz de La Casa*

*Ageism's perception, knowledge and behavior toward older people among students who study therapeutic and non-therapeutic professions | Ahuva Even-Zohar*

# PRE-CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

## **DOCTORAL STUDIES IN SOCIAL WORK SIG Event**

(organizers: Jon Symons and Sofia Dedotsi)

Wednesday 30 March, 10.00 a.m. -1p.m.

Brasil Room [UCP Congress Centre, 1st floor]

08.30: Registration opening

10.00: Welcome and introductions

10.10: SURVIVING THE PHD VIVA, Professor John Carpenter, University of Bristol and Professor Christina Albuquerque, University of Coimbra, discuss on defending successfully the PhD thesis in different systems across Europe.

10.30: STRATEGIC PUBLISHING FOR PHD CANDIDATES, Professor Einat Peled, Tel Aviv University, reflects on the process of early publishing as a PhD student.

10.50: Discussion

11.00: Coffee break

11.15: EARLY CAREER DEVELOPMENT: FROM A PhD STUDENT TO A SOCIAL WORK SCHOLAR Professor Idit Weiss, Tel Aviv University, reflects on choices, opportunities and challenges following the successful completion of a PhD into the world of academia and research scholarship.

11.30: PHD NETWORKS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN USA, Professor Paula Nurius, University of Washington and Deirdre McGlone Lanesskog, University of Illinois, present successful initiatives for PhD students and doctoral supervisors that have been developed in the US.

11.55: Discussion

12.05: 3 MINUTE THESIS COMPETITION, PhD students at various stages of their research present their thesis and receive feedback by a panel of academics (with a prize to the best presentation)

12.35: The plan forward for the PhD SIG, convenors, members of the Special Interest Group and other participants give updates and discuss future goals for the PhD SIG.

## PRACTICE RESEARCH IN SOCIAL WORK SIG Event

(organizer: Lars Uggerhøj)

Wednesday 30 March, 9.00 a.m.-2.45 p.m.

### CURRENT STAGE OF PRACTICE RESEARCH - LOCAL EXPERIENCES AND GENERAL ISSUES

09.00: Welcome and presentation

09.30: Parallel Workshops

WORKSHOP 1 | *What is Practice Research and how is it related to and/or different from other kinds of research approaches?*

Eltje Bos, University of Applied Sciences Amsterdam

Mirja Satka, University of Helsinki

Joanna Rawles, London South Bank University

Søren Peter Olesen, Aalborg University

Heidi Muurinen, University of Helsinki

Kaija Hänninen and Ritva Poikela, University of Helsinki

WORKSHOP 2 | *Practice Research in action - experience's from carrying out practice research: what was good, surprising, bad* [Room: Sociedade Cientifica, 1st floor ]

Gillian Ruch, University of Sussex Brighton

Sigrid Mairhofer, Free University of Bozen - Bolzano

Atalia Mosek and Ayala Cohen, Social Work Department, Tel Hai College

Anne Moe, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

Hanne Warming, Signe Fjordside and Manon Lavaud, Roskilde University

Heidrun Schulze, University of Applied Sciences

RheinMain Wiesbaden

12:00: Lunch

12.45: Workshops

WORKSHOP 3 | *How can Practice Research facilitate transferable knowledge-production?*

Sarah Lewis-Brooke, Middlesex University

Judith Metz, University of Applied Sciences Amsterdam

Kirsi Nousiainen, Helsinki University

Sara Serbati, University of Padua

14.45: Closing remarks

## SOCIAL WORK, HISTORY AND RESEARCH SIG Event

(organizers: John Gal, Adrienne Chambon and Stefan Köngeter)

Wednesday 30 March, 9.30 a.m. -1.30 p.m.

This pre-conference will provide participants with an opportunity to discuss epistemological and methodological aspects of historical research in social work that cut across various topics. The sessions will offer room for exchange on methodological questions as well as on the importance of historical research for today's social work practice, research, and teaching.

### HOW QUESTIONS: SOCIAL WORK ARCHIVES AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The first of the talks will be led by Dr Joanne Evans archival and record keeping scholar, Monash University, Technology, on the topic: Rights in Records. Who do archives traditionally belong to? Whose interests are being served by current archival frameworks, and whose needs are privileged? What rights do 'subjects' of records have over access and management? What rights could they have? What rights should they have? This set of questions revolves around power relations, raising ethical and pragmatic questions about the formation, management and use of archives. Dr Evans is currently investigating these issues as part of an ARC funded Future Fellowship research program exploring the co-design of record keeping and archival frameworks for children who experience institutional or otherout-of-home care.

Her respondent will be Professor Gisela Hauss, of the School of Social Work at the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland, who leads a national project on the history of residential care and abuse, that uses a large archival data set, and links with current debates in child welfare policy.

### WHY QUESTIONS: TRANSMITTING PROGRESSIVE SOCIAL JUSTICE KNOWLEDGE AS SOCIAL WORK

The second talk centers on the difficult transmission of the history of the discipline of social work as progressive social justice knowledge, and the creation of an archive for such purpose. The speaker, Tina Wilson, Ph.D student and Vanier scholar at McMaster University, School of Social Work will discuss an approach to history as an intergenerational task or gap, and the inclusion of affective histories drawn from feminist cultural historians.

Her first respondent, Professor of social work and social pedagogy, Susanne Maurer, of the Phillips University of Marburg (Germany), is knowledgeable in women's movements and women's archives, and is herself actively involved in the intergenerational transmission of knowledge.

Her second respondent, Sarah Matthews of the Open University in the UK, will compare experiences of the Social Work History Network in the United Kingdom, its attempt to use the past to influence current social work practice and policy including the creation of an archive for this purpose.

### PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVES: BACK TO THE PUBLIC SPHERE

The exhibition "Brighton's Carlton Hill Children: Children were everywhere:" curated by Julia Winckler, Senior Lecturer in Photography and Creative Media at the University of Brighton, in collaboration with Adrienne Chambon, will stimulate discussion on the visualization of historical research, and giving back historical archives to the public sphere.

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