Editorial

Taking stock

In 2007 (vol 17.2) I undertook a review of the articles that had been published in Groupwork during the period 2000-2006 (Volumes 12-16). This review consisted of an analysis of the topics and the nature of the authorship of the 71 articles that appeared during those years. As this is my last editorial as Co-editor of Groupwork, I thought it appropriate to return to this exercise and to bring it up to date. There follows below, then, a series of Tables that consider the 44 articles that have appeared in the journal since the last time I took stock. Figures tell the provenance of the articles, provide details about the authors - whether they wrote singly, jointly or in larger numbers, their gender, job and profession - and supply a breakdown of the focus of the articles by theme and topic.

   The figures for the current review are set alongside those for 2000-06, and the two sets of figures are added together to give totals for the whole decade from 2000-09, covering eight volumes of the journal.

   We can each draw our own conclusions from these Tables. It is clear that the journal continues to have a strong international base, though there is a higher proportion of UK articles in recent years (59% compared to an earlier 49%) and the English-speaking world continues to dominate. Notably absent are articles from continental Europe (just one in this most recent period) and the developing nations of Africa and Asia. There continues to be no inter-country authorship: all multi-authored articles were written by authors in the same country (though one author in a multi-authored article had recently moved to another country). This is an interesting and perhaps surprising finding.

   The proportion of women authors has increased (from 57% to 67%) so that now two out of three authors are female; and there is a decrease in sole authorship, down from 59% to 50%. The journal's mission to increase authorship beyond academia is boosted by a fall in academic authors from 68% to 50% between the 2000-06 and the 2007-09 period.

Table 1
Articles in *Groupwork*

Origin	2000-06		2007-09		2000-09	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
UK	35	49	26	59	61	53
USA	20	28	9	20	29	25
Australia	4	6	4	9	8	7
China / HK	4	6	2	4	6	5
Canada	5	7	-		5	4
South Africa	-		2	4	2	2
Finland	1		-		1	
Greece			1		1	
Ireland	1		-		1	
Netherlands	1		-		1	
Total numbers:	71		44		115	
Sole authored	42	59	22	50	64	56
Co-authored	19	27	15	34	34	30
Three or more	10	14	7	16	17	15

However, we must be careful about reading too much into these figures. Given the other demands on people's time, there is a limit to how proactive the journal's editors and editorial board can be and it is difficult to know what part serendipity plays in these figures. Some developments, such as the doubling in the percentage of articles from clinical psychologists from 9% to 18%, are undoubtedly due to an active Editorial Board member in this field and it is our desire to continue to broaden the professional base both of the journal and the Board. The percentage of professions other than social work showed a small rise (from 42% to 48%) and we can feel pleased with the broad range of professional backgrounds amongst our authorship, justifying the journal's strapline, 'An Interdisciplinary Journal for Working with Groups'. A number of articles are co-authored across disciplines and the 'Others' category hides a musician, a journalist and an information scientist. However, only one of the articles included an author who was a service user - an improvement on the zero of the previous period, but still a long way to go.

Table 2
The profile of authors in *Groupwork* (2000-06)

Background	2000-06		2007-09		2000-09	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Female:	65	57	51	67	116	61
Male:	47	41	24	32	71	37
Not known:	3		1		4	
Academics:	78	68	38	50	116	61
Practitioners:	24	21	19	25	43	23
Managers:	8	7	6	8	14	7
Students:	2	6	8	8	4	
Other:		-	4		4	
Not known:	3		3		6	
Professions						
Social work:	67	58	41	52	108	56
Psychology:	10	9	14	18	24	12
Therapy,						
Consultancy:	9	8	4	5	13	7
Health, medicine:	8	7	5	6	13	7
Education, training:	5	4	4	5	9	5
Youth, community,						
Probation:	6	5	-		6	3
Occupational therapy:	-	3	4	3	2	
Other		-	4	5	4	2
Not known	10	9	3	4	13	7

1 of whom 16 appear more than once
2 of whom three appear more than once
3 total adds to 78 because two authors appear in two columns
only two authors' jobs were described specifically as 'Groupworker'

Table 3

Article topics in *Groupwork* (2000-09[1])

Group methods and approaches 39 (34%) [2]
art/craft/creative writing 6; new technology 6; social action 5; culture 2; recovery 2; critical incident debriefing 1; decision-making 1; discussion 1; esteem 1; evaluative method 1; experiential 1; lifegames 1; manualised curricula; music 1; mindfulness 1; narrative therapy 1; pre-group methods 1; problem-solving 1; psychodynamic 1; reminiscence 1; sculpts 1; speed dating 1; tasks 1

Mental health 18 (16%)

Education and training 16 (14%)

Children and families 14 (12%)
parenting 5; play 3; bereavement 2: ADHD 1

Adults 14 (12%)
older people 9; learning disability 3; carers 1; resiliency 1

Research and evaluation [3] 8 (7%)

Health 8 (7%)
palliative care 4; disability 1; promotion 2; stroke 1

Management/team 5 (4%)

Women's groups 5 (4%)
child abuse 1; domestic abuse 1; prostitution 1; refugees 1

Youth work / criminal justice 5 (4%)

Groupwork knowledge and theory 4 (3%)
developmental stages 3; knowledge base 1

Men's groups 4 (3%)
fathers 3

Conference reports 3 (3%)

Group leadership 3 (3%)

Group supervision 3 (3%)
staff support 1

Community 2 (2%)
community of practice 1

Multi-cultural 2 (2%)
Ethics 1

Involuntary group members 1

Self-help group 1

1. Editorials, debates and reviews have been excluded from this analysis.
2. Percentages total more than 100% because some articles are counted in more than one category
3. Only articles whose primary focus is research and evaluation are included in this total - many more articles had sections that covered evaluation of a particular group.

Table 4
Special issues

2.3 (1989)	Groupwork in Europe (Ken Heap)
3.2 (1990)	Child Sexual Abuse (Allan Brown and Andrew Kerslake
4.1 (1991)	Groupwork with Offenders (Allan Brown and Brian Caddick)
5.3 (1992)	Groupwork in Ireland (Robbie Gilligan and John Pinkerton)
6.2 (1993)	Bereavement and Loss (Lynne Muir)
7.2 (1994)	Groupwork with Women (Claire Wintram)
8.2 (1995)	Groupwork in Education (Harold Marchant)
9.2 (1996)	Groupwork and Research (Dave Ward)
11.3 (1999)	Groupwork Across the Disciplines (Oded Manor)
12.1 (2000)	Groupwork Across the Disciplines (Oded Manor)
13.3 (2003)	Groupwork in Mental Health (Oded Manor and Jerome Carson)
14.2 (2004)	Groupwork and Social Action (Dave Ward)
17.1 (2007)	In-patient Groupwork (Jonathan Radcliffe, Katja Hajek and Jerome Carson)
18.2 (2008)	Groupwork and Management (Dave Ward)
19.2 (2009)	Groupwork with Older People (Jonathan Parker)

Table 3, the digest of themes and topics of the published articles, is the most difficult to construct, not least because one article can touch on many of these categories. I have used the framework developed for the review in 2007, adding to it where necessary. As then, I have aimed to restrict most articles to one principal category. This means that some categories, such as 'Research and Evaluation' are seemingly under-recorded; although only 8 articles had this as their primary focus (all published in the earlier 2000-06 period), most articles include strong evaluative elements. 'Groupwork knowledge and theory' continues to be poorly represented as the specific and major focus of an article.

In 2007 I wrote

Groupwork offers a commonality for people who, in all other respects, are separated by borders of all kinds - national, professional, specialism, setting, etc. Those who have practised groupwork or researched, taught and written about it, know that it has a special potential to transform the rhetoric of anti-oppressive practice and empowerment into reality. Groupwork is an eternal force, so it is with some interest that when we turn to the title of the very first article in Volume 1, Issue 1, Groupwork with Hard to Reach Clients, the only terminology that would not now be contested is 'groupwork'!

This much is still true: groupwork has a continuity that becomes increasingly important as the settings in which it is practised change and unsettle. It is reassuring to review the articles published in Groupwork and to know that it continues to be a method and milieu for practice that has such a considerable capacity for support, challenge and liberation, and that people continue to wish to tell the story of groupwork through the pages of this journal.

In this issue

Cheryl Lee writes engagingly with five of her social work students, Jamie Atchison, Eliette del Carmen Montiel, Paul Flory, Jessica Stephanie Liza and John M. Valenzuela about a creative endeavour to start a 'groupwork club' affiliated to the Association for the Advancement of Social Work with Groups (AASWG), which is an international professional association. We learn about the club's purposes to nurture social groupwork, to engage in a collaborative groupwork experience, and to link members to an international social work organization that supports all aspects of groupwork. The article describes the various stages, considers mutual aid and evaluates the members' perceptions of the club, analysed for a one-year period. Indications are that club members experienced professional growth as a result of their membership. This is an excellent model for other educative settings that might wish to establish mutual support to advance groupwork.

Kate Evans' article, Rhythm 'n' Blues: Bringing poetry into groupwork, explores the question 'What has reading and writing poetry to offer groupwork?' There have been a number of articles in Groupwork over the years on the use of art, craft and play, but this is the first to explore the potential of poetry. Kate Evans considers the role poetry can play in developing communication skills and confidence, and encouraging empathy, self-awareness and mental well-being - all consonant with good groupwork practice. It is interesting that the early stages of poetry (composition) are private and this kind of early privacy is difficult to achieve in most other forms of groupwork. The article explores the benefits of reading, choosing and sharing poems in groups.

Angela Olsen tells the story of an inter-professional groupwork project facilitated by a social worker and a community nurse. The group's

purpose was to review the recruitment and interview processes to employ new support workers used by a Learning Disability Partnership Board. Angela describes the impact of the various services (health, education and social care) on the creation and development of the groupwork project. What proves to be limiting is not the nature of the intellectual disability but organisational constraints, such as staffing budgets and transport contracts. The article uses a powerful image in which 'guards' police the lives of people with intellectual disability. The article demonstrates how, with group support, people with intellectual disability can make important decisions that have a far-reaching impact on services.

Roni Berger's article is a conceptual one, focusing on the dynamics of groups in a highly stressful situation where the group has mixed ethnicity/race. This is an important topic, too little explored, but ignored at the group's peril. The article provides a critical review of the relevant stress and groupwork literature. In particular, we are invited to consider mixed race groups as microcosms of societal structure and power relationships. The article presents the challenges that stressful experiences pose to a group and this is illustrated with anecdotal examples from the author's own experience. The article concludes by considering the implications for practice and directions for future research.

And finally ...

As I noted at the beginning, this is my final editorial. Pamela Trevithick and I became Co-editors in 2004 and, together, we have guided the journal through six volumes. It has been a very enjoyable journey and I would like to thank Pam for her companionship and collegial spirit. Indeed, my thanks to all the members of our editorial board for the support and friendship that they have given to me and to the journal over those years. It has been a great group - challenging and rewarding. My thanks, too, to the 'backroom folk', the Journal's reviewers who maintain a consistently high standard, both in terms of the quality of the help and advice they provide to authors, but also in the quick turnaround they achieve, so that anxious authors do not wait too long for their feedback. Last, but by no means least, I would like to express

my appreciation of David Whiting, the publisher of Groupwork. Whiting and Birch is a very personal and responsive publisher and, in a world of increasing size and monopoly, a very welcome independent player. Groupwork has a good friend in David.

So, readers, please welcome Tim Kelly, Professor of Social Work at Dundee University, Scotland, who takes my place as Co-editor. I am happy and relieved to know that the journal is in good hands. I know it will thrive.

Mark Doel
Research Professor of Social Work
Sheffield Hallam University
Co-Editor