

The contributors

Gary Clapton is a senior lecturer in social work at the University of Edinburgh. He has practised as a social worker and practice teacher in statutory and non-statutory sectors in Edinburgh and London. His interests are fathers, adoption and how students best learn. He has published widely and often on all three themes. His current relevant area of study is the interface between field and classroom, especially the role that academics and tutors can play in developing closer links with practice.

Maura Daly is an experienced social worker of 20 years who has worked largely in the field of children and families - as a residential worker and as a statutory community-based worker. For the past 6 years she has worked with Circle, a Scottish voluntary organisation providing family support to some of the most marginalised families, both as a practice teacher and as a project manager. Maura is also a part-time tutor at University of Edinburgh, facilitating 'Learning for Practice' groups. Her main areas of interest are in relationship-based approaches to practice and practice learning.

Paul Johnson is an Associate Professor and also the BSW Coordinator for the School of Social Work at the University of Southern Maine. Prior to assuming his appointment at USM he was a member of the faculty at Lehman College, City University of New York. Before entering academia, he was employed by Jewish Child Care Association and also worked at United Cerebral Palsy of New York State. Not only has Dr. Johnson practised in the United States, but prior to emigrating to the United States in 1986, he worked in residential social work in the United Kingdom. Presently Paul is working with the Portland Public Schools multilingual department, concerning access to mental health services for Portland's ever expanding multicultural community. In the spring of 2007, this program was awarded a \$300,000 grant by the Robert Wood Johnson

Foundation. Paul has published widely in these fields and in June 2007 his book *Empowering Children through Art and Expression* was published by Jessica Kingsley.

Jane Maidment began her social work career in New Zealand where she worked in older persons health. For many years she was involved in facilitating education/support groups with people caring for a relative with dementia, as well as groups for people with a diagnosis of early dementia. Since shifting to Australia in 1999 most of her groupwork experience has been derived from classroom teaching. This article records 'an experiment' of using 'speed dating' in this context. Jane's main areas of research are social work practicum education, working with diversity and more latterly exploring the use of craft as a vehicle for promoting social connectedness.

Melanie Osborne began her social work career working with the Department of Education and Training as a School Social Worker in both Primary and Secondary School settings. For several years she was involved in facilitating various groups pertaining to numerous issues with children, young people as well as parents within the school communities. Currently, Melanie works for a local community service agency in a staff/volunteer support role and as part of her role facilitates various peer support groups. Additionally, as a private practitioner Melanie is involved in a local program for parentally bereaved children and young people whereby she conducts groupwork programmes.

Christina (Reineth) Prinsloo is senior lecturer at the Department of Social Work and Criminology at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. Her main areas of research and teaching are groupwork, family development and guidance and community engagement. She is the departmental coordinator for community engagement and service-learning modules and endeavours to combine teaching and research with community service. The theme of her doctoral thesis was 'marriage enrichment through growth groups'. Reineth has developed a manual for the South African Department of Social Development on marriage preparation and marriage enrichment in support of the governmental aim of family preservation.

Penny Singh is a senior lecturer at the Durban University of Technology in Durban, South Africa. Her research interests include oral assessment of student learning, second language teaching and learning, action research, and the use of groupwork particularly in multilingual and multicultural classrooms. Dr Singh has published articles on her use of action research in the diverse classrooms which characterise post-apartheid education in South Africa. Following her doctoral research into the incorporation of an oral assessment strategy in tertiary science in South Africa, she is now involved in a funded project researching the development of models of oral assessment for tertiary Science for the South African and international classrooms.