

Introduction

Why a second edition of this book? There are several reasons.

First, we remain excited about the growth of social work in the Asia Pacific. In this book you will hear stories about what is going on in many countries and regions of the Asia Pacific, and once you've read these stories we think you will be just as excited as we are.

Second, the Asia Pacific is a dynamic place. Nothing stays the same for very long, and the region remains the economic, political and social centre of gravity for the world. We want to give social work educators an opportunity to revise and update their contributions to the first edition, and to hear from new authors in places where social work education is emerging, and where social work issues are coming to the foreground.

Third, despite the astonishing diversity of the region in language, culture, philosophy, religion, economic systems and the way social work is taught and practiced, we believe that the social work environment is gradually becoming more cohesive. This emerging cohesiveness is a remarkable achievement, and is an acknowledgement of work of the regional social work educators' organisation in bringing together social work scholarship across the region into one vibrant and relevant organisation—the Asia Pacific Association of Social Work Educators (APASWE), which also provided seed funding for this book. Spurred on by the debates surrounding the revision of the definition of social work, social work educators from every country are having important and productive conversations with colleagues throughout the region. These conversations go to the heart of social work: What is social work, is it a profession, or discipline, or both? Are those differences meaningful? And how is social work practiced where you are? Does it matter there are differences? And what can we share from addressing these questions? As social work educators we must ask ourselves a further key question: How do we teach social work and

prepare students for practice in an increasingly globalised, dynamic and culturally diverse environment?

With this book we hope to provide a resource for social work educators and students throughout the region to have those conversations.

We acknowledge again that English is the colonial language of this region, and while it remains the default language of international social work conversation, it also imposes a kind of epistemological hegemony, forcing people to think and communicate with English words and concepts. In the Asia-Pacific region English is not always an easy fit. In this book, each chapter is translated into Chinese, Japanese and Korean (in that order). Where the first language of the author is not English, the first language has also been provided: in most cases this will include regional languages such as Vietnamese or Fijian. The abstract in the first language of the author is included immediately following the abstract in English; this means that where the authors are Korean, or Japanese, for instance, the abstract order is changed to reflect those languages first. In this way we hope not only to communicate with people who are less confident in reading English, but also to express ideas and concepts that fit better in another language.

We are tremendously grateful to our translators whose work truly was a labour of love and commitment, since they worked without financial compensation. Translators worked in pairs, cross-checking and back-translating each others' work from the abstracts supplied by the authors. In some cases the authors provided their own first-language abstract. Chinese translators were students from Massey University-Albany's (New Zealand) Master of Applied Social Work program: they are Mengyi CAI, Yidan LI, Haiying SONG, Zenjiang HU, Yun CHEN, and Rong YING. Japanese translations were done by Shoichi Isogai, MAppSW, a graduate of Massey University, and Kana Matsuo, a chapter contributor to this book. Korean translations were done by In Young HAN, one of the editors of this book. Working on these translations was a valuable experience for all of us, and we hope you will also find them useful, even if only as a reminder that

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the Asia-Pacific region is a vast and complex place, where sometimes English is a not so welcome visitor.

This book is divided into four sections. The authors in the first section write from an array of cultural voices. Jun Sun HONG and In Young HAN write about the increasingly diverse and complex social welfare and changing population environment of the Republic of Korea, and how social work educators are addressing that new diversity. Lorraine Muller and Susan Gair tell us their story of the cycle of learning about an Australian Indigenous people's perspective from their respective cultural heritage and the curricula and interactive learning that this engendered. Murli Desai provides an overview of the contemporary scene in the Asia Pacific with respect to gender, and the progress—or lack of it—countries have made toward gender equity in education and other social indices. Mark Henrickson critiques the way social work educators replicate heteronormativity and continue the marginalisation of gender and sexual minorities if they do not take a critical stance with their teaching. And Moses Ma'alo Faleolo considers the thorny question of how social work educators consider and teach cultural validity, particularly in respect of indigenous cultures, using his Samoan heritage. His Samoan cultural knowledge provides another dimension to working cross-culturally with knowledge and sensitivity and provides a powerful insight into his culture and its wisdom for all to share.

The second section hears from national voices. In this section Kana Matsuo describes for us the conversation that has taken place in Japan about the definition of social work. Japan is a particularly fitting place for this discussion, because there has been a great deal of conversation and debate about social work—and professional social work—in Japan for quite a long time. Richard Hugman has been actively supporting the development of social work and social work education in Vietnam for many years, and together with his colleagues Bùi Thị Xuân Mai and Nguyễn Thị Thái Lan (these names are in traditional Vietnamese order with surnames first) offer us an on-the-ground perspective on the emergence of social work in Vietnam, and the challenges that social work educators are facing in

that emerging and powerful nation. Joseph Leung writes about the explosion of social work in the economic power that is China, and the challenges that development has brought. And Keo Chanvunthy describes the sometimes overwhelming challenges and complexities of establishing a social work educational program in post-war Cambodia, a nation with so much to develop, yet so few resources to develop with. Bala Raju Nikku describes the development of social work in Nepal where the rapid growth of social work programs in both the State supported and privately funded Universities and Colleges has not been matched with professional oversight and the required resources. The demand for practitioners and educators in the country is also an unmet need that requires urgent attention.

The third section addresses curricula and practica concerns. Heather Fraser and Ksenija Napan both address their individual experiences of enhancing the classes they teach: Heather Fraser explores how in the classroom politics and emotions can both inspire and collide. Ksenija Napan takes a critical standpoint in relation to the politics of teaching and invites teachers and students to think critically about social work issues, curricula and values. Both show how this is possible in the classroom with classes of new students and provide valuable examples of how to teach critically and reflectively. Louise Coventry and Marty Grace describe how working cross-culturally with social work students and supervisors from different cultural backgrounds can be a rich and rewarding experience if attention to reciprocity and thoughtful engagement and exchange are put at the centre of this learning. Kate Saxton is an addition to this edition; she describes the challenges of educating students for a newly emerging social work discipline in a nation with a complex educational and political environment.

Finally, in the fourth section, policy voices, we hear from Carolyn Noble, who encourages us to critique western and post-colonial paradigms of social work from Asia Pacific perspectives; she tells us that the theories and models of social work are not universal, but rather local, and need to be understood and implemented in ways that take into account indigenous and local contexts. Deborah West

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and Dan Bashiera explore the practice-activism divide, outline an ethical discourse between social work and humanitarianism, and discuss how this discourse can provide a framework to consolidate and develop the knowledge base for evidence based practice in resource-poor, cross-cultural and remote environments. Nilan Yu explores the implications of labour migration for social work education in the Asia Pacific, and unpacks some of the related human rights and welfare issues at the local, regional and global levels. Finally, Linda Briskman discusses the issue of asylum seekers and their current treatment on arrival in Australia and the politics underlying their plight. She urges social workers to work with social movements to ensure that their human rights are fought for, secured and then protected as they try and make a new life for themselves and their families. If social work is concerned with social justice then this issue needs our full attention.

We finish this introduction as we did in the first edition by acknowledging the many indigenous communities, past and present, throughout the region for their care and custodianship of our lands and the abundance, diversity and resources of their domains, and for their willingness to share their knowledges with us in the development of this book. We are all the richer for this knowledge.

And, finally we are thankful to each other for the collegial collaboration and camaraderie we have shared in the production of this expanded volume. Again, enjoy!

Carolyn Noble, Sydney
Mark Henrickson, Auckland
In Young Han, Seoul
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