

Jan Duke: Professionalisation, education, and registration of social workers in Aotearoa New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: This article details the contribution made by Jan Duke to the development of social work in Aotearoa New Zealand, with particular emphasis on the development of education and professionalisation in preparation for mandatory registration.

METHOD: A life history method is used to provide one “story” of Jan’s contribution. Interviews were held with Jan, as well as with six other people who worked alongside Jan over time. Other historical documents have also been used to support this article.

FINDINGS: Jan made a significant contribution in her roles on both the Social Workers Registration Board and then later as a Deputy Registrar within the Secretariat. Participants describe Jan’s social work values, her knowledge of regulation, her commitment to working alongside Māori and her relationship skills as all being critical in moving the profession of social work towards mandatory registration.

CONCLUSIONS: Jan Duke has played a significant part in the history of social work in this country, particularly in holding the tensions between Crown regulation and professional advocacy on the pathway towards mandatory registration.

Keywords: Social work, registration, regulation, social work education, Jan Duke

This article forms part of a growing body of historical accounts capturing the contributions made by individuals to the development of social work in Aotearoa New Zealand. Jan Duke features in this article with a specific focus on her role in social work professionalisation, raising standards for social work education and moving the profession towards mandatory registration.

Jan’s involvement in, and impact on, the current context of social work in Aotearoa spans the first quarter of this century. With

a background in nursing, social work and community work, Jan initially moved from Australia to Aotearoa as Head of Department and Professor of Nursing & Midwifery at Victoria University of Wellington. In 2003, she became a member of the inaugural Social Workers Registration Board (SWRB), where she was involved in setting up the infrastructure and new policies required for the Social Workers Registration Act (SWRA, 2003). She held that role on the Board until 2008 when she became the Deputy Registrar in the SWRB Secretariat¹.

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Throughout her time on the Secretariat, she established many important relationships instrumental for moving the profession from voluntary to mandatory registration, while simultaneously strengthening the quality of social work education. Jan was able to do so through maintaining a careful balance of various tensions, through her partnerships, her skillset, and her ongoing commitment to social justice and social work values.

This article begins with a methodological description and then describes Jan's early developmental and professional years in Australia prior to her move to Aotearoa. Her main areas of contribution are then considered, set in a particular historical, cultural and political context and brought to life by the words of some key stakeholders in social work's professionalisation project in the early 2000s.

Methodology

A Life History methodology, known as a topical life history, has been used to explore Jan's contribution within a particular time and area of her life (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004). The methodology can be further specified as being developed out of both researched and reflexive methods of life history (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004). Different kinds of data have come together to construct this researched "story"; as researchers, we also bring our own stories and experiences of Jan, and of particular times/events, to the research. It has been a reflexive process. We have selected some data, omitted other data and thus contributed to the construction of this story. There are many stories that could be told; this is ours, endorsed by the participants who have contributed to it.

In this kind of methodological process, it is important that the researchers situate themselves. Barb worked alongside Jan in her capacity of being a director of social work at one of the country's universities throughout 2011–2019. Carole served

extensively with Jan on recognition panels for social work programmes and, like Barb, has maintained personal contact with Jan since then.

Design/methods

The life history method uses various forms of information to develop the story that is to be told. This article is composed of interviews with key stakeholders, previously documented material, a transcript from an interview with Jan from Sonya Hunt's PhD research (Hunt, 2020), as well as the authors' own experiences and knowledge of Jan.

This project received ethical approval from the University of Auckland Human Participants' Ethics Committee in February 2021. Jan was asked to provide the names of people she believed could add richness to the article. She named seven potential participants and signed release of information forms to be provided to those people. Potential participants were contacted by email and all initially agreed to be interviewed, with one interview not eventuating. In addition to Jan's initial in-person interview, six interviews were held via Zoom or phone calls from January to May of 2022. Jan was again interviewed in January 2024. She also agreed to the release of the transcript of an interview that she had done with Sonya Hunt, for her PhD thesis in 2016, to be used for this article (all personal communication material dated August 9, 2016). Jan's initial interview was professionally transcribed, and subsequent interviews used the Zoom transcriber function. These transcripts were uploaded into the NVivo data analysis software package and analysed thematically, based on Braun and Clarke's (2022) six stages of data processing with codes and then themes being developed from the data.

All participants were provided with the opportunity to approve any quotations attributed to them in the article, and Jan also had final approval of the article submitted.

Jan's early years

Jan was born in rural New South Wales, the eldest daughter of eight children. She initially attended a one-teacher primary school and then went on to a Catholic boarding school for her secondary years. She was obliged to leave school in Year 11 to return home to help care for a family member, meaning she was unable to go to university as she had planned (J. Duke, personal communication, January 28, 2024).

Jan then did her general nursing training from 1969 to 1971 and relates that in 1973 she found herself newly married and had moved to the UK to undertake midwifery training. During her time in the UK, Jan remembered harrowing situations where the women she worked with were supported by various social service initiatives, and how this encouraged a broader perspective on care. By 1977, Jan had returned to Australia and with two children found herself at a crossroads. Having missed the earlier opportunity to attend university, she applied successfully to undertake her Bachelor of Social Studies degree (professional social work qualification) at the University of Sydney. Here her placements included an adolescent mental health unit and a state government's Women's Co-ordination Unit, where she drew on her nursing and midwifery knowledge and developed resources for women and girls who had unplanned pregnancies.

Jan's first social work job was as a community development social worker and co-ordinator of a neighbourhood centre in an inner Sydney suburb. She was involved in setting up several important initiatives there, including a childcare centre and a tenancy advocacy service. Jan also became actively involved with the New South Wales branch of the National Australian Social Welfare Union. The Union was successful in obtaining a national award for social and community workers nationally. While Jan loved the community work, funding for the centre was contract-based and renewed

annually, so there was never the economic certainty that she needed while raising two children (J. Duke, personal communication, January 28, 2024).

In 1985 Jan moved to a nursing education position and began what was to be an illustrious career in education, spanning just under twenty years. Through this time, Jan completed a Diploma in Labour Relations and Law and her Master of Arts (Hons) at the University of Sydney, as well as her PhD at the University of New South Wales (completed in 2002). Her trajectory is then one of increasing responsibility and leadership roles within the academy. Jan also engaged in consultancies for the World Health Organisation, and in other education policy consultancy related roles. She was also the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Nursing Council in 1998-99 (J. Duke, personal communication, June 30, 2008).

Aotearoa bound

In 2000 Jan was invited to apply for a role at Victoria University of Wellington as Professor of Nursing and Midwifery. Jan stated that they "wanted somebody who was social work qualified because Victoria had closed down its social work degree and they wanted somebody who would be able to work with them should they decide to restart their social work degree" (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022). Ultimately Victoria University decided not to re-establish a social work degree, but Jan was instrumental in setting up a postgraduate programme for social workers and occupational therapists who were new to mental health (see Staniforth & Appleby, 2022).

The early years of the development of professional social work are well charted by Nash (1998) and Hunt (2017, 2020). Jan Duke's appointments to the SWRB (to the Board in 2003 and the Secretariat in 2008) were indicative of the need to

provide knowledge and expertise for the development of both professional and educational standards.

“Who is this woman?”: Jan’s role on the Board 2003-2008

The SWRA (2003) provided the first legal framework for the (initially voluntary) registration of social workers; the Board itself was first constituted in October 2003.

The majority of the inaugural SWRB board members had been appointed because of their experience in the social work professional body, the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers (ANZASW). Jan described her journey to become a board member in her interview with Sonya Hunt in 2016:

I was actually contacted by somebody in Australia who had been watching the developments and suggested it might be interesting, given that I had been on a regulatory authority or two in Australia, and they thought that I might be able to put some regulatory knowledge into the Board. I had been Chief Executive of the Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council before I came to New Zealand. I threw my hat in the ring. (J. Duke, personal communication, August 9, 2016)

Jan observed that as a perceived outsider—a nurse *and* an Australian—her potential contribution was at first under-recognised and viewed with some suspicion:

It was interesting when we had the first meeting of the original board members ... there were nine of us there at the time. All of the others knew each other because the social work sector in New Zealand is fairly small and there was quite a lot of tension about “who is this professor of nursing, who has actually worked with regulations and understands regulations, that they have dumped on us?” So, it took a little while, I think, as not being seen as a social worker and

it took some time for them to realise that I actually did have a social work qualification and that Victoria University was actually running a programme for social workers in terms of what was then CTA (Clinical Training Agency)-funded entry to mental health for social workers and occupational therapists. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

The first Board’s role from 2003 onwards was that of implementation. Sean McKinley was the first registrar for the SWRB who worked alongside Jan in both Board and Secretariat roles. He observed that, operationally and to the board members, Jan’s background and knowledge were unknown.

... there wasn’t a lot of lead-in time – there was less than 12 months from appointment to taking applications for registration so there was a lot of work that had to be done in that first 9 to 12 months. We had to be open for applications by October 2004. (J. Duke, personal communication, August 9, 2016)

Initial and subsequent Board members commented on the requirements for specific experience and knowledge about regulation required within the Board during this developmental phase. Toni Hocquard, a Board member from 2011 and a subsequent Chair of the Board, commented that Jan’s prior experience within nursing regulation in Australia melded an understanding of regulatory expectations and requirements with a professional social work perspective:

She had what no one else had, which was that nursing thing, the rest of us really just came from social work—she had that nursing background, and that’s what I think helped to give her the vision. I think it took some people a little while to cotton onto that ... (T. Hocquard, personal communication, January 21, 2022)

Also a Board member from 2011, Mary Miles commented about the depth of Jan’s experience of professional regulation:

I loved the lens she brought to the discussions and because it was wider than just practice, it was always she had that look at the regulation side, but also on the education side. (M. Miles, personal communication, May 26, 2022)

A key role in the initial period of the Board was to look at the establishment of programme recognition standards, whereby a social work programme could be recognised as having content and processes able to produce social work graduates at an established beginning practitioner level. During the years between 2003 and 2008, the SWRB completed the recognition process for all the then current social work qualifications. Jan's academic background and current role within a tertiary institution without a social work programme created an opportunity to contribute:

I guess I was so much from outside that it was obvious I wasn't going to have any conflict of interest with almost anything because I wasn't a member of the Association, I wasn't practising as a social worker and I'd had no input into the development of the legislation. (J. Duke, personal communication, August 9, 2016)

Jan had lead responsibility for drafting the programme recognition standards and social work educators were consulted. Current qualifications were automatically transitioned onto the current schedule and subsequently reviewed. During this process, Toni Hocquard observed that Jan used her academic background to navigate differing expectations of academic rigour within the polytechnic and university sectors:

In the polytechs, I don't think there was as much of a strong understanding of the importance of ... academic rigour, and I think she helped people to understand what that actually looked like. She didn't just challenge without substance, she was able to guide, and I think people might have found that threatening initially, but once they realised she knew her stuff,

then she would help ... the landscape changed a bit. (T. Hocquard, personal communication, January 21, 2022)

Kieran O'Donoghue, an academic who worked alongside Jan on many programme recognition panels and social work education standards reviews made a similar observation:

She was always an academic, she understood the value of knowledge across all realms, and I think that's a really significant and important part, and her ability to walk in different worlds, to engage with the wānanga sector, to engage with the institute of technology sector, and to engage with the university sector, and to recognise that they were all different. (K. O'Donoghue, personal communication, February 20, 2022)

Embedding the social work voice: Jan Duke's role as Deputy Registrar

Jan served two terms on the SWRB before making the move to being the Deputy Registrar with primary responsibility for Education. This involved resigning her position at Victoria University and from her tenure on the Board of the SWRB. Jan's decision to move from board member to the



Jan Duke, with Sean McKinley, Registrar/ Chief Executive SWRB and Robyn Corrigan, SWRB Chair

Deputy Registrar role in 2008 was informed by her own professional trajectory and by the growth in the roles and tasks of the SWRB.

Acknowledging the tensions created by the legislative mandate of the SWRB, Jan suggested that as the regulation of social work was essential for the development and maintenance of standards, and for the protection of the public, that competency and social work practice needed to be defined from within the profession. Jan identified the continuing balancing act between the governance role of the SWRB, and the social work voice within the Secretariat. Whilst personnel and Board members change over time, the requirement for social work representation in the Board is for four out of seven members to be registered social workers: she observed the continuing importance of a clear social work voice within the expanding Secretariat staffing (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022).

Explaining the purpose of regulation to the profession was a key role and task. Jan described her role as being the “professional voice of the regulatory team” and using the relational skills of social work to navigate the profession’s responses to the regulatory processes:

I think it was really important for the profession to see that there was somebody from the Secretariat that understood ... and could engage with the profession and understood that it was a relational profession, and it is [about] maintaining those relationships and doing it in an important face-to-face way to move forward. Because ... there was a government organisation that was about social control. So, trying to balance that and getting social workers to understand that it was about protecting the public not controlling the profession. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

Her Australian experience of nursing regulation had taught her that professions

could be enhanced and supported (as opposed to only being controlled) by regulation, with greater multidisciplinary acknowledgement:

And certainly, the health social workers found that once they moved to being a regulated workforce ..., their standing within the multidisciplinary team was different. They had a different acknowledgment from the doctors and the psychologists because they were also a regulated profession. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

Toni Hocquard acknowledged Jan Duke’s role in changing the perception of the SWRB within the profession:

The Registration Board, because it’s located in government, it always carried that negativity that social workers always challenge about the system. So it came with that and to be able to negotiate the landscape and move it from being a vilified sort of an organisation to something that social workers could actually see as useful, I think, is something that Jan played a big part in. (T. Hocquard, personal communication, January 21, 2022)

Jan Duke’s tenure in the Secretariat enabled a greater social work voice within the regulatory space and worked towards influencing the perception of regulation within the profession. This was something that Jan felt was essential, but which could not always be taken for granted. Jan also believed that in going forward, that the contribution of the profession was needed in making important decisions on policy and practice.

I think the profession needs to make sure they always have a voice in some of those things and it is not just policy because we are a public service or agency or make policy, there needs to be professional learning and professional voice. That professional consultation needs to continue to happen, and I think it is for the profession to work out in a

way how that continues to happen given that the board Secretariat has got so big. There are so many staff and the numbers of social workers there are so small. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

The Education Role: Programme recognition standards

One of the key steps in the regulation project was to ensure the quality of social work education was of high standard and consistent throughout the country.

Jan Duke came into the SWRB roles from a long career in academic practice in Australia and Aotearoa, as a teacher, professor and researcher. The new regulatory environment in Aotearoa had to navigate the complexities of social work education, delivered from within universities, wānanga, private training establishments (PTE) and polytechnics. The responsibility for approving academic courses as suitable for the education and training of social workers prior to the SWRA had been the responsibility of ANZASW. As Mary Nash's history of social work education in Aotearoa indicated, this earlier period of education and training oversaw a transition from short courses (e.g., Tiromoana and Taranaki House, see Staniforth, 2015) to 2-year diplomas, and 3-year degrees (Nash, 1998). In the first 5 years of the Board (2003–2008), Jan, along with Liz Beddoe and others, had been instrumental in developing the Board's role in recognising social work qualifications. Sean McKinley considered that:

[Her] contribution was immense ... especially in the area of qualifications ... because it grew to, like, 17 qualifications over something like 30 sites and unlike the other professions who registered under the HPCA Act, we were registered under our own Act, so we didn't necessarily have that pool of knowledge that the health sector had.

So we were really starting from scratch. (S. McKinley, personal communication, February 16, 2022)

Sean McKinley's observation was that programme recognition panels brought a new level of scrutiny and analysis to social work education, and that Jan's professional experience in nursing education enabled this. The process by which the panels were conducted was also crucial to getting the tertiary institutions onboard:

At the end of that first programme recognition visit, people actually realised that this wasn't sort of a Big Brother-type process. That we weren't telling educators how and what to teach, that it was actually more of a supportive process. "Tell us what you do, tell us how you do it, and tell us what you need from us to support you". (S. McKinley, personal communication, February 16, 2022)

One aspect of the resistance to the setting and imposition of education standards for social work programmes was the well-founded concern about standardisation and a 'one size fits all' approach, directed from the Crown, and potentially reducing the opportunity for programmes to represent and reflect cultural, regional and community identity (Staniforth et al., 2022). Kieran O'Donoghue recognised Jan's position in that, within the SWRB's role in recognising social work programmes, that:

... so she might tell us what sort of regulations we would have, but it wasn't for the Board to set curriculum and she was also, I think, one of the people that could recognise the need for diversity across the social work sector. (K. O'Donoghue, personal communication, February 20, 2022)

These tensions were especially crucial for Tangata Whenua educators, working in a regulatory environment that had seen opportunities for bicultural partnership

threatened by the assumption of Crown responsibility for both registration of social workers and the setting of education standards.

Shaping the degree

The required length of the social work undergraduate qualification changed significantly over time. At the time the SWRA came into place, social work programmes were still offering 3- or 4-year undergraduate programmes. Jan reflected that national equivalence was needed, so employers could know that social workers graduated with a similar level of knowledge and expertise.

It took us a while ... to get from a [2]-year training to where everybody is doing a four-year degree where the students come out able to critically reflect on their practice, to be able to know where to find the evidence if they don't know what they need to know, they at least know where to search it. They know how to use professional supervision properly ... and the difference that the employers tell us they have noticed ... in the polytechnics, wānanga, PTE sector, they can just see (although there was resistance initially to that 4 years) the practitioners themselves and the employers can see that they are now getting a quality outcome from education. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

Sean McKinley considered that the move to the 4-year degree was Jan's greatest achievement. He indicated that achieving the transition was underpinned by the relational platform that he witnessed Jan building. This was often a fraught process, with different implications for universities and other sectors. Such a smooth transition from 3- to 4-year degrees was:

... down to making sure you have all the i's are dotted, all the t's are crossed, because I think she also understood that

you got one chance to do this and so you needed to do it properly. And, and so there was again, you know, relationship-building, getting people to understand. (S. McKinley, personal communication, February 16, 2022)

Kieran O'Donoghue (personal communication, February 20, 2022) made the link between the transition to the 4-year degree, and the parity in the international workforce that enabled social workers from Aotearoa New Zealand to practise in Australia and beyond. He recalled that at Jan's farewell from her role at the Secretariat, Shannon Pakura (Chair of SWRB) mentioned that one of Jan's significant achievements was the mutual recognition with the Australian Association of Social Workers, which had been enabled by having parity in the length of undergraduate qualifications.

The Masters requirement

The transition of undergraduate social work degrees from a 3-year to a 4-year qualification was a major driver for the enforcement of the Masters-level qualification for educators. An increased emphasis on education standards and academic rigour inevitably turned the spotlight on to the qualifications and experience of the educators within social work programmes. NZQA requires educators to have a qualification higher than that on which they are teaching. This requirement, eventually endorsed by the SWRB, meant that social work educators had to have a minimum of a Master's degree in order to teach on a Bachelor's programme. This remained a contentious decision, especially for Tangata Whenua, that attracted much criticism for being a monocultural understanding of expertise, and which resulted in some educators having to leave their posts. Jan reflected on this requirement:

I think that part of that was using a sledgehammer to crack a nut, it possibly came down harder than we needed to.

.... So, we had a situation where we had really new graduates coming out and teaching without any experience and the reason that the Board had consultation with the educators and decided to put the benchmark of a Master's degree to be able to teach social work skills was so that you had somebody who was fully registered with some practice behind them... So, they had that educational knowledge to understand what was required in teaching at an undergraduate level and what was required for people to become research active. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

Jan commented that the expectation of a Master's qualification provided a foundation for the polytechnic programmes, in particular, to develop a firm academic basis with which to understand the requirements of the four year degree that was being mooted. Jan commented that some of the programmes welcomed the expectation of a Master's degree for their educators:

... in fact the wānanga were quite pleased at times to be able to use that requirement. I think in some instances they found it quite helpful, but it was a challenge, and it was a challenge for some of the Pakeha practitioners in some of the polytechnics as well, get your degree, finish your masters, be an academic. An academic according to NZQA needs to have a qualification above the one that you are teaching. We just formalised that in a hard barrier for a while. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

This was a challenge for wānanga and was often viewed as a lack of recognition of other forms of expertise and knowledge that the SWRB has since addressed (in 2021).

Wheturangi Walsh-Tapiata, speaking from extensive experience in university and wānanga education, leadership and management, commented that within the

requirement for the postgraduate degree, Jan had worked hard with the institutions to enable qualifications to be achieved, and to address challenges to meeting these requirements as they arose (W. Walsh-Tapiata, personal communication, February 10, 2022).

In 2022, Jan observed that it was now possible to relax these qualification requirements:

The education institutions now know what they need to know and what they need in their staff and much more flexibility particularly around some speciality, practices, theories. They may have a really superb practitioner who is degree qualified not Masters qualified, who would be a superb teacher in some areas. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

Whilst Jan's initial appointment to the SWRB was that of Deputy Registrar, her responsibilities extended far beyond the education mandate, with key involvement in the legislative change from voluntary to mandatory registration for social workers.

Voluntary to mandatory registration

The initial position of the SWRA and the Board regarding the registration of the profession was that it needed to remain a voluntary decision. A SWRB review on the Act in July 2007 had recommended a move towards mandatory registration, now that mechanisms for registration had been established (SWRB, 2007). It was necessary to negotiate the transition from voluntary to mandatory registration carefully. With the first purpose under the legislation being the protection of the public, voluntary registration would always leave the possibility that poor practice could continue without the disciplinary consequences enshrined within the regulatory framework.

Various brakes were applied on the timing of any move to mandatory registration.

Jan commented that the delay in moving towards a mandatory registration for social work had largely been the challenge of staffing Child, Youth and Family (the precursor to Oranga Tamariki), as well as the fact that about half the social work workforce was employed in the NGO sector, who were not funded to pay for registration costs of social workers (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022).

Jan's comments in interviews for this research revealed just how political a process the move to mandatory registration was, and how finely tuned the relational negotiations between Board, Secretariat and the Minister needed to be. "Lots of bigger picture actors determined the pace with the move towards mandatory legislation" (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022), and the funding of social work, registration and education were fundamental in this process.

I think as a secretariat we matured, and we had become sophisticated to know what to do. What do we need to do, how can we influence government, what do we need to do differently because we had enough sense of what government needed to hear. I think there was support across the House once we got to the readings. [...] I think the professions came together really well at the time of the draft legislation to make sure what eventually went through parliament and all of those discussions we had with the select committee afterwards was really where the profession really grabbed the legislation by the horns and said, "yes we need it now and want it and this is what it needs to look like." (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

From the perspective of some of the participants for this article, Jan is considered to have been instrumental in the success of this process:

I definitely think getting across the line in terms of mandatory there was a lot of

background work that she and Sean did. All the dissenters around mandatory. I think she really did help to move the groundswell. ... I remember some very big players in the social work world who were very anti-registration, at one point, who then swung over. I think that Sean and Jan were a double act. ... You know, pulling on the importance of relationships, I think, Jan spent a lot of time building relationships with people and then that allows you to have those honest [and] courageous conversations and I think Jan is very good at [these]. (T. Hocquard, personal communication, January 21, 2022)

Section 13: Valuing cultural and community knowledge and expertise in the regulatory environment

Section 13 unites the focus on education standards and qualifications with that of registration and competencies. As an enabling clause in the legislation, Section 13 was constructed to provide an avenue for those with considerable practice expertise and experience to have their contributions recognised and to enable their registration without the requirements of a formal social work education. It has been of extreme importance to Tangata Whenua, whose commitment to manaakitanga and arohanui ki te tangata transcends Western constructions of social work. In other words, Māori have engaged in practice similar to social work and Section 13 offered the opportunity for people working in communities to have their expertise formally recognised.

One of Jan's roles was to construct a strong framework for the assessment of Section 13 applications where previously there had been no prototypes. This entailed establishing a process for applications in which the relational, and often kanohi ki te kanohi, process was vital.

So, there was a lot of work with Section 13 in the early days and that involved

a lot of workshops in the community To really see the experience of social workers who that piece of legislation was written for. Supporting them with their applications for registration. Sometimes interviewing them just to have that extra bit of certainty before I wrote papers for the board on Section 13.

[Someone] would ring up and say "Jan, I need you to come and talk to this person because I need to work out whether I should be supporting her with Section 13, I'm just not quite sure about it. Can we have a conversation with her and just decide?" That ability and the flexibility that the Secretariat in the early days gave me to go out and have those conversations because they are our important social workers that we needed to get in. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)



Jan Duke with Karen Brown at the Section 13 Recognition Ceremony.

The importance of succeeding in a Section 13 application cannot be underestimated, and Jan's contribution to the mana of those who were successful was noted by several participants in this research. Karen Brown termed her the *Queen of Section 13*, saying that "anyone after her is a princess because it's certainly not the Queen" (K. Brown, personal communication, January 17, 2022).

Jan made a difference. To give us an opportunity to have that voice and that experience to demonstrate, we have the capacity and ability to do it. Sometimes people just need to understand, not everybody can run on the same track. (K. Brown, personal communication, January 17, 2022)

Karen recalled that a cluster of wāhine Māori had successfully been through the Section 13 process, but that there was no formal recognition by means of a certificate or celebration equivalent to that of a graduation.

I said to Jan, "the Registration Board doesn't even give a certificate to Section 13 people. We don't even get registered under the same cluster, we're the poor cousins ... I cannot tell my people that we're the poor cousins because we are not. So I'm going to get a Māori artist that's part of our whanau to create some certificates of achievement, I'll give you a copy for the Registration Board that they might consider doing it for all people, because it is bloody hard work, Jan." And then, when we organised, it was a big day for our Māori community, we asked Jan to come down and she came down and presented and we took photos of her presenting the Māori women with the tohu. I would say she's the best thing that has happened to us as Māori women here for Section 13 because all the women that have got the tohu here, most of us are section 13. (K. Brown, personal communication, January 17, 2022)

Wheturangi Walsh-Tapiata also observed Jan's commitment to Tangata Whenua and relational practice manifested in the Section 13 process:

We then brought together about twenty of our kaumatua who primarily we felt fitted the grandparenting clause and we wanted to put them through this process. Again, Jan walked alongside of us in terms of doing that whole piece of work. Why it's particularly special for me is that we put my mother through that grandparenting course - you know my mother has passed on, since that time, but Jan committed to forming a panel that would meet all of the requirements of the SWRB but was also a cultural panel and there were a whole group of us at that time, who were prepared to be on those panels. And I remember, they came to where I was based at that time and they went through a whole process and they announced that my mother was a competent social worker and therefore she became registered as competent, as a social worker under that grandparenting clause. And not only was that big for her, that actually it was really big for our iwi, because they did a whole big ceremony and process afterwards of acknowledging that we might have young ones coming through who have degrees, but actually, you are just as competent in this space, you know you're the cultural supervisor, you're the one that sits on all of our panels, the care protection panel on behalf of all of us. That was a really lovely phase of history, I think.
(W. Walsh-Tapiata, personal communication, February 10, 2022)

Bringing it together. The 2013 Conference

In 2013, the SWRB sponsored its first (and only) conference for social work in Wellington. The theme for the Conference was "Protecting the Public-Enhancing the Profession" and was attended by over 200 social workers. There were over 51 papers

and three workshops presented, divided into themes of registration, practice, education and a special session on Māori models of education (Duke et al., 2013). This brought together the strands of all of Jan's roles in relation to education, professionalisation and registration. Jan saw this as one of her most important contributions.

I would like to add here that the 2013 conference that the Board sponsored was a great achievement. We had international keynote speakers (3), and an edited collection of refereed papers. It was a great example of how the Board enhanced the profession and the professionalism of social workers. Organising that conference was a big challenge, but the outcome was, I think the best social work conference in New Zealand in the past 20 years. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

Whilst we can consider Jan's role with the SWRB as a Board member and as Deputy in a simple description of her contributions to milestones in education, policy, and mandatory registration, some of the characteristics of her practice transcend the different roles and outcomes. We now turn to some of the "hows" of Jan's contributions.

Jan's approach to getting things done

Participants in this research highlighted the professional and personal processes that Jan used to ensure that the goals of the SWRB and of the profession were as integrated as possible. These are described below regarding her relational approach, her courage and determination, her advocacy for the profession, and her ability to balance directness with kindness, and knowledge with humility.

First and foremost, in participants' commentaries was Jan's use of a relational approach to raising challenges, addressing

issues and seeking resolution to difference. Jan considered relational practice to be crucial:

I think those stakeholder engagement relationships, that is what social work is about and that is what social work regulation should be about. Not about being legalistic, it is about maintaining the relationship so that you know the profession that you are working with. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

Many of the changes brought about during Jan's time were contentious and involved holding and working through complex issues.

... those critical conversations, you end up valuing people when they don't shy away from it. You know, they come back time and time again with "can we try it this way?" You know that she never gave up. That is her dedication, actually, to SWRB and more broadly than that, to the profession of social work. (W. Walsh-Tapiata, personal communication, February 10, 2022)

As much as she would like us to not have 17 or 19 programmes [...], she was involved intimately with every one of them, she knew everybody that was involved in social work education, she would not step backwards in calling them when she had something to talk to them about. And she would also head a lot of things off at the pass and I think that that sort of wisdom, insight and relationship with the education sector was really important. (K. O'Donoghue, personal communication, February 20, 2022)

Jan's approachability made her an identifiable contact within the Wellington office of the SWRB. Wheturangi Walsh-Tapiata considered that face-to-face contact with Te Wānanga o Aotearoa students enabled ākonga to feel more confident about registration and competency processes, and contacting the SWRB with queries, because

'Aunty Jan' had visited and taught within their classes. Wheturangi recalled that these visits were extended to staff and out to community members as well (W. Walsh-Tapiata personal communication, February 10, 2022).

Toni Hocquard reflected that "when you actually look at all of the behaviours that Jan demonstrated, they're not nursing behaviours, they're social work behaviours" (T. Hocquard, personal communication, January 21, 2022). Sean McKinley engaged internationally with counterparts in other jurisdictions about common challenges for professional regulation, and considered that the SWRB successes were really down to the relationship building and the trust developed (T. Hocquard, personal communication, February 16, 2022).

Jan's relational approach came to the forefront in the implementation of competency and 'fit and proper' processes. The prime mandate of the SWRA is that of the protection of the public. The legislation enables competence to be assessed and processes for addressing poor practice to be developed and implemented. Through the Code of Conduct (SWRB, 2016) and a Competency process, the SWRB established the notion of 'fit and proper' that governed entry into social work programmes.

In her role, Jan frequently fielded questions from educators and students regarding the Board's position on criminal and health-related matters. Jan was often the sounding board for ethical questions, where a situation with (for example) a social worker or student's behaviour or past offending posed an ethical quandary that required careful discussion about a course of action, prior to any formal action by the SWRB.

Both of this article's authors held social work programme leader roles and can attest to how useful it was having someone in the Deputy role who could hold the tensions of the need for public protection with the social work values of potential for change

and recognising the value of people's life experience in their social work practice. Jan demonstrates this view:

There was one particular non-social work qualified person on the original Board who said that anybody who has a conviction should not be a social worker, to which my response was "well anybody of my generation who hasn't had a run in with the police over the anti-Vietnam demonstrations or the Springbok demonstrations or something, I would wonder about their commitment to social justice". (J. Duke, Personal communication, March 26, 2022)

This view was always backed by advice from Jan that people needed to be able to demonstrate their process of change, backed up by evidence and it was important to be able to guide students in developing their evidence portfolios from the beginning.

Mary Miles commented that conversations with Jan provided a 'sense of justice for the person who we were talking with, they felt they were fairly treated, that's the impression and feedback we got' (M. Miles, personal communication, May 26, 2022).

Relational practice is integral to whakawhanaungatanga and social work. Several participants spoke at length about Jan's ability to overcome suspicion and resistance from practitioners and educators, especially those whose identity and practice placed them in a (sometimes fraught) partnership with the SWRB as a Crown Entity.

She was really committed to making this work. But she knew that it wouldn't be easy because here's a whole lot of criteria from the SWRB. And we didn't always align in terms of wānanga. And so that meant a whole lot of real conflict, real and honest conversations, and I can tell you, to begin with people in the wānanga were highly critical of Jan, they did not see her as a critical friend. They saw her as the

blockage that we needed to get past. And 'ma wai ra?' [who will take responsibility, guide us?], over time, this is the change that occurs (W. Walsh-Tapiata, personal communication, February 10, 2022).

Several participants in this research told the stories of Jan's learning from her engagement with Tangata Whenua:

Jan used to contact me because, of course, anything that happened in the wānanga often required a powhiri. She would say "do I have to wear a black skirt?" because she didn't wear skirts and she only wore trousers. Over time, we saw Jan just come to accept that that's how it is when you're working in that space, and it's a really lovely little cultural example of how I think progressively over the years, she changed some, and we changed some, and I remember in a more recent event where I was with her, I didn't wear a skirt. She's "excuse me, how come you don't have your skirt on?" And that is an example of acceptance of our space and her acceptance into our space. (W. Walsh-Tapiata, personal communication, February 10, 2022)

Such reciprocity produced loyalty as well as traction for change. As Karen Brown put it, "she was and will always be supported by us, because she did what no other person would do in the Registration Board, black, white or orange. She gave us the time of day" (K. Brown, personal communication, January 17, 2022).

Nearly all the participants in this research also talked about Jan's dedication and determination and how much of her work was done behind the scenes and without recognition.

Every so often, there have been individuals who have a determination and they may not be the ones who are up front, but it is their determination that keeps things moving. And that's never easy and they never get the credit,

... she could have gone at any time, 'now, I can't do this', you know. If standing there and holding the line isn't what we should all be about, then you know, I don't know. (T Hocquard, personal communication, January 21, 2022)

Wheturangi emphasised Jan's courageousness and determination in being an ally for Tangata Whenua in navigating the professionalisation project:

For or us as iwi Māori, we were really grateful to have her there. So at times when you can't have Māori, you have to have people that you know will stand up for us in the institution. And that's what she progressively became. I think that we were brave enough to have the brave conversations without diminishing the tangata of the person and trust, and that has to be the basis of not only a good relationship, but the process of getting us through some critical issues. She never gave up, that is her dedication, actually. (W. Walsh-Tapiata, personal communication, February 10, 2022)

All participants in this research indicated that Jan provided consistent advocacy for the profession of social work. Kieran O'Donoghue articulated this well:

She's really committed to that form of professional accountability to the public, but also that notion of being competent and recognised by the state for our social work expertise, knowledge and skills, and being accountable to a code of conduct. ... you could feel that there would be somebody in that corner that recognised the importance of professionalism. ... rather than the restriction of social workers. She was clearly positioned as somebody that was advocating for social work as a profession for the social workers and for the people that they were going to be working with ... (K. O'Donoghue, personal communication, February 20, 2022).

This advocacy demonstrated an important role that the profession should also take for itself:

I think that way when you think back to those days, social workers often talked about advocating for our clients and all the rest of it, but we were not so good at advocating for ourselves. And I think one of the things Jan brought was ... the possibility you could actually achieve so much more if you unified as a profession first. (T. Hocquard, personal communication, January 21, 2022)

In the authors' experience, there have been people who have felt intimidated by Jan and claims have sometimes been made that she "didn't suffer fools" easily. This at times presented in Jan's direct manner, that may not have been the "Kiwi" way. This directness was beneficial, as mentioned previously, and it was also very much balanced by kindness. This is exemplified by Kieran's comments about holding these traits together:

She was direct. I grew to love her directness because it was tied to her honesty and integrity. Jan is also an incredibly kind and thoughtful person. You don't see that first off. You see Jan's mission first off and Jan's professionalism and she has a purpose. So she's purpose driven. (K. O'Donoghue, personal communication, February 20, 2022)

Mary Miles commented about how she always loved going into the office when Jan was Deputy.

There was always a form of coffee in the morning to connect and [check if] everybody was okay ... And yeah if somebody's birthday, she'd be the one who would actually find the money for the cake and the coffee and she'd be the one to ensure that the environment we worked in was warm and connecting. (M. Miles, personal communication, May 26, 2022)

Several research participants commented on Jan's sharp intelligence and memory for detail, while also maintaining a very humble manner. "There was a complete lack of ego" (M. Miles, personal communication, May 26, 2022). Kieran O'Donoghue related that Jan was "an incredibly hard worker, and a very sharp mind. On panels [programme recognition], it was a challenge to be as prepared or more prepared than Jan (K. O'Donoghue, personal communication, February 20, 2022).

Sean McKinley commented:

... it was never about the position or the title ... It was very much, and I think that's probably what a lot of people didn't see, is that her investment and support of the profession, it was all based on the social work profession and getting the respect it deserved. (S. McKinley, personal communication, February 16, 2022)

We now move to some concluding sections, looking at Jan's own sense of her achievements and her thoughts moving on.

Jan's views

We asked Jan what she thought her most important contribution had been and what her thoughts were regarding the future of the profession.

...the main contribution I have made to social work in the last years was working with the educators, being able to bring the educational lens as well as the professional practice lens helped with that. And I think you had to be a social worker, you couldn't do that if you were just an educator, you had to have social work as well as education in your background. I think it is that blend of social work and education that enabled us to move that forward to where it is today. (J. Duke, personal communication, March 26, 2022)

Jan finished at the Board on February 28, 2021. This was an auspicious day for social work in Aotearoa. Henceforth all New Zealand qualified social workers would be required to have completed an internationally recognised 4-year undergraduate or 2-year postgraduate social work qualification and become registered to practise. Jan's contribution to the profession was complete.

Conclusion

This article has provided one story of the roles of Jan Duke in the professional, educational and regulatory developments of social work through the time of Jan's involvement with the Social Work Registration Board and Secretariat.

Jan used her knowledge, skills and values to ensure that the voice of the social work profession was well represented on social work's path towards mandatory registration. There were many tensions on this road. Lifting educational requirements, working with Tangata Whenua and the social work profession in a space where autonomy was being relinquished, and working with government to manoeuvre the many hurdles of legislation were all accomplished through Jan's thoughtful, respectful and relational manner. Through it all she was Jan:

She didn't do anything other than who she is, a very resourceful honest, available woman going well beyond the requirements of that role. (K. Brown, personal communication, January 17, 2022)

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Note

1 A secretariat is the part of a legal entity that is in charge of the administration and clerical aspects of the running of the organisation.

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