



## International Journal of Social Pedagogy

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### Editorial

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# Editorial

Dear Reader,

Much has happened at the *International Journal of Social Pedagogy* since our last issue was published. Prof. Pat Petrie, who co-edited the journal, retired last year and has been succeeded by her UCL Institute of Education colleague, Prof. Claire Cameron. We're extremely grateful to Pat for her wisdom and tireless support, which have shaped our journal's aspirations and profile from the outset. We're very pleased to have found in Claire a highly esteemed and deeply committed co-editor who has made a substantial contribution to social pedagogy in the UK and beyond. Claire is the first professor of social pedagogy in the UK and also manages the newly established Social Pedagogy Professional Association (SPPA), which was launched in February of this year. *IJSP* is delighted to be associated with SPPA's inaugural conference on 'Social Pedagogy as Education in its Broadest Sense', at which UCL Press and *IJSP* are sponsoring a prize for the best poster presentation on the conference theme.

The launch of SPPA forms an important milestone in the development of social pedagogy in the UK. As the professional home for social pedagogy in the UK, SPPA plays a crucial role in establishing and maintaining standards of qualifications and practice. You can find out more about SPPA's activities, vision and membership offers at <http://www.sppa-uk.org>. SPPA has emerged at a time when a suite of new learning programmes in social pedagogy are being developed:

- At vocational level, there are now Crossfields Institute Level 3 and Level 5 Diplomas in Social Pedagogy, which have been developed by ThemPra Social Pedagogy and Jacaranda Development with support

from SPPA. ThemPra are also leading on an Erasmus+ funded project with eight international partners to develop a Massive Open Online Course in social pedagogy across Europe, which will be piloted this autumn and be available for free from 2019.

- The University of Central Lancashire are offering a BA programme in Social Pedagogy, Advocacy and Participation, which is now in its second year.
- At Masters level, the University of Salford have just launched their new MA in Social Pedagogy, and UCLan will run an innovative MA programme in Social Pedagogical Leadership from autumn 2018.

We are also excited to have found a new publisher in UCL Press, the first UK university press to provide open access to all of its publications. Sharing our belief that high-quality writing – be it research, theoretical or practice contributions – can change the world for the better if it is available to everyone everywhere free of charge, we feel that UCL Press is an excellent choice for *IJSP*. Its team will lend our journal valuable expertise, support and further increase *IJSP*'s profile. We also hope that this will enable us to publish two annual issues as well as regular thematic special issues and are looking forward to collaborating with our colleagues at UCL Press.

In this issue, we bring together academic papers from Denmark, Norway, Canada and Scotland as well as a photo essay with the best photo submissions to our recent competition to design the new *IJSP* cover.

In 'Social Pedagogy: An Approach Without Fixed Recipes', Jan Rothuizen and Lotte Harbo insightfully detail why social pedagogy requires professionals to competently navigate practice. Outlining several tensions, such as those between being part of a community while maintaining one's sense of individuality, seeing one's practice just as work or as a calling, balancing knowledge with intuition and other tacit abilities, being professional and personal, working to de-institutionalise the people supported by one's institution, and navigating the spectrum between care and control, they argue that social pedagogical practice requires an inquisitive approach. Through various examples, the authors highlight why there cannot, and must not, be a fixed manual to social pedagogical practice. Rather than trivialising practice – and by extension the diversity of human experience – by expecting ready-made solutions, social pedagogues must demonstrate professional curiosity and seek dialogue with colleagues and citizens in dealing with these complexities. Terje Halvorsen's paper 'An Alternative Neo-Kohlbergian Approach in Social Pedagogy' offers critical insights into *Aggression Replacement Training* (ART), a programme supporting young people with severe

behavioural problems which has gained much international interest. As the author describes, ART draws substantially on Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of moral development in order to nurture conventional reasoning and increase pro-social behaviour. Critiquing Kohlberg's view of child development, which many sociology of childhood studies have found to underestimate children's capacities and moral agency, Halvorsen argues that ART could be further strengthened by introducing young people to normative ethics that could help them identify, clarify and resolve everyday moral dilemmas. This would complement the Kohlbergian view that moral development is predetermined by nature with a more pedagogical perspective that human development is also about nurturing growth.

'Risking Attachments in Teaching Child and Youth Care in Twenty-First-Century Settler Colonial, Environmental and Biotechnological Worlds' by Canadian-based Jennifer White, Scott Kouri and Veronica Pacini-Ketchabaw provides fascinating self-critical insights into how the authors aim to nurture political agency within child and youth care students. They argue that dominant discourses, material realities and socio-political relations do not just provide the context in which child and youth care takes place but directly shape it in profound ways that require professionals to be politically attuned. The authors explore three political and social realities relevant for child and youth care in Canada: settler colonialism, environmental degradation and biotechnological enhancement. They propose three ways in which the education of child and youth care workers can effectively address the resulting challenges: by cultivating a 'troubled consciousness' (Chapman, 2013) that recognises political and ethical complicity in oppression (one striking example the authors list is that up to 50 per cent of foster children are of Indigenous origin, although Indigenous people make up less than 4 per cent of the overall population); by decolonising praxis (for instance by integrating Indigenous knowledge, theories and practices more into the curriculum and enabling greater access to higher education for Indigenous students); and by crafting new subjectivities that take account of the fact that we cannot merely critique social inequality but must, in Gandhi's words, *be the change we wish to see*.

From a UK perspective, this article seems particularly relevant and insightful given the increasing interest among higher education institutions to develop social pedagogy modules or even degree programmes. White and her colleagues draw attention to the dimension in social pedagogy that is fundamental when educating future generations of social pedagogues: the warm and fuzzy feel-good character of relationship-centred practice must be complemented with socio-political

engagement to challenge and address the cold and stark social inequalities that still prevail.

Graham McPheat and Evelyn Vrouwenfelder, two researchers from Scotland, examine the potential of social pedagogy with regards to 'Developing and Maintaining Multi-Disciplinary Relationships in Residential Child Care'. Their article briefly summarises an independent evaluation of a nine-day social pedagogy short course with a multi-professional group of participants, which highlighted the benefits of social pedagogy in developing a common language, working across professional and organisational boundaries, and prioritising the health and well-being of children and young people as a prerequisite for other aspects of developments. This, the authors argue, shows the value of social pedagogy for residential child care workers in particular, who rely on strong and supportive multi-disciplinary relationships with other agencies involved in the lives of looked-after children. A social pedagogy framework could help care workers in managing role expectations, influence other agencies via a common language and framework, and create a clear focus on children and young people's developmental needs. This, in turn, could lead to a more nuanced and relationship-centred approach at a time where there is pressure to adopt approaches that are overly controlling and risk averse.

'A Picture Says More Than a Thousand Words' is a photo essay explaining the stories behind the top five submissions to our Facebook photo competition last year. Our aim was to find a cover image for the *IJSP's* new UCL Press look that would be powerful to express the most central aspects of social pedagogy.

The *International Journal of Social Pedagogy* is pleased to be a partner supporting the International Conference 'Social Pedagogy and Social Education: Bridging Traditions and Innovations', which will be held at Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Mexico, on 22–24 February 2018. Organised by the US-based Social Pedagogy Association in collaboration with the Social and Cultural Pedagogy Program at Arizona State University, the Social and Cultural Pedagogy Graduate Student Organization (SCP-GO), the Processos Educativos de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la BUAP, and the Red Mexicana de Pedagogía Social, this exciting conference will bring together many practitioners and academics in the field from across the globe. You can find out more in the conference announcement below or at <http://www.socialpedagogy.org>.

We hope you'll enjoy the range of papers.

Best wishes,  
Gabriel Eichsteller and Claire Cameron

## References

Chapman, C. (2013). Cultivating a troubled consciousness: Compulsory sound-mindedness and complicity in oppression. *Health, Culture and Society*, 5(1), 182–198.

## Advertisement

### **Social Pedagogy and Social Education: Bridging traditions and innovations**

Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Mexico  
February 22–24, 2018

Social Pedagogy Association  
*In collaboration with*  
Social and Cultural Pedagogy Program, School of Social  
Transformation  
Social and Cultural Pedagogy Graduate Student Organization  
Arizona State University

The Social Pedagogy Association, in collaboration with the Social and Cultural Pedagogy Program at Arizona State University, the Social and Cultural Pedagogy Graduate Student Organization (SCP-GO), the Processos Educativos de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras de la BUAP, and the Red Mexicana de Pedagogía Social, is happy to announce the International Conference “*Social Pedagogy and Social Education: Bridging traditions and innovations*,” which will be held at Universidad Autónoma de Puebla on February 22–24, 2018.

This conference aims at nurturing three bridges. First, it will bring together academics and practitioners to encourage fruitful dialogues between theory and practice. Second, it will acknowledge traditions in social pedagogy and social education while recognizing innovative work in these fields. Third, it will bring together different linguistic communities from around the world.

Find out more about the call for proposals and the conference programme at [www.socialpedagogy.org](http://www.socialpedagogy.org)