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General Information

The Official Journal of the College of Community Psychologists
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Editorial

Heather Gridley
Victoria University

Holding the Tenth Trans-Tasman Conference in Community Psychology in Sydney 2006 was always going to be a challenge. Although Sydney was at the forefront of developments in community psychology in its early days in Australia, there is no postgraduate program in New South Wales to provide the ongoing energy and renewal that has been on tap in Western Australia and Victoria, and to a lesser extent in Queensland. So it was something of a surprise to have at least three Sydney universities represented in the conference program, together with a range of community organizations from across the state. There has always been a rich vein of grassroots practice and consumer activism represented in the APS Community College's small membership in NSW. Perhaps it has been a well-kept secret until now that community psychology there has managed to subvert disciplinary borders more successfully than elsewhere – criminology, health sciences, community development, education, Indigenous studies . . .

The Sydney Conference came together in less than six months, and forged its own place in the folklore of Trans-Tasman conferences - Pakatoa, Maralinga, Rotorua, Yarrabah, Toodyay, Hamilton, Melbourne, Hillarys Harbour (Perth), Tauranga. This is not the place to revisit the conference itself, but I do want to acknowledge the work of all the contributors to the Conference Committee: Meg Smith, Di Clarke and Rosemary Pynor in Sydney, Lynne Cohen in Western Australia, and a bevy of indispensable student helpers from the University of Western Sydney, Sydney University and University of Notre Dame Australia, Sydney Campus. We also very much appreciated the support of Peter Dean at UNDA, the Community College National Committee and the APS National Office staff.

Parallel to the conference planning, the prospect of the proceedings constituting the next issue of the Australian Community Psychologist emerged. All conference presentation proposals had been subjected to a review process, and each of the papers submitted for the Proceedings special issue was further reviewed by at least two referees. The review panel included Adrian Fisher, Heather Gridley, Carol Tutchener, Rosemary Pynor, Lynne Cohen, Harriet Radermacher, Chris Sonn, Lyn O'Grady, Stephen Fyson, Grace Pretty, Meg Smith, Briony Kercheval, Catherine D'Arcy, Di Clarke, Anne Sibbel, Felicity Wright, Grace Pretty, Brian Bishop, Bridget Monro, Debra Rickwood, Ann Dadich and Kristy-Lee Riley. Thank you all for the serious consideration and constructive feedback you offered. And special thanks to Carol Tutchener, who was meticulous in setting up a data base of manuscripts and sending them out for review, and to Anne Sibbel who waited patiently as production editor for the drip feed of completed articles.

Nine papers survived the review and revision process. While not representative of the entire range of keynote addresses, symposia, workshops, themed discussions, posters, planning sessions and processing activities that took place at the conference, they are certainly indicative of some key debates and research hotbeds in Community Psychology within Australia and beyond. We are delighted with their freshness nearly twelve months on from the conference, and congratulate all the authors for the way they have managed to balance accessibility with intellectual and critical challenge. We have also included in this issue a full set of abstracts of the papers, workshops and posters that made up the program for *Less talkin', more walkin': the Tenth Trans-Tasman Conference in Community*

Psychology.

The Conference program was organised around four streams/themes:

‘Nothing so practical as ...’ – Theoretical developments influencing community psychology practice

‘Working together for deadly outcomes’ – Community psychology and Indigenous people
‘Journeys with consumers’ - Recent developments in mental health policy and practice

‘Conversations that cross borders’ - International agendas in community psychology

For the Proceedings, we have collapsed these streams into two, each of which is introduced by one of the keynote addresses to the conference. As such, the two papers can serve as signposts to this edition of *ACP*, marking the genealogy of community psychology, whose ‘parents’ have often been loosely identified as community mental health and applied social psychology.

Appropriately for a Trans-Tasman venture, the first group of papers is headed by a keynote presentation from Aotearoa New Zealand. Hilary Lapsley and Heather Barnett from the Mental Health Commission in Wellington are joined by young consumer Shona Clarke to report on an investigation into young adults’ first experience of a disabling mental health crisis and their first use of adult mental health services. Ann Dadich’s paper on self-help support groups for young people experiencing mental health problems continues the focus on young consumers. The paper is drawn from Ann’s doctoral research that won the 2005 APS Robin Winkler Award for excellence in a project in the field of applied community psychology. Rosemary Pynor extends the self-help/mutual-help discussion to the disability field, where she talks about the challenges of reconciling empowerment rhetoric with everyday realities of supporting disabled people’s participation in self-help organizations. The paper by Celeste Galton and Gerda Alberts Muller takes a practitioner perspective on a Personal Support Program that attempts to apply community psychology principles to the implementation of the Federal Government’s *Welfare to Work* program. And finally, Shelley O’Keefe and Sheree Freeburn describe the processes involved in developing, trialling and evaluating a partnership model of

service delivery on epilepsy and seizure management to be culturally appropriate for Aboriginal communities.

Although two of these papers are research reports and the others are more practice-oriented, all are located in community settings, and all place the rights, voices and needs of those most affected by the experience of crisis, health problems, oppression and/or disability as their central consideration.

The second group of papers comes under the very broad banner of ‘theory’, and is introduced by Grace Pretty’s inspiring keynote – a virtual walking tour of her own career history across two continents (and hemispheres), paralleled by theoretical developments in community psychology that continue to have relevance – and invite caution – in 21st century, mid rural crisis Queensland. Brian Bishop and Alison Browne have written two papers, one of which revisits Kurt Lewin’s much-quoted but often decontextualised and misconstrued observation that ‘there is nothing so practical as a good theory’. Their second paper borrows the concept of iatrogenesis to consider the unintended consequences of interventions within natural resource management contexts – perhaps the largest scale ‘practice setting’ imaginable for community psychologists. Jenny Sharples’ unusually reflective paper takes a critical look at how mainstream psychological theories can be readily co-opted to serve dominant political agendas. I read this one just as I came across a truly Orwellian draft proposal to use Prochaska and DiClemente’s motivational interviewing (designed to assist decision-making in the context of problem behaviours such as substance use or gambling) to persuade asylum-seekers to return to their country of origin, so Jenny’s paper helped me to put words to the shiver down my spine.

It is all too clear that these two groupings of papers immediately trouble the binary separation of theory and practice, as did the presence at the Sydney conference of a larger than usual number of community workers and service consumers – it seems more accurate to suggest that community psychologists (and fellow travellers) in Australia and New Zealand have not been above or afraid of tackling real-world problems, nor have they turned their back on theoretical

considerations once they find themselves working at the coalface of community practice. We were proud of both the quality of presentations and the processes that supported them in making the Tenth Trans-Tasman Conference in Community Psychology so memorable for visitors and locals, veteran and neophyte community psychologists alike. We are equally proud of this special "Proceedings" edition of *ACP*, which brings together research and practice in community psychology, and encapsulates some of the most pressing theoretical and political issues confronting the field.

[Close cooperation between theoretical and applied psychology] can be accomplished ... if the theorist does not look toward applied problems with highbrow aversion or the fear of social problems, and if the applied psychologist realizes that there is nothing so practical as a good theory. (Lewin, 1951, p. 169, cited in Bishop & Browne, this issue, p.69).

Unfortunately we were not able to include an abstract or adaptation of the extraordinary keynote address by Bevan Cassidy, Nywaigi Warrior, and 2003 Recipient of the Neville Bonner Award as the National Indigenous Universities Teacher of the Year – and indeed, those who were present would acknowledge that it would be impossible to do justice in print to his multi-dimensional presentation. But it seems fitting to end this editorial with Bevan's opening words, and in doing so, to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we gathered in Australia's first colonial city in April, 2006:

I am a Nywaigi Warrior

I acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nations and its peoples as the sovereign owners of this land, Australia and the Torres Strait Islands.

I acknowledge all of you, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in this place as representatives of your nations, as representatives of your peoples.

I acknowledge the owners of this land, the Wathaurong nation and its peoples!

There is a great challenge that stands before us at the crossroads in our collective moral spirit as Australians.

There is a great challenge that stands before us as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nations and its peoples.

And there are two great mindsets that shaped our histories as
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
That has shaped our existence as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
That will shape our future as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

One has the reputation of a modern civilisation,
A Western Civilisation,
That has created the world's present systems and institutions
Its histories, its cultural institutions, its social institutions, its political institutions,
Passed down through the generations through its hierarchal systems.
Passed down through the generations through its written traditions.

The Other,
Has the reputation of the World's Oldest Living Adaptable Civilisation
Of co-existence with its environment, with its communities, with its spirituality.
Its histories, its cultural institutions, its social institutions, its political institutions,
Passed down through the generations through its oral traditions.

Yet

Both must ask the question if there is a mutual respect and understanding of the grave realities
That we face as a modern nation
That we face as a modern people.

Both are worlds apart but must be understood.
Both must be understood to bring their worlds together.
Both must be willing to change a system of

thinking to effect a system change.
Both must learn from the lessons of the past to
teach the lessons for the future.

And
Both must be willing to step into the unknown to
address the known.
That is the benefit of education! That is the
objective of education!

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Tenth Trans-Tasman Conference in Community Psychology

**Thursday 20th - Sunday 23rd April 2006
The University of Notre Dame Australia
Broadway Campus, Sydney**

Worldviews, citizen power and control: Emerging Issues from Natural Resource Management Research in the East Kimberley

Browne, A., Bishop, B., & Bellamy, J. (Curtin University)

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For diverse reasons, there has been increasing recognition nationally, and internationally, of the importance of incorporating local and regional Indigenous and non-Indigenous community voices in Natural Resource Management (NRM), to 1) inform policy and research directions and content, and 2) to improve the 'uptake' of the outcomes of research and policy approaches. Commonly, participatory, collaborative and multidisciplinary projects are suggested as ways of incorporating the understandings of scientists, policy makers and lay advocates in NRM. The Ord Bonaparte Program (OBP) is a large scale, multi-disciplinary, collaborative research model in the East Kimberley region of Western Australia that was established to inform ecologically sustainable development and the management of natural resources within the region. This poster is based on the findings from the evaluation project of the OBP. It focuses on the impacts that divergent understandings of participatory and collaborative research had for different groups involved, particularly how involvement of these diverse groups highlighted and reinforced issues of citizen power and control operating within local, regional and international NRM contexts.

SYMPOSIUM

The role of Sense of Community and Sense of Belonging as protective factors for school success.

Cohen, L., & Pooley, J. (Edith Cowan University)

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Symposium abstract

During their time at school, children are exposed to a number of risk factors that may result in depression, suicide, offending, and truancy. The literature suggests that students who develop a close connection with their school are more likely to succeed during their school years. Sense of community and sense of belonging are important as protective factors that may influence the levels of risk. The school community is an ideal environment in which to examine the contribution of a sense of community and a sense of belonging as protective factors. In this presentation two papers are presented which are based on a longitudinal study of risk and protective factors and the relationship between sense of community and sense of belonging.

Critiquing the School Community: A Qualitative Study of Children's Conceptualizations of their School

Pooley, J., Breen, L., Pike, L., Cohen, L. (Edith Cowan University) & Drew, N. (University of Notre Dame Australia)

Schools are becoming increasingly accountable for the successful educational outcomes of students. However, little attention is paid to the personal development of students in such areas as self efficacy, participation, competence and self-determination. In this study, forty-six children aged from 9 to 12 years were interviewed to ascertain their conceptualisations of the school community. The responses of the students indicate that they characterise their school with responses that are closely aligned to the adult conceptualisations of sense of community as purported by McMillan and Chavis (1986). Examples include the people within the school, schools as places for activities and interaction, a place for safety, cooperation, influence and functionality. In order to ensure the psychological well being of the children, they should have a role in the decision making processes

of the school as well as in curriculum design.

Sex, drugs and rock and roll – the rocky road through high school

Cohen, L., Pike, L., & Pooley, J. (Edith Cowan University)

This study explored the transition of children from the last year of primary school through the first years of high school. The study examined the role of a sense of belonging as a protective factor to minimize risk and enhance resilience of the children. This study is part of a longitudinal study in which students have been participating for five years. A number of psychosocial assessments were conducted yielding information about depressive symptomatology, self perception, coping skills, and a sense of belonging. The outcomes of this ongoing research has particular relevance for understanding the transition from primary to high school and for the development of interventions designed to minimize risk and promote well being within the schools and for young people in general.

Productive and fun activities in struggling communities: Bringing the future into the present

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The purpose of this session is to illustrate principles of creating futures in disadvantaged communities, and bring participants' ideas and experience into the mix. My job as a community-based psychologist operates in the context of at-risk communities: families and schools with socio-economic disadvantages, people with disabilities, ethnic and linguistic minorities, sometimes in developing countries. In the last 10 years, we have set up programs in community learning centres, technology centres, etc. What people (some 30,000, mostly children) learn and what they engage in by having fun, provide protective factors and reduce risk factors. Within each of these activities, we create explicit images of future success. We provide the right level of challenge, and enable people to see themselves being successful where they normally

fail. Some images are explicit—e.g., videos of reading fluently, making friends, persevering under stress. Other positive images are implied by interpersonal interactions. We included images of sustaining programs beyond the external funding. Individuals were widely successful. The sustainability plans were not. Success depends on strategies to bring the images of the future into the present. These strategies include the 90:10 rule, recasting error correction as focused learning from success, and use of technology to place interventions in the most challenging settings. Programs have been sustained, in many cases, through unexpected means.

Cross-sector collaborations for health and safer communities: *What, How, and Why?*

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Cross Sector Collaborations function as mechanisms for change in health, social and community development. Although emphasis has been given on outcomes, not much has been written about processes within cross sector collaborations that foster change. Using a case study methodology, this research explores how a cross sector collaboration of organisations, professionals and individuals work toward the facilitation of health and safety of a local community in a local government area of the City of Port Phillip of Victoria in Australia. This presentation reports on findings and data collected over 3 years, which shows that a key outcome of the cross sector collaboration processes and functions relate to the identifying, negotiating, reframing, and development of shared understandings about and actions on health, social and community issues. The cross-sectoral or interdisciplinary nature of the collaboration supports the development of mechanisms and contexts for negotiating coordinated change initiatives, which are based on shared values, trust, relationships and reciprocity. Importantly, the change that cross sector collaboration achieves is often unacknowledged because it lies beyond the planned and immediate objective outcomes. The

implications of cross sector collaborations as change mechanisms are explored in terms of its process and function in policy development and implementation in health, social and community work.

Pathways to Commitment or Alienation: The possibility of sequential steps within Psychological Sense of Community

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The research involved examining the nature of the transition that students experienced in progressing to junior high school from primary school. Students' experiences were chosen as the focus of the research because the issue of substance being investigated was that of alienation. Theoretical frameworks, based on constructions of psychological sense of community, were designed to see how readily the experience of alienation could be mapped as the antithesis of increasing psychological sense of community. The main methodology that was used was the qualitative procedure of discourse analysis, implemented over a three-year period. During this time, 33 focus group interviews with 120 student leaders were recorded, transcribed and analysed. The key findings of the research include the establishment of critical concerns of students. These critical concerns were articulated as psychological sense of community categories of interest, with positive and negative discourse descriptors being developed for each category. The categories of interest were arranged into a sequential pattern that described pathways to increasing commitment or alienation.

Women, culture, religion, men and family violence

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Our beliefs, values, thinking and behaviours are influenced by the cultural and religious teachings we subscribe to. Culture and religion play an important role in shaping our behaviours and the relationships between males and females. Various theories attempted to explain the violence perpetrated by men against women. Individuals are the focus of some theories in an

attempt of looking for personal explanation such as mental health, alcohol and drugs, stress, external factors, the victim's role, religion reasons and cultural practices and beliefs. Culture and religious beliefs are the focus of others. This presentation is a study of domestic violence (DV) as a gender based crime in an attempt to enhance our understanding of this social crime perpetrated against women from the mainstream communities and from minority groups in Australia and in other countries. This presentation also provides an analytical view on cultural attitudes and on past and current strategies adopted by various authorities in responding to DV. Proving that DV is a gender-based crime does not discount the influence of religion and cultural beliefs and practices. As there are few research papers that closely examine the extent and impact of DV affecting the women from Arabic speaking communities, it is anticipated that this presentation may lead to further research into this area within the Arabic speaking communities.

Re-gendering community psychologies and re-generating feminisms: How far have(n't) we come?

Gridley, H. (Victoria University) & Thomas, K. (Curtin University)

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Community psychology and feminism share similar social critiques and advocate similar change models. However these similarities may not match the realities of practice. This forum is the first of a series of locally based conversations taking place within community psychology throughout 2006. Participants are invited to consider several guiding questions as they relate to gender equity, social justice and human rights within their own communities. Guiding questions for reflection and discussion include:

- How are our commitments to feminist values evident in our research and practice?
- How do we enact gender equity in our work as researchers, consultants, practitioners and teachers?
- What local initiatives or achievements in the area of human rights for women would you like to celebrate and share with other psychologists?
- How can the pedagogy of psychology be

better directed in ways that ensure future generations can contribute towards improving the lives of women?

Our over-arching argument is that psychologists can serve as better champions for global and local social justice when their work is infused with feminist perspectives.

Blending Agendas: The whirl and grind of joint sector work

Helean, J. (Auckland District Health Board)
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Joint sector and whole of government are terms embedded in the vocabulary of New Zealand social policy. Although agencies have requirements re joint sector work, and acceptance of the collaborative model, most do not have the necessary resources or systems in place. Staff involved in joint sector project work volunteer on top of core roles because the approach is implicit in their professional or agency practice, or they simply have optimism. Managers have little to help assess how and where to can gain best strategic advantage from the black hole of staff time lost to joint sector project work. Three agencies in Auckland (Health, Education, and Child, Youth and Family) joined up to evaluate three projects involving all their agencies. The aim was to evaluate the successful factors in the joint sector process in order to improve these intensive group processes with long term timeframes and uncertain outcomes. The findings from the reflections of 57 joint sector participants are discussed in this process evaluation. Success factors and barriers are examined in relation to previous research. The discussion of findings from this Auckland study will be of interest to others struggling to capture the kernels of best practice in the whirl of joint sector activity.

Responding to media representations of working class men

Hodgetts, D. & Rua, M. (University of Waikato)
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This paper documents the tendency of New Zealand media to disseminate negative representations of working class men as unintelligent, violent and irresponsible abusers.

We consider the ways in which such representations also manifest in psychological research and how this creates a sense of negative accusations towards working men that can be harmful and restrict men's participation in community life. This paper draws upon insights from ethnographic observations, life narrative interviews, photographic techniques and media diaries, which have been compiled collaboratively with 15 Maori and Pakeha men. These materials are used to illustrate how these men often appropriate aspects from media representations in order to make sense of their own lives, relationships, and community participation. In the process these men reproduce and then resist negative media accusations. We discuss why our research into the positive relationships and community contributions of working class men who are not in trouble needs to explore negative media representations as a shared symbolic backdrop or contextual social representation for participants' lives.

Australian-Muslim Adolescent Identity

Hussein, T. & Fisher, A. (Victoria University)
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The purpose of this research was to explore Australian-Muslim adolescent identity. Semi-structured interviews exploring self-identification and concept; sense of belonging; positive and negative attitudes towards one's own ethnic group; ethnic involvement/social participation; and cultural practices were conducted with 37 (14 female, 23 male) Year 9 students from two Islamic colleges in Victoria. Results indicated Australian-Muslim identity to be a multidimensional concept. Divergent identity patterns appeared related to factors including length of time in Australia, exposure to and involvement in Australian society, and experiences of racism and hostility. In conclusion, the research has shed light on Australian-Muslim adolescent identity. In turn, this light has both reinforced and challenged existing theories on identity, culture, and ethnicity. However, a significant limitation of the study was that interviewees were recruited from Islamic colleges. To understand Australian-Muslim identity, participants should be recruited

from mainstream and other religious affiliated secondary colleges.

Going walkabout together through the suburbs

Lloyd, R. (University of Western Sydney)
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‘Going Walkabout Together Through The Suburbs’ (GW3TS) focuses on group interaction and support, plus Life Journaling with Volunteer Buddies among a group of about 30 young adults (18-35 yrs). Participants are from a community of people living with mental health challenges and/or intellectual disability, teamed up with people living without these challenges, but with plenty of other life issues. The supported inquiry-style, participative action research process aims to contribute to reforming rehabilitation through modelling community-based, self-help, peer support group processes. Our experience has been that the original intention, to highlight paired fortnightly journaling, has become secondary to the actual dynamic "in-community", and I am now exploring how to describe that process, in order to share with others the elements of creating and supporting such safe, trusting, self-help environments in any community setting. Such approaches have been discussed with different community mental health rehabilitation services around Sydney over the past two years, in a shared exploration of better ways to engage people in community-based, self-help rehabilitation.

An exploration of ‘sense of community’ and well being in urban versus rural Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities.

Miller, S.L. & Eisen, L.N. (Australian Catholic University)

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One group that is attempting to maintain their sense of community through cultural cohesion is the Australian Aboriginal people. Very little appropriate research with Aboriginal samples has been carried out to date due to a lack of culturally appropriate and sensitive

measurement tools. A new culturally sensitive measure has been developed which allows for the identification of Aboriginal people at risk for depression and suicide. This measure, along with an instrument which assesses the degree to which people have a strong sense of community, is used to examine if a psychological sense of community is related to well being. Research questions include: Are there differences in levels of sense of community between rural versus urban, Aboriginal versus non Aboriginal communities? Is sense of community related to depressive symptoms? Methodological issues include the veracity and reliability of findings when non- Aboriginal researchers conduct research with Aboriginal communities. These issues are discussed and debated along with the implications and potential future directions of research in this area.

“Walk a mile in my shoes”

Muller, J. (Griffith University)
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Using a new and exploratory visual methodology, which has its basis in qualitative research (Neuman, 1997, Patton, 2002) and visual ethnography (Pink, 2001), this presentation explores, from a consumer’s perspective, the quality of life of people who have mental illness and live in the community. Using image-text (Mitchell, 1994), the photographic images and narratives can both bring new information that together creates a synergy otherwise overlooked in traditional text-based and quantitative research and offers a more ‘sensually complete’ methodology (Warren, 2002). Specifically, a visual methodology, in the tradition of social documentary images, is used to investigate ‘what it feels like to be mentally ill and to live in the community’. The research will be used to increase understanding and awareness and promote social action. It will also be used to extend current psychological methodologies into the visual – as a process of exploration and triangulation. The presentation takes the format of a photographic exhibition.

Policies and Paradigms in Indigenous

Psychology: De-colonising Practice

Nolan, W. & McConnochie, K. (The University of South Australia)

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This paper reports on a research project exploring the history of relationships between government policies towards Indigenous Australians, patterns of psychological research with Indigenous Australians, the impact of this relationship on how psychologists engage with Indigenous communities and clients and the implications for professional education of psychologists. Psychology is often portrayed as being located within the dominant Western paradigm of a positivist orientated experimental science. For example, Tyler (2002) argued that there is a historical 'racist cultural bias' permeating the structures of the discipline and shaping psychology's narratives, perspectives, and scientific and professional standards. Historically there has been a close relationship between government policies towards Indigenous Australians, the paradigms adopted by psychologists researching in Indigenous contexts and psychological practice. This relationship has been reflected in short periods of intense research and publishing activity, occurring at around the same time as significant changes in government policy towards Indigenous Australia followed by long periods of relative inactivity. This relationship is further reflected in similarities between the assumptions underlying the policy frameworks and the models and assumptions applied in psychological research and practice. The paper examines the extent to which research activity and paradigms adopted by psychologists intersect and co-vary with prevailing government policies, the impact of these relationships on psychologists and their Indigenous clients and the implications for the training of psychologists.

Less talkin', more wheelin': Exploring the challenges for community psychologists doing research with disabled people

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The social model of disability requires that research about disability should be controlled and managed by disabled people themselves.

Traditional research has tended to marginalise disabled people, and the outcomes have been meaningless and irrelevant to them. Three years ago I approached a small disability advocacy organisation with a view to conducting participatory action research and to examine its value as an empowering research practice. In this presentation, I describe some of the challenges and tensions that emerged, particularly around negotiating my role in the research. I also examine how deeply entrenched ableist attitudes served to perpetuate the barriers to participation for disabled people and reinforced the tendency to victimise disabled people. This study revealed how disability discourses maintain inequities in power, and consequently hinder attempts to do research in empowering ways with disabled people. Until this is recognised, community psychology research and practice may fail to be meaningful and empowering for disabled people. Through this presentation, I seek to extend the discussion around 'decolonising methodologies' (which has tended to focus on Indigenous issues) to encompass disability issues. I also hope to encourage and promote the use of critical reflexivity to explore how community psychologists can work in more participatory and empowering ways.

Consumer and carer voices on the role of relapse prevention in the recovery process for people with mental illness

Rickwood, D. (University of Canberra)

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This paper reports the views of the consumers and carers who were part of a national consultation on the role of relapse prevention in the recovery process for people who have experienced mental illness. There is a growing focus on the need for prevention to be included as a routine component of treatment and continuing care; yet, feedback shows that frequently this is not the case, and that too often the experience of consumers, and their families and carers, is of a crisis-focussed mental health system that doesn't respond early enough to avert further episodes of illness. Progressing the understanding and implementation of prevention approaches has been a priority of the National Mental Health Promotion and Prevention

Working Party, and they auspiced a major national consultation in late 2004 around the role of relapse prevention. Three documents have recently been released that report on this work—a monograph, framework, and report of the national consultation. The focus of this paper is on what consumers and carers said about how they incorporate preventive activities as part of the recovery process.

Living with mental illness in Australia: Changes in policy and practice affecting mental health service consumers

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The movement of large numbers of people from psychiatric hospitals in the 1960s changed the face of mental health services in Australia. This paper explores some of the issues facing people living with mental illness in the community today and the impact of social policy, legislative change and funding of services on their lives, with particular reference to New South Wales. The growth of support and advocacy groups in the 1970s and 1980s, and their role alongside psychologists and other health workers in bringing about change in the provision and type of mental health services, are examined. Opportunities for advocacy and real input into the quality of service provisions have increased, and many people living with disabilities are active in contributing to policy development and advocacy services. However, the level of funding of mental health services and the resources available to care for people living with mental illness in the community still remain low and, in many cases, inadequate to provide proper quality care for people living with mental illness.

Interfacing Alternative and Complementary Well-being Ways for Local Wellness: Intercultural Peacehealing

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The paper outlines actions whereby the nurturers of psycho-social and other forms of well-being in the First, Third, and Fourth Worlds may engage together in supporting people in the aftermath of man-made/natural disasters in ways that enrich

local ways, and have positive second and third order consequences that detract from the well-being of no one involved, and that do not compromise local self help. The paper also has implications for supporting oppressed Indigenous/small minority people in the region in the context of the ongoing fragmenting and disintegrating of their culture, in their place, by dominant elements. The paper outlines the evolving of community psychology practice at Fraser House Psychiatric Unit at North Ryde Hospital and the interfacing of this practice with Indigenous psychologies of the East Asia Oceania Australasia Region. The Laceweb, an informal network of Indigenous and Oppressed Small Minority psycho-social healers is presented as an example of local Well-being self-help and mutual help action (refer 'Cultural Keyline' and other material at www.laceweb.org.au).

New Roles for Community Psychologists

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This paper identifies new roles and work opportunities that may emerge for community and clinical psychologists and clinical sociologists as Workcover care providers of self-help and mutual help amongst claimants. The implications of the Victoria Workcover Act requiring providers to use a bio-psychosocial model is discussed and a recent doctoral thesis on research on the bio-psychosocial model in the 1960s is introduced as a resource for Community and Clinical Psychologists (and Clinical Sociologists) interested in exploring working in, or researching this emerging field. Wellnet, a Community Based Organisation that may form a Biopsychosocial Support Network is introduced.

Learning to Grin and Bear It: Nurturing a social movement from the footpath up

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This interactive workshop explores how community psychologists can participate in yet another revolution. It welcomes everyone's experiences of changing the culture of their own street and discusses attempts by community

psychologists to improve neighbourhood social cohesion on the streets of inner-Melbourne. The work, conducted via the City of Port Phillip Council, has involved a series of novel and, dare we say it, fun, projects, such as street parties and Smiles per Hour, to counter the ebbing away of local neighbourhood connections in a time of increasing individualism, busyness, household security, fence heights, and geographical dispersion of the extended family. The workshop critically reflects on a psychologist's role in the common process of community building and explores the challenge of re-kindling good ol' community spirit without resorting to grand visions of either nostalgia or utopia. It also covers the pragmatics of evaluation, communication, sustainable project design, processes of building partnerships with others in the community and the trials of transforming a topic that was initially dismissed as flippant, into one now regarded by many as profound.

Community Psychology, the AIDS Epidemic and Ideology – No More Uncommitted Relationships!

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Even with the limited testing that has been conducted globally, 45 million people have been identified as HIV positive. In South Africa alone this number represents 5 million of the total population of 40 million. Much global funding is based on the ABC approach to AIDS prevention (Abstinence, Be Faithful, Use Condoms) - a coherent ideology that is both similar to, and raises challenges for, empowerment approaches that claim to be value neutral but are actually ideologically based. In Sub-Saharan Africa, the area hardest hit area by the epidemic, up to 75% of all HIV cases are women and less than 20% of them have access to contraception. The HIV epidemic highlights the destruction wrought by community theories and policies that are gender and power 'neutral' or naïve. It also raises a number of questions about how we walk and talk empowerment within Community Psychology. These questions are imperative for developing approaches that can be up-scaled to regional, national and global levels and include, but are not limited to: What

are the current levels of social justice walk and talk in the discipline? What is the next step for enactment? To whom should Community Psychologists be devoting relational commitment?

Community centred health promotion and prevention: Conceptual and methodological considerations

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In this paper, I introduce the concept of *community centred health promotion*, which in this context, refers to a strategy that is tailored to suit a particular community; and involves community members. Literature on the history and meaning of health promotion, evidence based health promotion, community engagement and community governance is reviewed to illuminate and support the concept. Doctoral research to be undertaken as part of a National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) public health scholarship is also outlined. The research will support a social model of health and involve the development of a community health evidence base in stage one, including the construction of a state-wide health database, analysis of health status and determinants of health, and development of profiles of community health needs. This evidence base will be used to engage a sample of community members and health/community service workers in the development of appropriate community specific plans of action in stage two. Stage three will reflect on the outcomes of stage one and two and evaluate the potential of the research program to be extended to other areas in Victoria and to the broader Australian context. Conclusions about the viability of *community centred health promotion* and the place of health promotion in community psychology will be made.

Applying HEAT to meet the training and employment needs of local youth

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The number of early school leavers in Boroondara, Port Phillip and Stonnington municipalities is 29% higher than the State

average for Years 9 and 10. Most schools focus on achieving high academic results, and there are few non traditional learning programs, or relevant training and employment programs, for less academically inclined young people. HEAT (Hospitality Employment and Training) is an innovative twelve week program which takes vocational learning out into the local community and industry. It is designed to interrupt the slide into long term unemployment and associated problems such as poor health, crime and homelessness, that many disengaged young people face. HEAT offers work experience and accredited hospitality industry qualifications. Additionally, there is a strong emphasis on welfare, career guidance, and post-program support as, for many in the target group, becoming job ready requires much more than just acquiring work-related skills. The large, fast-growing City of Port Phillip hospitality industry is an excellent medium for re-engagement, as it is exciting, varied and offers local casual, part-time and full-time work. Early HEAT results are presented, with details of how action research evaluation is used to continuously fine-tune and develop a model that can be replicated by other community groups.

A comparison of Sense of Community with family, friend and significant other social support as predictors of subjective well-being.

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This study examined whether sense of community (SoC) significantly predicts subjective well-being (SWB) beyond that afforded by family, friends and significant other support. The sample included 464 adults aged 18-82 years ($M = 44.4$, $SD = 15.42$). Participants resided in a diverse range of inner and outer suburbs of Melbourne. The cognitive and affective components of SWB were measured using the Satisfaction with Life Scale and the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule respectively. The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support was used to measure family, friend and significant other social support. The Sense of Community Index was used to measure SoC. Multiple regression analyses indicated that SoC did significantly

predict SWB beyond that of the other social support variables for positive affect, negative affect and satisfaction with life. SoC was negatively correlated with all three SWB variables. Possible explanations for this inverse relationship will be discussed. For example, it is likely that SoC influences city and country people differently (different cognitions, behaviours and feelings). Consequently community practitioners cannot assume that SoC will foster positive qualities in every community. Some communities may be utilising other sources of support such as friendship and may deem this sufficient in the promotion of SWB.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

What is SoC and is it universally consistent?

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Common definitions of sense of community (SoC) refer to feeling connected, supported, safe and important within a community. SoC also involves a sharing of common values and goals about the community. Since the conceptual work of Sarason (1974) advances regarding our understanding of SoC have occurred both conceptually and empirically. For example McMillan and Ryan (1986) have developed a model of SoC and Chavis, Hogge, McMillan and Wandersman (1986) have constructed a corresponding measure, the Sense of Community Index. However, it is agreed among SoC researchers that more work is needed as there are conceptual inconsistencies and existing measures do not meet satisfactory psychometric standards. Clarification of the constituents of SoC is first needed. What does SoC mean to people? What empirical evidence is there to support this position? It has been found that SoC (as it is currently measured) is important to individual well-being but such benefits are dependent on several factors such as the location and size of the community. One of the main questions for discussion concerns whether city and country people have a different understanding of what SoC entails? More specifically does SoC transcend geographical qualities and can a universal measure of SoC be developed?

Building Humour Through Rapport: A

Qualitative Study

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This study addresses the connection between humour and rapport. With the use of a qualitative methodology the study investigates how the appropriate use of humour can build rapport in a variety of settings and gains a greater understanding of how this phenomenon works. The author also reports benefits of increased rapport. Through the use of autoethnography the author provides in-depth accounts of various instances when he has utilized humour to build rapport in his own life. The incorporation of personal experiences and stories helps illustrate the subjectivity of humour and increases understanding of the numerous situations in which humour can positively affect rapport. To achieve a more objective understanding of the phenomenon, six professional comedians were utilized as participants and interviewed. Participants provided an account of the multiple effects of humour in both their professional and social life. Their experiences were interpreted through a grounded theory analysis, resulting in the development of four themes. The four themes are then discussed and evaluated with the use of participants' and the author's personal experiences. The four themes presented are: defuse – when humour is used to defuse a tense situation; deflect - when humour is used as a deflective technique; evaluate – using humour to evaluate beliefs, attitude or boundaries; revealing – using humour to reveal your opinion, thoughts or beliefs. All themes provide an account of a different situation and approaches in which humour can positively influence rapport and the benefits of increased rapport. The author's hope is to not only increase understanding of this phenomenon by demonstrating the connections between humour and rapport but also illustrate the effectiveness of autoethnography in psychological research.

There is nothing so practical as ...: Building myths in community psychology¹

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Kurt Lewin's comment about the need to integrate psychological theory and practice famously has been mythologised in academic psychology in a distorted, self-serving form. Myths may serve to create a sense of collective identity, but in professional arenas myths can lead to distortions of the nature of theory and practice. We argue that some central tenets of community psychology have developed mythical status and, as such, perform social as well as conceptual functions. We argue that the unexamined status of these myths can lead to difficulties in praxis, the theory-practice interface. This has led to misunderstandings of people and community. For example, although community psychology was to be operationalised at broader levels (i.e., societal, community and organisational) as well as the individual, the prevailing zeitgeist of positivistic psychological thinking dominated actual practice and community psychology's myths have contributed to the failure to recognise the dominance of individualistic thinking, with little conceptualisation and operationalisation occurring beyond the individual level. This has led to poor implementation of the ecological approaches epitomised by contextualism.

A popular myth among academic psychologists that is reflected in the common assertion that Kurt Lewin had stated that "there is nothing so useful as a good theory" (e.g., Dalton, Elias & Wandersman, 2001, p. 5). What he was actually emphasising was a praxis model where theory and practice inform each other when he wrote:

[Close cooperation between theoretical and applied psychology] can be accomplished ... if the theorist does not look toward applied problems with highbrow aversion or the fear of social problems, and if the applied psychologist realizes that there is nothing so practical as a good theory. (Lewin, 1951, p. 169)

The misquotation of Lewin reifies theory and is a hallmark of mainstream psychological myths as it fits the dominant worldviews that allows academics to see themselves primarily as 'thinkers' and not 'doers' (Sarason, 1981; Wicker, 1989). Similar myths within community psychology have emerged over time and they too have consequences, as we will explore. The creation of myths serves to help collective identification with communities, both lay and academic. Myths, worldviews and community narratives are aspects of community that help in

defining 'deep abiding truths' about the nature of people (Davis, 2005), social identity and providing a sense of belonging (Rappaport, 2000). In academic disciplines, these aspects can be seen as aspects of both the existing and the emerging paradigms in scientific revolutions (Kuhn, 1970). They provide disciplines with a sense of identity and a sense of community. If the worldviews, narratives and myths are left as unexamined, axiomatic assumptions about the nature of the world (Sarason, 1981), they can create distortions in the way we conceptualise issues and solutions (Becker, 2005; O'Neil, 2005). Sarason criticised academic psychologists for not recognising the "fact that psychologists are, no less than those they studied and about whom they theorised, were and are products of a socialization process from which they absorbed a particular view of people and society" (p. x). We suggest that critical examination of community psychologists' socialisation is essential and that faulty theorising occurs when a awareness of our disciplinary myths is not present in conceptualising praxis.

The myth of the pre-eminence of theory over praxis in mainstream psychology is reflected in the misquoting of Lewin. While it reassures academic psychologists on their role and in their science, it has led to many problems such as the crisis of relevance (Elms, 1975), methodological