

Editorial

By John Winslade



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This is the second issue of the *Explorations* e-journal. We are gratified, and excited even, that the first issue has been read and responded to by many people. There have been nearly 6000 hits on the *Explorations* website. It has also come to our attention that people have made contact with some of the authors and shared responses to what they read. This is, of course, what we hoped would happen.

The second issue seeks to consolidate what was built in the first edition. It demonstrates the momentum that the journal is starting to build and shows there is a steady stream of material emerging from the innovative narrative practice that is emerging around the world. We are grateful for all who have submitted articles so far, including those which are still being worked on to prepare for publication.

In contrast to the first issue, this issue contains a series of articles from one country – New Zealand. We did not plan it this way. It has just happened that these came to be ready for publication at this time. In another way, however, this happenstance provides an opportunity to acknowledge the substantial development of narrative practice in one context. David Epston has made a considerable contribution to the development of narrative practice in New Zealand through his teaching and his enthusiasm for narrative ideas. There are many who have been infected by the spirit that he brings to his work. And there have been other reasons for the growth of narrative practice in New Zealand. One lay in the commitment made during the mid-1990s at the University of Waikato to develop a Masters degree in counselling based on narrative practice and the theoretical exploration of poststructuralist and social constructionist ideas. The University of Waikato is one of the participating partner organisations for this journal. Five of the contributors to this journal issue are in fact graduates of this program.

Each has taken narrative practice into innovative places. There have been other sites for narrative growth in New Zealand as well. I am thinking of the UNITEC program in social practice in Auckland, which has also made a home for the development of narrative ideas (and is also a participating partner organisation with this journal). In Wellington, the work done at The Family Centre has become known around the world and recently was publicly acknowledged with Charles Waldegrave being made a 'Companion of the Queen's Service Order'.

It would be an exaggeration to refer to narrative practice as 'mainstream' within New Zealand. But it does have a base of recognition that is strong and vibrant and well-populated. So it is not by chance alone, when I think about it, that these articles have emerged from New Zealand.

What has been more important than their country of origin, however, in putting these articles together in a single issue, has been the territory into which they have ventured. Each of the articles in this issue is an exhalation of professional fresh air. Wally McKenzie records some of the thinking he has been doing about 'critical incident debriefing' in the context of the Employment Assistance Programme counselling he has been doing. Kath and Ron Cronin-Lampe write about their development of a 'restorative practices' orientation within school counselling. Paul Flanagan spoke at the Dulwich Centre Publications' conference in Adelaide, 2008, about his work with children's sexuality and he expands on that work here. Mike Williams illustrates his innovative work in schools through the creation of 'undercover anti-bullying teams' with a telling case study account. These are all applications of narrative practice either into territories that have not been widely explored or in ways that will be new to many readers.

Sarah Penwarden has turned her Masters degree thesis into an article, which represents the first publication in this journal of a research article with implications for narrative practice. We are hoping for many more of such articles in future and would encourage those who are similarly engaged in writing theses or dissertations to consider this journal as an outlet for research that supports narrative practice to be read by many, rather than just by examiners.

There are also articles in this issue that connect with practice in other parts of the world. David Epston's letter to the inaugural 'Narrative Therapy as Contextual Practice in South Africa Conference' is an example. David addresses specifically the issue of translation of practice ideas from one context to another and encourages those making such translations to be wary of direct copying. This theme is picked up by Daria Kutuzova in a review article. Daria engaged a group of her colleagues in Russia to review an article from the United States on narrative practice with people who are homeless. She presents the outcomes of their discussions on a blog page about which aspects of the North American article would be relevant in a Russian context and which would not. I recommend this article for the method it uses – a method that could be replicated by many others in many other parts of the world and on many other topics.

Maureen Frayling also writes a review article. This time it is a review of a special edition of a journal aimed at nurses that explores the use of therapeutic letter-writing in nursing. The impetus for this special edition of the *Journal of Family Nursing* seems to come from a nursing training program in Canada. Again it is fascinating to see how ideas that grew out of narrative family therapy are being picked up in other professional fields. In her response to the articles of the special edition, Maureen examines the translation of these ideas into her own contexts of work.

Finally there is an article that I have written in collaboration with Mariel Avalos. It arose out of a particularly moving story that Mariel wrote as a school counselling student. As I read it, I believed that it cried out to be heard by others and that it could not help but provide

inspiration for many others to honour generative family narratives. To me it also illustrated Gilles Deleuze's concept of the 'line of flight' I have been exploring over recent months. Mariel's story originates in a Mexican context and moves into California.

There have been many people who have contributed to the development of these articles to the point where we can offer them into your hands. I wish to acknowledge and thank them all. As well as our authors, this issue has been made possible by the work of our team of editors and reviewers. The editorial team has consisted of Sekneh Beckett, David Pare, Kathie Crocket, Daria Kutuzova, David Denborough and John Winslade. Cheryl White and the Dulwich Centre are the publishers and Cheryl has provided publishing oversight. Valuable contributions have been made to the development of material to publishable standard by our reviewers. In this edition, the following people have reviewed article drafts: Stephen Madigan, Angel Yuen, Gerald Monk, Wendy Drewery, Zoy Kazan, David Newman, Bill Madsen, Walter Bera, Katy Batha, Adriana Glusman, Richard Pringle, and Judith Graham. Our sincere thanks for the thoughtful review work that you have done.

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