Book reviews

Book review policy

The policy of *Social Work Review* is to offer books for review to ANZASW members in the first instance. New reviewers are welcome and any member who would like to be added to the list is invited to write (preferably by e-mail) or telephone the Book Review Editor. It is most helpful to the Editor if you are able to identify specific titles from those offered below that match your area of interest. If you wish to discuss any of the books, or want to make a more general inquiry about book reviewing you are most welcome to make contact. Once a review is completed, the book becomes the property of the reviewer.

Publications available for review

Beresford, P. & Carr, S. (2012). (Eds.). *Social care, service users and user involvement*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publications.

Carroll, M. & Shaw, E. (2012). *Ethical maturity in the helping professions – Making difficult life and work decisions*. Australia: Psychoz.

Craig, C. (2009). *Study skills for health and social care students*. London: Sage.

Depoy, E., & French Gilson, S. (2010) *Studying disability: Multiple theories and responses*. London: Sage.

English, A., Selby, R., & Bell., H. (2011). *Working with whanau: Maori social work in schools*. Palmerston North: Massey University.

Golding, K.S., Fain, J., Frost, A., Templeton, S.(2013).*Observing children with attachment difficulties in Preschool Settings: A tool for identifying and supporting emotional and social difficulties*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publications.

Gursnasky, D., Harvey, J. & Kennedy, R. (2003). *Case management: policy, practice and professional business*. Crows Nest NSW: Allen and Unwin.

Gursansky, D., Kennedy, R. & Camilleri, P. (2012). *The practice of case management*. Crows Nest NSW: Allen and Unwin.

Holroyd, J. (2012). *Improving personal and organisational performance in social work*. London: Sage.

Howe, K. & Gray, I. (2013). *Effective supervision in social work*. London: Sage.

James, A.M. (2009). *Brothers and sisters in adoption: Helping children navigate relationships when new kids join the family*. Indianapolis: Perspectives Press.

Kassin, S., Fein, S., & Markus, H.R. (2010). *Social psychology*. (8th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

Kline, R. & Preston-Shoot, M. (2012). *Professional accountability in social care and health*. London: Sage.

Murphy, J., Murray, S., Chalmers, J., Martin, S., & Marston, G. (2011). *Half a citizen-life on welfare in Australia*. Crows Nest NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Nelson, A. (2011). *Social work with substance users*. London: Sage.

Quinney, A. & Hafford-Letchfield, T. (2012). *Interprofessional social work: Effective collaborative approaches*.(2nd edn.) London: Sage.

Sanders, J. & Munford, R. (2010). *Working with families: Strengths-based approaches*. Wellington: Dunmore.

Selby, R., English, A., & Bell, H. (2011). *Social worker in schools: A New Zealand Maori experience*. Palmerston North: Massey University.

Steinberg, G., & Hall, B. (2000). *Inside transracial adoption*. Indianapolis: Perspectives Press.

Tawhai, V.M.H. & Gray-Sharp, K. (2011). (Eds.) '*Always speaking'- The Treaty of Waitangi and public policy*. Wellington: Huia.

Tomlins-Jahnke, H. & Mulholland, M. (2011). (Eds.) *Mana tangata politics of empowerment*. Wellington: Huia.

Wade, J., Biehal, N., Farrelly, N., & Sinclair, I. (2011). *Caring for abused and neglected children. Making the right decisions for reunification or long-term care*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Wadsworth, Y. (2010). *Building in research and evaluation. Human inquiry for living systems*. Crows Nest NSW: Allen & Unwin.

Watling, S. & Rogers, J. (2012). Social work in a digital society. London: Sage.

Weld, N. (2012). *A practical guide to transformative supervision for the helping professions*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

eBooks also available for review

Palliative care, ageing and spirituality: A guide for older people, carers and families, by Elizabeth Mackinlay. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Hearing the person with dementia: Person-centred approaches to communication for families and caregivers, by Bernie McCarthy. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Address all enquiries to:

Helen Simmons
Book Review Editor
Social Work & Social Policy programme
School of Health & Social Services
Massey University
Private Bag 11-222
Palmerston North 4442
New Zealand

E-mail: H.Simmons@massey.ac.nz

Kaoukji, D., & Najit, M. (2009). *Children's services in the developing world.* **Ashgate Publishing, England.**

It is hard to describe this work as a book, it is rather a collection of disparate journal articles. Given the fact that academic search engines are so efficient, and international journals are so accessible online it is hard to see the value in presenting these in the form of a bound, hardcover book. The book is the sixth part of a series called the Library of Essay in Child Welfare and Development.

The introduction acknowledges that the other five volumes, and indeed much academic work in a more general sense focuses on thinking from Europe, North America and Australasia and neglects the economic South. I often enjoy introductions and prefaces and find a lot of insights in them and I hoped that given the dry nature of some of the articles that

the introduction would provide some overarching illumination of the topic. However it was more of a literature review, so it served no great purpose other than indicate what articles the reader should focus on to address particular themes.

Having worked with children in developing countries, I was interested in the title of this book. What this book addresses is precisely what I find so personally rewarding and wonderful about working in developing countries – and that is the passion and excitement of doing so. Most of the articles have statistics at the heart of them, for instance even an article that sounds very exciting on the relationship between polygamous family structures and the mental health of Bedouin Arab adolescents is weighed down by the statistical tools used. These went far beyond anything I learnt on a social work degree.

That is not to diminish the interesting information in the book. For instance there was an interesting Ecological Model of the impact of trauma on children who have experience war, within an article on a Salvadoran study on the impact of war on the mental health of children. However with the proliferation of academic information that is available, I don't believe that purchasing all of these articles as a book is a particularly effective way of accessing knowledge about children's services in the developing world.

What this work fails to do is provide a link between the economic North and the economic South, by way of either discussing children from the economic South who have migrated to the economic North, or practitioners from the economic North who are working in the economic South. This really mitigates the usefulness for practitioners from the economic North. Given that each article focussed on a very specific geographical location, this also mitigates the usefulness of the whole tome for practitioners from the economic South.

Tiffany Apaitia-Vague
Social Work Educator, Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki.

Social work under pressure: How to overcome stress, fatigue and burnout in the workplace. **Kate van Heugten. 224 pp. 2011. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London and Philadelphia.**

It's a compelling topic, stress, particularly for social workers. At best, stress motivates positive change, helping individuals, families, organisations and communities to recognise and work with their inherent resiliencies and strengths to problem-solve, leading to enhanced well-being and autonomy. At worst, it can lead to poor health and health-related behaviours, crime, family violence and other psychopathologies, sleep deprivation, mood swings, and more.

Social workers are up to their eyeballs in it, frequently called upon by others to ameliorate stressful social situations where no one knows the right answers, where the relationship dynamics are difficult and complex, and where there is a high degree of risk. Clinical social work is largely about stress and is inherently stressful.

In *Social work under pressure*, Dr Kate van Heugten, an associate professor at the University of Canterbury, shows her skills as a scholar, researcher and writer. Most importantly, however, she effectively demonstrates that she is a social worker's social worker. 'To protect them[selves] from stress overload,' she counsels, 'social workers need to be supported to

strike a balance between caring for their clients, ensuring they represent clients' needs and have adequate resources to support them, and keeping boundaries on excessive demands from those same service users, their employing agencies and the wider public.'

As demonstrated by her comprehensive bibliography and her own extensive list of publications, there isn't much about social work stress that the author hasn't thought, read or researched about. Her writing is authoritative, but at the same time intensely personal and situational. She speaks of her own struggles as a mother, cancer survivor and academic. Her great compassion for those left vulnerable in the aftermath of life's vicissitudes is self-evident.

Careful thought has gone into the organisation of this book, which is 'self-help' in the best sense of the term. There are pull-quotes with evidence-based practice tips, a recurring feature called 'Pauses for reflection' that poses questions which resonate and which serve as valuable points of departure for change and growth and letting go. At the end of each chapter the author provides additional pointers to paper and web-based resources for the topic covered. The author takes care, however, to separate out what can be improved or managed through worker participation in stress reduction from those stressors that are beyond our ability as workers to control (many workplace stressors are organisational and can be changed only if the organisation changes).

Another useful feature that will keep social workers consulting this book is the evidence-based 'toolkits' for coping that are also provided at the end of each chapter. Exhibiting the latest thinking in resilience, strengths-based practice and positive psychology, for instance, the book's 'toolkit for balance in practice' contained this little gem: 'Turn up the dial on noticing positive events and opportunities for growth, and turn down the dial on negative critique. This doesn't mean we should fail to address wrongs, but the balance should fall toward constructive communications.' The book is peppered with similarly helpful observations, strategies and behaviours that, when applied, reduce stress and improve work/life balance.

The chapter on trauma examines the exponential effects of catastrophic events like the Christchurch quakes on social worker stress. A combination of the trauma of the event, coupled with the sudden upsurge in demand for services at the precise time when resources have been destroyed or compromised, has impacted on many a worker's resilience. This hopeful book has personally engaged me in a way that few books have. I have not only read it, but I have worked with it and I have applied what it said in my own circumstances. I am working with it still.

It is said, when the student is ready, the teacher will appear. This book is the one-stop, turn-to volume for calm and level-headed advice for social workers in the midst of any storm. The author has obvious compassion, and loads of solid advice and usable pointers, for victims of workplace bullying. Also, she helps social workers to detach from self-blame in situations which are essentially beyond their control.

As mentioned, the author is a seasoned academic and university administrator who has dozens of articles, book chapters, and presentations to her credit, mostly about workplace stress and violence, including bullying. This first book is slim (about 200 pages) yet com-

prehensive, emphasising the multi-factorial contributions to social worker stress and setting out evidence-based strategies for dealing with them in practical and user-friendly ways. The volume is a must have for any social worker's bookshelf. If you are a social worker who wants to see positive change result from the stress you are under right now, read this book.

Doug Matthews, MSW MANZASW RSW
CDHB Social Worker.

Social work in a digital society. **Sue Watling and Jim Rogers. London, Sage Publications, 2012. Paperback, 166 pages.**

'Digital' may seem like the latest overused term at times, however this book presents a strong case for its importance to social work theory and practice. It is part of the series *Transforming Social Work Practice*, a collection of introductory texts for social work in the United Kingdom, with its primary nominated audience identified being first year social work students. It makes frequent reference to the new UK professional competence framework 'Professional Capabilities Framework for Social Work', included in text and graphic form in appendices. It provides solid introduction to the social impact of internet, digital policy and its implications, digital equalities and digital divides, issues for student placements and digital literacies for social work education and practice. It also provides ample prompts for practice reflection in case studies and research summaries. It includes introductions to terminology and key concepts needed for competent use of digital technologies in both educational and practice settings.

The teaching purpose is reflected in the writing style, and there are many sections addressed to 'when you are on placement' or similar that reduce readability for a wider audience. It would be suited to guiding students through the material in accompaniment to online or other multimedia learning materials and class discussion. It may be of interest to Social Work educators seeking to design resources as it does provide a solid base of information, including clear research citations. A significant drawback in relation to the international market is the website, social, legal and resource information is almost completely UK specific. While it can be thought provoking and inspiring to read and compare, it places a demand on the non-UK reader to be familiar enough with their own national and local context to translate. This could prove a challenge for a beginning Social Work student without significant additional material and it would not be a 'stand alone' text for Social Work students or practitioners outside of the UK.

One stand out gem was the window into the UK social policy context, notably the analysis of benefits and challenges presented with the shift to 'digital-by-default' for contacting government services. It thoughtfully addresses the issue of the digital divide and implications for populations traditionally served by social workers, while simultaneously remaining attentive to the opportunities created by computer mediated communication. Retaining a balance in its assessment of digital technologies, it also discusses how digital technologies can increase accessibility. This resonates with the social model of disability, which understands barriers inequalities in opportunity as socially constructed and a failure of society to recognise and cater for diversity. It covers cautions and safety concerns, particularly for children and young people but also for practitioners discussing information sharing online and digital footprints. Sadly, there is minimal discussion of online therapeutic tools, although

again this may be a 'cost' in the editing process. Overall it achieves the purpose for which it was designed, as an entry level text to introduce the complexity of digital technologies and cultures for social work education and practice.

Justin Canty
MANZASW, Registered Social Worker
PhD candidate, Social Psychiatry and Population Mental Health Research Unit, University of Otago, Wellington.

***Social work with lesbians and gay men.* Helen Cosis Brown & Christine Cocker. London, Sage Publications, 2011. 187 pages. Paperback.**

The title suggests this book can be used as a working manual by a social worker working with lesbians and gay men. I do not find this to be the case. Rather the book provides valuable background of knowledge in regard to queer theory that will assist in a greater understanding when working with lesbians and gay men.

The book rightly places the sexuality of lesbians and gay men within the wider context of all sexualities. The authors have achieved this by explaining the historical, political and social aspects of gay and lesbian lifestyles. They do this in a manner that is easily understood.

The book is written for the benefit of United Kingdom readership and is largely relevant to those countries. However, the authors' references to Marx, Freud, Foucault make it relevant to a worldwide audience. However, its relevance stops there for a New Zealand readers.

New Zealand readers who are familiar with the history and progress of the homosexual movement in the 1970s and 1980s will identify the parallels of progress between the two countries. The history of the homosexual movement that commenced in New Zealand in the early 1980s is more intense and achieved more over a shorter time frame than the same history within the United Kingdom as described in the book. This historical path may be of the interest to a New Zealander doing gender studies at a tertiary level but I do not believe it would provide any new skills that would assist a New Zealand social worker involved in the lives of lesbians and gay men. For example, the skills of the social worker working with foster parents of a suspected closeted gay young person, as shown in the case study on page 73, are the skills that would be used in all areas of social work regardless of gender or race.

The United Kingdom has a diversity of races living within its shores. These races have varying views of homosexuality within their beliefs and cultures. This issue is not addressed in the book. This omission provides no new knowledge or assistance for Kiwi social workers working alongside the Treaty of Waitangi. Social workers in this country who wish to inform themselves in regard to working with Takataapui taane (Maori gay men) would achieve more understanding by reading chapter eleven of *Intimate Details and Vital Statistics, Aids, Sexuality and the Social Order in New Zealand*, edited by Peter Davis, 1996.

Michael Unverricht
ANZASW Professional Supervisor
Sojourn Certificate (working with persons living with HIV/AIDS) USA, 1997