Editorial

Lauren Breen

Welcome to the latest issue of *Australian Community Psychologist* (ACP). This issue is the first to be produced by the new Editorial Board consisting of myself (as Editor), Carol Tutchener (St Kilda Youth Service), Meg Smith (University of Western Sydney), Tahereh Ziaian (University of South Australia) and Anne Sibbel (Reflective Practice). I am very excited to be Editor, but I take on the role with some trepidation as Dawn Darlaston-Jones has left some (figuratively) large shoes to fill. I also want to acknowledge and thank Dawn for her work in managing the review process of one paper included in this issue.

In recent years, the journal has developed in leaps and bounds under Dawn's direction. The journal has gained an ISSN, is indexed in PANDORA, an Australian database and initiative of the Australian National Library (http://pandora.nla.gov.au/tep/84823) and moved to its current on-line format, and as a result, is disseminated to and accessed by an international audience. While still maintaining a very local flavour, the journal has included articles from the United Kingdom, Canada, New Zealand/Aotearoa, and the United States. The journal is also listed in the Excellent in Research in Australia (ERA) journal rankings (http://www.arc.gov.au/era/indicators.htm).

Whether we like it or not, metrics-based ratings systems are used to assess the impact and quality of research. My concern with these systems is that researchers working within emerging fields or from non-traditional epistemologies and methodologies may experience greater difficulties in promoting the quality of their research, gaining competitive funding, and achieving promotion, which further marginalises already marginalised research (ers) and further strengthens the status quo (Cheek, Garnham, & Quan, 2006; Rappaport, 2005). Indeed, the 'research enterprise' is and increasingly entrepreneurial whereby researchers are 'rewarded' for maintaining the prevailing state of affairs. The ERA initiative is designed to prevent any advantage of one discipline or study area over others (Carr, 2008; Universities Australia, 2008), but the extent to which it will be successful in achieving equity remains to be seen. It is it is however important that the journal is included in the ranking system.

This general issue brings together seven papers from around Australia and the world. First, David Fryer and Adele Laing apply a critical community psychology framework to pose and answer some questions concerning the definitions and uses of community psychology. They warn of the increasing colonisation of indigenous community psychologies and of the incongruence between critical community psychology theory and practice. Their theoretical examination is followed by five empirical papers. Nadya Surawski, Anne Pedersen, and Linda Briskman tackle an important yet under-researched topic – the impact of acting as a refugee advocate – and in doing so, make an important addition to the literature. They demonstrate the financial, emotional, and interpersonal effects of acting as a refugee advocate in Australia. The risk of burnout and potential for long-term harm has implications for advocates' ability to continue in this role in the face of adversarial government policy. Romina Iebra Aizpurúa and Adrian Fisher present their study of the acculturation experiences of Latin American women in Australia and demonstrate that acculturation is a lengthy and ongoing process rather than short-term and finite. Lyn O'Grady and Adrian Fisher utilise an innovative methodology, Photovoice, to privilege the perspectives and experiences of young people and their neighbourhoods. Lynn Priddis, Gail Wells, Kathie Dore, Janelle Booker, and Noel Howieson describe a collaborative community development partnership between a university

team and a community organisation aiming to improve parent-infant relationships. The programme was evaluated as successful and has been incorporated into the community organisation's suite of services.

These empirical papers are followed by two more theoretical papers. Bernard and Pauline Guerin reflect upon the formation and maintenance of relationships in remote Australian communities and illustrate that working with remote communities requires an understanding of remote relationships, accessible service delivery, and the sustainability of these services. Finally, Bróna Nic Giolla Easpaig and David Fryer consider the psychology textbook. They show that psychology textbooks have tended to be complicit in constructing 'truths' about gender and reinforcing oppression, yet also demonstrate their potential to subvert patriarchy and heterosexuality. These diverse papers are followed by two book reviews – Damien Riggs reviews Derek Hook's *Foucault, Psychology and the Analytics of Power* and Brian Bishop reviews *International Community Psychology: History and Theories,* edited by Stephanie Reich, Manuel Reimer, Isaac Prilleltensky and Maritza Montero.

Generating an issue of *Australian Community Psychologist* requires the work of many individuals, and this issue is no exception. I'd like to acknowledge and thank all of the contributing authors, the manuscript reviewers, the Editorial Board, and the College of Community Psychologists' national committee.

In keeping with attempts to produce a special issue and a general issue every year, the first issue of 2009 will be a special issue devoted to showcasing the work of students. I encourage current and recent students, at undergraduate or postgraduate level, to consider submitting a manuscript. Manuscripts may be of a theoretical or empirical focus and may be drawn from research or practice. For example, manuscripts might be derived from research projects and theses, coursework

assignments (individual or group-based), and reflections on practice issues. Please email manuscripts to me by January 15, 2009.

References

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