

The Australian Community Psychologist

The Official Journal of the Australian Psychological Society
College of Community Psychologists



APS

Australian
Psychological
Society

Volume 27 No. 1
July 2015

Office Bearers of the APS College Of Community Psychologists

Chairperson	Jenny Sharples Victoria
Deputy Chair	Helen Killmier Victoria
Secretary	Dawn Darlaston-Jones Western Australia
Treasurer and Web Editor	Julie Morsillo Victoria
Programme Accreditation	Grace Pretty Queensland
Professional Development	Meg Smith New South Wales
Membership Secretary	Pam Loughnan Victoria
State Chairs	Vacant Western Australia
	Meg Smith New South Wales
	Julie Dean Queensland
	Renzo Vittorino Victoria
ACP Editors	Anne M Sibbel Sharon McCarthy
ACP Associate Editors	Meg Smith Tahereh Ziaian Shiloh Groot Charlotte Brownlow Harriet Radermacher
AP Omnibus Journal Editorial Board Member	Lauren Breen Western Australia

Published by
The College of Community Psychologists of the Australian Psychological Society Ltd

ISSN 1835-7393

Disclaimer: "The publication of an advertisement by ACP is not an endorsement of the Advertiser nor of the products and services advertised. Only those professional development activities carrying the APS logo and an appropriate endorsement statement can be considered to be specifically approved by the APS. Advertisers may not incorporate in a subsequent advertisement or promotional piece the fact that a product or service has been advertised in any publication of the society. The publications of the College are published for and on behalf of the membership to advance psychology as a science and as a profession. The College reserves the right to unilaterally cancel or reject advertising which is not deemed to be in keeping with its scientific and professional aims".

Contents

Contents	3
General Information	4
Editorial: Anne M Sibbel and Sharon McCarthy	5
Articles	
<i>Bystander antiracism on behalf of Muslim Australians: The role of ethnocentrism and conformity</i> Laura E. McWhae, Yin Paradies and Anne Pedersen	6
<i>Hosting asylum seekers and attitudes toward cultural diversity in Australia</i> Nigar G. Khawaja and Jane Wotherspoon	21
<i>(De)Constructing paradigms: Creating a psychology curriculum for conscientisation education</i> Dawn Darlaston-Jones	38
Special Section	
<i>Introduction: Sasha Alysha Stumpers</i> David J. Mander	49
<i>The social construction of ageing: Australian and Welsh perspectives</i> Sasha A Stumpers, Lynne Cohen, Julie Ann Pooley and & David J Mander	53
Book Review	
<i>Collaborative projects: An interdisciplinary study</i> Editor: Andy Blunden Reviewer: Caroline Macdonald	73
Call for papers: ACP Special Issue Gender and Violence Vol 28(1)	76
Preparation, Submission and Publication of Manuscripts	77

General Information

The Australian Community Psychologist is the Official Journal of the College of Community Psychologists of the Australian Psychological Society

Editors

Anne M Sibbel, *Western Australia*

Sharon McCarthy, *The University of Notre Dame, Western Australia*

Editorial Board

Meg Smith, *University of Western Sydney, New South Wales*

Tahereh Ziaian, *University of South Australia, South Australia*

Shiloh Groot, *University of Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand*

Charlotte Brownlow, *University of Southern Queensland, Queensland*

Harriet Radermacher, *Victoria*

ADVERTISING RATES

Full page \$100

1/2 page \$50

1/4 page \$25

All payments to be made out to:

APS College of Community Psychologists

The Australian Psychological Society

PO Box 38

Flinders Lane Post Office

Melbourne Vic 8009

Current and past issues of ACP can be accessed through Australia's web archive system PANDORA (<http://pandora.nla.gov.au/tep/84823>)

PANDORA is an initiative of the Australian National Library in conjunction with nine other collections. The name is an acronym derived from its mission: Preserving and Accessing Networked Documentary Resources of Australia.

Editorial

Anne M Sibbel
Sharon McCarthy

The Editorial Team of *The Australian Community Psychologist* welcomes you to our first issue for 2015.

In this issue we have 3 general papers, together with a special section presenting the work of Dr Sasha Stumpers, who sadly passed away in September 2012.

The first general paper by Laura E. McWhae, Yin Paradies and Anne Pedersen, examines the role of ethnocentrism and conformity, which have long been associated with racism, in willingness to engage in bystander antiprejudice on behalf Muslim Australians. In the second paper Niger Khawaja and Jane Wotherspoon explore the impact attitudes towards cultural diversity and demographic factors had upon people's willingness to support asylum seekers in and attitudes towards cultural diversity in Australia. In the final paper in the general section Dawn Darlaston-Jones proposes a curriculum framework for teaching psychology that is embedded in critical theory and critical pedagogy and that is more relevant and responsive to the creation of a more inclusive society.

David Mander provides a heart felt introduction to the special section on Dr Sasha Stumpers, focussing on her research and work interests and her contribution to Community Psychology. The following paper by Sasha Stumpers, Lynne Cohen, Julie Ann Pooley and David Mander presents the findings from Sasha's PhD research project that explored the different ways in which older adults make meaning of their experiences of ageing, and the implications of the findings for ageing policy and how such policy is effectively translated into practice.

Finally, Carol Macdonald provides a comprehensive review of Andy Blunden's edited book, *Collaborative Projects: An Interdisciplinary Study*.

This issue includes a call for papers for a special issue planned for 2016 on Violence and Gender. We are pleased to have Heather Gridley as guest editor for the issue.

Address for correspondence
acp.editor@gmail.com

Bystander antiprejudice on behalf of Muslim Australians: The role of ethnocentrism and conformity

Laura E. McWhae
Murdoch University
Yin Paradies
Deakin University
Anne Pedersen
Murdoch University

Racism and discrimination against Muslim minorities is becoming increasingly prevalent in Australia and much of the Western world. The present study investigated whether ethnocentrism and conformity, which have long been associated with racism, are also significant correlates of willingness to engage in bystander antiracism on behalf of Muslim Australians. Participants were 154 non-Muslim Australians (50.6% female), aged between 18-85 years ($M = 48$ years). Participants were recruited from around Australia to complete an anonymous online survey via Qualtrics. Measures were a bystander question (regarding a hypothetical scenario), social conformity and ethnocentrism scales, and demographic information (age; education; gender; political preference). Correlations indicated that participants high in ethnocentrism and conformity and low in formal education were significantly less likely to take bystander action. However, a hierarchical regression equation revealed ethnocentrism to be the only significant predictor of bystander antiracism with 18% of the variance explained overall. Our study adds to the current literature by exploring, for the first time, the combined role of ethnocentrism and conformity in willingness to engage in bystander antiracism. This, we hope, can assist antiracism practitioners with their interventions; encouraging bystander action is one way of creating a more equitable Australia.

Racism is a problem that is associated with poorer social, health, and economic outcomes for targets and societies more generally (Paradies, 2006). Racism has been defined as any belief, attitude, emotion, or action that maintains or exacerbates inequalities between racial, ethnic, or religious groups in society (Walton, Priest, & Paradies, 2013). Racism can have detrimental effects at individual, institutional and cultural levels (Jones, 1997). For example, at the individual level, racism can result in poorer mental and physical health outcomes (Jankowski, Sandage, & Hill, 2013). At the community level, racism can cause divisions within society; further contributing to an 'us and them' mentality. These sorts of divisions threaten community cohesion and harmony and instead promote violence, aggression and hostility between groups (Salleh-hoddin & Pedersen, 2012). Particularly since 9/11, Muslim people have increasingly been the targets of discrimination in Australia and other Western nations (Poynting & Mason, 2006).

There is debate over whether negativity towards Muslim Australians can be considered a form of racism, with some preferring terms such as 'Islamophobia' or 'anti-Islam' (Poynting & Mason, 2007). However, some researchers argue that much of anti-Muslim discrimination goes beyond a criticism of the religion and instead involves a racialisation process that involves cultural, linguistic, and racial elements (Grosfoguel, 2012; Poynting & Mason, 2007). It is argued that this racialisation process makes the distinction between racism and anti-Islamic racism not practical or necessary when applied to everyday life (Gulson & Webb, 2013; Moosavi, 2014; Sayyid, 2011). For the purposes of our study, we use the term racism.

Racism against Muslim people can lead to a sense of disenfranchisement and separation from the mainstream community, increased rates of psychopathology and poorer health outcomes (Judd & Vandenberg, 2014). At the institutional level, Muslims can experience discrimination when trying to find work due to mistrust of their work ethic and ability to fit in

based on stereotypes about their group (Lovat et al., 2013; Syed & Pio, 2009). Thus racism against Muslim people is a significant problem in Australia, not only for the individuals targeted, but for increasing tensions in the community.

As such, racism is an important social issue that needs to be addressed. Preliminary research into examining the effectiveness of antiracism initiatives and ways we can reduce racism in the community has been promising (eg. Pedersen, Walker, & Wise, 2005).

However, one potentially useful way of reducing racism that has received limited research attention is bystander antiracism.

Bystander Antiracism

A bystander is a witness to a situation of interest but is not directly involved as target or perpetrator (Darley & Latane, 1968; Nelson, Dunn, & Paradies, 2011). Nelson et al. (2011) defined bystander antiracism as “action taken by a person or persons (not directly involved as a target or perpetrator) to speak out about or seek to engage others in responding (either directly or indirectly, immediately or at a later time) against interpersonal or systematic racism” (p.265). Early studies examining bystander action or inaction in emergency situations (eg. Darley & Latane, 1968) spurred widespread research on why people choose to act or not act in crisis circumstances. However, less research has been done on what factors influence people to act in non-emergency situations that are still of social importance. These sorts of events are referred to as ‘everyday racism’ and relate to everyday, normalised racist talk that is recurrent and “infused into familiar practices, such as jokes and everyday exclusions” (Essed, 1991, p. 3). Bystanders are well positioned to contest everyday forms of racism which are encountered frequently by minority groups (Beagan, 2003).

There are a number of factors influencing whether bystanders take action against everyday racist scenarios. Some of these include empathetic concern (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Pedersen & Thomas, 2013), perceived offensiveness of the comment (Dickter & Newton, 2013), collective guilt (Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Pedersen & Thomas, 2013), fear (Neto & Pedersen,

2013), and powerlessness (Ashbaugh & Radomsky, 2009). Some studies find that socio-demographics also relate to bystander action. When there are relationships, people who engage in bystander antiprejudice are more likely to be older (Amato, 1985; Neto & Pedersen, 2013), female (Neto & Pedersen, 2013; Redmond, Pedersen, & Paradies, 2014), and have more formal education (Pedersen & Hartley, 2012; Russell, Pennay, Webster, & Paradies, 2013).

As Nelson et al. (2011) argue, even though it operates at individual levels, encouraging bystander action can have wider social benefits in that it works to destabilise the normalised instances of racism that marginalised people experience in everyday settings. This can prompt people to question the validity of these taken-for-granted instances of racism and perhaps propel witnesses and perpetrators to reduce their support and perpetuation of everyday racism in the community.

Bystander antiracism also shifts the burden of antiracism from targets to witnesses (Nelson et al., 2011). For example, a US study compared perpetrator reactions to confrontations about racial or gender bias from a confederate from the target group in question (Black people or women) and a confederate from a non-target group (White people and men). It was found that prejudiced individuals felt more guilt at their behaviour when questioned by a member of the non-target group than members of the target group (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). When confronted by a non-target group member, the confrontation was more likely to be taken seriously by the perpetrator and decreased their likelihood of acting on racial or gender stereotypes in a later experiment compared to confrontations by target group members (Czopp, Monteith, & Mark, 2006; Czopp & Monteith, 2003). Some of these findings may be because when a white person was confronted by a fellow white person, their stereotypical responses became a violation of in-group antiracist norms, whilst when confronted by an out-group member, the person may not feel they are violating their in-group norms by perpetuating stereotypes

(Jasinskaja-Lahti, Mähönen, & Liebkind, 2011).

This is relevant to research on consensus effects, which has found that people's attitudes can change in relation to what they think others believe. By referring to the beliefs of those similar to their own, people reinforce the self-perceived correctness of their viewpoint (Watt & Larkin, 2010). Pedersen, Griffiths and Watt (2008) found a strong positive relationship between perceived consensus and racism towards Aboriginal Australians and asylum seekers. Changing one's views based on consensus beliefs can be considered a type of conformity. Individuals differ in their propensity to conform to other people's opinions. However, no research has been done that has examined trait social conformity as a predictor of bystander antiracism.

Conformity

Conformity is one of the most well-known phenomena in the field of psychology. Foundational experiments by Milgram (1963), Asch (1951, 1955) and others show that pressure to conform to both authority and majority opinion has a powerful influence on people's behaviour. As defined by Cialdini and Goldstein (2004), conformity refers to the phenomenon of when an individual changes their behaviour in order to be in line with the responses of others.

Allport (1954) was the first to propose that conformity was linked with prejudice claiming that it made up at least 50% of what predicted prejudice. Subsequent research found that prejudice is highly related to prevailing social norms in that location (Crandall & Stangor, 2008). In another example, Sechrist and Young (2011) found that individual prejudice levels can be manipulated by providing consensus information. If a person thinks that most of their peers are prejudiced against an out-group, they too are likely to become more prejudiced. This effect also works in reverse; if they think that most of their peers are less prejudiced than them, they will subsequently report less prejudice. In the Swiss context, Falomir-Pichastor, Chatard, Selimbegovic, Konan, and Mugny (2013) found that there

was conformity to anti-discrimination norms for individuals with a low sense of in-group threat from foreigners. Therefore, the effect of social conformity on prejudice is related to the degree that prejudice is culturally normative in the sample's population.

This was supported by the finding of Duckitt (2001) that conformity was negatively related to prejudice towards out-groups in a New Zealand sample where being non-prejudiced was normative. However, Duckitt, Wagner, du Plessis, and Birum (2002) similarly found that in an American undergraduate sample, conformity indirectly predicted outgroup prejudice through a moderate positive relationship with right-wing authoritarianism. This was despite conformity having a negative relationship with outgroup prejudice directly (Duckitt et al., 2002).

Explicit racism is not normatively acceptable in Australian society (Dunn & Nelson, 2011). Thus, theoretically, people high in conformity may be more likely to engage in bystander antiracism if one is looking at a 'national' norm. However, some bystander research suggests that this relationship works in the other direction. People who have a higher tendency to conform socially may be less likely to want to do something that would make them stand out from the crowd or create conflict, as engaging in bystander antiracism would entail. As Cialdini and Goldstein (2004) argue, the goal of affiliation or maintaining social relations is a key motivator of conforming behaviour. This is supported by Stewart, Pedersen and Paradies (2014) finding that a desire to preserve interpersonal relationships was a significant obstacle to willingness to engage in bystander antiracism in a high risk scenario. Therefore, conformity is likely to be a significant negative predictor of bystander antiracism. This potential relationship of conformity with bystander antiracism has not been explored previously.

Ethnocentrism

Another potentially important personality variable which may be predictive of antiracism is ethnocentrism. Personality has long been considered an important component of prejudice (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950; Allport, 1954). For example, Adorno et al. (1950) proposed the idea

of the authoritarian personality, based on the finding that people who were prejudiced against one group often were prejudiced against other groups as well. As stated by Allport (1954) "One of the facts of which we are most certain is that people who reject one out-group will tend to reject other out-groups" (p. 68). This idea of generalised prejudice or racism is one of the founding components of the concept of ethnocentrism.

The terms 'ethnocentric' and 'ethnocentrism' have a long history in social psychology with the first use of the word 'ethnocentric' being used by McGee (1900). The exact meaning of ethnocentrism has varied over the years, with some researchers considering ethnocentrism to be the combination of in-group positivity and out-group negativity (e.g., Adorno et al., 1950). However, in a recent reconceptualisation and refinement of the concept, Bizumic, Duckitt, Popadic, Dru, and Krauss (2009) defined ethnocentrism as ethnic group self-centredness and argued that it is conceptually distinct from mere out-group negativity and in-group positivity. This is the definition that is used for this paper.

What distinguishes ethnocentrism from just general out-group negativity is that it involves devotion to the in-group (i.e., nationalism) relative to out-groups (Bizumic & Duckitt, 2012). This is an important distinction, as someone could be negative to out-groups but also be negative to their in-group as well. This is supported by the finding that although ethnocentrism has a moderate positive relationship with outgroup negativity, the relationship is not strong enough to suggest that they are the same concept (Bizumic et al., 2009). Similarly, someone could feel very positive towards their in-group but also be positive about out-groups as well. Rather, ethnocentrism is the sense that one's ethnic group is more important (and better) than other ethnic groups. This is consistent with Tajfel and Turner's (1979) Social Identity Theory, which posits that people are motivated to achieve positive differentiation of their groups through emphasising their group's superiority over other groups.

Bizumic et al. (2009; 2012) proposed that ethnocentrism has a hierarchical structure that consists of two major subtypes: intergroup and intragroup ethnocentrism. The intergroup ethnocentrism subscale measures the degree to which the in-group is more important than out-groups and includes four lower order components. These are preference (for one's own ethnic group over others), superiority (belief that one's own ethnic group is better than others), purity (support for maintaining the 'purity' of one's ethnic group), and exploitativeness (support for gain of one's own ethnic group at the expense of other ethnic groups) (Bizumic et al., 2009; Bizumic & Duckitt, 2012). The intragroup ethnocentrism scale involves the idea that the in-group as a whole is more important than separate individual group members and is made up of devotion (strong attachment and loyalty to one's ethnic group) and group cohesion (prioritisation of group harmony over individual rights). Bizumic et al. (2009; 2012) found support for their hierarchical model of ethnocentrism in a wide variety of countries including New Zealand, USA, Serbia and France. However, in all cases participants were undergraduate students. To our knowledge, no study has examined the factor structure of the Bizumic et al.'s (2009) full ethnocentrism scale in a community sample or an Australian context. Consequently, the present study hopes to contribute to the literature through examining whether the Bizumic ethnocentrism scale demonstrates the same factor structure as previous research in a sample from the general Australian population.

We are aware of only one study on bystander antiracism that has examined ethnocentrism. Abbott and Cameron (2014) found that, among 855 British adolescents aged 11–13 years, intergroup contact fostered bystander behavioural intentions by reducing ethnocentrism (i.e. enhancing openness to other groups).

The Present Study

The overall objective of the present study was to investigate attitudes towards Muslim Australians; a group which has been the target of much prejudice and discrimination (Poynting & Mason, 2006). As noted by

Prilleltensky and Gonick (1996), taking action with respect to oppressed groups is imperative from both a moral as well as a pragmatic view.

The first aim of the present study was to test Bizumic et al.'s (2009) ethnocentrism scale in the general Australian population. Although the six-factor structure of this scale has been tested internationally (Bizumic et al., 2009; Bizumic & Duckitt, 2012), all of the samples have been undergraduate students, none of whom resided in Australia. However, we tentatively predict that the same factor function will be found with our Australian data (Prediction 1).

The second and most important aim was to explore whether individual differences in ethnocentrism and conformity are related to intention to stand up against everyday racism against Muslim people. No previous studies have explored these possible relationships in conjunction with each other. As intergroup ethnocentrism has a significant positive relationship with prejudice (Bizumic et al., 2009), it is hypothesised that intergroup ethnocentrism will have a significant negative relationship with bystander antiracism. Furthermore, as the goal of maintaining social relations has been found to be an obstacle to engaging in bystander antiracism (Stewart et al., 2014), and as this is a major motivator of conforming behaviour (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004), it is predicted that conformity will have a significant negative relationship with action intention (Prediction 2).

A final aim was to establish which variable (conformity or ethnocentrism) predicts bystander action by way of a multiple regression. As there is no research to guide us in this regard, we make no prediction.

The independent variables included in the present study were intergroup ethnocentrism (preference, superiority, exploitativeness and purity) and intragroup ethnocentrism (group cohesion and devotion), conformity, age, gender, political preference, and education level. The outcome variable is likelihood of saying something in response to a prejudiced comment (bystander action intention).

Method

Participants

154 (50.6% female) eligible participants were randomly selected from the general Australian population using the Qualtrics Australian participant database (Qualtrics, 2014). Emails were randomly sent out to all eligible individuals until the required number of participants responded. A quota was set to ensure an approximately even number of male and female participants were selected. There were no other quotas set. Participants were aged between 18 and 85 years ($M = 48.26$, $SD = 15.78$). All participants had to be over 18 and non-Muslim. Participants were from a range of education backgrounds. 13.6% of the sample did not finish secondary school, 20.8% had completed year 12, 37.7% had completed or were completing vocational training or an undergraduate diploma, whilst 27.9% had completed or were completing a Bachelor degree or higher. The vast majority of participants reported being Caucasian (79.2%), whilst a smaller minority reported being Asian (7.1%), Indian (4.5%) or other (8.4%). 51.3% of participants were Christian, 35.7% had no religion, 3.9% were Buddhist, 3.2% Hindu, and 5.8% had other religions. This is roughly representative of the general Australian population (ABS, 2011). Participants were sampled relatively evenly across the political spectrum with 26% of the sample stating they were left-wing, 21.4% right wing, 33.8% were centre and 18.8% didn't care. Qualtrics was paid \$1000 for recruiting participants.

Materials

Demographics. Participants were asked six questions to determine their age in years, gender (1 = Male, 2 = Female), political preference (1 = strongly left, 5 = strongly right, 6 = don't care), education level (1 = did not complete secondary school, 6 = higher degree, e.g., Masters, PhD), ethnic/cultural background (e.g., Middle Eastern) and religious views (e.g., Christian).

Conformity. Conformity was measured using Duckitt et al.'s (2002) Social Conformity Scale. These authors found that reliability was satisfactory ($\alpha = .77$). The social conformity scale consists of 14 personality trait adjectives related to conformity (7 reverse-scored). Participants were asked to rate on a sliding scale

from 0-100 the degree to which each personality trait adjective (e.g., conforming, unorthodox) was characteristic of their personality or behaviour.

Ethnocentrism. Ethnocentrism was measured using Bizumic et al.'s (2009) ethnocentrism scale. The ethnocentrism scale consists of six subscales (alpha levels in brackets): preference ($\alpha = .73$), superiority ($\alpha = .81$), purity ($\alpha = .89$), exploitativeness ($\alpha = .84$), group cohesion ($\alpha = .79$), and devotion ($\alpha = .85$) (Bizumic et al., 2009). The scale contains 58 items and participants were asked to rate how much they agree with the items on a 7-point Likert scale (1- Strongly Disagree to 7- Strongly Agree). The subscales have been found to have good reliability across different countries, with the alpha levels reported above from a New Zealand sample. The overall scale has a high alpha level ($\alpha = .91$), but had low mean inter-item correlation ($\alpha = .16$). This low inter-item correlation was attributed to the multi-dimensional nature of the ethnocentrism construct.

Hypothetical Scenario. One hypothetical scenario of racism towards Muslim people was adapted from Redmond, Pedersen and Paradies (2014). The scenario depicted a scene in which an acquaintance states that he did not hire a Muslim at a workplace because there was no way he was "giving a job to one of those fanatics" (see Appendix I for full scenario).

Agreement/Disagreement with the perpetrator. Participants were asked to select whether they were more supportive of their acquaintance's point of view or an alternative view. This question was asked in order to split participants into groups based on whether they agreed or disagreed with the racist comment. They then rated the strength of their agreement or disagreement on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from (1- Strongly agree to 7- Strongly Disagree). Strength of disagreement was used to double-check that participants had selected the appropriate box of whether they agreed or disagreed.

Intention to engage in bystander antiracism. In order to determine whether bystander action intention, participants were asked to rate on a 7 point Likert scale "How likely you are to speak up in this scenario,

either in support of your acquaintance's view or an alternative view?" (1- Extremely unlikely to 7= extremely likely).

Design

The research design had three phases. The first stage was to undertake a factor analysis of the six ethnocentrism scales (group cohesion, devotion, exploitativeness, preference, superiority, purity) to determine whether they factor into separate factors. The second stage produced a correlation matrix with all the relevant variables. The third stage included the predictor variables (ethnocentrism and conformity) in a regression with action intention as the outcome variable which also controlled for socio-demographic information (i.e., age, political views, gender, and education level). The accepted minimum subject to independent variable ratio of 5:1 was used to estimate sample size; thus, our sample is sufficient.

Procedure

After both approval from the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee (using embedded consent) and piloting of the questionnaire, participants throughout Australia were contacted via email by the Qualtrics administrator in July 2014. The email included an outline of the study as contained in the information blurb and a hyperlink to the survey. Upon clicking the link, participants were first shown the information blurb which provided study and ethics information. They were then asked if they would like to proceed with the survey. Procedure with the survey was taken as consent. The order of the questions asked were: Socio-demographics, conformity, ethnocentrism, and then the scenario and bystander antiracism questions.

Results

Testing Bizumic et al.'s (2009) Ethnocentrism Scale (Aim 1)

SPSS20 was used in all of the following analyses. The preference, superiority, purity, exploitativeness and devotion scales all had excellent reliabilities and had similar standard deviations. The group cohesion scale showed good reliability; however, it had a more restricted standard deviation than the other

five scales.

Factor analysis. An exploratory factor analysis using principal axis factoring was conducted to determine the underlying factor structure of the six ethnocentrism subscales. A direct oblimin rotation was used as theoretically all scales are expected to be correlated. The assumptions were not significantly violated, with one exception; the group cohesion subscale had a low diagonal value of .31 on the anti-image matrices. Group cohesion also had a low initial communality of .13. As a result, group cohesion was removed and the analysis re-run with the five remaining subscales using principal axis factoring and a direct oblimin rotation.

The factor analysis was repeated with the five remaining subscales (after removing group cohesion). One factor was extracted with an eigenvalue of 3.56 which explained 71.2% of the variance. An examination of the scree plot clearly and unambiguously showed that only one factor should be extracted. All subscales had initial communalities above .3, and factor loadings of .66 or greater. These results indicate that a single factor of ethnocentrism underlies variance in each of the subscales. Consequently, the mean score of participants for all items in five (preference, superiority, exploitativeness, purity and devotion) of the six original subscales scales was computed and taken as giving an indication of overall ethnocentrism score (re-labelled from this point on as 'FiveScale Ethnocentrism').

Relationship between bystander action intention and independent variables (Aim 2)

Participants were grouped according to whether they supported the perpetrator's view or an alternative view. Initially, 26 participants were identified as supporting the perpetrator's point of view (racist group) and 128 supported an alternative view (non-racist group). Seven cases were omitted as their answers to the grouping variable and the manipulation check (strength of agreement with the perpetrator) conflicted. This left 23 participants and 124 participants in the racist and non-racist group respectively. Those who selected 'don't care' for political preference ($n = 28$) and those who selected 'centre' ($n = 52$) were recoded as being "neither left/right wing" as we were

primarily interested in participants who had a left/right political orientation. Only the non-racist group was selected for the following analyses. No violations were serious enough to transform the data. However, all analyses were bootstrapped to minimise the effect of minor violations on the data.

Descriptives and correlations. The ethnocentrism scale had excellent reliability ($\alpha = .96$). The conformity scale had satisfactory reliability ($\alpha = .77$). Table 1 shows the means, standard deviations, and correlations of bystander action, ethnocentrism, conformity and the four socio-demographic variables (i.e., age, political preference, and education). Bias-corrected confidence intervals are reported in brackets. Three outliers were deleted and the residuals recalculated.

As Table 1 shows, there was a significant small to moderate negative correlations between FiveScale ethnocentrism score and action intention (Prediction 1). This means that those higher in ethnocentrism were less likely to act than those low in ethnocentrism. There was also a small negative correlation between conformity and action intention; however, as the BCa upper limit confidence interval was close to zero at $-.01$, this relationship should be interpreted with caution. Of the socio-demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, education level, or political preference), only education was a significant correlate of action intention.

Regression. A standard multiple regression analysis was conducted with the variables that were significantly correlated with action intention after the outliers were removed. The only significant socio-demographic variable, education, was entered at step 1. The personality variables of ethnocentrism and conformity were entered at step 2. At step 1, education accounted for a significant 4% of the variance in action intention, $F(1, 119) = 4.48, p = .04$. At step 2, the addition of ethnocentrism and conformity to the model significantly predicted an additional 14% of the variance in action intention, bringing the total shared variance to 18%, $F(3, 117) = 8.56, p < .001$. However, at step 2, ethnocentrism was the only unique

significant predictor of action intention, predicting 11.8% of the total unique variance, $t(116) = -4.11, p < .001$. With education only predicting a non-significant 1.08% of unique variance, $t(116) = 1.24, p = .22$, and conformity only a non-significant 1% of unique variance, $t(116) = -1.2, p = .23$, in action intention respectively. The multiple regression equation is shown in Table 2.

Discussion

The present study has two main aims. The first was to see whether the ethnocentrism scale measured two different ethnocentrism factors (inter-group and intra-group), it did not. The second aim was to investigate what correlated with bystander action in support of Muslim Australians. We found that bystander action was negatively correlated with both conformity and ethnocentrism; however, a hierarchical regression analysis indicated the only significant unique predictor was ethnocentrism. We turn first to the factoring of the ethnocentrism items.

Bizumic et al.'s (2009) Ethnocentrism Factor Structure (Prediction 1)

The first aim was to test the factor structure of Bizumic et al.'s (2009) ethnocentrism scale in an Australian community sample. An exploratory factor analysis revealed that devotion was measuring the same underlying factor as intergroup ethnocentrism; it did not fit with group cohesion in line with previous research. Therefore, an ethnocentrism scale was created using five of the six subscales (preference, superiority, purity, exploitativeness and devotion) with group cohesion excluded due to its low communality with the other scales. These results are surprising as the factor structure supporting the grouping of devotion and group cohesion together into an intragroup ethnocentrism subscale has been supported through studies across a number of nations (Bizumic et al., 2009; Bizumic & Duckitt, 2012). However, all these previous tests were done by the original creators of the measure on students (Bizumic et al., 2009; Bizumic & Duckitt, 2012). The current findings suggest that the ethnocentrism scale may operate differently in community samples within the Australian context. It is worth noting that other

scales where other sub-factors were expected presented a uni-factorial solution (eg. Griffiths & Pedersen, 2009). This latter study was a community sample as well – it may be that university students respond differently to the general public.

Ethnocentrism, Conformity, and Bystander Action Intention (Prediction 2)

The primary aim of the present study was to explore whether the individual difference variables of ethnocentrism and conformity were significantly related to willingness to engage in bystander antiracism on behalf of Muslim Australians. As hypothesised, the more ethnocentric an individual was, the less likely they were to express an intention to act in the racist scenario against Muslim Australians supporting Prediction 2. Even when participants who overtly agreed with the racist comment were filtered out, the more ethnocentric the participant was, the less likely they were to engage in bystander antiracism. This supports past research, as ethnocentrism is a concept which is highly related to prejudice (Akrami, Ekehammar, & Bergh, 2011; Allport, 1954; Bizumic et al., 2009; Bizumic & Duckitt, 2012). Nevertheless, the fact that overtly racist participants had already been filtered out suggests that Bizumic et al.'s (2009) ethnocentrism scale may be useful for studying more subtle forms of racism.

As hypothesised in Prediction 2, conformity displayed a significant (albeit weak) negative correlation with action intention, indicating that participants scoring higher in conformity were less likely to engage in bystander antiracism compared to those low in conformity. This lends some support to the idea that acts of racism decrease the willingness of individuals high in trait conformity to engage in bystander antiracism even in a broader societal context that discourages prejudice, such as Australia. This is in line with Cialdini and Goldstein's (2004) theory that a major reason people engage in conforming behaviour is a desire to preserve interpersonal relationships. This is also a major reason that people attribute their lack of willingness to engage in bystander

Table 1
Correlations between ethnocentrism, conformity, demographics, and action intention with three outliers removed.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Mean	SD
1 Action Intention	-	-.40*** [-.55, -.22]	-.19* [-.32, -.01]	-.11 [-.32, .12]	.19* [.01, .35]	.00 [-.18, .20]	-.09 [-.24, .07]	5.23 [5.05, 5.42]	1.09 [.97, 1.21]
2 Ethnocentrism		-	.19* [.01, .36]	.01 [-.17, .17]	-.19* [-.35, -.02]	-.21* [-.38, -.01]	.11 [-.07, .29]	3.02 [2.84, 3.20]	.91 [.81, 1.00]
3 Conformity			-	.14 [-.03, .30]	-.16 [-.33, .01]	.02 [-.15, .20]	.27** [.05, .46]	55.82 [53.90, 57.65]	12.05 [10.54, 13.27]
4 Age				-	-.21* [-.36, -.05]	-.24** [-.39, -.06]	.12 [-.09, .34]	47.73 [44.77, 50.82]	16.12 [14.72, 17.50]
5 Education					-	-.05 [-.23, .12]	-.07 [-.25, .13]	3.45 [3.18, 3.72]	1.57 [1.45, 1.67]
6 Gender						-	.06 [-.14, .24]	1.54 [1.45, 1.62]	.50 [.49, .50]
7 Political Preference							-	2.86 [2.70, 3.02]	.90 [.79, 1.00]

Note: $N = 121$. 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals reported in brackets.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 2
Hierarchical Multiple Regression Equation for Predicting Intention to Engage in Bystander Antiracism on Behalf of Muslim Australians with three outliers removed.

Variables	B	β	sr^2	R ² change	R ²	Adj. R ²
Step 1						
Constant	4.77** [4.31, 5.21]			.04*	.04*	.03*
Education	.13* [0.03, 0.26]	.19*	.04			
Step 2						
Constant	6.78** [5.61, 8.03]			0.14***	.18***	0.16***
Education	.07 [-0.04, 0.20]	.11	.01			
Ethnocentrism	-.43** [-0.65, -0.18]	-.36	.12			
Conformity	-.01 [-0.03, 0.01]	-.10	.01			

Note: $N = 121$. 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals reported in brackets.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

antiracism (Stewart et al., 2014). Additionally, Sechrist and Young's (2011) finding that people's prejudice levels can be manipulated by providing consensus information may also be a reason why more conforming individuals are less inclined to engage in bystander antiracism. Upon exposure to racist views of one or more individuals, a high-conforming individual may be inhibited from action whilst less conforming individuals are not. Future research should explore this possibility.

Education was the only socio-demographic variable that had a significant relationship with bystander action intention. It displayed a weak positive correlation: More educated participants were significantly more likely than less educated participants to engage in bystander antiracism. This supports previous research that more educated individuals are less likely to be prejudiced (Pedersen & Hartley, 2012) and are more likely to engage in bystander antiracism (Russell et al., 2013). Unlike some previous studies (Amato, 1985; Neto & Pedersen, 2013; Redmond et al., 2014; Russell et al., 2013), there were no significant correlation of age, gender or political preference found with bystander action

intention. However, this links with previous research which found that socio-demographics do not always correlate with prejudice. The most prevalent correlations in order of frequency are political orientation, education, age and gender (Pedersen & Griffiths, 2012).

Strengths, Limitations, and Future Research

A major strength of the present study was the use of a representative Australian community sample. This increases the likelihood that our findings can generalise to the broad Australian population. Our study was the first to examine how both ethnocentrism and conformity relate to bystander anti-racism. However, this study was limited in a number of ways. First, as this study looked at action intention rather than actual behaviour, social desirability may have affected results. Studies that look at actual engagement in bystander antiracism is lower than behavioural intentions would suggest (Nelson et al., 2011; Swim, Hyers, Cohen, Fitzgerald, & Bylsma, 2003). Additionally, as conformity is highly related to social desirability (Crandall, Eshleman, & O'Brien, 2002), it may be that

trait conformity may have a differential impact depending on whether action intention is measured for a hypothetical scenario vs. actual behaviour in a real life scenario. For example, when asked specifically in a survey whether they would say something against a racist scenario, it is clear that the socially desirable response is to respond when compared to a real life scenario. In a real life scenario, there are more competing norms on behaviour that may particularly affect the response of highly conforming individuals. For example, the desire to not stand out, make a scene, cause conflict, and the need to preserve interpersonal relationships may mean that in a real life scenario, more conforming individuals may be less likely to be active bystanders when faced with racism than less conforming individuals (Crandall et al., 2002). However, it should be noted that there is evidence of an overlap with action *intention* (Stewart et al., 2014) and *actual action* (Dickter & Newton, 2013).

Future research could explore the differential effects of conformity in real life (or laboratory settings) vs. hypothetical bystander antiracism scenarios to gain a better understanding of the effect of conformity on bystander antiracism.

A second limitation was that the sheer size of the ethnocentrism scale limited the number of variables that could be examined. It also meant that only one bystander scenario could be used to keep the survey to a reasonable length. Using more than one bystander scenario may have reduced the likelihood of spurious results as it would have allowed comparison of the predictor variables across different situations.

With respect to future research, it may be useful to compare the ability of ethnocentrism to predict bystander action intention in relation to a specific type of racism (e.g., Islamophobia). This is especially important due to the close relationship between ethnocentrism and racism. It would be useful to examine whether ethnocentrism predicts unique variance in bystander action intention that cannot be explained by the individual's level of specific racism against a particular outgroup.

From a practical viewpoint, interventions aimed at reducing ethnocentric beliefs may be effective in increasing willingness to engage in

bystander antiracism. As noted in the introduction, prejudice/racism is conceptually different to ethnocentrism which involves more than simply negativity towards an outgroup. Thus, antiracist practitioners could benefit from fully discussing who is in the ingroup and who is in the outgroup – and why. In particular, they could fully discuss the concepts in the ethnocentrism scale – both intergroup and intragroup. They could also discuss the whole issue of conformity; how difficult it is to speak out and when it is appropriate, and inappropriate, to speak out. Finally, spreading social norms of confronting racism may increase the propensity of more conforming individuals to act positively in racist scenarios.

In conclusion, the present study demonstrated that two variables that are associated with racism (ethnocentrism and conformity) were also related to bystander action intention. Furthermore, it revealed that ethnocentrism is a significant predictor of bystander antiracism against Muslims in the Australian community and that it is more predictive than demographic variables or conformity in determining action intention in a representative community sample.

Encouraging bystander antiracism may destabilise racist norms in society so they become less acceptable than what they are now. This idea is supported by the substantial effect of consensus beliefs on altering the expression of prejudiced attitudes (Sechrist & Young, 2011; Watt & Larkin, 2010). Encouraging bystander antiracism is one tool that can be used to create a more equitable and safe future for persecuted minority groups such as Muslim Australians. As noted by Prilleltensky and Gonick (1996), oppression can be political and psychological. This is the case here – and both issues need dealing with.

References

- Abbott, N., & Cameron, L. (2014). What makes a young assertive bystander? The effect of intergroup contact, empathy, cultural openness, and in-group bias on assertive bystander intervention intentions. *Journal of Social Issues*, 70(1), 167–182. doi:10.1111/josi.12053

- ABS. (2011). *Australian Bureau of Statistics 2011.0 - Reflecting a Nation: Stories from the 2011 Census*. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2011.0main+features902012-2013>.
- Adorno, T., Frenkel-Brunswik, E., Levinson, D., & Sanford, R. (1950). *The authoritarian personality*. Oxford, UK: Harpers.
- Akrami, N., Ekehammar, B., & Bergh, R. (2011). Generalized prejudice: Common and specific components. *Psychological Science*, 22(1), 57–9. doi:10.1177/0956797610390384
- Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday.
- Amato, P. R. (1985). An investigation of planned helping behavior. *Journal of Research in Personality*, 19(2), 232–252. doi:10.1016/0092-6566(85)90031-5
- Asch, S. E. (1951). Effects of group pressure upon the modification and distortion of judgment. In H. Guetzkow (Ed.), *Groups, leadership and men*. Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Press.
- Asch, S. E. (1955). Opinions and Social Pressure. *Scientific American*, 193(5), 31–35. doi:10.1038/scientificamerican1155-31
- Ashbaugh, A. R., & Radomsky, A. S. (2009). Interpretations of and memory for bodily sensations during public speaking. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 40(3), 399–411. doi:10.1016/j.jbtep.2009.03.001
- Beagan, B. L. (2003). “Is this worth getting into a big fuss over?” Everyday racism in medical school. *Medical Education*, 37(10), 852–860. doi:10.1046/j.1365-2923.2003.01622.x
- Bizumic, B., & Duckitt, J. (2012). What is and is not ethnocentrism? A conceptual analysis and political implications. *Political Psychology*, 33(6), 887–909. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9221.2012.00907.x
- Bizumic, B., Duckitt, J., Popadic, D., Dru, V., & Krauss, S. (2009). A cross-cultural investigation into a reconceptualisation of ethnocentrism. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 39, 871–899. doi:10.1002/ejsp
- Cialdini, R. B., & Goldstein, N. J. (2004). Social influence: Compliance and conformity. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 55(1974), 591–621. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.55.090902.142015
- Crandall, C. S., Eshleman, A., & O’Brien, L. (2002). Social norms and the expression and suppression of prejudice: The struggle for internalization. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 82(3), 359–378. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.82.3.359
- Crandall, C., & Stangor, C. (2008). Conformity and prejudice. In J. Dovidio, P. Glick, & L. Rudman (Eds.), *On the nature of prejudice* (pp. 295–309). Hoboken: Wiley. doi:10.1002/9780470773963.ch24
- Czopp, A. M., & Monteith, M. J. (2003). Confronting prejudice (literally): Reactions to confrontations of racial and gender bias. *Personality & Social Psychology Bulletin*, 29(4), 532–44. doi:10.1177/0146167202250923
- Czopp, A. M., Monteith, M. J., & Mark, A. Y. (2006). Standing up for a change: Reducing bias through interpersonal confrontation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(5), 784–803. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.90.5.784
- Darley, J., & Latane, B. (1968). Bystander intervention in emergencies: Diffusion of responsibility. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 8(4), 377–383. doi:10.1037/h0025589
- Dickter, C. L., & Newton, V. A. (2013). To confront or not to confront: Non-targets’ evaluations of and responses to racist comments. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 43, E262–E275. doi:10.1111/jasp.12022
- Duckitt, J. (2001). A dual-process cognitive-motivational theory of ideology and prejudice. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*. Retrieved from [http://users.ugent.be/~wbeyers/scripts/2011/artikels/Duckitt 2001.pdf](http://users.ugent.be/~wbeyers/scripts/2011/artikels/Duckitt%2001.pdf)

- Duckitt, J., Wagner, C., du Plessis, I., & Birum, I. (2002). The psychological bases of ideology and prejudice: Testing a dual process model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 83*(1), 75–93. doi:10.1037//0022-3514.83.1.75
- Dunn, K., & Nelson, J. K. (2011). Challenging the public denial of racism for a deeper multiculturalism. *Journal of Intercultural Studies, 32*(6), 587–602. doi:10.1080/07256868.2011.618105
- Eisenberg, N., & Miller, P. (1987). The relation of empathy to prosocial and related behaviors. *Psychological Bulletin, 101*(1), 91–119. doi:10.1037//0033-2909.101.1.91
- Essed, P. (1991). *Understanding Everyday Racism: An Interdisciplinary Theory*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Falomir-Pichastor, J. M., Chatard, A., Selimbegovic, L., Konan, P. N., & Mugny, G. (2013). Conformity and counter-conformity to anti-discrimination norms: the moderating effect of attitude toward foreigners and perceived in-group threat. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 43*, E206–E215. doi:10.1111/jasp.12024
- Griffiths, B., & Pedersen, A. (2009). Prejudice and the function of attitudes relating to Muslim Australians and Indigenous Australians. *Australian Journal of Psychology, 61*(4), 228–238. doi:10.1080/00049530902748275
- Grosfoguel, R. (2012). The multiple faces of Islamophobia. *Islamophobia Studies Journal, 1*(1), 9–33.
- Gulson, K. N., & Webb, P. T. (2013). “We had to hide we’re Muslim”: ambient fear, Islamic schools and the geographies of race and religion. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 34*(4), 628–641. doi:10.1080/01596306.2013.822623
- Jankowski, P. J., Sandage, S. J., & Hill, P. C. (2013). Differentiation-based models of forgivingness, mental health and social justice commitment: Mediator effects for differentiation of self and humility. *The Journal of Positive Psychology, 8*(5), 412–424. doi:10.1080/17439760.2013.820337
- Jasinskaja-Lahti, I., Mähönen, T. A., & Liebkind, K. (2011). Ingroup norms, intergroup contact and intergroup anxiety as predictors of the outgroup attitudes of majority and minority youth. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 35*(3), 346–355. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2010.06.001
- Jones, J. M. (1997). *Prejudice and racism*. Sydney, NSW: McGraw Hill.
- Judd, K. A., & Vandenberg, B. (2014). Effects of religious stigma and harm on perceived psychopathology. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture, 17*(5), 508–519. doi:10.1080/13674676.2013.856001
- Lovat, T., Nilan, P., Hosseini, S. A. H., Samarayi, I., Mansfield, M., & Alexander, W. (2013). Discrimination in the Labor Market: Exposing employment barriers among Muslim jobseekers in Australia. *Issues in Social Science, 1*(1), 53. doi:10.5296/iss.v1i1.4374
- McGee, W. J. (1900). Primitive Numbers. *Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology (1897-1898), 19*, 825–851.
- Milgram, S. (1963). Behavioral study of obedience. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 67*(4), 371–8. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/14049516>
- Moosavi, L. (2014). The racialization of Muslim converts in Britain and their experiences of Islamophobia. *Critical Sociology, 41*(1), 41–56. doi:10.1177/0896920513504601
- Nelson, J. K., Dunn, K. M., & Paradies, Y. (2011). Bystander anti-Racism: A review of the literature. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy, 11*(1), 263–284. doi:10.1111/j.1530-2415.2011.01274.x
- Neto, Y. F., & Pedersen, A. (2013). No time like the present: Determinants of intentions to engage in bystander anti-racism on behalf of Indigenous Australians. *Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology, 7*(01), 36–49. doi:10.1017/prp.2013.4

- Paradies, Y. (2006). A systematic review of empirical research on self-reported racism and health. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 35(4), 888–901. doi:10.1093/ije/dyl056
- Pedersen, A., & Griffiths, B. (2012). *Prejudice and its relationship to socio-demographic variables over time*. Unpublished document. Perth, WA.
- Pedersen, A., Griffiths, B., & Watt, S. E. (2008). Attitudes toward out-groups and the perception of consensus: All feet do not wear one shoe. *557(April 2007)*, 543–557. doi:10.1002/casp
- Pedersen, A., & Hartley, L. (2012). Prejudice against Muslim Australians: The role of values, gender and consensus. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 22, 239–255. doi:10.1002/casp
- Pedersen, A., & Thomas, E. (2013). “There but for the grace of God go we”: Prejudice toward asylum seekers. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace*, 19(3), 253–265. Retrieved from <http://psycnet.apa.org/journals/pac/19/3/253/>
- Pedersen, A., Walker, I., & Wise, M. (2005). “Talk does not cook rice”: Beyond anti-racism rhetoric to strategies for social action. *Australian Psychologist*, 40(1), 20–31. doi:10.1080/0005006051233131729
- Poynting, S., & Mason, V. (2006). “Tolerance, Freedom, Justice and Peace”? Britain, Australia and Anti-Muslim Racism since 11 September 2001. *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 27(4), 365–391. doi:10.1080/07256860600934973
- Poynting, S., & Mason, V. (2007). The resistible rise of Islamophobia: Anti-Muslim racism in the UK and Australia before 11 September 2001. *Journal of Sociology*, 43(1), 61–86. doi:10.1177/1440783307073935
- Prilleltensky, I., & Gonick, L. (1996). Politics change, oppression remains: On the psychology and politics of oppression. *Political Psychology*, 17(1), 127. doi:10.2307/3791946
- Qualtrics. (2014). Qualtrics Research Suite. Retrieved from <http://qualtrics.com/research-suite/>
- Redmond, J. D., Pedersen, A., & Paradies, Y. (2014). Psychosocial predictors of antiracist bystander action toward Indigenous Australians. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 20(4), 474–490. doi:10.1037/pac0000062
- Russell, Z., Pennay, D., Webster, K., & Paradies, Y. (2013). *Choosing to act: Bystander action to prevent race-based discrimination and support cultural diversity in the Victorian community*. Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.
- Salleh-hoddin, A., & Pedersen, A. (2012). Experiences of discrimination by Muslim Australians and protective factors for integration. *The Australian Community Psychologist*, 24(2), 43–58.
- Sayyid, S. (2011). Racism and islamophobia. *International Centre for Muslim and Non-Muslim Understanding, MnM Commentary No 4*, 1–4.
- Sechrist, G., & Young, A. (2011). The influence of social consensus information on intergroup attitudes: The moderating effects of ingroup identification. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 151(6), 674–695. Retrieved from <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00224545.2010.522615>
- Stewart, K., Pedersen, A., & Paradies, Y. (2014). It’s always good to help when possible, but...: Obstacles to Bystander Anti-prejudice. *The International Journal of Diversity in Education*, 13(3), 39–53.
- Swim, J. K., Hyers, L. L., Cohen, L. L., Fitzgerald, D. C., & Bylsma, W. H. (2003). African American college students’ experiences with everyday racism: Characteristics of and responses to these incidents. *Journal Of Black Psychology*, 29(1), 38–67. doi:10.1177/0095798402239228
- Syed, J., & Pio, E. (2009). Veiled diversity? Workplace experiences of Muslim women in Australia. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 27(1), 115–137. doi:10.1007/s10490-009-9168-x

- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In S. Worche & W. G. Austin (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33–47). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Walton, J., Priest, N., & Paradies, Y. (2013). “It depends how you’re saying it”: The complexities of everyday racism. *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 7(1), 74–90. Retrieved from <http://www.ijcv.org/index.php/ijcv/article/viewArticle/257>
- Watt, S., & Larkin, C. (2010). Prejudiced people perceive more community support for their views: The role of own, media, and peer attitudes in perceived consensus. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 40(3), 710–731. Retrieved from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2010.00594.x/full>

Appendix I Bystander Scenario

In this section we would like you to consider the following scenario and think about what you would do in response. Please answer with what you believe you ACTUALLY WOULD DO in this situation, NOT with what you believe you SHOULD do.

You are at a party chatting one-on-one with an acquaintance. At one point the conversation turns to issues regarding Muslim people living in Australia. Your acquaintance says, “One of those Muslims applied to work for me the other day. There is no way I am giving a job to one of those fanatics!” Your acquaintance is very worked up and displays a very negative view of Muslim people in general.

Please mark the box most appropriate to you.
Would you be more supportive of:
Your acquaintance's views, OR (1)
An alternative view? (2)

How likely you are to speak up in this scenario, either in support of your acquaintance’s view or an alternative view?
Extremely Unlikely (1)
Very Unlikely (2)
Somewhat Unlikely (3)
Neither Likely or Unlikely (4)
Somewhat Likely (5)
Very Likely (6)
Extremely Likely (7)

Biography: Laura McWhae, Yin Paradies, and Anne Pedersen

Laura McWhae has just completed her Honours year and has a strong interest in both social and community psychology and child developmental psychology. Yin Paradies conducts interdisciplinary research on the health, social and economic effects of racism as well as anti-racism theory, policy and practice. Anne Pedersen works as a community psychologist and researches the topic of prejudice and antiprejudice.

Funding

Funding for this research was provided through an Australian Research Council Linkage Grant (LP110200495).

Address for correspondence

Laura McWhae and Anne Pedersen
Murdoch University, Western Australia
e: laura.mcwhae@gmail.com
e: A.Pedersen@murdoch.edu.au
Room 1.025, Social Science Building
90 South Street, Murdoch, WA, 6150
T: +61 8 9360 6488 | F: +61 8 9360 6492.

Hosting asylum seekers and attitudes toward cultural diversity in Australia

Nigar G. Khawaja
Jane Wotherspoon
Queensland University of Technology

In 2012, the Australian government in office introduced a novel scheme of housing asylum seekers as guests of Australians in the community. A number of Australians participated in the scheme and volunteered as hosts. This study compared those who volunteered to assist asylum seekers with general members of the community to explore the impact attitudes towards cultural diversity and demographic factors had upon willingness to support asylum seekers. Further, the two groups were combined to examine the factors that can contribute to positive attitudes to diversity in society in general. Participants (N = 142; aged from 24-79 years) completed online questionnaires assessing demographic variables, attitudes towards cultural diversity and acculturation. Various analysis of variance procedures, Chi-squared tests and correlations were conducted. Group comparisons indicated that volunteers' attitudes did not impact on willingness to support asylum seekers. However, some demographic differences between groups emerged. Volunteers were more likely to be professionals with stable jobs, ethnically diverse and well-travelled individuals. Analyses on the combined groups indicated age, education, and not having a strong religious affiliation enhanced Australians' positive attitudes to cultural diversity. The findings have implications for promoting positive attitudes to diversity in individuals, organisations and communities. Potential opportunities for professionals and policy-makers to promote support for cultural diversity in the community are discussed.

Cultural diversity is a feature of Australian society (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012), and can bring many benefits, including exposure to new ideas, experiences and economic opportunities (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010; Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2011). However, there are also challenges and negative attitudes and discrimination towards minority groups in Australia have gone hand in hand with the country's long history of immigration (Schweitzer, Perkoulidis, Krome, Ludlow, & Ryan, 2005). Schweitzer et al. investigated attitudes held by Australians towards cultural diversity and acculturation, and whether these attitudes impacted upon people's willingness to act in support of asylum seekers. Research has found low levels of prejudice in members of a majority group correspond to greater support for policies designed to assist minority groups (Turoy-Smith, Kane, & Pedersen, 2013). For the present study, willingness to assist was demonstrated through volunteering to participate in the Community Placement Network (CPN), a homestay program to help

asylum seekers settle into the community.
Attitudes toward Cultural Diversity in Australia

Research into attitudes to cultural diversity in Australia has produced varied findings. Dandy and Pe-Pua (2010) found that although Australians in general favour diversity, they had concerns about its perceived negative consequences. Others have proposed Australia is currently retreating from embracing cultural diversity (Pedersen, Fozdar, & Kenny, 2012) and many Australians are prejudiced towards minority groups (Schweitzer et al., 2005; Stewart, Pedersen, & Paradies, 2014). These inconsistencies in attitudes towards cultural diversity may be a result of the political and economic climate as official support for multicultural policies has varied in Australia (Colic-Peisker, 2011) Further, world events such as the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 in the United States and the 2002 Bali bombing can also influence attitudes (Stewart et al., 2014; Suhnan, Pedersen, & Paradies, 2012). People become less tolerant to cultural

diversity when a threat to security or to economic wellbeing is perceived, (Schweitzer et al. 2005). Bulbeck (2004) reported that although cultural diversity is favoured, the idea of sharing resources is not popular. Moreover, the cultural origin of migrants can also contribute to the attitudes of the Australians toward diversity. Currently, attitudes towards asylum seekers, often from the Middle East or Afghanistan (Suhnan et al., 2012), are particularly negative (Pedersen, Attwell, & Heveli, 2005; Pedersen, Watt, & Hansen, 2006; Schweitzer et al., 2005; Stewart et al, 2014). This is despite the fact that asylum seekers make up only a small proportion of the total number of migrants Australia receives each year. In the period 2011-2012, from a total of 184,998 places made available through Australia's migration program, humanitarian visas comprised just 13,759, compared to 125,755 skilled migration places (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 2014). Pedersen, et al. (2006) argue that false beliefs held by Australians that asylum seekers are queue jumpers, illegal, and not genuine refugees can contribute to the prejudice faced by asylum seekers in Australia. Further, media coverage and governmental harsh policies of turning the boats and smashing the people smugglers' business have aggravated public fears and biases towards asylum seekers (Suhnan et al., 2012; Stewart et al., 2014) .

Asylum Seekers in Australia

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, n.d.) an asylum seeker is someone who claims to be a refugee, but whose claim to international protection has not yet been evaluated by the country in which they are seeking protection. While Australian law classifies those asylum seekers who arrive in Australia as 'unlawful non-citizens', their right to seek asylum here is recognised under international law, along with their right not to be penalised due to their means of entry to the country (Phillips, 2011).

There is much public debate in Australia about how the government should process the refugee status of asylum seekers to this country, particularly those who arrive by boat, and recent governments have developed

policies designed to deter maritime arrivals (Pedersen et al., 2005). By the end of the 1990s, when a new wave of asylum seekers began arriving by boat from countries like Afghanistan, Iraq and Sri Lanka, asylum seekers were detained in remote locations, for up to seven years at a time, without having their applications processed (Pedersen et al., 2006). Other Australian government initiatives to deter asylum seekers arriving by boat include offshore processing and the Regional Resettlement Arrangement with Papua New Guinea, whereby asylum seekers to Australia are transferred to Papua New Guinea with no hope of resettlement in Australia (UNHCR, 2013).

Community Placement Network (CPN)

The UNHCR has expressed concerns over the physical and psychological wellbeing of asylum seekers held under such arrangements. Therefore, they welcomed an initiative in 2012 by the Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship, in collaboration with humanitarian and settlement organisations, to form the CPN. The CPN aimed to move eligible asylum seekers on bridging visas from detention centres into the community using a home-stay program. Community volunteers were sought to host two or more asylum seekers in their homes for a six-week period. Volunteers received training and briefing about their guests from the settlement organisation. Within two months of the program being announced, over 1,400 volunteers from the community had applied to host asylum seekers (Bowles, 2012), and more than 4,000 people volunteered over the course of the program (Bycroft, 2013). Even though controversies around the management of asylum seekers led to the suspension of the scheme in 2013, it was still interesting to examine the factors associated with the act of helping this population. The establishment of the CPN offered a new opportunity to investigate why, in an era when negativity towards asylum seekers appears to prevail in at least some parts of the community, other Australians are willing to take action to support asylum seekers. It is unclear how the attitudes towards cultural diversity affect the

willingness to take action with respect to refugees in Australia (Turoy-Smith et al., 2013). Turoy-Smith et al. in their Perth-based study found reduction in prejudice towards refugees led to increased support for affirmative action and equal opportunity policies, as well as increased willingness to act. However, Turoy-Smith et al. measured self-reported willingness to act, and the attitudes of those who have taken action by volunteering to host asylum seekers have not been examined. It was of interest to investigate if attitudes toward diversity and willingness to support asylum seekers were influenced by acculturation preferences and demographic factors.

Demographic Variables Associated with Attitudes to Cultural Diversity

Previous research in Australia has found education, age, gender, employment status, and membership of the dominant Anglo Australian cultural group to be associated with attitudes towards cultural diversity in general (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010). Education and gender have also been associated with attitudes towards refugees and asylum seekers (Schweitzer et al., 2005). Dandy and Pe-Pua found women, who generally demonstrate lower levels of social dominance, to have more positive attitudes toward immigration and cultural diversity. Schweitzer et al. found that men, compared with women, reported a higher level of prejudice towards refugees because they are more likely to perceive them as economically or politically threatening. Income has an impact on attitudes toward diversity and immigration. In Europe, people with higher income were less likely to see migrants as competing for their jobs, compared to lower wage workers (Jackson, Brown, Brown & Marks, 2001). However, a recent study on attitudes to immigration and multiculturalism in New Zealand found no effect for income (Ward & Masgoret, 2008), so it would be useful to investigate whether Australia more closely matches New Zealand or Europe in this regard.

Further, some preliminary research exploring the link between religious beliefs and tolerance for cultural diversity has revealed mixed outcomes. Hunsberger and

Jackson (2005) found a positive relationship between religiousness and prejudice, which seems to run counter to the principles of religions that emphasise benevolence. However, these researchers suggest that intergroup dynamics can exacerbate prejudice even for people who may individually value compassion and tolerance. People who most strongly identify with their religious group may be more likely to hold unfavourable attitudes towards outgroup members in order to enhance esteem (Hunsberger & Jackson). Recent research from multicultural societies indicate that people from minority groups tend to support other ethnically diverse groups more effectively as at times they are more aware of their issues and can understand them better than the host society (Lam, Tracz, & Lucey, 2013; Warburton & McLaughlin, 2007). Finally, globalisation and increased travel are now emerging as factors that promote awareness and acceptance of diverse cultures (Oudenhoven & Ward, 2013; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006; Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011; Ward, Bochner, & Furnham, 2002).

Acculturation

Different cultural groups residing in Australia interact and influence each other. When different cultural groups come into contact with each other, a process of acculturation is said to occur. Acculturation is a multidimensional concept and involves cultural and psychological changes at both the group and individual level and at the minority and majority level (Berry, 2003; 2005; Chirkov, 2009; Hernandez, 2009; Ward, 2008). According to Berry (2005), acculturating groups or individuals can differ along two dimensions - attitude towards *maintenance* of their original culture, and attitude towards *contact* with the new (Zagefka & Brown, 2002). Four acculturation strategies emerge, according to whether a positive or negative orientation is held towards these dimensions of maintenance and contact (Berry, 2001). *Integration* occurs when the desire to maintain one's original culture is high, combined with a high desire for contact with other groups. *Assimilation* refers to a low desire for maintenance,

combined with a high desire for contact. *Separation* is manifested by a high desire for maintenance, along with a low desire for contact, and *marginalisation* results from a low desire for either maintenance or contact (Berry, 2001; Hernandez, 2009; Zagefka & Brown, 2002). Although minority groups undergo most of the adaptation, the changes and attitudes of the majority are also very important in the settlement of the newly arrived and inter-group relations (Bourhis, Barrette, El-Geledi, & Schmidt, 2009; Bourhis, Moise, Perreault, & Senecal, 1997).

In order to understand the complex acculturation process, researchers have incorporated the preferred acculturation strategies of the host society as well as the migrants (Bourhis et al, 1997; Rohman, Florack, & Piontkowski, 2006). According to these researchers it is important to consider how the preferred strategies of host country and minority groups can interact. A fit of acculturation preferences, where both host and minority groups agree on either integration or assimilation, can lead to consensual outcomes resulting in less intergroup tension and better communication between groups (Arends-Toth & van de Vijver, 2003). A lack of fit of acculturation preferences, where host and the minority groups disagree, with one preferring integration while the other desires separation, can result in conflict and poor intergroup relations (Zagefka & Brown, 2002).

Zagefka and Brown (2002) suggest that when predicting acculturation outcomes, the subjective perception of either the host society or minority group about the preferred acculturation strategy of the other group may be of more utility than an objective measure of the other group's acculturation preferences. For example, while minority groups may in fact favour integration, if the host society perceives the minority group to desire separation, this perception, although incorrect, will influence how the host society views the acculturation process (Zagefka & Brown). To investigate this, Zagefka and Brown measured host society and minority group acculturation preferences among German school students, as well as the perceptions each group held about the acculturation preferences of the other.

They found that not only do the actual acculturation strategies of each group interact, but each group's perception of the strategy favoured by the other influences intergroup relations.

Further, research based on British nationals found that host society' members tend to support cultural diversity when they perceive a minority group as desiring contact with the host society and wanting to adopt the host society culture (Tip, Zagefka, Gonzalez, Brown, Cinnirella, & Na, 2012). The perception that minority group members wished to maintain contact with their original culture was associated with less support for cultural diversity and considered a threat by the host society. Tip et al. noted that this tendency of the host society seems to conflict with a basic concept of multiculturalism, according to which minority groups maintain the right to express their cultural identity. Zagefka and Brown (2002) and Tip et al. analysed the different dimensions of acculturation by examining previously overlooked host society preferences and perceptions. Nevertheless, being based on students, these studies have limited generalisability (Pedersen et al., 2005; Schweitzer et al, 2005). Therefore, there is a need to study general members of the community from a range of demographic backgrounds and those who have volunteered to host minority group members in their own homes. While a number of Australian studies have looked at acculturation challenges of refugees, migrants and international students (Lu et al., 2011; Milner & Khawaja, 2010; Smith & Khawaja, 2011), the acculturation attitudes and preferences of members of the host society have not been extensively researched. It is unclear what type of attitudes and factors influence a person to support asylum seekers. An understanding of mainstream Australians' attitudes towards cultural diversity and acculturation, and factors influencing their willingness to act in support of minority groups, may assist policy-makers, organisations and professionals to develop strategies for enhancing the relationships among diverse groups in Australia.

Aims and Hypotheses

The present study is important as it investigated the mainstream Australian attitudes toward cultural diversity by recruiting general members of the community and those who volunteered to host asylum seekers. The study had two aims. The first goal was to compare those who volunteered (CPN volunteers) to host an asylum seeker, with general members of the Australian community, to investigate possible links between attitudinal and demographic factors and willingness to take action in support of asylum seekers. It was hypothesised that the CPN volunteers and community members would be differentiated by age, education, gender, group status, income, religion, and country of birth, as these demographic features are associated with attitudes to diversity and immigration. Due to the exploratory nature of the study the direction is not postulated. Further, it was hypothesised that CPN volunteers, compared with community members would have a higher level of support for cultural diversity, and would favour both cultural maintenance and cultural contact.

The second aim of the study was to explore broadly the attitudes of mainstream Australians toward cultural diversity and acculturation to gain insights into the acculturation preferences and perceptions of Australians. This information is theoretically important in all multidimensional models of acculturation, and also important in understanding the stressors associated with acculturation for minority groups. It was hypothesised that demographic variables of age, education, gender, group status, income, and religion would be associated with attitude to cultural diversity and acculturation preferences for maintenance and contact. Secondly, in line with multidimensional models of acculturation, it was predicted that perceived acculturation preferences of contact and adoption would be positively associated with support for cultural diversity, while the perceived acculturation preference of maintenance would be negatively associated with support for cultural diversity.

Method

Participants

A total of 142 participants were recruited for this study, 99 women and 43 men. The age range of participants was from 24 to 79, with an average age of 48.23 years ($SD = 12.62$). Participants were from two groups - members of the CPN ($N = 72$) and a community sample ($N = 70$). Out of the CPN group, 42 had hosted asylum seekers, while the rest were waiting for guests to be allocated to them. No-one from the community sample had registered for this scheme. CPN members were recruited via email through one of the organisations associated in setting up the CPN, while community members were recruited via a snowballing technique. Email invitations were sent to staff and students within QUT's School of Psychology and Counselling. Recipients of the email invitation were requested to forward the recruitment email and survey link on to a further two contacts.

Measures

A demographic form gathered data on age, gender, country of birth, education, religion, ethnicity, overseas travel, income, and employment status. The Preferred Acculturation Strategy Scale measures acculturation. The Perceived Acculturation Preference Scale measures perceived acculturation preferences and the Multicultural Ideology Scale measures attitudes toward cultural diversity.

Preferred Acculturation Strategy Scale (Zagefka & Brown, 2002). This five-item scale measures participants' desire for each of the dimensions of acculturation, cultural maintenance, and cultural contact. This scale was adapted from Zagefka and Brown's (2002) scale administered to German host society members, for host society members in Australia by replacing the words Germany or German with Australia and Australian. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). The scale consists of two subscales: Acculturation preference- maintenance and acculturation preference - contact. Three items measure the respondent's attitude towards cultural maintenance ("I think it is

important that migrants to Australia maintain their own culture"). A higher score on this subscale indicates more support for immigrants to maintain contact with their original culture. Zagefka and Brown found high internal validity ($\alpha = .80$) for this dimension. Two items measure the respondent's attitude towards contact ("I think it is important that migrants have Australian friends"). A higher score on this subscale indicates support for immigrants to have contact with mainstream Australians. The internal reliability for this dimension was reported as high ($\alpha = .88$; Zagefka & Brown).

Perceived Acculturation Preference Scale (Tip et al. 2012). This eight-item scale measures how British dominant society perceived the acculturation preferences of Pakistani minority group members. This scale was adapted for the dominant society in Australia, by replacing references to Britain or British with the words Australia or Australian. It measures the perceptions Australians hold about the acculturation strategies preferred by minority group members. All items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). This scale contains three subscales. The first three-item subscale 'Perceived Maintenance Preference', measures the perception of the minority group's desire for cultural maintenance ("I believe migrants to Australia want to maintain their own religion, language and clothing"), with an internal reliability of $\alpha = .83$ (Tip et al.). The second three-item subscale 'Perceived Adoption Preference', measures the perception of the minority group's adoption of Australian culture such as ("I believe migrants to Australia want to adapt to Australian religion, language and clothing"). For this subscale, $\alpha = .69$. The final two-item subscale 'Perceived Contact Preference', measured the perception of the minority group's attitude towards contact with $\alpha = .90$ ("I believe migrants to Australia find it important to have Australian friends").

The Multicultural Ideology Scale (Berry & Kalin, 1995; Dandy & Pe-Pua 2010). This ten-item scale measures people's support for a culturally diverse society. The scale is an Australian adaptation of the original Canadian

Multicultural Ideology Scale (Berry and Kalin, cited in Arends-Toth & van de Vijver, 2003). The items are measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). Five items are measured positively (Migrants should be supported in their attempts to preserve their own cultural heritage in Australia), while the other 5 items are worded in a negative direction (It is best for Australia if people forget their different cultural backgrounds as soon as possible). Dandy and Pe-Pua found high internal reliability for the scale, with $\alpha = .83$. A higher score indicates a more positive attitude towards diversity.

Procedure

Ethical clearance for this project was obtained from the Queensland University of Technology Human Research Ethics Committee (Approval Number 1200000646). Participants 18 years or above with Australian citizenship or permanent residency were eligible for the study. Emails with information about the study and a link for an online survey were used to recruit participants. An agency responsible for arranging the home stay of the asylum seekers was approached and they agreed to forward recruitment emails to their members who had volunteered to host an asylum seeker. A snowballing technique was used to recruit participants for the community sample. Psychology students at a university were asked to send the invitation email to at least two of their friends and acquaintances who met the eligibility criteria. Data collection was carried out over a four-month period between December 2012 and March 2013. As the total number of people who were invited to participate in the study was not known, a response rate could not be calculated.

Participants were informed that participation was voluntary and responses would be anonymous. Completion and submission of the online survey was regarded as the participant's consent. Participants were also informed that once the questionnaire was submitted, it was no longer possible to withdraw from the study, as identifying information was not collected to

maintain confidentiality. Participants were provided with information on how to access support in the event that they experienced distress or discomfort as a result of completing the questionnaire.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Data were screened for data entry errors and missing values. On the demographic form, data were missing for 7 respondents on the item 'income'. No pattern across the groups was apparent in these responses, so the respondents were excluded for that comparison. A minimal amount of missing data existed for responses to scales. The missing data occurred randomly across the groups and were replaced with the group mean for that variable (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

The data were checked for assumptions of normality. Many of the distributions were negatively skewed, with significant results found on the Shapiro-Wilks test of univariate normality. These results were not considered problematic for a number of reasons. Firstly, the non-normality was due to skewness, which tended to occur in the same direction in each case (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Secondly, Tabachnick and Fidell suggest that multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) tests are robust to violations of normality as long as there are at least 20 degrees of freedom for error in a univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA), and as no cell in the following analyses has a sample size of less than 20, this criterion was met. When univariate outliers were found, it was determined that they were drawn from the population in question and not the result of data entry errors.

One extreme multivariate outlier was found and excluded from the analyses. Several less extreme multivariate outliers were found, but were retained, as according to measures of Cook's Distance, they were not influential (Allen & Bennet, 2012). No multicollinearity, and homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices were met, unless otherwise discussed in the individual analyses. Unless otherwise mentioned, an alpha level of .05 was used throughout.

Reliability Analyses of Scales

Internal consistency was measured using

Cronbach's Alpha. The Cronbach's alpha for Acculturation Preferences - Maintenance, Acculturation Preferences - Contact, Perceived Maintenance Preference, Perceived Adoption Preference, Perceived Contact Preferences and Multicultural Ideology Scale were .84, .84, .85, .68, .84 and .84 respectively.

Analysis of Intergroup Differences

Demographic variables. The first stage of statistical analysis involved investigating whether there were any differences between the groups (CPN volunteers and community sample). ANOVAs and Pearson's chi-squared tests of contingencies were conducted to look for differences between the groups based on demographic factors. The descriptive statistics for gender, age, income, occupation, education level, religious belief, country of birth and cultural group are presented in Table 1. The Pearson's chi-square test for occupation was statistically significant, with the CPN and community groups differing by profession, although the effect size was small, ($\chi^2(1, n = 142) = 7.45, p = .006$, Cramer's $V = .23$). The Pearson's chi-square test for country of birth was also statistically significant, although again the effect size was small, ($\chi^2(1, n = 142) = 3.86, p = .049$, Cramer's $V = .17$). There were no other statistically significant results.

In addition to the above demographic variables, participants were also asked about overseas travel during the last five years. CPN volunteers (90.3%) were more likely to have travelled than community members (71.4%). The Pearson's chi-square test for overseas travel was statistically significant, with a small effect size. ($\chi^2(1, n = 142) = 8.19, p = .004$, Cramer's $V = .24$).

Attitudes to diversity and acculturation preference.

Overall, scores on the attitudinal scales were compared between groups and were in the upper ranges for each scale, suggesting respondents were generally in favour of multicultural ideology, cultural maintenance and cultural contact. High scores for both cultural maintenance and cultural contact correspond to support for an integration strategy. Table 2 presents the

Table 1
Demographic Variables by Group Membership

Demographic Variable	Community Sample	Community Placement Network
Gender (%)		
Female	65.7	73.6
Country of Birth (%)*		
Australian Born	80	65.3
Overseas Born	20	34.7
Highest Level Education Completed (%)		
Year 12 or below	11.4	11.1
Technical Diploma/TAFE	22.9	15.3
Bachelors	48.6	41.7
Master degree or higher	17.1	31.9
Age in years: Mean (SD)	46.94(13.3)	49.47(12.54)
Cultural group (%)		
Dominant	92.6	86.1
Non-dominant	7.4	13.9
Religion (%)		
Religion	57.1	51.4
No Religion	42.9	48.6
Occupation (%)*		
Professional	68.6	87.5
Non-Professional	31.4	12.5
Household income (%)		
Under \$35,000	20.6	18.6
\$35,000 to under \$50,000	14.7	7.1
\$50,000 to under \$75,000	14.7	18.6
\$75,000 to under \$100,000	13.2	15.7
\$100,000 or above	36.8	40

Note. * Chi –square tests were significant for these variables.

means and standard deviations for each group. A MANOVA, with three dependent variables, indicated support for cultural diversity as measured by score on the Multicultural Ideology Scale, and scores for subscales of Preferred Acculturation Strategy Scale

(Acculturation Preference - Maintenance and Acculturation Preference – Contact). The independent variable was group membership. No significant difference between groups was found, $F(3,137) = 1.16, p = .328$, partial $\eta^2 = .025$.

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations for to Multicultural Ideology, Cultural Maintenance and Cultural Contact by Group Membership

Variable	Sample	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Multicultural Ideology	Community	51.81	1.19
	CPN	53.78	0.92
Acculturation Preference -			
Maintenance	Community	10.69	0.31
	CPN	11.03	0.29
Acculturation Preference -			
Contact	Community	8.27	0.18
	CPN	8.54	0.19

Perceived acculturation preference. A MANOVA was conducted with group membership as the independent variable, and scores for the subscales of Perceived Acculturation Preference Scale (Perceived Maintenance Preference, Perceived Contact Preference and Perceived Adoption Preference) as dependent variables. One influential outlier was identified and excluded from the analysis. No significant differences were found between groups, $F(3,132) = 1.12$, $p = .345$, partial $\eta^2 = .025$.

General Attitudes to Diversity

The intergroup differences between the CPN volunteers and community samples indicated that the groups were demographically very similar. Therefore, the decision was made to combine the groups in order to investigate factors influencing Australian attitudes towards diversity and acculturation.

Demographic variables. Multiple analyses of covariance (MANCOVA) were

conducted to examine the effect of gender, ethnicity, religion, education, income and employment on attitudes to diversity and acculturation preferences for maintenance and contact. Group membership (CPN volunteers or the community members) was used as a covariate throughout the following analyses to accurately assess variable effects by accounting for any variance due to group membership. MANCOVAs examined the effects of gender, ethnicity (membership of dominant versus non-dominant culture), income level and employment field upon attitudes towards multicultural diversity, and acculturation preferences were statistically non-significant.

A MANCOVA was carried out to test the effect of religious identification on multicultural ideology and acculturation preferences, and was statistically significant, $F(3,136) = 4.17$, $p = .007$, partial $\eta^2 = .084$, showing a difference in attitude related to religious identification. Analysis of the

dependent variables individually showed no significant effects of religion on individual variables of multicultural ideology, acculturation preference for contact or maintenance. Respondents who indicated they did not hold any religious beliefs reported higher scores on multicultural ideology ($M = 54.10$, $SD = 9.26$) than those respondents who held religious beliefs ($M = 49.69$, $SD = 9.93$). By contrast, participants who indicated they did hold religious beliefs reported higher scores on acculturation preference for contact ($M = 8.78$, $SD = 1.41$) than respondents who did not hold religious beliefs

($M = 8.17$, $SD = 1.54$).

The effect of level of education on multicultural ideology and acculturation preferences was also tested. The analysis showed a statistically significant difference between groups based on their education level, $F(9,408) = 2.05$, $p = .033$, partial $\eta^2 = .043$. Analysis of the dependent variables individually showed no effects of education on multicultural ideology, acculturation preference for contact or maintenance.

Correlation was used to investigate the relationship between age and multicultural ideology and acculturation preference. As the

Table 3

Relationship among Perceived Acculturation Preferences, Acculturation Preference and Multicultural Ideology

	2	3	4	5	6
1. Multicultural Ideology	-.12	.34**	.17**	.18**	-.09
2. Acculturation Preference- Contact	-	.11	.07	.25**	.08
3. Acculturation Preference- Maintenance	-	-	.16*	.19**	.31**
4. Perceived Adoption Preference	-	-	-	.44**	-.07
5. Perceived Contact Preference	-	-	-	-	.02
6. Perceived Maintenance Preference	-	-	-	-	-

* Correlation is significant at $p = .05$ (two-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at $p = .01$ (two-tailed)

assumption of normality for the data was not met, a non-parametric procedure was used and Kendall's tau-b was calculated. The results indicated a weak positive correlation between age and acculturation preference for contact, $\tau = .16$, $p = .01$, two-tailed, $N = 141$. No statistically significant relationship was found between age and multicultural ideology or preference for maintenance.

Perceived Acculturation Preferences of Others

Correlations were conducted to examine the relationship between respondents' perceptions of the acculturation preferences of others and their own acculturation preferences and attitudes to multicultural ideology. Kendall's tau-b was calculated and the results are summarised in Table 3.

As seen by the Table 3, participants' multicultural ideology, views that migrants should maintain their own original culture and a perceived preference for migrants to adopt the host society's culture and to maintain a link with them were correlated. More favourable attitudes to cultural diversity, as measured by multicultural ideology, were associated with the host society favouring maintenance of original culture in the acculturation process, along with the perception that minority groups desired contact with the host society, and were in favour of adopting host society culture.

Discussion

Australia is a culturally diverse society with migrant, refugees and asylum seekers arriving from different parts of the world. Even though Australian population favours cultural diversity, there has been a fear that it may lead to negative consequences (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010). The fears and concerns have been severe toward asylum seekers, who have been arriving in the last decade (Schweitzer et al., 2005; Stewart et al., 2014). In spite of the prejudices and biases toward the asylum seekers, a number of Australians participated in a government program and hosted these individuals in their homes (Bowles, 2012; Bycroft, 2013). It was of interest to explore if these volunteers differed from the others. It was also important to explore the beliefs and ideas the general community had toward diversity. The study had a dual purpose.

Firstly, it aimed to compare those who offered themselves as volunteers with other members of the community to investigate whether demographic and attitudinal factors influenced the volunteers' willingness to support asylum seekers by hosting them in their houses. Secondly, the Australian attitudes towards diversity and acculturation were explored generally. Hypotheses were partially supported.

Intergroup Differences

Predictions regarding intergroup differences between CPN volunteers and the wider community were generally not supported. The study found no differences between the groups on age, gender, education, income, religious belief, ethnic status, or cultural group. However, some areas of difference were identified. CPN volunteers were more likely to have been born overseas. This is consistent with literature which indicates that being part of non-dominant ethnic group helps a person understand the multicultural issues of other culturally diverse individuals (Lam et al., 2013; Warburton & Laughin, 2007). Members of the CPN were more likely to have travelled overseas within the previous five years than the community sample. Overseas travel can be considered as a way of exposing people to different cultures (Oudenhoven & Ward, 2013; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), and thereby effecting change in the individual's attitudes towards diversity. Although Ward et al. (2002) argue tourism is often characterised by superficial and unequal interactions, on the other hand, recreational travel is likely to involve voluntary and positive interactions. These conditions have been associated with reductions in prejudice (Pettigrew, et al., 2011). Further investigation is needed to determine the nature of overseas travel however, as this study did not distinguish between travel for recreation and for work. There may also be individual traits associated with actively seeking out overseas travel experience that could also influence how likely a person is to actively seek out the opportunity to participate in a scheme such as the CPN. One possibility could be a person's openness to experience. This study did not

look at individual traits, but given no significant differences in attitude were found between the two groups, exploring individual traits may be of benefit in understanding what causes some people to take action.

CPN volunteers were also more likely to be professionals. In the absence of a difference based on income, it may be that features of professional employment such as potentially greater job security and opportunities for advancement, can lead to reduced realistic threat, shown to increase prejudice (Schweitzer et al., 2005). People working in professional fields may feel less threatened by asylum seekers and immigrants in general as they are less likely to experience real or perceived competition for temporary or lower skilled jobs (Jackson et al., 2001).

It was predicted that CPN volunteers would have higher multicultural ideology scores, indicating more support for cultural diversity, but this was not supported by the results, as the groups did not differ significantly on this measure. The means for both groups were towards the upper end of the range, indicating relatively high support for multiculturalism, which is in line with Dandy and Pe-Pua's (2010) findings. It was also hypothesised that CPN volunteers would hold more positive views towards cultural maintenance and cultural contact. However, acculturation preferences for either maintenance of original culture or contact with new culture did not differ between the groups. The lack of difference across groups may be partly due to the high proportion of tertiary educated participants in all groups.

The group comparison results suggest that overall the groups were very similar demographically and attitudinally. From this study, it must be concluded that attitudinal differences in themselves are not enough to distinguish those people who are willing become involved in the hosting asylum seekers in their home.

General Attitudes to Diversity

Demographic variables. Partial support was found for the impact of demographic variables upon support for multiculturalism and acculturation across the pooled sample. Results indicated participants who were more

highly educated reported more favourable attitudes towards multiculturalism. This corresponds to earlier research (Dandy & Pe-Pua, 2010), which also found more highly educated participants held more positive views of cultural diversity. Further education may help in developing the skills to critically analyse false beliefs about minority groups such as asylum seekers. Tertiary institutions are also often culturally diverse institutions, allowing opportunities to interact with people from a range of backgrounds, thus reducing prejudice.

The second demographic variable that had an effect on attitude was religion. Respondents who indicated they did not hold religious beliefs had higher scores on the Multicultural Ideology Scale, indicating higher levels of tolerance for diversity. This corresponds with much of the psychological literature that has found links between religious belief and prejudice (Hunsberger & Jackson, 2005). Various explanatory mechanisms have been employed to understand this link (Hunsberger & Jackson). People who most strongly identify with their religious group may be more likely to be prejudiced against outgroup members (Hunsberger & Jackson).

Acculturation preferences. The results revealed a positive association between scores on the Multicultural Ideology Scale and acculturation preference for maintenance of original culture. As expected, participants who were more in favour of diversity were more likely to advocate that migrants maintain their original culture when they come to Australia. This is in line with earlier acculturation research, which associates support for multiculturalism with an integration strategy for acculturation, where both groups maintain elements of their own cultures as they come into contact (Berry, 2001; Zagefka & Brown, 2002).

Predictions relating to the impact of perceived acculturation preferences on support for cultural diversity were partially supported. Participants who perceived migrants as wanting to both adopt Australian culture and have contact with Australians were more likely to support cultural diversity.

However, no significant relationship was found between perceived desire to maintain original culture and support for multiculturalism. While the results of this study suggest perceived desires of migrants for certain acculturation strategies are linked to host societies' attitudes towards diversity, they do not fully align with Tip et al.'s (2012) findings, which predict that the perceived desire of minority groups to maintain their original culture can appear threatening to a host society, and potentially lead to less tolerance for multiculturalism. Instead, the results suggest that contrary to the British sample studied by Tip et al., the Australians sampled in this study did not find cultural maintenance threatening and were more likely to consider the benefits of cultural diversity.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

There are a number of limitations to consider and results of this study should be taken with caution. Firstly, the community sample did not represent the broader Australian community accurately, as they were recruited through a snowballing method that started within a university setting, leading to a higher proportion of tertiary-educated respondents. Future research should ensure large samples with participants from all walks of life are recruited, leading to a more representative sample of Australian society. Secondly, convenience sampling was used, and participants in all groups were self-selected. It is possible people decided to participate as they felt strongly about issues related to multiculturalism in Australia, particularly at a time of wide media coverage of issues relating to asylum seekers. Finally, although the survey was online and anonymous, due to the subject matter, survey responses may have been subject to social desirability effects. It may be beneficial to include a measure of social desirability in future studies.

Keeping in view that attitudinal differences between groups were not found, it may be worthwhile investigating if, personal characteristics such as empathy impacts why people take action in support of others or fears and anxieties prevent them from such behaviours.

Implications and Conclusion

Despite the study's limitations, this was the first research to examine why Australian members of the community volunteered to host asylum seekers by participating in the government initiative to move them into the community. Therefore it was a unique opportunity to investigate the characteristics of people willing to take action in support of a minority group. The study also adds to the body of work on acculturation theory in Australia more generally, by analysing acculturation preferences from the host society's point of view, as well as investigating how a host society's perceived acculturation preferences are related to its support for multiculturalism. Current models of acculturation recognise the role of host society preferences in the acculturation process, with discordance between host and minority group strategies potentially leading to problematic outcomes. The ability to predict when consensual or conflictual outcomes are likely to result may assist professionals working with minority groups to better anticipate and address acculturative stress.

This study also reinforces earlier work that has demonstrated the importance of education in reducing prejudice and improving support for diversity. Any attempts by policy-makers or professionals to increase support in the community for diversity should consider the role of education in addressing bias. There are also implications from the finding that religion can be associated with more negative attitudes towards diversity. While membership of a religious organisation may sometimes result in less positive attitudes towards outgroup members, organisations, and their leaders also have an opportunity to encourage positive attitudes towards diversity and create intergroup contact opportunities, and this could also be applied to all organisations that inspire strong ingroup identity among their members.

At a time when political and public debate over asylum seekers continues, further understanding of the factors that can contribute to support for multiculturalism, and furthermore, actual willingness to

support asylum seekers and other minority groups, may be useful when confronted by negative attitudes in the community in general. The outcome is potentially useful for professionals, policy-makers and clinicians who need to address these issues and their consequences in Australian society.

References

- Allen, P., & Bennett, K. (2012). *SPSS statistics: A practical guide version 20.0*. Melbourne: Cengage Learning Australia.
- Arends-Toth, J., & van de Vijver, F. J. R. (2003). Multiculturalism and acculturation: Views of Dutch and Turkish-Dutch. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 33*, 249-266. doi: 10.1002.ejsp.143
- Australian Bureau of Statistics, (2012). *Reflecting a nation: Stories from the 2011 census, 2012-2013* [Electronic version]. Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/Lookup/2071.0mainfeatures902012-2013>
- Berry, J. (2001). A psychology of immigration. *Journal of Social Issues, 57* (3), 615-631. doi: 10.1111/0022-4537.00231
- Berry, J. (2003). Conceptual approaches to acculturation. In K. M. Chun, P. Balls Organista & G. Marin (Eds.), *Acculturation: Advances in theory, measurement, and applied research* (pp. 17-37). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Berry, J. (2005). Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 29*, 697-712. doi: 10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.07.013
- Berry, J., & Kalin, R. (1995). Multicultural and ethnic attitudes in Canada: An overview of the 1991 national survey. *Canadian Journal of Behavioural Science, 27*(3), 301-320. Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/220520091?accountid=13380>
- Bourhis, R. Y., Barrette, G., El-Geledi, S., & Schmidt Sr., R. (2009). Acculturation orientations and social relations between immigrant and host community members in California. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 40*(3), 443-467. doi: 10.1177/0022022108330988
- Bourhis, R. Y., Moise, L. C., Perreault, S., & Senecal, S. (1997). Towards an interactive acculturation model: A social psychological approach. *International Journal of Psychology, 32*(6), 369-386. doi: 0.1080/002075997400629
- Bowles, M. (2012, May 21). Opening statement to Legal and Constitutional Committee, Budget Estimates hearing, Parliament House, Canberra. Retrieved from: http://www.google.com.au/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=10&ved=0CFgQFjAJ&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.immi.gov.au%2Fabout%2Fspeeches-pres%2F_pdf%2F2012%2F2012-05-21-opening-statement.pdf&ei=0VaDUI3WK0tiQeY0IHYDQ&usg=AFQjCNEKgdGCTPnvL_JW8VRkkapGyemUg
- Bulbeck, C. (2004). The 'white worrier' in South Australia. *Journal of Sociology, 40* (4), 341-361. doi: 10.1177/1440783304048379
- Bycroft, D. Australian Homestay Network, (2013). *Community placement network*. Retrieved from website: <http://www.homestaynetwork.org/cpn>
- Chirkov, V. (2009). Critical psychology of acculturation: What do we study and how do we study it, when we investigate acculturation? *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 33*, 94-105. doi: 10.1016/j.ijintrel.2009.12.004
- Colic-Peisker, V. (2011). A new era in Australian multiculturalism? From working-class "ethnics" to a "multicultural middle-class". *International Migration Review, 45*(3), 562-587. doi:10.1111/j.1747-7379.2011.00858.x
- Dandy, J., & Pe-Pua, R. (2010). Attitudes to multiculturalism, immigration and cultural diversity: Comparison of dominant and non-dominant groups in three Australian states. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 34*, 34-46. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2009.10.003

- Department of Immigration and Citizenship. (2011). *The people of Australia: Australia's multicultural policy* [Electronic version]. Retrieved from http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/multicultural/pdf_doc/people-of-australia-multicultural-policy-booklet.pdf
- Department of Immigration and Citizenship. (2014). *Australia's migration trends 2011-12 at a glance* [Electronic version]. Retrieved from <https://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/immigration-update/australian-migration-trends-2011-12-glance.pdf>
- Hernandez, M. (2009). Psychological theories of immigration. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 19(6), 713-729. doi: 10.1080/10911350902910898
- Hunsberger, B., & Jackson, L. M. (2005). Religion, meaning, and prejudice. *Journal of Social Issues*, 61(4), 807-826. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-4560.2005.00433.x
- Jackson, J. S., Brown, K. T., Brown, T. N., & Marks, B. (2001). Contemporary immigration policy orientations among dominant-group members in Western Europe [Electronic version]. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57(3), 431-457. Retrieved from <http://gateway.library.qut.edu.au/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=afh&AN=5487116&site=ehost-live>
- Jackson, L. M., & Hunsberger, B. (1999). An intergroup perspective on religion and prejudice [Electronic version]. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 38(4), 509-523. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/1387609?uid=2&uid=4&sid=21102727343613>
- Lam, S., Tracz, S., & Lucey, C. (2013). Age, gender, and ethnicity of counsellor trainees and corresponding counselling self efficacy: Research findings and implication for counsellor educators. *International Journal of Advanced Counselling*, 35, 172-187. Doi: 10.1007/s10447-012-9175-3
- Milner, K., & Khawaja, N. G. (2010). Sudanese refugees in Australia: The impact of Acculturation stress. *Journal of Pacific Rim Psychology*, 4(1), 19-29. Retrieved from: <http://search.informit.com.au.ezp01.library.qut.edu.au/documentSummary;dn=413876539201159;res=IELNZC>
- Oudenhoven, J. P., & Ward, C. (2013). Fading majority cultures: The implications of transnationalism and demographic changes for immigrant acculturation. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 23(2), 81-97. doi:10.1002/casp.2132
- Pedersen, A., Attwell, J., & Heveli, D. (2005). Prediction of negative attitudes toward Australian asylum seekers: False beliefs, nationalism, and self-esteem. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 57(3), 148-160. doi: 10.1080/00049530500125157
- Pedersen, A., Fozdar, F., & Kenny, M. A. (2012). Battling boatloads of prejudice: An interdisciplinary approach to activism with asylum seekers and refugees in Australia. In D. Bretherton and N. Balvin, (Eds.), *Peace Psychology in Australia*, (pp. 121-137). Boston, MA: Springer US.
- Pedersen, A., & Hartley, L. K. (2012). Prejudice against Muslim Australians: The role of values, gender and consensus. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*, 22, 239-255. doi: 10.1002/casp.1110
- Pedersen, A., Watt, S., & Hansen, S. (2006). The role of false beliefs in the community's and the federal government's attitudes toward Australian asylum seekers. *Australian Journal of Social Issues*, 41(1), 105-124. Retrieved from: <http://search.proquest.com.ezp01.library.qut.edu.au/docview/216247221>
- Pettigrew, T. F., & Tropp, L. R. (2006). A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 90(5), 751-783. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.90.5.751

- Pettigrew, T. F., Tropp, L. R., Wagner, U., & Christ, O. (2011). Recent advances in intergroup contact theory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35, 271-280. doi: 10.1016/j.ijintrel.2011.03.001
- Phillips, J. (2011). *Asylum seekers and refugees: What are the facts?* Parliamentary Library, Canberra, Australia. Retrieved from <http://www.aph.gov.au/Library/pubs/BN/sp/AsylumFacts.pdf>
- Rohman, A., Florack, A., & Piontkowski, U. (2006). The role of discordant acculturation attitudes in perceived threat: An analysis of host and immigrant attitudes in Germany. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30, 683-702. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2006.06.
- Schweitzer, R., Perkoulidis, S., Krome, S., Ludlow, C., & Ryan, M. (2005). Attitudes towards refugees: The dark side of prejudice in Australia. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 57(3), 170-179. doi: 10.1080.00049530500125199
- Smith, R. A., & Khawaja, N. G. (2011). A review of the acculturation experiences of international students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35, 699-713. doi: 10.1016/j.ijintrel.2011.08.004
- Stewart, K., Pedersen, A., & Paradies, Y. (2014). It's always good to help when possible but...: Identifying obstacles to bystander anti-prejudice. *The International Journal of Diversity in Education*, 13 (3), 39 - 53.
- Suhnan, A., Pedersen, A., & Hartley, L. (2012). Re-examining prejudice against asylum seekers in Australia: The role of people smugglers, the perception of threat, and acceptance of false beliefs. *The Australian Community Psychologist*, 24, 2, 79 - 97.
- Tabachnick, B. G., & Fidell, L. S. (2007). *Using multivariate statistics* (5th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson Education.
- Tip, L. K., Zagefka, H., Gonzalez, R., Brown, R., Cinnirella, M., & Na, X. (2012). Is support for multiculturalism threatened by...threat itself? *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 36, 22-30. doi: 10.1016/j.ijintrel.2010.09.011
- Turoy-Smith, K. M., Kane, R., & Pedersen, A. (2013). The willingness of a society to act on behalf of Indigenous Australians and refugees: The role of contact, intergroup anxiety, prejudice, and support for legislative change. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 43, 179-195. doi: 10.1111/jasp.12017.
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (n.d.). *Asylum-Seekers*. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c137.html>
- Voci, A., & Hewstone, M. (2003). Intergroup contact and prejudice toward immigrants in Italy: The meditational role of anxiety and the moderational role of group salience. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, 6(1), 37-54. doi: 10.1177/136430203006001011
- Ward, C. (2008). Thinking outside the Berry boxes: New perspectives on identity, acculturation and intercultural relations. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 32, 105-114. doi: 10.1016/j.ijintrel.2007.11.002
- Ward, C., Bochner, S., & Furnham, A. (2002). *Psychology of Culture Shock* (2nd ed.). Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.
- Ward, C., & Masgoret, A. (2008). Attitudes toward immigrants, immigration, and multiculturalism in New Zealand: A social psychological analysis. *The International Migration Review*, 42(1), 227-248. doi: 10.1111/j.1747-7379.2007.00119.x
- Warburton, J., & McLaughlin, D. (2007). Passing on our culture: How older Australians from diverse cultural backgrounds contribute to civil society. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 22 (1), 47-60.
- Zagefka, H., & Brown, R. (2002). The relationship between acculturation strategies, relative fit and intergroup relations: Immigrant-majority relations in Germany. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 32, 171-188. doi: 10.1002/ejsp.73.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank Australian Homestay Network and the participants for their assistance with the study.

Address for correspondence

Associate Professor Nigar Gohar Khawaja
E: n.khawaja@qut.edu.au
Tel: +61 7 3138 4540
School of Psychology and Counselling,
Faculty of Health, Queensland University of
Technology, O Block, B Wing, Room 525
Ring Road, Kelvin Grove, Queensland 4059,
Australia.

(De)Constructing paradigms: Creating a psychology curriculum for conscientisation education

Dawn Darlaston-Jones
University of Notre Dame, Australia

Critical psychology challenges the traditional assumptions of mainstream psychology by identifying the bases of power that maintain inequity and unjust social practices and working towards transformational change. Psychology has the capacity to be at the forefront of a social change agenda to remove the barriers that impede human functioning; the vanguard of such a social change agenda should be the educational settings in which psychology is taught and where psychologists are trained. To this end I propose a curriculum framework embedded in critical theory and critical pedagogy that allows the educational processes (pedagogy) and course content (knowledge) to be (de)constructed and the hidden unspoken discourses to emerge. In addition, in the context of Australia this includes a decolonisation agenda that analyses the ways in which power is used to maintain subordination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the ways in which education becomes a vehicle of contestation and substantive reconciliation. To this end, I articulate the philosophical and theoretical concepts that I utilised during my doctoral research and which have evolved over the past 10 years of teaching practice and which is now embedded into the Bachelor of Behavioural Science at the University of Notre Dame (Fremantle campus). Such an approach to psychology education has the capacity to increase the diversity of students attracted to the discipline, improve student satisfaction, contribute to the creation of a more inclusive society, as well as achieve the relevance and potential that has been suggested is currently lacking in psychology.

Psychology has evolved as a discipline that focusses on the intra-psychic processes of the person with less emphasis on the context that triggers or influences that process. Yet as a profession it is conducted in a society that is shaped and directed by the values, norms and biases that characterise its culture and temporal location in history. Therefore, its practitioners and scientists are educated, and then practise, within a spatial and temporal zone not in a vacuum; furthermore these practitioners and scientists are not immune from the socialisation processes that construct the identities of the individuals that comprise those various contexts (Prilleltensky & Fox, 1997). The modernist view of the individual is based on the binary notion of self/other and has resulted in individualism dominating the construction of Western society. It has been demonstrated that commitment to the values of individualism, meritocracy, and consumerism that characterise educational settings serve as a barrier to student satisfaction and completion by conceptualising personal success (or failure) as located within the individual with no

consideration of the contextual factors that promote or inhibit that success (Darlaston-Jones, 2005). In essence, the value placed on the individual is defined by the absence of an equal commitment to the collective. Society then becomes comprised of what Gergen (1999) describes as isolated souls who are doomed to enter and leave the world as self with everyone else defined as other and therefore different and separate from. It is this deification of the self that has led to what I have come to view as the theology of individualism that dominates Western culture often to the exclusion of community and which has such damaging and isolating effects on individuals, particularly Indigenous students (Kinnane, 2014). Consequently, I argue that the education of psychology students should incorporate critical theory in the analysis of the complex interactions that occur between the person, the relational interactions of family, employment, and neighbourhood as well as the broader socio-political, economic, and cultural milieu. I further argue that in a settler context such as Australia that such analysis must include an emphasis on

decolonisation both of the discipline and profession of psychology as well as the broader societal context. While similar calls for a more inclusive psychology have been made, psychology education has thus far resisted and avoided the necessary changes and has succeeded in maintaining the status quo. Consequently, articulating a curriculum framework that decolonises the discipline and offers the potential for societal change might assist and encourage other educators to consider different approaches to the training of the next generation of professionals.

Proponents of critical psychology argue that psychology can no longer sustain the misguided belief that psychology is a value neutral endeavour (Prilleltensky & Fox, 1997). Critical psychology therefore challenges the traditional assumptions of mainstream psychology with a particular emphasis on identifying the bases of power that maintain inequity and unjust social practices. To achieve this goal, universities need to be transformed into pluralistic spaces that expect, and plan for, difference within the student body (Tanaka, 2003) but which also deconstruct the epistemological and ontological foundations on which they are built (Claiborne, 2014). Such an approach requires deep scrutiny of the curriculum in relation to the types of knowledge that is taught and the hidden implications of including, or excluding, other knowledge and perspectives, and it includes integration of the student's external world into the learning environment (Bartell, 2003). Therefore I suggest that as a discipline and a profession, psychology should be at the forefront of a social change agenda to remove the barriers that impede human functioning; the vanguard of such a social change agenda should be the educational settings in which psychology is taught and where psychologists are trained. To this end I propose a curriculum framework embedded in critical theory and critical pedagogy that allows the educational processes (pedagogy) and course content (knowledge) to be (de)constructed and the hidden unspoken discourses to emerge. In addition, in the context of Australia (and other colonised settler spaces), this includes a

decolonisation agenda that incorporates an analysis of the ways in which power is used to maintain subordination of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the ways in which education becomes a vehicle of contestation and substantive reconciliation (Dudgeon, Darlaston-Jones & Clark, 2011 ; Darlaston-Jones, Herbert, Ryan, Darlaston-Jones, Harris & Dudgeon, 2014).

In this paper I articulate the philosophical and theoretical concepts that I utilised during my doctoral research and which have evolved over the past 10 years of teaching practice. In the early days of my involvement in the Bachelor of Behavioural Science at the Fremantle campus of the University of Notre Dame it was only in the units (courses/subjects) that I taught that this framework and approach could be applied. However, in recent years it has become possible to expand it into other units and it is now embedded across the entire degree programme. Consequently, the degree now reflects the vision conceived in my PhD and articulated in this paper. I illustrate the synergy between the disciplinary knowledge and the pedagogical practices employed in its transmission and how this can contribute to transformational social change. Such an approach to psychology education has the capacity to increase the diversity of students attracted to the discipline, improve student satisfaction (Darlaston-Jones, 2005), and contribute to the creation of a more inclusive society, as well as achieve the relevance and potential that has been suggested is currently lacking in psychology (Albee, 1986; Breen & Darlaston-Jones, 2010 ; Riggs, 2004).

As is the case with many researchers, my interest in the relationship between political process and education (and higher education in particular) is a function of my own life experience. Throughout the four years I spent as an undergraduate and Honours student I felt a strong sense of isolation. For me the theories of human behaviour to which I was exposed in psychology did little to explain human action and it seemed too simplistic to reduce that complexity and diversity of human nature to a mean score. I interpreted my experience

however, as a personal deficit and questioned my suitability as a student. Once I entered postgraduate study in Community Psychology I realised there was another way of seeing the world, one that meshed with my own need to view a holistic context rather than segments of it and it was here that I began to rethink my internalisation of the negative. I still questioned whether my experience was isolated to me or whether other students had similar responses not only to the educational environment but to the study of psychology specifically. It was this that ignited my interest in the learning process and the role of universities as a vehicle for social commentary and this interest was sustained and nurtured by the students I taught, and the stories they shared with me in an informal way as their tutor and lecturer.

In my PhD thesis (Darlaston-Jones, 2005) my story was echoed in the voices of many of the students I interviewed; it has also been prevalent in the stories of students I have taught over the years. Yet it would not be accurate to see these experiences as a negative reflection on the various educators or sites. My own experience as both a student and academic in different contexts suggests that there exists a strong commitment among university staff to assisting students and to help them to achieve their goals. This however, makes it more important to understand and identify the mechanisms involved in the student experience because if their undergraduate years are characterised as 'surviving' within an environment that explicitly promotes student support structures, it must mean that something else is occurring at an implicit, unconscious, taken-for-granted level of interaction that is problematic for students. It was this analysis that led me to the work of critical theorists such as Freire, Parker, Apple, Giroux, and hooks who argue that education needs to be about liberation and freedom; it must contribute to the creation of a society that values and respects diversity and which is inclusive of all peoples. By definition such an approach to education intrinsically incorporates psychology and in the context of

a settler nation such as Australia it must incorporate a decolonisation approach to substantive reconciliation between the settler and the First nations people who were affected by the colonisation process.

During the social reforms of the 1960s non-traditional students were able to access higher education in greater numbers than at any time in history. Not only were they entering universities but they were influencing the development and direction of their courses. There was a global increase during this time in programmes devoted to women, and Indigenous peoples, and a resurgence of interest in politics and philosophy as vehicles for the critique of a status quo that ignored the privilege of Whiteness and the structure of power in constituting society (Aronowitz, 2000; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991; Freire, 1998). These social changes were stimulated by the enthusiasm and euphoria that characterised the post World War II years and that provided the catalyst for the spread of democracy (Bean & Metzner, 1985). But if the 1960s and 70s were characterised by student empowerment, recent decades have been defined by disempowerment (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991; Giroux, 2001; Hook, 2013).

Recent shifts in ideology have seen a reversal of the social justice trend with universities reducing offerings to students and refocusing the role of tertiary education away from 'learning' and towards 'training' (Blackmore, 2001). In this manner, universities are conceptualised primarily as instructional sites and the fact that they are also cultural and political sites is largely ignored (Claibourne, 2014; Giroux, 1983). The marketing of higher education as a 'must have' commodity to society has resulted in the sector creating a demand and then servicing it with one eye geared to the job market and the other firmly on the stock market (Aronowitz, 2000). This is demonstrated by the increased globalisation of higher education and the associated embedding of neo-liberal ideology around market forces. With students being reframed as consumers and universities competing for

the lucrative full-fee paying international student, as well as the use of technology to provide access to on-line learning, the ubiquitous 'business model' defines what constitutes a 'student' and 'knowledge' and converts both into commodities. The net result of this ideological shift is that citizenship education, which has been a foundational tenet of a liberal democratic society, plays a subordinate role to the vocational relevance of the curriculum (Giroux, 1983; Tierney, 1999). In this new order, the morality that once informed debate within universities in regard to human existence has been replaced with technical arguments about bottom line economics and increasing positions of power over one's competition.

One of the main contentions of critical psychologists is that psychology plays an important role in supporting the Western view of a civilised society (Albee, 1986; Albee, Joffe, & Dusenbury, 1988; Allen, 2001; Baritz, 1974; Jacoby, 1975; Riggs, 2004; Sarason, 1976, 1981). Indeed, psychology is taught in the universities that are themselves a major contributor to the maintenance of the status quo. It is through the socialisation processes that occur in major social institutions (education, church, law, media, family etc.) that society is constructed, and it is from these institutions that the values and norms that become the cultural barometer for society are drawn. Mainstream psychology then by extension becomes a perpetrator of the inequities that result from these power imbalances rather than a voice of opposition and reform (Albee, 1986; Albee et al., 1988; Allen, 2001; Baritz, 1974; Jacoby, 1975; Sarason, 1976, 1981). This is particularly relevant to a multicultural nation such as Australia where it becomes imperative to create an educational system that is relevant to all citizens not just those of the dominant group. To achieve this goal, universities need to be transformed into pluralistic spaces that expect, and plan for difference within the student body (Tanaka, 2003) but which also deconstruct the epistemological and ontological foundations on which they are built (Claiborne, 2014).

This requires not only the disciplinary knowledge but also the pedagogical practices by which that knowledge is transmitted to be deconstructed and (re)analysed in order to achieve the goal of student satisfaction and social justice and transformation.

Responding to the challenge of educational change entails two different but equally important approaches: First, the development of Instrumental Structures at an institutional level which includes (but is not limited to) on-line learning environments with appropriate support services; evening and early morning class times; flexible office hours for academic staff and student services, especially in the student administration and library area; adequate and affordable on-site child care for students and staff; affordable tuition strategies; on-site employment for students; and opportunities for students and academics to meet informally to talk and engage. While at one level such strategies might be regarded as a simplistic solution to a set of complex problems, the benefit is that these adjustments to the daily operations of the university provide a visible, immediate message to students that the university understands the complexity in their lives and is making an effort to accommodate this. In this way the student experiences a culture of understanding and support rather than rigidity in its daily functioning. Many universities, are already utilising these initiatives in an effort to support students and therefore for these universities, the focus can be transferred to the deeper more complex and critical analysis of the cultural nexus between the university and society. However, the challenge exists for the more traditional universities to follow this example and adjust their ideology in line with the needs of the contemporary student.

The second component is the creation of a Decolonisation Curriculum which requires a deeper, and more fundamental philosophical and epistemological shift. This is especially relevant to education in a colonised space because the intergenerational transmission of the values, assumptions, beliefs, and practices that established the racial hierarchy of one group in relation to

another needs to be broken if substantive reconciliation is to occur (Darlaston-Jones et al., 2014; Dudgeon, et al., in press). This context requires that the dominant teaching and learning practices be called into question and (de)constructed to incorporate Indigenous voices, knowledges, ways of working, and belief systems. Indigenous psychology has to be valued alongside the Western paradigm in a way that acknowledges both but which encourages the critical reflexivity necessary for members of the dominant group to understand their own position relative to Indigenous peoples and the shared history of colonisation. In emphasising the subject position of each person in the context of colonisation, the opportunity to include conversations around class, gender, sexuality, and other intersections of identity also emerge. If the student population is multicultural and multi-class then so too the educational processes (pedagogy) and course content (knowledge) need to reflect this by deconstructing the taken-for-granted knowledge that we are privileging and disseminating. It calls for the discourses that maintain asymmetrical power relations (Prilleltensky, 2003) in the learning context and the community to be challenged by creating a teaching and learning environment, or a 'community of learning', that positions the student at the foundation (Hanno, 1999); a critical approach to education based on the liberation theories of Freire (1970, 1998, 1999); and a reassessment of how the content we teach privileges certain groups over others (Riggs, 2004). Such an approach requires deep scrutiny of the curriculum in relation to the types of knowledge that is taught and the hidden implications of including or excluding other knowledge and perspectives, and it includes integration of the student's external world into the learning environment (Bartell, 2003). This approach changes the power dynamic relative to the type of knowledge that is taught, and therefore privileged, and this could have dramatic benefits to students who feel isolated and marginalised by the dominant ideology, and this is especially true for Indigenous students.

The curriculum structure identified in Figure 1 articulates a model of teaching and learning that is embedded within a decolonisation framework. It illustrates the progression of learning from the current dominant framework (Basic) which encourages surface learning and neglects critical reflexivity, towards a Freirian liberation model of teaching and learning (Advanced). The latter approach is based on deep understanding of the nexus between the self and other and the power bases that are involved in those relationships and therefore has the capacity to change the individual and the collective. The starting point for such curriculum construction must be the outcome one seeks to achieve; a psychology education that is reflexive, inclusive, and which seeks to participate in social transformation to redress the power imbalances that lead to psychological distress; a psychology that is reflexive to ensure relevance, and a psychology that is reflective of the context in which it operates. To this end, the process of education must be one of (de)construction in order to identify the discourses and acculturative practices that frame the values assumptions and beliefs that underpin the setting and which contribute to the dominance of whiteness and neo-liberal ideology. Creating a curriculum that unpacks dominance and exclusion and creates the opportunity for the opposite to emerge has the potential to lead to transformative praxis by encouraging students (and staff) to position themselves relative to the societal issues they seek to redress.

This perspective of psychology education means that five issues (Tanaka, 2002) gain greater relevance in understanding the student experience and how this relates to not only the university experience but how this is transferred to society.

These issues are:

Voice: whose voice is privileged in psychology and by extension who is silenced, are student and educators able to be seen as having 'subject position' or are they objectified by the consumer focus adopted by the sector and the discipline?

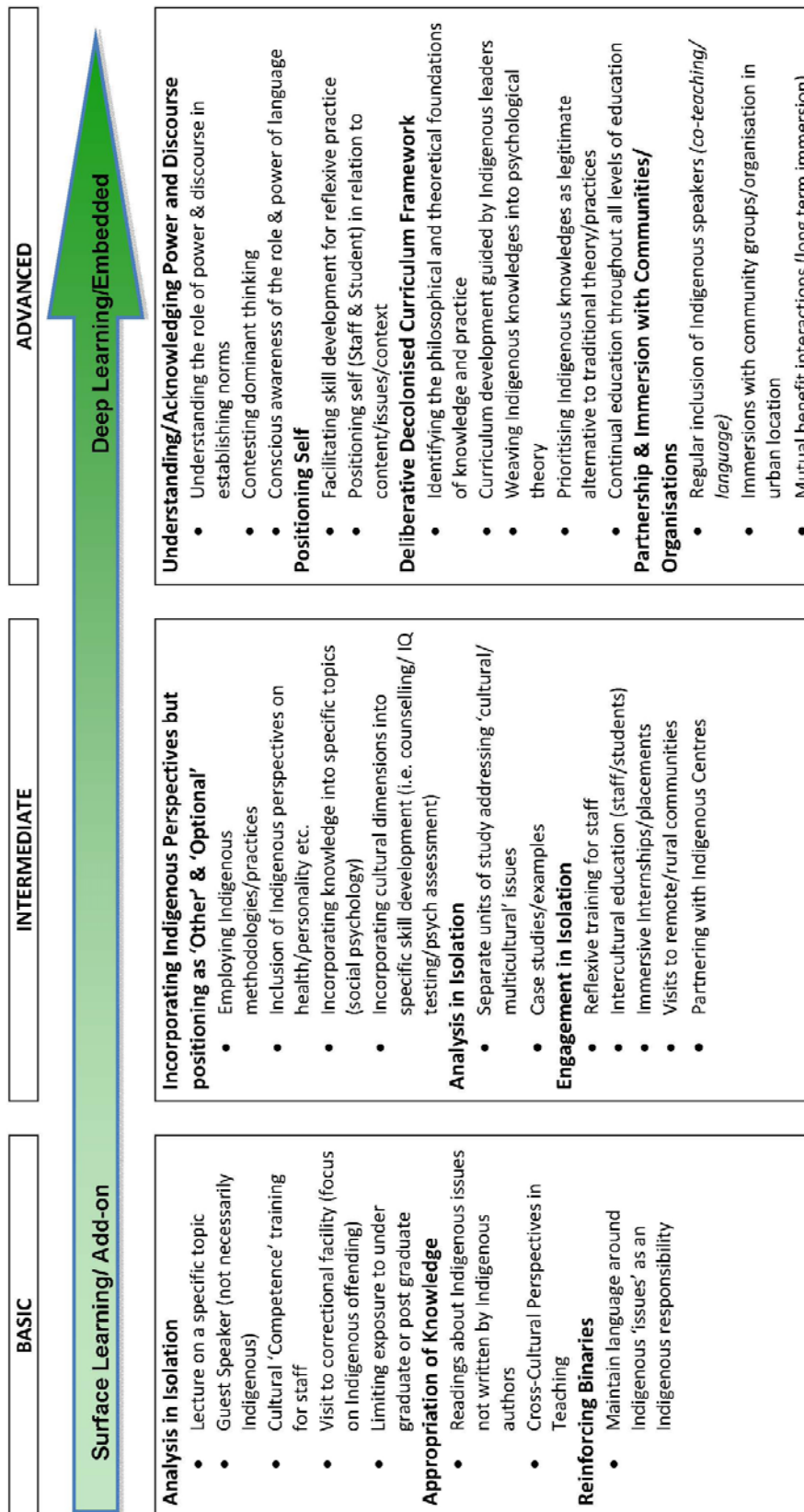


Figure 1: Decolonisation Curriculum Framework

Power: in seeking universal laws of behaviour do we question the Eurocentric mono-cultural nature of psychological knowledge? Do we examine the ways in which such an approach positions minority groups and particularly Indigenous peoples? Do we scrutinise the ways in which pedagogical theory and teaching practices reinforce the dominant perspective and so contribute to cultural hegemony?

Authenticity: do educators and students identify their own cultural space that includes issues of social, economic, and political power?

Reflexivity: is there an explicit examination of the subject positions that individuals occupy in society and their role in constituting the norms that contribute to the creation of the university as a cultural place?

Reconstitution: is psychology able to effect change and create a learning environment conducive to the development of an inclusive society?

Critical psychology has at its core a commitment to social justice and the creation of a 'good society' that promotes the wellbeing of all its citizens rather than just the interests of the privileged (Albee, 1986; Albee et al., 1988; Baritz, 1974; Brown, 1989; Deutsch & Steil, 1988; Fox, 1991, 1993; Fox & Prilleltensky, 1996; Newborough, 1992). Fundamental to this is a critique of society's major institutions and of psychology as contributing to the established norms that facilitate the marginalisation of less powerful individuals and groups. This entails an explicit analysis of power and the role it plays not only in the creation and maintenance of oppression but also in its ability to enact liberation (Foucault, 1997). As a profession, psychology uses its power to reinforce its position within society as an owner and disseminator of knowledge, but perhaps more importantly by defining what constitutes knowledge (Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2002). This power can be used to

maintain the current systems or it can be used to transform society such that all citizens have fair and equitable access to community resources; in effect, the creation of a well-society (Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2002).

Freire's seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) has been credited with raising the awareness of mainstream educators to the effects of marginalisation and oppression on educational performance. Freire insisted that it was not possible to understand why some children performed well at school while others did not, without a critical analysis of the cultural, social, political, and historical context the children were experiencing inside and outside of school (Freire, 1970). The view that all children enter school as a blank slate on which an educator can write was rejected by Freire as a nonsense in that poverty, marginalisation, race, and politics all contribute to how effectively a child will learn (Freire, 1970, 1998). In this respect, education can be conceptualised as a set of theoretical assumptions, processes, and practices that create and perpetuate a body of knowledge (Giroux, 1983). While Freire's work was principally conducted with primary and secondary school students his arguments apply equally to tertiary education.

Failure to examine the contributing effects of culture, history, economics, politics, and the institutions that support and contribute to the development of the person presents a limited understanding of human behaviour and its consequences (Smith, 1999). It was this that drove my initial investigations into the student experience in order to gain a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that contribute to, and promote, success, satisfaction and retention among undergraduate psychology students and how the teaching and learning context as well as what is taught might contribute to feelings of dissatisfaction (Darlaston-Jones, 2005). This relationship and how this is interpreted by the student in relation to his or her self-concept, appears to be critical in understanding the experience of education

but it was the potentially oppressive nature of this relationship that emerged as a significant finding during my early research (Darlaston-Jones 2005). The value of any experience depends not only on the experience per se but on the struggles around the way it is interpreted and defined (Giroux, 1983). Therefore it is not just the actual interaction that occurs as a function of being a student that is crucial but how that experience is interpreted. It is also the effect of that experience in relation to the long term outcome for the student and how this is played out on the broader fabric of society that is imperative. If the structure, policies, and processes result in fewer students being retained within psychology then the cost to society is visible in the lack of graduates and the knowledge, and hence expertise, they bring to the broader community (Tierney, 1992). Perhaps even more important is the issue of the type of students that are being retained. Arguing that the value base of higher education imitates the Western ideal of individualism, consumerism, and meritocracy at the expense of social responsibility and justice then the type of student likely to flourish in that environment is one for whom that value base resonates. This then reinforces those ideals and values in society and the notion of a just and well society is lost in favour of one that emphasises individual achievement over compassion (Apple, 1982, 2000; Aronowitz, 2000; Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991; Biesta, 2001; Claibourne, 2014; Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2002).

The reverse is also problematic in that being part of a system that promotes a set of values to which the individual cannot subscribe can result in the person internalising the difference as a deficit. This internalisation of deficit can lead to the student viewing him or herself as the cause of the problem rather than viewing the system as inappropriate or responsible. This process has been described as psychological oppression (Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1996) whereby the person develops a negative view of self in response to a situation or context rather than questioning the validity of the

situation or context in terms of its appropriateness. So for example, a student who fails to understand course content in spite of employing appropriate study techniques might internalise the situation in terms of lack of personal ability when in fact it might be that the lecturer is employing outdated teaching practices and arcane language in the delivery of the material or that the cultural realities of the student are not represented in the learning context. The long term effects of psychological oppression can be devastating not only to the individual but also to society (Prilleltensky & Gonick, 1996).

The purpose of critical psychology education therefore is not simply to identify oppressive systems, policies or practices; rather, it is to challenge the societal structures and mechanisms that permit the existence of oppression and effect change to establish a relational system based on mutual respect and responsibility (Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2002). To achieve this outcome critical psychology focuses on establishing a different set of values and norms on which society might be established. Fundamental to this is the commitment to social justice and empowerment which endorses the underlying principles of self-determination, equal participation, compassion, and respect for diversity (Prilleltensky & Fox, 1997). These values then become the lens through which society is critiqued to identify the systemic barriers that prevent individuals from achieving the goal of relational wellbeing. It also becomes the mechanism with which individuals can critique their own role and position in maintaining these barriers and provides the means for creating a new vision (Dudgeon, et al, 2011). When this critique is conceptualised through a multilevel model of interconnected relationships, the influence and impact of these power relations is afforded greater clarity.

In their model of wellbeing, Prilleltensky and Nelson (2002) offer a framework for inclusion based on the balance between individual and the collective. The wellbeing of the individual is predicated on the wellbeing of the society in which he or

she operates and this includes the relational aspects of family and workplace as well as neighbourhood, city, and country. Consequently, at the individual and relational levels the focus is on intra-psychic and interpersonal dynamics while the inclusion of the collective context requires an examination of the economic, cultural, and political systems that operate there and their effect on the persons located within the society (Prilleltensky & Nelson, 2002). Critical psychology argues for balance so that the traditional focus on individualism is countered by an equal commitment to mutuality and connectedness and re-establishing the notion of social responsibility (Fox, 1985; Prilleltensky & Fox, 1997; Sarason, 1974) and this is demonstrated by this model of wellbeing. If, as has already been suggested, it is within our educational systems that the values of society are formulated then it becomes essential to ensure that the values being promoting within our schools and universities are those we wish to see endorsed at a societal level (Dudgeon, et al, 2011; Darlston-Jones, et al, 2014; Leistyna, 1999).

The model of psychology education that I have articulated resides within a theoretical framework of critical theory, critical pedagogy, decolonisation, and wellbeing. Combining these elements within which the five probes offered by Tanaka (2003; *Voice, Power, Authenticity, Reflexivity, & Reconstitution*) can be employed to assess each element and each decision. This means that the knowledge that is transmitted and the manner in which this transmission occurs has greater potential to create a more inclusive and supportive educational environment. This in turn is more conducive to student success which in turn has the capacity to transfer into society through the professional and personal relationships graduates engage in. As a consequence of the critical consciousness (Freire, 1970) that these students now possess they are not only able to respond to their own experiences in a more complete manner but they are able to identify oppressive practices when they occur in various settings and act accordingly.

References

- Albee, G. (1986). Toward a just society: Lessons from observations on the primary prevention of psychopathology. *American Psychologist*, 41, 891-898.
- Albee, G., Joffe, J., & Dusenburg, L. (Eds.). (1988). *Prevention, powerlessness, and politics: Readings on social change*. Beverley Hills, CA: Sage.
- Allen, R. L. (2001). The globalisation of white supremacy: Toward a critical discourse on the racialisation of the world. *Educational Theory*, 51(4), 467.
- Apple, M. (1982). *Cultural and economic reproduction in education*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- Apple, M. (2000). *Official knowledge*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Aronowitz, S. (2000). *The knowledge factory*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
- Aronowitz, S., & Giroux, H. (1991). *Postmodern education: Politics, culture, and social criticism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Baritz, L. (1974). *The servants of power: A history of the use of social science in American industry*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Bartell, M. (2003). Internationalization of universities: A university culture-based framework. *Higher Education*, 45, 43-70.
- Bean, J., & Metzner, B. (1985). A conceptual model of non-traditional undergraduate student attrition. *Review of Education Research*, 55(4), 485-540.
- Biesta, G. (2001). How difficult should education be? *Educational Theory*, 51(4), 385.
- Blackmore, J. (2001). Universities in crisis? Knowledge economies, emancipatory pedagogies, and the critical intellectual. *Educational Theory*, 51(3), 353.
- Breen, L., & Darlston-Jones, D. (2010). Moving beyond the enduring dominance of positivism in psychological research: An Australian perspective. *Australian Psychologist*, 45(1) 67-76.
- Brown, L. (1989). New voices, new visions: Toward a lesbian/gay paradigm. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 13, 445-458.

- Claibourne, L. (2014). The potential of critical educational psychology beyond its meritocratic past. In T. Corcoran (Ed.), *Psychology in education* (pp. 1 - 16). Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
- Darlaston-Jones, D. (2005). *Evidence from the survivors: Factors affecting retention of undergraduate psychology students at a Western Australian university and implications for cultural change within higher education*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Edith Cowan University, Perth, Australia.
- Darlaston-Jones, D., Herbert, J., Ryan, K., Darlaston-Jones W., Harris, J., & Dudgeon, P (2014). Are we asking the right questions? Why we should have a decolonization discourse based on conscientisation rather than Indigenising the curriculum. Accepted in *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 37(1), 86-104.
- Deutsch, M., & Steil, J. (1988). Awakening the sense of injustice. *Social Justice Research*, 2, 3-23.
- Dudgeon, P., Darlaston-Jones, D., Nikora, L., Waitoki, W., Pe-Pua, R., Nhat Tran, L., & Rouhani, L. (in press). Indigenous peoples & change. In D. Sam & J. Berry (Eds.) *The Cambridge handbook of acculturation psychology, 2nd Ed.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Foucault, M. (1997). The ethics of the concern of the self as a practice of freedom. In P. Rabinow (Ed.), *Michel Foucault: Ethics, subjectivity, and trust* (pp. 281-301). New York, NY: The New Press.
- Fox, D. (1991). Social science's limited role in resolving psycholegal social problems. *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 17, 117-124.
- Fox, D. (1993). Psychological jurisprudence and radical social change. *American Psychologist*, 48, 234-241.
- Fox, D., & Prilleltensky, I. (1996). The inescapable nature of politics in psychology: A response to Dyslin and O'Donohue. *New Ideas in Psychology*, 14, 21-26.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York, NY: Continuum.
- Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civil courage*. New York, NY: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.
- Freire, P. (1999). Making history and unveiling oppression. *Dulwich Centre Journal*, 3, 37-39.
- Giroux, H. (1983). *Theory and resistance in Education: A pedagogy for the opposition*. South Hadley, Ma: Bergin & Garvey Publishers Inc.
- Giroux, H. (2001). Pedagogy of the depressed: Beyond the new politics of cynicism. *College Literature*, 28(3), 1-32.
- Hanno, D. (1999). Energising your teaching: Developing a community of learning. *Issues in Accounting Education*, 14(2), 323-335.
- Hook, G. (2013). Towards a decolonising pedagogy: Understanding Australian Indigenous studies through critical whiteness theory and film pedagogy. *The Australian Journal of Indigenous education*, 41,(2), 110-119.
- Jacoby, R. (1975). *Social amnesia: A critique of contemporary psychology from Adler to Laing*. Boston, MA: Beacon.
- Kinnane, S., Wilks, J., Wilson, K., Hughes, T., & Thomas, S. (2014). 'Can't be what you can't see': The transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students into higher education: Literature review 2014. Broome, Australia: University of Notre Dame Australia.
- Leistyna, P. (1999). *Presence of mind: Education and the politics of deception*. Boulder, Col: Westview Press.
- Newborough, J. R. (1992). Community psychology in the postmodern world. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 20, 10-25.
- Prilleltensky, I. (2003). Understanding, resisting, and overcoming oppression: Toward psychopolitical validity. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 31(1/2), 195-201.
- Prilleltensky, I., & Fox, D. (1997). Introducing critical psychology: Values, assumptions, and the status quo. In D. Fox & I. Prilleltensky (Eds.), *Critical*

- psychology: An introduction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Prilleltensky, I., & Gonick, L. (1996). Politics change, oppression remains: On the psychology and politics of oppression. *Political Psychology, 17*, 127-147.
- Prilleltensky, I., & Nelson, G. (2002). *Doing psychology critically: Making a difference in diverse settings*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Riggs, D. (2004). Challenging the monoculturalism of psychology: Towards a more socially accountable pedagogy and practice. *Australian Psychologist, 39*(2), 118-126.
- Sarason, S. (1976). Community psychology and the anarchist insight. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 4*, 243-261.
- Sarason, S. (1981). *Psychology Misdirected*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Smith, L. (1999). *Decolonising methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples*. Dunedin: University of Otago Press.
- Tanaka, G. (2002). Higher education's self-reflexive turn: Toward an intercultural theory of student development. *The Journal of Higher Education, 73*(2), 263-296.
- Tanaka, G. (2003). *The intercultural campus: Transcending culture and power in American higher education*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Tierney, W. (1992). An anthropological analysis of student participation in college. *Journal of Higher Education, 63*, 603-618.
- Tierney, W. (1999). *Building the responsive campus: Creating high performance colleges and universities*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Whitney Darlaston-Jones in the preparation and development of this paper. Her insights, clarity, and capacity to help me articulate my ideas was invaluable and greatly enhanced the final product. I also extend my thanks to two anonymous reviewers.

Address for correspondence

Associate Professor Dawn Darlaston-Jones
e: dawn.darlaston-jones@nd.edu.au

Special Section

An Introduction: Sasha Alysha Stumpers

David J. Mander



Dr Sasha Alysha Stumpers, emerging academic, psychologist and well-respected researcher, died on September 23rd, 2012. She was 33 years of age.

I first met Sasha in 2002. We met quite by chance outside a lecture hall on a warm summer evening at Edith Cowan University (ECU) in Perth, Western Australia (WA). While waiting for our lecturer to arrive, we spent twenty minutes or so sitting on a bench, watching birds collect nectar from the nearby wattles while the sun went down. We talked about our partiality for travel, the coming year of study, work, and possible future

career pathways. Little did I know at the time that our chance meeting would grow into a deeply loving relationship and that I would spend the next 10 years of my life with this fascinating woman. Sasha shaped my being as man in such a way, that I have yet been unable to satisfactorily put into words the extent of my gratitude and feelings for her. So that said, and as her colleague, friend, and fiancé, it is my great honour to write the introduction to this special section of the Australian Community Psychologist (ACP) showcasing Sasha's PhD work and to share a small insight into her life as a person, as well as her academic journey as a student and

development as a psychologist.

Known for her compassionate and kind-hearted spirit, Sasha was a graduate of the community psychology program at ECU and completed her PhD studies under the supervision of Professor Lynne Cohen and Associate Professor Julie Ann Pooley. Achieving a Bachelor of Arts with first class honours, she was a member of the Golden Key National Honour Society for scholastic achievement and excellence, and was recognised in 2008 as being in the top 100 students at ECU. A recipient of a full-time Australian Postgraduate Scholarship Award, she was also a sessional lecturer with both the School of Psychology and the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) at ECU, as well as an associate member of the Australian Psychological Society (APS).

Sasha was born two months premature on April 21st 1979 and weighed only 1350 grams. She grew up in the Northern suburb of Balga, Perth and by the time she was 10 years of age she had already married a boy at her primary school in a mock wedding ceremony, although the photos suggest she was a little more enthusiastic about it than her young suitor. A curious, sociable and happy child, during her primary school years Sasha achieved well academically and made a smooth transition into secondary school. In addition to the usual secondary school subjects she also studied aviation, was elected to the Student Council and won several school and rotary citizenship awards. By and large, school for Sasha was a positive experience, full of fun and laughter and she would often fondly reminisce about how it had foremost given her many close and cherished lifelong friendships.

Entering university Sasha initially enrolled in a media studies degree but feeling out of place and surrounded by what she described as “self important egos” (Stumpers, personal reflection, 2008) she transferred a year later into the psychology program at ECU. As a student she excelled and found the structure of the ECU undergraduate psychology program resonated closely with her strong sense of social justice and desire

for learning opportunities that had real world applications. It was during her undergraduate that she also began working part-time in a trendy Perth café which allowed her to finance and pursue her one great passion in life, travel. Sasha found the opportunity to explore somewhere new, meet new people, learn a language, and form a connection with different places enthralling. During her life she managed to travel to Canada, Chile, New Zealand, to most countries in Europe, and to the United States of America, as well as extensively across Australia and her home state of WA.

In 2003 Sasha was invited onto the psychology honours program at ECU. As a part of her fourth year studies she selected a community psychology unit because of its practical component as it gave her the opportunity to gain direct experience working with children. It was during this time that she also undertook volunteer work with the Red Cross SHARK program supporting and helping vulnerable children. Her ability to reach out and connect with young people was quickly recognised by the Principal of Balga Senior High School (BSHS). He subsequently employed her at the Balga Youth Program (BYP) to work with some of the most educationally at risk and disadvantaged youth in Perth. Instead of forcing already disengaged youth to attend school, BYP took schooling to their homes and Sasha worked tirelessly to forge genuine, trusting relationships, and a sense of connectedness with the merits of education. Her gentle but committed approach would often rapidly dissolve the resistance of the young people she worked with, and both parents and school staff highly valued her compassionate nature.

Sasha’s experiences at BYP shaped the focus of her honours project. It explored the perceptions of students finishing primary school about the impending transition to secondary school. She achieved first class honours and subsequently later published the findings of her research in the *International Journal Community, Work & Family*, titled: *‘A critical exploration of the school context for young adolescents completing primary*

education' (Stumpers, Breen, Pooley, Cohen, & Pike, 2005). This success encouraged Sasha to consider the community psychology masters program at ECU and while she did not initially see herself as a post-graduate student, it seemed to too good an opportunity to pass up. Balancing full-time employment at BYP with part-time study in the masters program, Sasha described this time in her life as "so personally rewarding and important for my development as a professional and a person" (Stumpers, personal reflection, 2008). To her great surprise, two years into the masters program Sasha was asked to consider transferring into the PhD program at ECU and she later recalled, "so here I was... this little girl from Balga contemplating a PhD" (Stumpers, personal reflection, 2008).

For Sasha, the opportunity to complete a PhD foremost caused her to ask what does a PhD mean, and how would a further four years of study change me? She later reflected, "it is a strange thing to consider undertaking such a feat especially when you have never had such an inclination" (Stumpers, personal reflection, 2008). Comforted by the support and guidance offered by Professor Cohen and Associate Professor Pooley, Sasha began her PhD studies and for the first time started to genuinely acknowledge her own personal growth and professional progress as an emerging academic and researcher. Near this time, Sasha also made a career change and began working as a Research Officer with the Australian Indigenous HealthInfonet at Kurungkurl Katitjin, ECU. During her seven years with the HealthInfoNet she promoted and disseminated research about health and wellbeing issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and coordinated the publication of an annual overview on the health of Aboriginal people in WA.

While still passionate about education and working with children and young people, and after much deliberation, Sasha decided her PhD would investigate social constructions of ageing. A decision that came about after consultation in 2007 with the Council on the Ageing in WA and the Living Longer Living Stronger program of the Vario Wellness Clinic at ECU. In 2008, Sasha

joined the Australian Research Council/ National Health and Medical Research Council Research Network in Ageing Well and also become involved with the Emerging Researchers in Ageing (ERA), an initiative of Professor Helen Bartlett and the Australasian Centre on Ageing at the University of Queensland. She also attended the 41st National Conference of the Australian Association of Gerontology in 2008. This enabled Sasha to network with leading international experts in the ageing field and in particular to meet Professor Judith Phillips of Swansea University, Wales, UK and then President of the British Society for Gerontology.

Following this, Sasha applied for one of 25 placements to attend a week long ERA Master Class held in Brisbane at the University of Queensland and then secured a \$10,000 funding grant from the ERA International Exchange Program so she could extend her PhD project to include an international component. In 2009, and hosted by Professor Judith Phillips, Sasha took part in a 9-week exchange with the Centre for Innovative Ageing at Swansea University, Wales, UK and collected data from several different Welsh communities for her PhD project. While there, Sasha presented her research at the 2009 annual British Society for Gerontology conference and visited government and non-government ageing research centres in Bath, Cardiff, Keele, London, Oxford, and Sheffield, as well as visiting the Beth Johnson Foundation, the Welsh Government Assembly, and attending the AGM for Age Concern. On her return she attended an ERA gathering in Melbourne to disseminate the findings from her international exchange. Sasha subsequently submitted her PhD in early 2012.

Sasha received the news that she had passed her PhD by email while we were in Las Vegas, USA. We had just arrived at our hotel and were preparing to undertake a three-week road trip camping and hiking trails in several of the national parks on the East Coast of America. I cannot remember what we excitedly spoke about at the time, but after she had digested the feedback from the

reviewers, I do recall that we spent a quiet moment that evening just sitting and watching an orange and red sunset settle in over the busy strip below. While we sat there, I could not only see the relief in her face but also feel her personal sense of accomplishment. The PhD journey for Sasha was a challenging and rewarding experience that she chipped away at each day, but one that was driven by her compassion for others and a genuine belief in the value of community psychology. So I sincerely hope the following article does justice to all of her hard work and that it goes some way to highlighting “the importance of investigating the experience of ageing from the perspective of those who have experience with it” (Stumpers, 2012).

Following her passing, Sasha was posthumously awarded the Robin Winkler Award in 2013 for her outstanding doctoral research project, *An exploration of the experience and social construction of ageing: Perspectives from older adults in a healthy ageing program and those from Western Australian and Welsh communities*. Sasha’s work and engagement with the field of psychology and ageing was deemed as going “beyond the level that is normally expected of a doctoral student” (personal communication, selection committee, 2014).

References

- Stumpers, S. A. (2008). Forum speech – personal reflections. Edith Cowan University.
- Stumpers, S. A. (2012). *An exploration of the experience and social construction of ageing: Perspectives from older adults in a healthy ageing program and those from Western Australian and Welsh Communities*. Doctoral Thesis, Edith Cowan University.
- Stumpers, S. A., Breen, L., Pooley, J. A., Cohen, L., & Pike, L. T. (2005). A critical exploration of the school context for young adolescents completing primary education. *Community, Work, & Family*, 8(3), 251-270. doi: 10.1080/13668800500142228

The social construction of ageing: Australian and Welsh perspectives

Sasha A Stumpers¹

Lynne Cohen¹

Julie Ann Pooley¹

¹Edith Cowan University

David J Mander

The University of Western Australia

In recent years, a strong focus has emerged towards developing and implementing guidelines, policies, governmental strategies, and research agendas that best support a growing ageing population. However, policies and theoretical understandings of ageing have been questioned in regard to their continued medicalisation, problematising, and objectification of the ageing experience. To explore the different ways in which older adults make meaning of their experiences of ageing, a qualitative methodology, guided by the theoretical underpinnings of phenomenology and social constructionism was used. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with participants from four distinct contexts, three of which were located in Western Australia (WA), including 17 participants from a healthy ageing program; 12 participants who have withdrawn from a healthy ageing program; and 15 participants from a community sample. The fourth sample comprised of 15 participants from a community sample in Wales, United Kingdom (UK). The data revealed that whilst participants described feeling that the dominant discourse in wider society caused them to anticipate ageing as a stage in life centred on experiencing decline and loss (e.g., a decline in mental functioning, or a loss of mobility), it was also evident that psychological, social, and political aspects were of equal, or greater significance to the meaningful understandings they constructed about their personal ageing experience. Further, the data contends that a pressing need exists to evaluate the way in which ageing policy is effectively translated into practice, that is, in a way that closely aligns with the lived experiences of ageing as had by individuals.

Ageing is broadly referred to as a multidimensional process of biological, psychological, and social change with some dimensions declining over time (i.e., mobility) and other aspects growing and expanding (i.e., the acquisition of knowledge or wisdom) (McPherson, 1990; Stuart-Hamilton, 1994, 2006). In 2010, the proportion of Australia's population aged 65 years and over was 13.6% (an increase of 2.5% since 30 June 1990) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010), with this proportion projected to increase to between 23%¹ and 25% by 2056 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2008). This means that one in four Australians is expected to be over the age of 65 years by this time. As at the 30 June 2010, the proportion of the population aged 85 years and over has more than doubled since 30 June 1990 from 0.9% to 1.8% (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010) and it is projected that this cohort will account for 5% to 7% of the total population by 2056 (Australian

Bureau of Statistics, 2008).

Population ageing is not unique to Australia. Worldwide, the proportion of people aged 60 years and over is increasing faster than any other age group with an expected growth of 223% between 1970 and 2025 (World Health Organisation, 2002). Average life expectancy at birth has increased by 21 years since 1950 to 67.6 years, with a further increase of eight years expected by 2050 (United Nations/Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Population Division, 2010). This changing distribution of population is most apparent in wealthy industrialised countries and results in smaller proportions of people at younger ages and larger proportions at older ages (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2010; United Nations/Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Population Division, 2010). By 2050, 80% of the two billion people over the age of 60 years are expected to be living in developing countries (World

Health Organisation, 2002).

Similar to international trends, population ageing in Australia has been associated with wide reaching and diverse issues, with the prioritisation of these issues continually being debated at a national and state level (Bartlett, 2003). In October 1996, in recognition of the challenges of an ageing population in Australia, the Commonwealth, State and Territory Health and Community Services Ministers established the *Healthy Ageing Task Force* to assist in improving the planning and coordination involved in addressing ageing issues. The particular focus of the taskforce reflected a view of healthy ageing as an Australian outlook on life that recognises that growing older is a natural and positive part of living, and involves the interdependence of generations while also acknowledging the diversity and individuality of older people (Commonwealth of Australia, 1999; Commonwealth States and Territories, 2000). Subsequently, in 1998 Australia became one of the first countries to appoint a Minister for Ageing (Department of Health and Ageing Australian Government, 2007).

In 2001, the Australian Federal Government announced the *National Strategy for an Ageing Australia (NSAA): An Older Australia, Challenges and Opportunities for all*. The NSAA outlined policies that support continued economic and social contributions by older people which would be essential in the future, with a major goal being to deliver the best outcomes for all Australians regardless of age (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001). Specific principles included: All Australians (regardless of age) having access to appropriate employment as well as opportunities to make 'life-long' contributions to society and economy; the need for public and private contributions to be made to meet the needs and aspirations of an older Australia; a focus on public programs supplementing rather than supplanting the role of individuals, families and communities; and the building of a strong evidence base to inform policy for an ageing Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001; Department of Health and

Ageing Australian Government, 2007).

Despite these developments in ageing policy, biological perspectives (i.e., ageing involves increased susceptibility to disease and physical deterioration) and the medicalisation of ageing (i.e., ageing requires medical intervention) continues to dominate the discourse on ageing, influencing how ageing issues are constructed in wider society and prioritised at a political level (Brickman et al., 1982; Bury, 2001; Estes, 1993; Estes, Biggs, & Phillipson, 2009; Estes & Binney, 1989). However, two concerns exist with biomedical approaches to understanding the ageing process are: 1) the construction of ageing as a problem, and; 2) they offer little insight into the meaning that individuals associate with ageing (Coleman, Ivani-Chalian, & Robinson, 1998; Jamieson, 2002a). Given this, any new analysis of the ageing experience must in the first instance consider existing psychological and theoretical perspectives of ageing, and their contribution to knowledge in the ageing field.

Psychological and Theoretical Perspectives of Ageing.

Psychological theories of older age are relatively sparse compared to other stages in the lifecycle and are commonly considered together under the banner of psychosocial theories (Schaie, 2001; Wadensten, 2006). Psychosocial theories of ageing attempt to explain human development and ageing in terms of individual changes in cognitive functions, behaviours, roles, relationships, coping ability, and social changes (Wadensten, 2006) while also considering the interaction of the ageing person in their social context (Coote, 2009; Estes et al., 2009; Phillipson, 1998). A summary of early psychosocial perspectives of ageing are presented in Table 1.

Criticism of disengagement, activity, and continuity theories, has contributed to the development of lifespan perspectives, which consider the interconnectedness of past, present, and future experiences on the ageing experience. By contrast, Erik Erikson's psychosocial stages of human

Table 1

Summary of Psychosocial Perspectives in Ageing

Psychosocial perspectives in ageing	Contribution to understandings of ageing
Disengagement Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With increased age, people withdraw from social activities and roles as a natural response to lessened capabilities and diminished interest. ▪ Withdrawal and disengagement are not considered problematic, but rather beneficial for the older person.
Activity Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Involvement in the social contexts is important and being active is considered better than being non-active. ▪ Maintaining activity patterns and values typical of middle age are necessary for a rich and satisfying life
Continuity Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuity between past and present is important with the perception of time central influencing the salience of particular social goals ▪ Taking forward behaviours, attitudes, habits and relationships in earlier years into later life contributes to successful ageing.

development theory highlighted later life as a period of greater heterogeneity. More recently, a ninth stage of human psychosocial development has been proposed and described as incorporating the concept of gerotranscendence (Erikson & Erikson, 1997). The concept of gerotranscendence suggested that the very process of living into old age encompasses a general redefinition of self and of relationships with others by way of a decrease in self centeredness; decreased interest in material things and superficial social interactions; and an increase in self reflection and need for solitude (Gatz & Zarit, 1999; Schroots, 1996; Wadensten, 2006).

Outwardly, there appears to be some resemblance between the concept of gerotranscendence and the theories of disengagement, activity and continuity but on closer inspection important distinctions can be made (Achenbaum, 2006; Schroots, 1996). For example, gerotranscendence implies a redefinition of reality which is connected with social activity while also

recognising the need for solitary 'philosophising', whereas disengagement is restricted to simply 'turning inwards' and withdrawal socially seen as the only possibility in ageing (Schroots, 1996). The process of redefining reality according to gerotranscendence, represents a more forward direction of integrity development rather than just meaning the integration of elements in a life that has passed as suggested by Erikson (Achenbaum, 2006; Schroots, 1996).

Despite the influence of psychosocial perspectives in understanding the contemporary ageing experience, the study of ageing continues to remain primarily within a discourse subordinate to biomedical related concerns (Estes et al., 2009). This conflict has seen the rise of critical gerontology; an approach aimed at challenging unreflexive acceptance of established positions, substantive value assumptions, theories, and perspectives in ageing (Estes et al., 2009; Holstein & Minkler, 2007). Critical gerontology offers a

response to some of the major concerns of research in ageing including: Critique of the biomedical model and its preoccupation with deterioration and disease; the need for a clearer understanding of the 'social construction of dependency' in old age; and a shift from an individualistic focus to consideration of social and economic influence on ageing (Bernard & Scharf, 2007; Estes et al., 2009; Holstein & Minkler, 2007; Townsend, 2007).

In an effort to move beyond the 'decline and loss' paradigm, the study of successful ageing has grown in popularity and become an important psychological based theoretical contribution to the development of social theory in gerontology (Estes et al., 2009; Holstein & Minkler, 2003). Despite its long history dating back to the early 1960s (Baltes & Baltes, 1990b), the concept only became popular in 1998 when Rowe and Kahn presented a widely debated three tiered approach towards defining the hallmarks of successful ageing including: 1) the avoidance of disease and disability; 2) the maintenance of high physical and cognitive functional capacity; and 3) active and continued engagement in life (Rowe & Kahn, 1998). While making a considerable contribution towards understanding the ageing process, critics have argued that this three tiered approach suggests ageing is a measurable, visible attribute proportionate to an individual's efforts and that it is built on an assumption of equity and equality existing in society (Holstein & Minkler, 2003, 2007).

More recently, a 'wellness' approach to ageing has increasingly placed emphasis on understanding health and wellbeing from a more holistic perspective. This approach considers a person's unique ecology, meaning-making experiences, and the impact of different influences on their life, such as the role of employment; government policy; cultural values and ideologies; physical; intellectual; social; psychological; and spiritual factors (Gordon, 2006; Larson, 1999; Lavretsky, 2010). By exploring how individuals and groups are able to satisfy basic human needs such as experiencing meaningful participation in decision-making

processes affecting their lives as well as develop a sense of competence and self-efficacy, a wellness approach arguably offers a greater understanding of the lived experience of ageing (Prilleltensky & Fox, 2007; Prilleltensky, Nelson, & Peirson, 2001; Tones, 1996).

However, despite this philosophical and theoretical shift, there remains a pressing need for research into the lived experience of ageing and how individuals construct meaning around it. A fundamental question to the study of ageing has been to understand how people come to terms with age related changes (Estes et al., 2009; Jamieson, 2002b; Reed, Stanley, & Clarke, 2004). The meaning that people assign to ageing is influenced by their own unique life experiences and social interactions with the world, yet research continues to predominantly focus on objectifying the ageing experience, or trying to measure it through standardised testing. Therefore, to better understand the experience of ageing there is particular scope for research which privileges the voices of those that are living it (Atchley, 1991; Coleman et al., 1998; Jamieson, 2002a).

Purpose of the Current Study

The aim of this study is to explore the question: What are the experiences and social constructions of ageing for older adults over the age of 50 years? In doing so, it seeks to provide a platform from which to articulate what ageing means to those that are actually living the experience.

Method

This study draws on one aspect of a much larger investigation into the social construction of ageing. A qualitative methodology was used to conduct in-depth interviews with a purposive sample of participants and was guided by the theoretical frameworks of phenomenology and social constructionism. Ethical approval was sought through all stakeholder groups. Through this process, issues concerning informed consent, confidentiality, and any potential consequences of the research were addressed. Participants were informed about the nature of the research, that the interview

was confidential, that they could stop and withdraw from the research at any time and that they would be given the opportunity to ask any further questions. All participants signed a consent form prior to participating in the interviews.

Participants

This study involved both Australian and Welsh participants. 59 older adults aged 50 years and older participated in this study. Participants were recruited from four main sources: 1) a healthy ageing program ('LLLS group'); 2) people who have withdrawn from a healthy ageing program ('Discontinuing group'); 3) a local community sample ('WA group'), and; 4) an international community sample ('Welsh group'). Across all groups, the age of participants ranged from 50 years to 89 years with 23 males and 36 females. There were 17 participants in the 'LLLS group'; 12 participants in the 'Discontinuing group'; while the local community sample from WA and the community sample from Wales, each comprised 15 participants.

Procedure

Semi-structured interview schedules containing open-ended questions were designed and utilised with all participants by the researcher. For example, questions included 'Tell me about your experience of ageing' and 'Describe a moment you have experienced that typifies ageing to you?' Consistent with a 'funneling' technique the schedules began generally and became more specific (Smith, 1995). In addition, probing questions were used to explore the issues raised by participants. For example, 'Can you tell me more about that?' Basic demographic information such as age, gender, employment, health, and relationship status was also collected. A digital voice recorder was used to record interviews and to allow for verbatim transcription by the researcher.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used as it provided a theoretically flexible approach to analysing qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Elliott & Timulak, 2005). Six main phases were used to analyse the data collected and involved: 1) Becoming familiar with the data; 2) Generating initial codes; 3)

Theme development; 4) Reviewing themes; 5) Defining and naming themes, and; 6) Producing a report on the findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Rapley, 2011). Analysis occurred simultaneously and the procedures outlined by each phase were used as tools rather than directives in order to retain the dynamic nature of qualitative analysis (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The analysis process as a result was driven by insight gained through interaction with the data (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Elliott & Timulak, 2005).

Findings and Interpretations

Exploring the way in which individuals made meaning of their experiences and how the broader social contexts influenced these meanings were of particular interest to this study. For participants in this study, five major themes with related sub-themes were relevant to the construction of meaning around the lived experience of ageing (see Table 2).

Theme One: Primed thought

Investigating the way in which participants articulated meaning revealed that certain social cues primed how the experience of ageing was understood. Four sub-themes were identified that illustrated this process and included: 1) the lucky view; 2) comparisons with others; 3) healthy ageing, and; 4) decline and loss.

The lucky view. Participants frequently reported that they felt 'lucky' for having made it as far in life as they had in terms of their age. Moreover, these participants believed that luck was the key to having had a positive experience of ageing, "I'm very blessed, I think, I'm very blessed and lucky to of lived so healthy for this long" (Welsh = 7[line 253]), and "getting old is a journey that's how I look at it...I've had the wonderful chance of being born and live...if you're lucky enough to get old" (LLLS = 3[line 1339]). The assignment of luck to understanding the experience of ageing has also been found in other international research. A New Zealand study involving 60 participants revealed that constructions of health and illness were to varying degrees considered beyond one's

control with responses indicating luck, good fortune and God as contributing to good health outcomes in older age (Pond, Stephens, & Alpass, 2010).

Comparison with others. Comparing ones' experience of ageing to that of others was a key feature of participants' descriptions and reflections of ageing. Age, like gender and ethnicity, can be a marker of self-identity and used for the categorisation of others. These categories provide social group membership and benchmarks for comparison, which it has been asserted that individuals will often explore in search of a positive identity (Giles, McIlrath, Mulac, & McCann, 2010). Comparisons with one's own or other age cohort can also reflect beliefs about key developmental tasks and transitions associated with a particular age group (Giles et al., 2010; Hepworth, 2002). Similarly, stereotypes attributed to certain age groups can also inform expectations about how we view our future selves. Comparisons to past generations in order to articulate, evaluate and understand current

experiences was a common focus of reflection with participants. Comparisons were frequently made against that of one's parents but close friends and peers were often referred to also. For example, "my mother died when she was 73, and my father died when he was 80...my grandmother died when she was 95 so...I passed my mother and I haven't caught up to my father and perhaps I'll go past me grandmother." (Discontinuing = 8[line 15]).

Unique to participants' in the 'Welsh group', was the influence of being alive during 'war times' (World War II). Nearly all participants from the 'Welsh group' made comparisons with people who had not experienced the impact of World War II when telling of their own experience of ageing, "With the war years, we didn't have all this fast food stuff...it was a healthy diet and I think it put us all in good stead" (Welsh = 6[line 77]), and "during the war, I was called up and I was twenty and I worked all through the war...I've never sat back, even now I do all my housework,

Table 2

Major Themes and Related Sub-Themes for all four Participant Groups

Major theme	Related sub-themes
Primed thought	The "lucky" view Comparisons with others Healthy ageing Decline and loss
Connectedness	The value of groups Supportive relationships Religion and spirituality
Social values	Generational interactions Ageism Resource allocation
Negotiating transitions in ageing	Life-stages and events The dependence-independence continuum The ageing body Attitude and acceptance
Agency and influence	Meaningful roles Personal control and perceived worth

my washing, my cleaning and everything...I don't sit around." (Welsh = 5[line 41]).

Research suggests individuals who compare themselves favourably with others, tend to experience better health outcomes, especially later in life (Bailis & Chipperfield, 2002, 2006; Bailis, Chipperfield, & Perry, 2005; Frieswijk, Buunk, Steverink, & Slaets, 2004; Heidrich & Ryff, 1993a, 1993b; Kwan, Love, Ryff, & Essex, 2003). Older individuals who judge their health or physical capacity more positively, even upon receiving information threatening to their self-concept, tend to adapt more successfully to failure or threat, and report greater life satisfaction and less psychological distress (Bauer, Wrosch, & Jobin, 2008). Downward social comparisons or the notion of seeing yourself as better off than the average person, have also been argued to be self-protective by alleviating the negative emotional consequences of stressful encounters and threats to self-esteem (Bauer et al., 2008; Heckhausen & Brim, 1997; Wills, 1981).

Healthy ageing. Many participants felt individuals were responsible for maintaining good health as they aged. However, a subtle difference existed between Western Australian (WA) and Welsh participants understanding of healthy ageing. In WA, healthy ageing was considered by participants as an individual responsibility and related strongly to physical concerns. "*Healthy ageing, I do it already...stretches and walk to the shops*" (WA=8[line 302]), similarly, "*you've really got to take responsibility for keeping yourself as healthy as possible...I've been going to hydrotherapy, I do stretching and mobility and aerobic exercises...healthy ageing I think is absolutely crucial*" (WA = 11[line 657]). This understanding is consistent with some of the main strategies used to promote healthy ageing in WA (i.e., physical activity programs) and more widely across Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 1999). By comparison, Welsh participants more strongly identified with the role of diet in healthy ageing. "*We have a healthy lunch, we have healthy breakfast...we have to control the diet...he [husband] had high cholesterol*

but that's well controlled...because we eat properly" (Welsh = 10[line 125]). An examination of key healthy ageing strategies promoted by the Government of Wales, reveals that 'healthy eating' is a priority area along with emotional health and wellbeing and physical activity (Welsh Assembly Government, 2005, 2008, 2009).

Decline and loss. Many participants linked the notion of decline and loss with their own experience and constructions of ageing. For example, "*it's a case of wearing out and not being able to do as much now as I used to do...just the case of slowing up I think...slowing physically and as they say the wear and tear*" (LLLS = 15[line 26 & 185]) and "*well quite literally it's [ageing] the process of getting old and the running down of all your faculties, mental and physical and emotional, every aspect so the gradual, running down and eventually breaking down.*" (LLLS = 17[line 14]). Increased involvement with the medical world reinforced this perception for several participants, "*personally, you feel like you can't do as much as you did before or like you've got to start going to the doctor, you've got to start taking medication...the only solution to any complaint is medication or bit more medication...that's a negative.*" (LLLS = 12[line 360]). While the experience of seeing others suffer with illness was central to other participants. Changes in one's cognitive functioning and mental capacity through dementia and Alzheimer's disease was particularly identified as a concerning aspect of ageing, especially if participants had witnessed the impact of these conditions on members of their own family.

The most influence was my mum went into nursing care with dementia which was eventually Alzheimer's, and in those seven years...looking after her and things like that, that really hit home to see how I, I could possibly end up...that's probably the biggest fear about ageing I have, not dying fast you know just to, to linger on and ooh it's just awful. (LLLS = 16 [line 78]).

Theme Two: Connectedness

Connectedness encompassed the importance of feeling and being linked with other people. Although the concept of connectedness is not new, the role it plays in relation to healthy ageing means that it still requires further exploration (Register & Scharer, 2010). While previous research has focussed on personal relationships as facilitating connectedness (Kafetsios & Sideridis, 2006; Register & Scharer, 2010), for participants in the current study connectedness involved more than just individual and personal relationships. While the importance of individual relationships based on intimacy and shared mutual support was not understated by participants, a sense of connectedness facilitated through groups, religion and/or spirituality; and just having a familiarity and a sense of belonging to a wider network and/or community were equally acknowledged. Each of these points of connection were reported to add depth and purpose to participants' experiences of ageing and were pivotal in shaping what ageing meant to participants. Three sub-themes identified were: 1) the value of groups; 2) supportive relationships, and; 3) religion and spirituality.

The value of groups. Participants emphasised how keeping involved in some type of group interaction, whether it was a physical activity or more social by intent, was central to the experience of ageing. Rather than the focus being on the type of activity, the very nature of groups, the formal and informal interactions and the direct and indirect support that resulted from being involved in a group, were often acknowledged and described as offering many important benefits. For example, a Western Australian participant repeatedly referred to 'group energy' and described the motivating benefits created by the natural dynamics of group participation.

You get these groups of people going out all dressed up walking...I think that's great you know, they wouldn't do it by themselves...some people they won't do it unless it's in a group, well I can't meditate properly unless

I'm in a group...I find it a little bit more successful if I have that group energy...I think the group energy is good and I mean it's like weight watchers and all those programs you give each other incentive and help. (WA = 3[line 491]).

Similarly, several Welsh participants talked about their attendance at a local cafe that offered a community service for older adults. In particular, they highlighted how participating in the cafe group facilitated a sense of belonging alongside its primary purpose of offering useful educational information about ageing issues. The social interaction at the cafe was seen as central to promoting a positive sense of wellbeing, "it's quite good for people you see all the chaps here they moan and groan and trying to put the world right but it's good for them" (Welsh = 8[line 130]), and "it's finding things to do really, through the winter because I think you go downhill fast stuck in a house not meeting people, we came down here and we all just say 'what's your name' and exchange stories." (Welsh = 2[line 110]).

Supportive relationships. Emphasis given to the importance of social support through more intimate individual and close family relationships emerged frequently in the data.

I want to maintain a good relationship with my wife, with my kids, I want to be in a situation where I can assist my kids financially as well as sort of in terms of social and emotional stuff...I'd like to have the time to be able to have relationships with my, with people who I care about, wider family and friends. (WA = 4[line 144]).

Focussing more attention on both intimate and close relationships during older adulthood was often associated with having more time to do so as other commitments such as work became less of a priority. Investing more in emotionally meaningful relationships for participants was commonly

referred to while discussing family bonds however it was also acknowledged that it was important to keep boundaries with family and to ensure that one equally had interests outside of the family.

You still have to have some sort of quality of life and something you're interested in yourself, apart from your family as well so you're not really dependant socially on them...I garden...I've been learning Indonesian...I belong to a gym...none of my family are involved in any of that stuff, so I think you have to make your own interests as well because they find it a great burden if they have to provide for you socially as well, and as you get older you don't have the same sort of contribution to make to their social activities because I'm not really all that interested in what they do, like they do things that are quite to me a waste of time (laughs). (WA = 9[line 503]).

Religion and spirituality. In addition to group and more intimate relationships, several participants mentioned that their faith was a key thread that underlined their experience of ageing. For these participants, their faith provided a sense of connectedness to life as well as influenced their philosophy towards ageing. For some, faith was considered as providing the basis for a positive outlook, which facilitated a sense of acceptance with life. For others, their faith provided a sense of purpose and offered peace.

My Christian faith...I've always known that I've had hope for the future, whether I am dead or alive, so that in itself has taken care of my, any worries that I might of had...and it's given me a purpose, it's the purpose, I think...if you're just working towards your own personal satisfaction, your satisfaction of your family and the satisfaction of seeing your kids do well, I think you head yourself up for a lot of disappointments...I think if I wasn't a Christian, I would probably be fairly scared of what's in the future. (Discontinuing = 6[line 462]).

Another participant reported how faith provided her with a sense of connectedness and support during difficult times, and described how it helped her to reconstruct a difficult experience into an opportunity to help others affected by similar experiences.

It helps if you are a Christian, because when hard things come you have support, invisible support...when you've been through the hard things, you're more able to help people going through the hard things...I wouldn't want to lose my child, son, but my neighbour lost her son some time ago and she didn't know about ours and I called to see her and she said "nobody understands" and my husband said "she does", and I was glad, not that I'd lost my son but glad that I'd experienced what I did and as you get older of course you've been through so much and so you are a more valuable person...the more you've been through the more you have to give. (Welsh = 10[line 160]).

Interestingly, some participants who were undecided about their faith disclosed reflecting on and having considered the merit of different forms of religion and spirituality as they tried to make sense of, adapt to, and cope with the ageing experience.

Looking back I've met a few Buddha's...very calm, very passive...quite a good existence...had I known that twenty years ago I might have changed my way of thinking to Buddhism, they seem to be a very, well I mean they seem to be a very passive race...why can't we all live a peaceful existence, a happy peaceful existence. (LLLS = 11[line 280]).

Theme Three: Social Values

Research has shown that underlying attitudes and values present in wider society can influence constructions of ageing (Reed et al., 2004). Social values become particularly evident when the views of different groups within society come into

play (Estes et al., 2009). Participants in the current study similarly revealed how interactions with others in the wider community and societal assumptions about age, affected their own understanding of the ageing experience. Often these experiences were told in relation to observations of how other older adults were treated because of their age or perceived age. Three sub-themes were identified namely: 1) generational interactions; 2) ageism, and; 3) resource allocation.

Generational interactions. In talking about ageing and the wider community, participants often reported experiencing a sense of astonishment by the pervasiveness and explicitness of ageist attitudes during interactions with younger people. An experience which frequently underpinned and facilitated a 'us and them' construction of how these interactions were understood, "sometimes the young ones don't give us credit...you know you're too old to have an opinion but I suppose that's attitude from the young to the older people." (Discontinuing = 9[line 34]). Such experiences often led these participants to consider how others view them, and caused several to reflect on how they must present to others as a person of a certain age regardless of how they may have felt on the inside. "There are others [young people] that think you know, we're idiots, we're going down the drain, downhill, we don't know anything, they don't think that we have collected a lot of knowledge in our head." (LLS = 5[line 365]).

While interactions with younger generations were sometimes reflected upon negatively, this was largely dependent on the type of relationship participants had with a young person. Positive interactions were reported when a participant had a close affiliation with a younger person, either through a family connection or by having a professional relationship with a younger person. For example, one participant reported about a workplace relationship with younger people, "They don't think I'm old (laughs). You know, I relate to a lot of young people because I work with them, I think they're all right" (Welsh = 10[line 98]), and similarly

another revealed about studying at university with younger people, "I thought that would be one of the stumbling blocks when I went to university and yet the young people just accept you as another student." (Discontinuing = 1[line 145]).

Ageism. Participants' lived experience of ageing revealed having to contend with and be the recipient of ageist attitudes. This included negotiating both implicit and explicit ageist beliefs and behaviours, during interactions with individuals and in the wider community, at institutional and organisational levels, in the social media, and through the actions and inactions of government. Instances of implicit ageism were often identified in the views and messages expressed in various forms of social media about older people. For example, "The way the media portrays us at the moment, we shouldn't really be here anymore...we're just really quite a nuisance, we cost money, we don't produce anymore...patronising" (LLS = 6[line 143]) and "that's what the media do, they stereotype people, older people, they're bloody useless, 'they don't pay that much tax anymore' that sort of thing" (LLS = 9[line 195]).

Explicit forms of ageism were most commonly reported as taking place in the work place setting, particularly during the interview process and when initially applying for jobs. For example, "You just don't get a look in with jobs, you really just don't...and I could hardly say I'm 27 on a job application, I'm not going to the extremes to try and cover that up" (WA = 11[line 422]) and "I would get a phone call saying 'you sound like exactly what we want can you come down for an interview' and you would walk in the door and see the change in attitude once they realise your age." (Discontinuing = 1[line 138]).

A number of participants expressed their concern about ageism in terms of Western society as a whole and by making cultural comparisons. Several made these comparisons through their knowledge of Eastern perspectives on ageing as well as relating to experiences with their own culture. For example, "I don't think the

Australian culture...nurtures the elderly like some of the Asian countries do and really respect the elders and look after them, it's more...everybody do their own thing look after themselves." (WA = 5[line 130]).

Similarly, for one participant who identified as being of Indigenous Australian heritage, the concept of respect was discussed as a critical element of how older adults are traditionally considered and treated within many Indigenous groups and families.

Age gives an individual the aura of respect...I'm speaking now mainly from an Indigenous perspective...when I was a youngster it was part of growing up to respect your elders...a lot of older people are put into homes that doesn't happen so much in Indigenous communities as such, so in other cultures as well where older people have the respect and their opinions are sought, I think that's a benefit that's sometimes lost in the Western world where there's such an emphasis on materialism and you know having a new car...there's not enough time to spend with grandparents or with parents even. (WA = 12[line 13]).

Some participants also reported encountering medical ageism and commented on interactions with the health care system that left them feeling devalued and marginalised.

I had an experience at the hospital yesterday, the advice to older women is give up having your pap smears when you're about 60 because if you haven't had a problem up till then you won't and that's not my experience...I did have a problem and I said to the doctors yesterday, it's about time that advice was changed because I would of had a very slow painful death...then they very nicely explained to me, well it takes about ten years to come on so if you stop, like if you got it say at 65 well you'd be 75 before you needed an operation and they stopped themselves from saying well you know your life's

over, it sort of came out but was quickly drawn back and said "oh we wouldn't want to give a 75 year old an operation"...how dare they decide when they can cut off help. (WA = 9 [line 75]).

Medical ageism has been described as healthcare workers (i.e., doctors, nurses) and provider's (i.e., hospitals) tending to give less aggressive treatments and withholding a full range of treatment options based on age characteristics alone (Ory, Kinney, Hawkins, Sanner, & Mockenhaupt, 2003). While in some instances this type of behaviour may be considered as acting in the best interests of a patient, these participants in this study viewed it as discriminatory, paternalistic, overly judgemental, and as leading to experiencing differences in access to needed medical care. Participants in the 'Welsh group' captured the broad reaching implications and perceptions that medical ageism may cause individuals, as they perceived they were viewed as being a drain on public resources and specifically on the National Health Service (NHS), "*they call us 'coffin dodgers'...think we ought to be put to sleep at 70, I think the government think that...*" (Welsh = 2[line 145]).

Resource allocation. They way resources within society are allocated and distributed were found to further reinforce participants constructions of the aging experience. Workplace practices, healthcare provision, government planning and policies, and care facilities were all examples given by participants of this study that illustrated different issues with resource distribution and allocation that affected their experiences of ageing. For example, "*I feel sorry for people getting old in this country because we haven't got the facilities to cope, to look after the old and I'd hate to end up in an old people's home*". (Welsh = 3[line 67]). Concerns regarding how the government allocated resources to older people were raised by Western Australian participants through the example of expecting more support from government in terms of resources for older people.

Something needs to change...I've got daughters coming on and I seen them now looking towards old age with apprehension...people shouldn't have to be concerned with what's going to happen to me when I'm old that should be well taken care of by our community and that surely should be our goal as a community, as a government...making sure that everyone has the best quality of life...there are enough resources in this country to make a serious difference. (WA = 9[line 635]).

Theme Four: Negotiating Transitions in Ageing

Later life involves negotiating transitions associated with loss such as the death of friends and partners, retirement from work, and a decline in physical and cognitive functioning (Kwan et al., 2003). Participants' constructions of ageing often reflected how well they believed they were 'balancing' the gains and losses they experienced as they got older. For example, participants spoke about increased physical challenges and the associated impact of adjusting to these changes, but often countered this by talking about gains they perceived they had experienced such as a growing sense of freedom and wisdom. The transition to different roles, such as becoming a grandparent and retiring from work, were also frequently discussed as significant events that influenced understandings and constructions of the ageing experience. Four sub-themes were identified: 1) life stages and events; 2) the dependence-independence continuum; 3) the ageing body; and 4) attitude and acceptance.

Life stages and events. Participants' constructions of ageing were often defined through their experience of significant milestone events such as retirement and having grandchildren. For example, "*Things like my children getting married, having grandchildren and retiring from full time work...[that's] how I would see ageing, if you do those things it sort of means you've got to a certain stage, it's a continuum...it's a part of the life cycle.*" (LLLS = 12[line 18]).

Many participants perceived having to stop work or retirement as a definitive time in life when society decided they are old, "*When you retire and you have to get your seniors card and all these types of documents that tells you that your ageing and you've got to follow the lead as it were and make a means, a go for the best.*" (LLLS = 11[line 65]). Similarly, participants expressed adjusting to the loss of loved ones as a transitional marker of the ageing experience. For example, "*losing family of course, you know... (pause - voice softens) my mother, my sister, two brothers and that's ageing*" (Welsh = 10[line 37]).

Part of the reported 'balancing' process associated by participants with ageing was acknowledgement that some transitions also provided a sense of freedom. Retirement and changes in responsibilities in the later years of life were described by several participants as providing a sense of freedom and that stopping work meant they were able to spend more time on valued relationships. For example, "*[retirement] meant freedom that I could do what I wanted to which was brilliant...yeah I think the freedom to be able to do what I want to do having worked all my life that's probably the biggest change within me.*" (WA = 11[line 12]). Wisdom was also commonly identified as a positive acquisition that came with growing older. Wisdom was referred to directly and indirectly by participants and was frequently associated with how participants framed their worldviews and managed more complex aspects of their ageing experience. For example, "*probably your opinions have come to be a bit more rounded, your views probably got a bit of depth um that you didn't have when you were younger, wisdom hopefully*" (WA = 9[line 55]).

The dependence-independence continuum. For participants in the current research independence was related to self-reliance and described as being able to care for oneself and having the ability to do things they were used to doing, "*[independence] means that I haven't got to rely on other people*" (Welsh = 5[line 171]) and "*it means that you can manage to get*

about and do jobs and look after yourself." (LLS = 4[line 203]). However, it was also common that dependence on others was considered an inevitable consequence of ageing and this was a major concern for participants. *"Everyone hopes they don't need care but realistically...I suppose if you live long enough you'll probably, get weaker physically and need...going from being self-reliant to dependent seems to come quite suddenly and unexpectedly"* (WA = 9[line 489]) and *"it came as a big shock to me this fall and exactly what it meant to me...dependant on other people...I was unable to drive...the loss of not just your independence but sort of what my life was before."* (Discontinuing = 12[line 13]). For some participants, independence was not only considered as the absence of dependence but also closely linked to pride, self-esteem, and the ability to maintain a coherent sense of self. For example,

I think that independence gives you strength because I know a lot of people that aren't and they don't cope so I find if you have the ability to comfort yourself...I think that's a big benefit and I believe that I have got that and I have worked very hard to get it and I have to keep it...what I have nurtured within myself. (Discontinuing = 5[line 380]).

That said, it was recognised by some participants that being too independent was not always the most adaptive strategy in ageing as it could lead to issues stemming from social isolation.

You can become too independent too, people say selfish but it isn't, you get used to managing on your own, I've been a widow for 28 years...you've just got to manage and that's how you get sort of too independent and it becomes a bit of a curse really because if you meet a new fella they want you to depend on them a little and you've lost the knack. (Discontinuing group = 10[line 102]).

Hence, this study found that although independence was important to many participants, desiring and maintaining a sense of independence was not mutually exclusive from depending on others for help or the desire to have someone care about their general wellbeing. For example, *"Hopefully I will stay as independent as I possibly can, I currently do have a silver chain lady once a fortnight and I pay for that...as you get older...you need help if you're on your own"* (Discontinuing group = 5[line 479]) and *"it means a lot to me, to be as old as I am and I can still get around and my independence and everything, but I've got a daughter that lives near me and a granddaughter and they look after me too."* (Welsh group = 5[line 7]).

The ageing body. The issue of negotiating a decline in physical ability and body functions was discussed by many participants, *"I didn't realise at that time...that ageing is a slow process of things breaking down...it's like a car as it gets older."* (LLS = 3[line 13]). For other participants, an ageing body brought about a fear of their own mortality because of the physical changes they were experiencing, *"I suppose, with my body there's an anger about, you see your body getting older and you think hang on I haven't actually lived yet..."* (WA = 9[line 217]). For several female participants physical attractiveness was also discussed, *"I know it's not deep and meaningful but sometimes I get concerned that you don't look the same...nobody does but the way that your body, I mean you can exercise till the cows come home and you lose your elasticity...it's just coming to terms with that...that you're not young anymore."* (WA = 3[line 244]).

Similarly, issues of pride and dignity were reflected by some participants as important to how they managed the physical changes of their body. One participant would not get a walking stick, despite the need for it because of what it might represent, *"You get frustrated I think as you get older, you get a bit wobbly on your feet...if I'm going to go along the beach I take one of those hiking sticks so that doesn't look like a walking*

stick, it's all pride isn't it really." (Discontinuing = 4[line 120]).

Attitude and acceptance. Constructions of the ageing process were mediated by participant's general outlook or attitude towards life. Individual responses to the changes and transitions revealed that attitude was perceived as pivotal to how successful ageing was both managed and accepted. Acceptance was discussed not only in terms of just responding to and incorporating things that came along in life but also in terms of the importance of actively seeking to anticipate and cognitively reframe the various changes that occur as you age.

For example,

One day I had this light bulb moment right for about two years after losing my job, having to retire I realised I had been banging my head against a brick wall or saying this is unfair, this is unfair, it was unfair but it's just history I couldn't change it and I realised hey I can still feel the sun on my back, I can still hear the birds, I can still play with my grandchildren that was actually a bonus...I focus on the things that I still can do even though some of them are with modifications and just forget about the things I can't do. (WA = 11 [line 145]).

Theme Five: Agency and Influence

The importance of feeling valued and as having personal worth was shared by all participants. This emphasis often discussed in relation to situations where participants felt that they had a meaningful presence in the world either through fulfilling an influential role within their family or a work related role where their opinions and thoughts were sought. Having a social role that provided an opportunity to exercise a sense of agency and influence with others were reported as highly important to wellbeing, self-esteem, identity, and to the overall ageing experience. Two sub-themes emerged from the data: 1) meaningful roles, and; 2) personal control and worth.

Meaningful roles. For some participants, the experience of ageing was

defined by their job, with the experience of retiring from work greatly affecting their sense of self-worth. The impact of no longer working meant particularly to these participants that they were now limited financially, socially, and they perceived that they had a reduced status in wider society. For example, "*Once you retire the whole life system changes you know, like you're tied to an allocated pension, or you're a self-funded or whatever but you're confined to that, you no longer have the ability to go buy something and pay it off.*" (WA = 6[line 29]). For other participants they reported that stopping work meant that they had nothing to do, which made them feel old, "*it never used to enter my mind about growing old...it never hit me until I retired and I thought, I'm getting old but I am old now for sure, because I've nothing to do you know, it's a big blow.*" (LLS = 7[line 135]). Others took a more philosophical view when it came to retirement and access to meaningful roles and asserted that they would have to actively construct 'new' meaningful roles, "*I think when I was growing up you sort of got a sense that you retired and basically waited to die. Whereas, I think, people have more resources and...just because you retire from work doesn't mean you sort of retire from life.*" (WA = 4[line 68]).

Personal control and perceived worth.

Being able to exert a sense of personal control in life has been widely recognised by researchers and clinicians as one of the most important predictors of psychological wellbeing in older adulthood (Rowe & Kahn, 1987; Smith et al., 2000; Thoits, 2006). Personal control involves achieving desired outcomes on one's own behalf (e.g., choices), and in interactions with others (e.g., expressing needs) (Smith et al., 2000). For example, having a sense of personal control over the process of death was reported as important by many participants, particularly by those who had witnessed someone close to them dying in what they perceived as an undignified way. For these participants, how they were seen and considered by others not only in life but also in death, reflected deeper issues of pride and

dignity. For example,

We would never subject ourselves to chemotherapy or radiation because the extra 12 or 18 months it gives you, you live in bloody agony and torture and nausea and pain and...you're just stripped of all your dignity and I don't think that's meant to be, particularly in the eyes of your loved ones...I've been there for other people I don't want my family to do [that]...so that's the thing that affects me about ageing. (LLS = 9[line 105]).

An experience frequently described by participants was feeling as though they were 'invisible' which made them reflect on their sense of perceived worth. Feeling invisible was particularly related to experiences where participants felt they had 'no voice' and when they felt that their opinions were not acknowledged, valued, or considered because of their age. For example, "*if you were with some younger ones, it's like as if you've not got a voice, you know, I've found that sometimes*" (Welsh = 7[line 142]). Similarly, "*I've gone to a shop and will be first in line with a few people around me, younger people around me and then the assistant will look over my shoulder and address the guy behind me or address the lady beside as if you were invisible.*" (LLS = 2[line 157]), and "*people don't notice you...unless you speak to them. If you're walking along the street, you know, they look straight over your head.*" (Discontinuing = 10[line 216]). Feeling "invisible" was not confined to just experiences in the wider community and society but also permeated to the family level at family functions and gatherings. For example, "*Family have these celebrations for birthdays and Christmas and parties and BBQs and they all seem to just acknowledge you but they don't seem to want to know anything about you when you get into your 50s or 60s*" (LLS = 11[line 134]).

Discussion

This study found that participants' meaning making processes and constructions of the ageing process were primed by the dominant discourse used in wider society. In

particular, it highlighted that theoretical perspectives and assumptions informing the present ageing discourse, such as notions of 'decline and loss' and 'healthy ageing', were well recognised by participants and influenced not only their thinking about their physical health but also how they related to the overall lived experience of ageing. However, while participant experiences of ageing frequently involved a physical decline and loss in ability to do certain things, they also emphasised the social and psychological factors that impacted on their experience of ageing were of equal, if not greater significance. A notable proportion of participants' discussions focussed on intra and interpersonal issues associated with social connectedness such as identifying the value of groups, having intimate and supportive relationships, religion and spirituality as well as the influence of generational interactions, ageism, resource allocation, different life-stages and events, and the opportunity to be involved in meaningful roles.

Feeling invisible in social and family settings was a common way that participants believed represented how they were made to feel less valuable by others which also made them reflect on their own sense of personal control, value, and worth. Despite such challenges, findings from the current research indicate that the maintenance of a positive attitude was often regulated through the acceptance of change and balancing the dynamics between experienced losses and gains in ageing. Making social comparisons with others and others groups (i.e., parents, peers, and age cohorts) also influenced how participants constructed meaning about their own ageing experience. Making social comparisons enabled participants' to reflect on both 'fears' and 'hopes' about the future, as well as providing a way of planning in general for the ageing process. Interestingly, social comparisons appeared to not only be mediated by individual, familial, and societal interactions but also by reflecting on significant historical events (i.e., World War II) as well as by faith and cultural heritage.

Conclusion

An important goal of this research was to add knowledge to current literature on ageing through consultation with older adults about their ageing experience. The findings from this study encourage further thinking about how society defines and promotes healthy ageing. With evidence that health messages and dominant discourses have an influence on peoples' thinking, positive aspects about ageing identified through participants' experiences particularly the psychological and social aspects need to be more effectively communicated, promoted, and facilitated in future ageing policy and research. Specifically, healthy ageing initiatives implemented in the wider community need to embrace awareness of the lived experiences of ageing and put into practice actions that account for all factors contributing to a healthy ageing experience. Shifting the focus in this direction offers the benefit of modifying peoples' constructions and understandings about ageing and therefore has the potential to influence the ageing experience more positively.

References

- Achenbaum, W. A. (2006). Lars Tornstam, gerotranscendence: A developmental theory of positive aging, Springer Publishing Company, New York, 2005, 213 pp. [Reviews]. *Ageing and Society*, 4 (26), 671. doi: 10.1017/S0144686X06225261
- Atchley, R. C. (1991). The influence of aging or frailty on perceptions and expressions of the self: Theoretical and methodological issues. In J. E. Birren, J. E. Lubben, J. C. Rowe & D. D. E. (Eds.), *The concept and measurement of quality of life in frail elderly* (pp. 207-225). New York: Academic Press.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2008). *Population projections, Australia, 2006 to 2101*. (No. 3222.0). Canberra, ACT: ABS Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/PrimaryMainFeatures/3222.0?OpenDocument>
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2010). *Population by age and sex, Australian States and Territories, Jun 2010*. (No. 3201.0). Canberra, ACT: ABS Retrieved from <http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/productsbytitle/B52C3903D894336DCA2568A9001393C1?OpenDocument>.
- Bailis, D. S., & Chipperfield, J. G. (2002). Compensating for losses in perceived personal control over health: A role for collective self-esteem in healthy aging. *The Journals of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences*, 57B(6), 531-539. doi: 10.1093/geronb/57.6.P531
- Bailis, D. S., Chipperfield, J. G., & Perry, R. P. (2005). Optimistic social comparisons of older adults low in primary control: A prospective analysis of hospitalization and mortality. *Health Psychology*, 24(4), 393-401. doi: 10.1037/0278-6133.24.4.393
- Baltes, P. B., & Baltes, M. M. (Eds.). (1990b). *Successful aging: Perspectives from the behavioral sciences*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Bartlett, H. (2003). An ageing perspective. *Foresight*, 5(6), 26-33. doi: 10.1108/14636680310698810
- Bauer, I., Wrosch, C., & Jobin, J. (2008). I'm better off than most other people: The role of social comparisons for coping with regret in young adulthood and old age. *Psychology and Aging*, 23(4), 800-811. doi: 10.1037/a0014180
- Bernard, M., & Scharf, T. (2007). Critical perspectives on ageing societies. In M. Bernard & T. Scharf (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on ageing societies* (pp. 3-12). Bristol: Policy Press.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77-101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa
- Brickman, P., Rabinowitz, V. C., Karuza, J. J., Coates, D., Cohn, E., & Kidder, L. (1982). Models of helping and coping. *American Psychologist*, 37(4), 368-384. doi: 10.1037/0003-066x.37.4.368

- Bury, M. (2001). Illness narratives: Fact or fiction? *Sociology of Health & Illness*, 23(3), 263-285. doi: 10.1111/1467-9566.00252
- Coleman, P. G., Ivani-Chalian, C., & Robinson, M. (1998). The story continues: Persistence of life themes in old age. *Ageing and Society*, 18(4), 389-419.
- Commonwealth of Australia. (1999). *The national strategy for an ageing Australia: Healthy ageing discussion paper* (No. 2611). Canberra, ACT: Author.
- Commonwealth of Australia. (2001). *National strategy for an ageing Australia: An older Australia, challenges and opportunities for all* (No. 2940). Canberra, ACT: Author.
- Commonwealth States and Territories. (2000). *Commonwealth, State and Territory strategy on healthy ageing* (No. 2686). Canberra, ACT: Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care, 2000.
- Coote, A. (2009). The uneven dividend: Health and well-being in later life. In P. Cann & M. Dean (Eds.), *Unequal ageing: The untold story of exclusion in old age* (pp. 53-75). Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications Inc.
- Department of Health and Ageing Australian Government. (2007). *Implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: Australia's country report to UNESCAP*. Canberra, ACT: Author.
- Elliott, R., & Timulak, L. (2005). Descriptive and interpretive approaches to qualitative research. In J. Miles & P. Gilbert (Eds.), *A handbook of research methods for clinical and health psychology* (pp. 147-159). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Erikson, E. H., & Erikson, J. M. (1997). *The lifecycle completed, extended version*. New York: Norton.
- Estes, C. L. (1993). The aging enterprise revisited. *The Gerontologist*, 33(3), 292-298. doi: 10.1093/geront/33.3.292
- Estes, C. L., Biggs, S., & Phillipson, C. (2009). *Social theory, social policy and ageing: A critical introduction*. Berkshire, England: Open University Press.
- Estes, C. L., & Binney, E. A. (1989). The biomedicalization of aging: Dangers and dilemmas. *The Gerontologist*, 29(5), 587-596. doi: 10.1093/geront/29.5.587
- Frieswijk, N., Buunk, B. P., Steverink, N., & Slaets, J. P. J. (2004). The interpretation of social comparison and its relation to life satisfaction among elderly people: Does frailty make a difference? *The Journals of Gerontology Series B: Psychological Sciences and Social Sciences*, 59(5), P250-P257. doi: 10.1093/geronb/59.5.P250
- Gatz, M., & Zarit, S. H. (1999). A good old age: Paradox or possibility. In V. L. Bengtson & K. W. Schaie (Eds.), *Handbook of theories of aging* (pp. 396-416). New York: Springer.
- Giles, H., McIlrath, M., Mulac, A., & McCann, R. M. (2010). Expressing age salience: Three generations' reported events, frequencies, and valences. (Report). *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 2010(206), 73-91. doi: 10.1515/ijsl.2010.049
- Gordon, C. (2006). Live well, live long: Health promotion and disease prevention for older adults. *American Society on Aging's Live Well, Live Long Issue Brief Series*, 2007(Issue brief 1). Retrieved from www.asaging.org/cdc
- Heckhausen, J., & Brim, O. G. (1997). Perceived problems for self and others: Self-protection by social downgrading throughout adulthood. *Psychology and Aging*, 12(4), 610-619. doi: 10.1037/0882-7974.12.4.610
- Heidrich, S. M., & Ryff, C. D. (1993a). Physical and mental health in later life: The self-system as mediator. *Psychology and Aging*, 8(3), 327-338. doi: 10.1037/0882-7974.8.3.327
- Heidrich, S. M., & Ryff, C. D. (1993b). The role of social comparisons processes in the psychological adaptation of elderly adults. *Journal of Gerontology: Psychological Sciences*, 48(3), 127-136.

- Hepworth, M. (2002). Using 'cultural products' in researching images of ageing. In A. Jamieson & C. Victor (Eds.), *Researching ageing and later life: The practice of social gerontology* (pp. 80-95). Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Holstein, M. B., & Minkler, M. (2003). Self, society, and the 'new gerontology'. *The Gerontologist*, 43(6), 787-796. doi: 10.1093/geront/43.6.787
- Holstein, M. B., & Minkler, M. (2007). Critical gerontology: Reflections for the 21st century. In M. Bernard & T. Scharf (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on ageing societies* (pp. 13-26). Bristol: Policy Press.
- Jamieson, A. (2002a). Strategies and methods in researching ageing and later life. In A. Jamieson & C. Victor (Eds.), *Researching ageing and later life* (pp. 21-32). Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Jamieson, A. (2002b). Theory and practice in social gerontology. In A. Jamieson & C. Victor (Eds.), *Researching ageing and later life* (pp. 7-20). Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Kafetsios, K., & Sideridis, G. D. (2006). Attachment, social support and well-being in young and older adults. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 11(6), 863-875. doi: 10.1177/1359105306069084
- Kwan, C. M. L., Love, G. D., Ryff, C. D., & Essex, M. J. (2003). The role of self-enhancing evaluations in a successful life transition. *Psychology and Aging*, 18(1), 3-12. doi: 10.1037/0882-7974.18.1.3
- Larson, J. S. (1999). The conceptualization of health. *Medical Care Research and Review*, 56(2), 123-136. doi: 10.1177/107755879905600201
- Lavretsky, H. (2010). Spirituality and aging. *Ageing Health*, 6(6), 749-769. doi: 10.2217/ah.10.70
- McPherson, B. D. (1990). *Ageing as a social process: An introduction to individual and population ageing* (2nd ed.). Toronto: Butterworths.
- Ory, M., Kinney, H. M., Hawkins, M., Sanner, B., & Mockenhaupt, R. (2003). Challenging aging stereotypes: Strategies for creating a more active society. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 25(3), 164-171. doi: 10.1016/S0749-3797(03)00181-8
- Phillipson, C. (1998). *Reconstructing old age: New agendas in social theory and practice*. London: Sage Publications.
- Pond, R., Stephens, C., & Alpass, F. (2010). Virtuously watching one's health. *Journal of Health Psychology*, 15(5), 734-743. doi: 10.1177/1359105310368068
- Prilleltensky, I., & Fox, D. R. (2007). Psychopolitical literacy for wellness and justice. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 35(6), 793-805. doi: 10.1002/jcop.20179
- Prilleltensky, I., Nelson, G., & Peirson, L. (2001). The role of power and control in children's lives: An ecological analysis of pathways toward wellness, resilience and problems. *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology*, 11(2), 143-158. doi: 10.1002/casp.616
- Rapley, T. (2011). Some pragmatics of data analysis. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 273-290). London: Sage Publications.
- Reed, J., Stanley, D., & Clarke, C. (2004). *Health, well-being and older people*. Bristol, UK: The Policy Press.
- Register, M. E., & Scharer, K. M. (2010). Connectedness in community-dwelling older adults. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 32(4), 462-479. doi: 10.1177/0193945909355997
- Rowe, J. W., & Kahn, R. L. (1987). Human aging: Usual and successful. *Science*, 237(4811), 143-149. doi: 10.1126/science.3299702
- Rowe, J. W., & Kahn, R. L. (1998). *Successful aging*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Schaie, K. W. (2001). Theories of aging. In N. J. Smelser & P. B. Baltes (Eds.), *International encyclopedia of the social and behavioural sciences*. (pp. 317-322). Oxford: Pergamon.

- Schroots, J. J. F. (1996). Theoretical developments in the psychology of aging. *The Gerontologist*, 36(6), 742-748. doi: 10.1093/geront/36.6.742
- Smith, G. C., Kohn, S. J., Savage-Stevens, S. E., Finch, J. J., Ingate, R., & Lim, Y.-O. (2000). The effects of interpersonal and personal agency on perceived control and psychological well-being in adulthood. *The Gerontologist*, 40(4), 458-468. doi: 10.1093/geront/40.4.458
- Smith, J. A. (1995). Semi-structured interviewing and qualitative analysis. In J. Smith, R. Harre & L. van Langenhove (Eds.), *Rethinking methods in psychology* (pp. 9-26). London: Sage.
- Stuart-Hamilton, I. (1994). *The psychology of ageing: An introduction* (2nd ed.). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Stuart-Hamilton, I. (2006). *The psychology of ageing: An introduction* (4th ed.). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Thoits, P. A. (2006). Personal agency in the stress process. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 47(4), 309-323. doi: 10.1177/002214650604700401
- Tones, K. (1996). The anatomy and ideology of health promotion. In A. Scriven & J. Orne (Eds.), *Health promotion* (pp. 9-21). London: Macmillan.
- Townsend, P. (2007). Using human rights to defeat ageism: Dealing with policy-induced 'structured dependency'. In M. Bernard & T. Scharf (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on ageing societies* (pp. 27-44). Bristol: Policy Press.
- United Nations/Department of Economic and Social Affairs/Population Division. (2010). *World population ageing 2009*. New York: UN.
- Wadensten, B. (2006). An analysis of psychosocial theories of ageing and their relevance to practical gerontological nursing in Sweden. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences*, 20(3), 347-354. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-6712.2006.00414.x
- Welsh Assembly Government. (2005). *Healthy ageing action plan for Wales: A response to health challenge Wales*. Cardiff, Wales: Author.
- Welsh Assembly Government. (2008). *The strategy for older people in Wales: Living longer living better, 2008-2013*. Cardiff, Wales: Author.
- Welsh Assembly Government. (2009). *Older people's wellbeing monitor for Wales 2009*. Cardiff, Wales: Author.
- Wills, T. A. (1981). Downward comparison principles in social psychology. *Psychological Bulletin*, 90(2), 245-271. doi: 10.1037/0033-2909.90.2.245
- World Health Organization. (2002). *Active ageing: A policy framework*. Geneva, Switzerland: WHO.

Note

¹ Projections are not predictions or forecasts, but rather illustrations of the growth and change in population, which would occur if certain assumptions about future levels of fertility, mortality, internal migration and overseas migration were to prevail over the projection period. The assumptions incorporate recent trends, which indicate increasing levels of fertility and net overseas migration for Australia.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge and sincerely thank Dr Sharon McCarthy, Dr Anne Sibbel, and Associate Professor Dawn Darlaston-Jones for their contribution, guidance and support in the writing of this paper.

Address for correspondence

David Mander PhD
Health Promotion Evaluation Unit
The University of Western Australia,
Crawley, Western Australia, WA, 6009,
Australia.
e: david.mander@uwa.edu.au

Author biographical information

Sasha Stumpers
Please see introduction to this section.

Lynne Cohen

Lynne has a background in school teaching where she was head of the Biology and Mathematics departments. She is an Australian Learning and Teaching Council Fellow with an interest in developing

leadership in undergraduate students. She has received numerous Awards for Learning and Teaching. Currently she is the Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education and Arts and Professor of Psychology at Edith Cowan University. Lynne is a community psychologist and brings many years of experience in resiliency research with children and university students. She has successfully developed transition programs which empower students and positively impacts on their experience and outcomes. She has led a number of interdisciplinary research teams and is committed to a collaborative model involving community organisations. She also has extensive experience in working with children with learning difficulties. Lynne developed and implemented a literacy program for children with learning difficulties and has trained a team of teachers to provide a service for students with learning difficulties. Together with colleagues, she was instrumental in establishing the Lifespan Resilience Research Group at Edith Cowan University.

Julie Ann Pooley

Julie Ann is the Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching in the Faculty of Health, Engineering and Science and an Associate Professor of Psychology in the School of Psychology and Social Science at Edith Cowan University. Associate Professor Pooley is an accomplished lecturer in Psychology and has published extensively in the areas of resilience, post-traumatic growth, adolescence and children.

David Mander

David is a practicing Psychologist at a large K-12 boarding school in Perth. He also holds an Adjunct Senior Research Fellow position with the Health Promotion Evaluation Unit, The University of Western Australia. David has worked extensively in both the government and non-government education sectors and has recently been the Project Director at the Telethon Kids Institute of a large National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia funded project investigating bullying behaviour. While

completing his PhD in Psychology, David developed and implemented social and emotional support programs for Aboriginal students at 16 boarding schools in WA.

Collaborative Projects: An Interdisciplinary Study. Edited by Andy Blunden.

Reviewed by:

Carol Macdonald

University of South Australia

e: carolmacdon@gmail.com

Collaborative Projects is a collection of studies solicited by the editor, Andy Blunden, as a way of developing a new unit of analysis which he has been working on over the last five years. Blunden is a social theorist who has come to Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) and discovered what he sees as a certain disorderliness in the existing unit of analysis, that is, of activity. The disciplines include child development, psychotherapy, architectural design and political science, written by workers in both CHAT and social theory.

In the extended introduction, Blunden reflects on how the human sciences are, in broad terms, divided between disciplines concerned with people as individuals and disciplines concerned with people in groups. The former include psychology, for example, psychotherapy and child development, and education, and the latter, sociology, political science and history. He has an ongoing concern with this disjunction, arguing as he does, that humans are formed in culture and society, and, in turn these structures are maintained by individuals. In working in the broader humanities specialists from these varying disciplines usually come together to analyse a problem through the lens of their own approach. Blunden is hoping to transcend these differences using a new, shared unit of analysis in addressing problems. This we could term Community Psychology.

As befits a unit for social theory, “collaborative project” is not a static entity of social life, but rather is concerned with the dynamics of social change. When Blunden developed his new unit of analysis he went to a (then) Marxist – McIntyre for a theory of ethics. Projects then, have an ethical aspect of how people ought to collaborate as well as a

descriptive aspect of how they actually do work together to make and remake the world.

Most of the authors have their roots in the Cultural Psychology of Lev Vygotsky and the Soviet school of Activity Theory which developed after Vygotsky’s death in 1934. Vygotsky saw that human beings developed not merely in collaboration with the adults of a given culture, but through collaborative use of cultural artefacts, especially signs such as the spoken word. The use of these signs is internalised, creating new culturally-mediated links between perception and action. The Activity Theorists extended, some say, modified Vygotsky’s work with the concept of ‘an activity’ which is an aggregate of actions which are united because they serve the same socially-developed motive, understanding of activity that we find collaborative projects, but the term avoids the vagueness of ‘activity’. It also appeals to the everyday connotations of the words, something that lends to the attractiveness of the concept.

Other authors are primarily social theorists with varying degrees of familiarity with Vygotsky and Activity Theory who have used the concept of collaborative project because it provided a particularly useful approach to problems arising in their speciality. The book itself was a collaborative project, leading to an enhanced understanding of the posited unit of analysis. There are 12 research projects described in Part 1 and Part 2 contains 12 short chapters in which the authors reflect on the ideas raised in the earlier chapters. These reflections are followed by a final reflection on the whole book by the editor.

The first three chapters describe initiatives in which children and young people are engaged in projects as the centrepiece of a developmental approach to pre-school and primary education, college education and social work, respectively. Elena Kravtsova outlines the projective method for a continuous education system as it is applied in the Golden Key Schools in Russia. This is an experimental-genetic

method of instruction which aims to model the developmental processes which are replicated in real life, realising the potential of each child.

Eduardo Vianna Naja Hougaard and Anna Stetsenko describe a collaborative project developed at an urban community college in which students were inducted into developing a Transformative Activist Stance in which they examine social practices leading to inequality and discrimination which play a part in their own lives. They developed a Peer-Supported Activist Learning Community, focussing on closing the gaps between their learning goals and their overall life pursuits. Morten Nissen discusses a video produced and displayed on the internet by young drug users at a Copenhagen facility. The collaborative video production is explored, exposing issues of power, and examining the role of recognition in identity formation.

Moving on from this focus on projects designed by professionals to engage young people and promote their personal development, into the adult world as such, the next chapter is devoted to a study of collaborative projects in the arts and sciences. Vera John-Steiner, a cultural psychologist, sees thinking as a collaborative process where partnerships and collaborations are key to understanding. She looks particularly at a partnership of a chemist and physicist whose joint work gained international renown. They worked collaboratively, where this productivity was interspersed with periods of individual elaboration. They provide a key example of cross-disciplinary complementarity, and mutual appropriation.

From here on, the focus shifts from psychology per se, to projects aimed at creating a changed social space. One of the foremost CHAT practitioners, Michael Cole developed a after-school project aimed at enhancing learning experiences of working class children and teenagers, as part university, part community development. He documents the history of these endeavours entitled the 5th Dimension over three decades, particularly interested in forces against the sustainability of such educational

initiatives.

The next two chapters continue the focus on projects involving a finite number of people over a finite time-span, but having the objective of introducing some specific change in social practice. Andy Blunden tells of a project launched in 1999 by academic and general staff at the University of Melbourne which led to the introduction of

Collaborative Learning Spaces, and changed the University's policies for the maintenance and construction of shared teaching spaces. This project led to a new concept of learning spaces for university instruction, serving an example of how concepts are produced by projects. This configuration is now a world-wide practice in tertiary education.

When such short-term projects succeed, they necessarily become long-term programmes, part of the larger social fabric. One such project is described by Helena Worthen where she looked at a non-unionised work situation in conservative Central Illinois. A longstanding positive worker-employer relationship in a healthcare facility was suddenly ruptured when the employers abruptly made a downward shift in working conditions. The workers decided to unionise and there was a long strike which finally emanated in their being given a contract.

Ron Lubensky uses the concept of collaborative projects to study public deliberation in a citizen's parliament in Australia. Policy issues in contemporary life have become complex and many believe that such decisions should be left to experts. However, there is reason to believe that citizens – through the use of mini-publics – should be involved, rather than simply arguing that they make better decisions than panels of experts. In other words, public acceptance of the deliberative enterprise will rise on normative rather than epistemic claims. This analysis shows that deliberative practitioners should make a social movement to bring public deliberation into their mainstream their priority.

Next comes those projects which transcend the life span and activity of a finite

number of individuals, beginning with Vygotsky's collaborative project of social transformation in the early Soviet Union. Anna Stetsenko brings us back to Vygotsky's (and his collaborators) original project. In the last three decades his work has been interpreted in the West as a traditional value-neutral theory. This perception is not true to the spirit of his theory: His practice itself mirrors his conception of the social collaborative nature of the human mind. Knowledge is embedded in practical transformative engagements with the world – there is a link between the practical and theoretical, social and individual.

The final three reports concern projects enacted in the global social and political arena, involving masses of people. Here the projects are essentially engaged in conflict with the dominant projects in a society and in collaborative relations with other projects. As they show, the social changes achieved are not just legal or institutional changes, but changes in the consciousness of masses of people.

Jennifer Power shows how profoundly the AIDS Movement changed people's minds about health in Australia, where affected communities, notably the gay community, established the first 'safe-sex' campaigns, created large volunteer-based care and support networks for people living with HIV/AIDS, and established a presence at the forefront of public health-policy making regarding HIV/AIDS. AIDS activists successfully convinced the Federal Government to provide funds to enable them to take a lead in HIV-prevention. In doing so, they permanently enshrine the concept of community participation within the Australian public health system, including a measure of expert status equal to that of medical professionals in scientific and clinical decision making regarding HIV/AIDS. They "became" experts.

In another case study in Australia Lynne Beaton tracks the change in attitudes towards asbestos, used in a wide range of industrial products. Although mining and manufacturing of asbestos had long been recognised as a source of toxic, even lethal

effects on workers, attitudes of industry were resistant for decades. Internationally asbestosis had been recognised in the early decades of the twentieth century, but early on asbestos companies organised themselves against claims from workers. They remained resistant to efforts to ban the substance by medical scientists, governments, trade unions, and the media who were more or less vocal over decades. Asbestos was finally banned in Australia in 2003 after two projects – the union movement and medical science - collaborated to draw in the media, victims, and lawyers, to build an Anti-Asbestos Movement as a collaborative project.

Finally, Brecht De Smet examines the emergence of the Egyptian revolution from the collaborative project in Tahrir Square, to defy expectations, bring down the Mubarak regime and open a way to democracy. De Smet investigates the complex relations between different projects and importantly shows how a project's concept of itself develops immanently from its activity. The final part of the book is made up of 12 reflections covering reflections on the projects studied in the previous chapters as well as other projects such as the Women's Liberation Movement, prefigurative politics, emotions, children's play, and others.

In providing a unit of analysis which is appealing to people working for social change, Blunden and the other authors in this book offer a strong case for community psychology. Community psychology works with the 'we' of change: Building relationships, providing tools, analysing social and workplace settings, and working with people to fight oppression. The challenge for community psychology is probably to confront their role as experts in helping others towards social change.

Call for Papers

THE AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY
PSYCHOLOGIST, Vol.28, Issue 1
Special Issue on Violence and Gender

Editorial Board: Heather Gridley (Victoria University, Australia), Carmel O'Brien (Doncare, Australia), Dr Nicole Allen (University of Illinois, USA), Dr Liz Short (Victoria University, Australia), Dr Peter Streker, Director, Community Stars), Professor Mandy Morgan (Massey University, Aotearoa New Zealand).

The first issue of 2016 will be a special issue devoted to violence and gender.

Contributions by practitioners and community activists as well as academics and researchers are invited. Contributions which draw on theoretical frameworks relating to feminist and/or community psychology are especially welcome. It is expected that a major focus will be male violence against women in intimate relationships; however submission on other aspects of gender and violence will be considered.

If you are thinking about submitting a paper, you need to be mindful of the following points:

Our definition of **Feminist Psychology** is the same as that of the journal *Feminism & Psychology*: that which acknowledges gender and other social inequalities (e.g. race, class, disability, or sexuality) and considers their psychological effects.

All submitting authors are asked to read and abide by the APS Ethical Guidelines for Psychological Practice with Women and Girls which are attached, and available online at <https://www.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/EG-Women.pdf>.

Papers should be submitted electronically as an email attachment in Microsoft Word. Please refer to the Australian Community Psychologist guide for detailed information on the preparation, submission and

publication of manuscripts: http://www.groups.psychology.org.au/Assets/Files/Preparation_of_manuscripts.pdf

The deadline for submissions is Friday 30th October 2015. It is anticipated the issue will be published in mid-2016.

Early discussion of possible contributions is encouraged by contacting:
Heather Gridley
e: heather.gridley@vu.edu.au
Tel: +61 (0)419 113731

Preparation, Submission and Publication of Manuscripts

Manuscripts

The Australian Community Psychologist publishes work that is of relevance to community psychologists and others interested in the field. Research reports should be methodologically sound. Theoretical or area review papers are welcomed, as are letters, brief reports and papers by newer contributors to the discipline. Contributions towards the four sections of the journal are sought.

The Australian Community Psychologist is published twice per year and online and is available via the website of the Australian Psychological Society's College of Community Psychologists' page (<http://www.groups.psychology.org.au/GroupContent.aspx?ID=4395>).

Articles

Contributions are state of the art reviews of professional and applied areas and reviews and essays on matters of general relevance to community psychologists. They may be up to 10,000 words, including all tables, figures and references; however, authors should be as concise as possible.

Research Reports

This section is for the publication of empirical research reports relevant to community psychology theory, method, and practice. They may be up to 10,000 words, including all tables, figures and references; however, authors should be as concise as possible.

Practice Issues

This section publishes individual manuscripts and collections of manuscripts which address matters of general, professional and public relevance, techniques and approaches in psychological practice, professional development issues, and professional and public policy issues.

Book Reviews

The journal publishes book reviews of up to 1,000 words. Books reviewed relate directly to the major areas of practice in community

psychology.

Review and Publication of Manuscripts

The acceptable word processing program format is Microsoft Word. All manuscripts are submitted electronically to the Editors: Dr Anne Sibbel and Dr Sharon McCarthy: acp.editor@gmail.com

If authors experience any difficulty with electronic submission, hard copy materials together with a disc copy should be sent to:

Dr Sharon McCarthy
School of Arts & Sciences
University of Notre Dame
GPO Box 1225
PERTH WA 6959
Australia

With the exception of book reviews, all contributions are blind-reviewed. Articles submitted for review must be original works and may not be under consideration elsewhere. It is a condition of publication that authors assign the copyright of their articles to the Australian Psychological Society.

All manuscripts for consideration for publication in *The Australian Community Psychologist* must be formatted according to the instructions for authors below.

Instructions for Authors

The following constitutes advice to contributors that is relevant to all journal sections.

Every submission must include:

1. A cover letter stating the section of the journal to which the author(s) wish to submit the article.
2. The complete manuscript including title page, abstract, text, tables, figures, acknowledgements, and references.
3. Written permission from the publisher (copyright holder) to reproduce any previously published tables, illustrations or photographs.

Manuscripts should be arranged as follows:

Title page

Abstract and keywords

Text

References

Acknowledgements

Disclosures (if required)

Address for correspondence from readers (e.g., an email address)

Author biographies (a short paragraph on each author e.g., job title, research interests, department or research centre)

Tables and figures should be placed in the correct position within the body of the text.

Number pages consecutively, beginning with the Title page as page 1.

The Title Page should contain:

Title: Should be short and informative.

Recommended length is between 10 and 12 words.

Short title: A maximum of 50 characters.

Author(s): This should include each author's name in the preferred form of given name, family name.

Institution and Affiliations: This identifies the location (e.g., university) where the author(s) undertook the investigation.

Specific Formatting Requirements

Language

All manuscripts must be in English. Australian English is preferred.

Paper Size, Margins, Alignment

A4 page, ALL margins 2.5cm, all text left aligned (not justified) unless otherwise specified.

Spacing

All text must be double-spaced and left aligned (not justified) unless otherwise specified.

Font & Size

Times New Roman, 12pt unless otherwise specified.

Paper Title

14pt, bold, centred, sentence case.

Abstract and Keywords

The heading Abstract should be centred and in italics.

The text should be left aligned.

Place one blank line after the abstract.

The abstract must be no more than 200 words.

Place up to 6 (six) keywords.

Normal Text

12pt, Times New Roman double line-spacing, left aligned (not justified)

Do not leave line spaces between paragraphs but indent the first line of each paragraph.

Long Quotes (roughly, quotes of 30 words or more):

Indented 1 cm left and right

1st Level Heading

Main words capitalised, bold, centred, not italics.

1st Level of Subheading

Italics, main words capitalised, left aligned.

Do not number headings or subheadings.

2nd Level of Subheading

Italics, sentence case, left aligned. Text should continue on the same line.

Tables, Figures, and Diagrams

Captions should be typed above tables and below figures. These should be black and white and inserted in the correct place within the body of the text. Do not allow a figure or table to be split over two pages or to be separated from its label or caption.

Diagrams, illustrations, graphs, and so on, must be 'screen readable'. This means fully legible and readable on screen when displayed at widths that ideally do not exceed about 750 pixels and certainly should not exceed 1000 pixels.

Page Numbers

Insert page numbers at the top of the page, right aligned, beginning with the title page.

Footnotes

Avoid using footnotes. If used, please number them sequentially.

References

Use the reference style of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). List references under the 1st level heading.

Example journal article:

Fryer, D., & Laing, A. (2008). Community psychologies: What are they? What could they be? Why does it matter? A critical community psychology approach. *The Australian Community Psychologist*, 20(2), 7-15.

Example book:

Montero, M., & Sonn, C. C. (2010). *Psychology of liberation: Theory and applications*. New York: Springer.

Example book chapter:

Fielder, J., Roberts, J., & Abdullah, J. (2000). Research with Indigenous communities. In P. Dudgeon, D. Garvey & H. Pickett (Eds.), *Working with Indigenous Australians: A handbook for psychologists* (pp. 349-356). Perth, Australia: Gunada Press.

Example electronic source:

Cummins, R. A., Hughes, J., Tomy, A., Gibson, A., Woerner, J., & Lai, L. (2007). *The wellbeing of Australians – Carer health and wellbeing*. Melbourne, Australia: Australian Centre on Quality of Life, Deakin University. Accessed 27th September 2011 from <http://www.deakin.edu.au/research/acqol/auwbi/survey-reports/survey-017-1-report.pdf>

The Australian Community Psychologist

