

Defining Social Work in Aotearoa

Forty Years of **Pioneering
Research and Teaching**
at Massey University

A large, bold, blue graphic of the number '40' that spans the bottom half of the page. The '4' is a solid block, and the '0' is a thick, curved line that starts from the right edge and curves around the bottom of the '4'.

Michael Dale, Hannah Mooney & Kieran O'Donoghue

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Dedication

The authors dedicate this book to Mervyn Hancock and Ephra Garrett, who were the founding staff members and leaders of the social work programme at Massey University. Merv is widely recognised as the father of professional social work in Aotearoa New Zealand, while Ephra is clearly the whāea and midwife of social work. We hope that this book in some small way captures the aspirations, hopes, dreams and vision you had for social work in Aotearoa when you started the Massey University social work programme.

— Michael Dale, Hannah Mooney and Kieran O'Donoghue

Introduction

The social work profession is a bridge extended to those who are excluded, marginalised, lost and unloved within society. On a daily basis, social workers work on behalf of the public to assist individuals, groups, families, whānau and communities to change the stories and circumstances of their lives, as well as the way in which society positions them in the stories that are told about them.

Social work practice involves intervening in the social problems that impact on people's private lives. Through the decades, social workers have undertaken this work diligently, while pressed for time and having to navigate the competing demands of clients, their agencies, resources, the law and social policy. Social workers as a group are generally unassuming, service-orientated and focused on the needs of their clients, while working for change within bureaucratic, dehumanising and rationed systems. They are engaged in social change through mediating the aspirations of human rights and social justice within civil society. Nonetheless, the realities of their work loom large, and as professionals some are often marginalised, in a similar fashion to the clients they serve.

In Aotearoa New Zealand, the social work profession has been constructed from a range of attitudes to welfare, including indigenous

and Western approaches (rising from settler notions of charity delivered primarily by religious organisations). The establishment of the welfare state saw the government become the main provider of social and welfare services, through the departments of Education (Child Welfare Division), Māori Affairs (Māori Welfare Office), Health, Social Security and Justice. Up until the Department of Social Welfare Act in 1971, social workers practised under a range of titles including Child Welfare Officer, Māori Welfare Officer and Field Officer (Nash, 2001).

The education and training of social workers has been integrally connected to the development of the social work profession. Initially, social workers were trained through an apprenticeship model, under the supervision of a more experienced or senior colleague. Formal social work education came in the form of the Diploma in Social Science that was offered by Victoria University of Wellington from 1950 (Nash, 1998a). The Victoria programme only took a dozen students each year. Because this programme was unable to meet demand for trained social workers, in the 1960s the government departments developed formal training centres at Tiromoana and Taranaki House, where new social workers undertook an eight-week programme in two blocks of four weeks, with a six-week break in between (Staniforth, 2015).

In 1964, the New Zealand Association of Social Workers (NZASW) was formed, with Merv Hancock as its founding president. The NZASW and Merv Hancock were committed to the professionalisation of social work, which included the development of formal qualifications, and they worked alongside the government to establish them. In 1975, Merv Hancock was employed in the Department of Sociology at Massey University to develop and lead a social work programme for the university. This book endeavours to tell the story of this work.

The social work staff of Massey University, like their colleagues in practice, have a passion for the work of educating and developing social work practitioners, and furthering the disciplinary knowledge basis

of social work in Aotearoa New Zealand. They have done this while responding to significant changes in social conditions since the mid-1970s. In essence, this book is an attempt to record this effort, and to reflect on the impact it has had in furthering their aspirations for professional social work. In other words, this book aims to explore the contribution that the Massey University social work programme has made over its first 40 years in defining professional social work in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The question of the contribution, influence and impact of a university programme is a challenging one. Traditionally, an assessment of a university programme is based on the success of its graduates, the reputation of the programme nationally and internationally, the impact of staff and student research, and how well the programme, through service, contributes to its communities and country. In exploring the question of how the Massey programme has contributed to defining professional social work in Aotearoa New Zealand from 1975 to 2016, the authors undertook a review of the salient aspects of the history of Aotearoa New Zealand society and of the social work profession. We have also reviewed the history of the university, and the way in which the social work programme developed in terms of staffing, curriculum and programmes. Finally, we have attempted to capture the breadth and depth of research undertaken by the staff, students and alumni of the programme, as well as the specific accolades and honours awarded to staff, students and alumni.

The research methods employed were, firstly, an email questionnaire and oral history interviews with key informants (former staff and alumni). We also undertook an extensive review of social work literature, the social work records in Massey University Archives, the School of Social Work historical records and documents, library resources and online sources. The email questionnaire and oral history interviews explored the social work context, the Massey University context, the development of

the social work programme, the contribution the programme has made to social work and social policy, and the future picture for the social work programme. Both the questionnaires and the interview transcripts were analysed, with the key themes and events being identified by close reading. This research was approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

The review of literature, archival material, records, documents and online material was also focused on the social work context, the Massey University context, the development of the social work programme, and the contribution the programme has made to social work and social policy. The initial searching and collation of staff lists and staff publications was undertaken by Amy Viles, a fourth-year Bachelor of Social Work student on a summer scholarship. Amy's search involved looking through the university calendars and university research and publication reports.

We particularly acknowledge the assistance of Doug Franz, Strategic Research Information Manager, who provided access to the university research reports, and Louis Changuion, the Massey University archivist, for access to the archives and providing copies of digital photos. The Massey University Library also assisted us by providing endnote libraries of the social work and social policy theses.

In terms of the social work context, we drew from a range of sources, with key sources being Mary Nash's PhD thesis on the history of social work education (Nash, 1998a), the ANZASW Digital History project (<http://www.socialworkhistory.nz/>) and the Research and Publishing Group of the New Zealand Ministry for Culture and Heritage's New Zealand History site (<http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/>). We also undertook a review of all of the issues of *New Zealand Social Work*, *Social Work Review* (and its later iteration *Aotearoa New Zealand Social Work Review*), *Te Kōmako* and *Tu Mau*, and key social work and social policy texts (for example, *Social work in action*, *Social policy in Aotearoa New Zealand*, *New Zealand social work*, *Restorying social work supervision* and *Social*



The Social Science Tower (SST) opened in 1973 at Massey's Turitea Campus, Palmerston North. Social work has been based here for 40 years. **MASSEY UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES**

work theories in action). We also acknowledge the assistance of the Massey University alumni office, which provided us with information about the graduates of the programme and those who had been awarded honours.

In undertaking the research and writing for this book, we as authors were acutely aware of our own positioning as insiders, staff and graduates of the programme, and that our perspectives, experiences, worldviews and values influence the construction of the narrative in this book. Our biases are obvious; we are all invested in the social work programme at Massey University. We feel a sense of responsibility as the current custodians of this legacy to continue its work and build upon the foundations, established by Merv Hancock and Ephra Garrett, of a bicultural, critically reflective programme that engages with the social challenges of the day, that has practice relevance, challenges the social policy agenda, advances the profession of social work, and aspires to advance both human rights and social justice within Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally.

The audience we initially envisaged for this book was our alumni, social workers in Aotearoa New Zealand and social work students. As we researched the area of the history of social work schools and social work education programmes, we were unable to find any books which specifically captured the history and contribution of a social work school or programme within a university. We therefore became aware that there was a further possible audience for this book with our international colleagues within the International Association of Schools of Social Work. With our audience in mind, we decided that we would focus on the narrative and story, which means that we have kept in-text citations to a minimum and have chosen instead to have a full bibliography at the end of the book.

We have taken a chronological approach with the chapters, with each covering a particular period in the development of the programme. Within each chapter, we have set the scene of the period by discussing the social

work and university context of the time, and then how the programme developed and contributed to social work practice and policy in that period. The book concludes with a review of the programme's journey in defining professional social work in Aotearoa New Zealand, and explores what the future holds for social work and social work education.

Chapter One

A new professional programme for a changing society, 1975–1982

This chapter discusses the establishment and development of the social work programme at Massey University within a broader social context. The chapter consists of three parts: the social work context; the development of the Massey social work programme; and the contribution of the new programme to the development of social work in Aotearoa New Zealand. This three-part structure is also used in subsequent chapters.

The social work context is explored in two distinct sections. The first examines the events that shaped the social and political character of Aotearoa New Zealand. This in turn provides the background for the second section, which discusses the development of the social work profession.

Matters pertaining to government, legislation and policy, bicultural development and social issues characterised the social and political context of this period. Politically, Prime Minister Robert Muldoon dominated, trying to hold society together by interventionist government and regulation in the face of a liberal, deregulating and internationally changing world.

The political climate

Robert Muldoon led the National Party to electoral victory in 1975, and his government lasted until 1984. Muldoon's administration was

characterised by heavily interventionist economic policies; for example, by imposing a wage and price freeze, controlling rents, and attempting to reduce interest rates. The administration also invested in the ultimately unsuccessful Think Big strategy, which was intended to simultaneously decrease the country's reliance on imports and address unemployment (King, 2004, pp. 488–489).

The second oil shock of the 1970s was associated with a reduction in supply linked to the Iranian revolution, but it was also driven by strong global oil demand. Oil prices began to rise rapidly in mid-1979, more than doubling between April 1979 and April 1980. The National Government's response was to invest in Think Big large-scale industrial projects, mainly based around energy projects, in order to reduce New Zealand's dependence on foreign energy sources. An alternative short-term response was the introduction of carless days for motor vehicles, introduced in July 1979; even so, there was little reduction in petrol consumption, and the scheme was abandoned in May 1980.

The 1978 general election, conducted under the first-past-the-post system, saw the National Party returned with a reduced majority (down from 55 seats to 51 — securing 39.82 per cent of the total votes). The Muldoon administration had failed to reduce either overseas borrowing or the government's internal deficit; there was double-figure inflation, low economic growth and high unemployment. The Labour Party had gained increased representation (from 32 to 40 seats — securing 40.41 per cent of total votes), and the Social Credit Political League secured one seat, with Bruce Beetham becoming the party's second MP (they had secured 16 per cent of the total votes).

In 1981, the election saw the return of the National Party Government with a further-reduced majority of two over all of the other parties. National won 47 seats (34.3 per cent), Labour 43 (34.5 per cent), and Social Credit (18.3 per cent) 2 seats. In spite of the government's unpopularity, the opposition had failed to gain sufficient voter confidence.

Another notable political event during this period was the launch of the Mana Motuhake party by Matiu Rata, a former Labour Cabinet minister. Rata had tuned into the rising dissatisfaction with mainstream political responses to concerns held by Māori, and the Mana Motuhake party was launched at an Easter hui in 1980 at Tira Hou Marae in Auckland. Rata was of the view that Māori would always be marginalised if they remained inside the main political parties; key aspirations of the party included Māori autonomy and a vision of cultural unity.

The key legislative changes during this period revealed a focus on biculturalism, family relationships and civic rights. Biculturalism was evident in the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal by the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975. The Tribunal is a permanent commission of inquiry charged with making recommendations on claims brought by Māori relating to actions or omissions of the Crown that potentially breach the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi. The Tribunal was initially mandated to review claims made from 1975. It was not until 1985 that the remit was extended to claims from 1840. Upon the recommendation of the Tribunal, the Crown makes settlements through the Office of Treaty Settlements.

During this period the emphasis on family relationships was apparent in three Acts that marked changes regarding the relative power differential between women and men, including a focus on domestic violence. The first of these was the Matrimonial Property Act 1976 (which also recognised *de facto* relationships), which represented a further recognition of the need to redress gender inequality. The Act recognised the equal contributions of both partners to a relationship, and provided for a just division of property, in particular noting the interests of children. There was a general presumption that property would be divided equally between a couple. This Act was intended to work in association with the Domestic Purposes Benefit 1973, which aimed to help women with a dependent child, or children, who had either lost the support of a

husband, or who were inadequately supported by him. The Domestic Purposes Benefit set the benefit at a level that would enable sole parents to care for their children without needing to find paid employment, thus enabling many women and children to leave violent family situations. Together these two Acts removed another impediment to women who were trapped in unhealthy relationships and often subjected to family violence — financial dependence.

The Family Proceedings Act 1980 was the second Act. This Act established a single ground for divorce (dissolution of marriage or civil union); namely, irreconcilable differences proved by two years' living apart. Counselling was to be made available to assist couples regarding disputes concerning the care of children; provision was also made for a mediation conference chaired by a Family Court judge. The Act was empowering, too, in that it encouraged couples to assume responsibility to resolve disputes.

The third Act was the Domestic Protection Act 1982 (which came into force in 1983). This was the first piece of legislation in New Zealand to respond directly to domestic violence, introducing non-violence and non-molestation orders. Historical responses to domestic violence had reflected societal attitudes that considered domestic violence to be 'a private affair', and police intervention had primarily been in the role of mediator, with few cases resulting in prosecution. The women's movement of the 1960s and 1970s increased public awareness of domestic violence, and the first women's refuges were established in 1974 and 1975.

Changes in court structures also had implications for family relationships. The Family Court was established in New Zealand by the Family Courts Act 1980, and began operating on 1 October 1981. Although it is a division of the District Court, the Family Court has its own identity, with a Principal Family Court Judge and judges who are permanently appointed by the Governor-General. The Family Courts Act requires Family Court proceedings to avoid unnecessary formality.

The period was marked by three developments regarding civic rights. First — a reflection of the increasing centralisation of information held by the government — was the establishment of the National Law Enforcement System, also known as the Wanganui Computer, in 1976. This database held information accessible to the Police, Department of Justice and Land Transport Safety Authority. It recorded details regarding motor vehicle registration, driver's and firearms licences, and traffic and criminal convictions. While the Police minister hailed it as a 'most significant crime-fighting weapon', the database was controversial, and many questioned the State's right to gather information on its citizens.

Second, the Human Rights Commission was established by the Human Rights Commission Act 1977. The Commission was given a range of functions and powers to protect rights under United Nations covenants and conventions. The Human Rights Commission Act outlawed discrimination on the basis of sex, marital status and ethical or religious belief.

The third development was the Official Information Act 1982, which sought to balance the public's right of access to official information against the government's need to withhold information. The Act set out the principle of availability: that the public should have the right to access official information unless there is good reason for withholding it. Further, making information publicly available was considered to be consistent with the promotion of good government, enhancing respect for the law by enabling more effective public participation in the making and administration of laws and policies, and increasing the accountability of ministers and officials.

The mid-1970s witnessed events that were an expression of Māori self-determination, and that also presented a challenge to the perception that race relations in Aotearoa New Zealand were an example

to the world. Rapid urbanisation and assimilation practices had led to Māori being over-represented in negative health and wellbeing statistics. There were renewed calls for the Treaty of Waitangi to be adhered to by the Crown, particularly as these matters pertained to Māori land that had been taken by the government.

In 1975, there was a Māori Land March in the form of a hīkoi from Te Hāpua in the far north to the steps of Parliament in Wellington. This hīkoi was led by Hokianga community leader Dame Whina Cooper, who became known as Te Whāea of Te Motu (Mother of the Nation). Thousands of Māori and Pākehā joined the initial small group of 50 marchers as they completed the 1000-kilometre walk to protest. Their intent was encapsulated by her statement ‘not one more acre’. The march was an expression of Māori determination to halt the further transfer of Māori land to both Pākehā and the Crown, and was influential in politicising many Māori (King, 2004).

The occupation of Takaparawhā (Bastion Point) is another seminal marker of Māori concern regarding land issues. Takaparawhā is a promontory above Tāmaki Drive overlooking the Waitematā Harbour in Auckland, and was gifted to the Crown by Ngāti Whātua, the local iwi, as a defence site in 1885; subsequently, the land surrounding the point was appropriated for housing. In late 1976, Muldoon announced plans for a housing development at Takaparawhā. On 5 January 1977, the Ōrākei Māori Action Committee, led by Joe Hawke, occupied Takaparawhā in opposition to the Crown’s intention to dispose of the land. The dispute was subsequently taken to the Waitangi Tribunal, and in July 1988 the government agreed to the Tribunal’s recommendation that the land be returned to Ngāti Whātua.

In 1982, Hiwi Tauroa, the Race Relations Conciliator, released a report, *Race against time*. This report was based on a public survey, and argued that the state of race relations in New Zealand required urgent action. He asserted that biculturalism must be the first step towards multiculturalism

since Māori and Pākehā represent ‘the two cultural foundations of New Zealand society’.

The establishment of Te Kōhanga Reo (Language Nest) by the Department of Māori Affairs was to have a seminal contribution in the regeneration of te reo in Aotearoa New Zealand. The total-immersion Māori-language programme targeted children from birth to the age of six, and aimed to promote language and support whānau in the principles of Māori child-rearing practices. The first kōhanga reo opened in April 1982; by the end of the year, 100 had been established. By 2016, there were 460 kōhanga reo throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, and kōhanga have also been established in Australia and the United Kingdom. Following this total-immersion initiative for younger children, primary schools (kura kaupapa) and high schools (whare kura) were established from 1985. Wānanga (universities) were set up from 1981.

Race relations with Pasifika people also assumed prominence during this period. In 1976, the government’s intolerance towards Pasifika migrants found expression in the intensification of ‘dawn raids’ on Pasifika over-stayers (first introduced by the Labour Government in 1974). The background to this situation traced back to the 1950s, when the New Zealand government had encouraged emigration from Pasifika countries to provide labour to meet shortages caused by post-war economic expansion. However, as the result of economic recession and increasing unemployment in the 1970s, attention was now focused on immigrants whose temporary visas had expired. These migrants were disproportionately represented in unemployment and crime figures, and there was a perception that they were placing pressure on the welfare system. The raid tactics were accompanied by accusations of racism, and damaged relations with Pasifika countries like Samoa and Tonga.

A further expression of government exercise of power occurred in 1982. In 1962, Western Samoa was the first Pasifika nation to regain its independence, and a Treaty of Friendship was signed with New Zealand.

However, the citizenship status of Western Samoans was uncertain, and a case was taken to the Privy Council, which ruled that Western Samoans born since 1924 and their descendants were entitled to New Zealand citizenship. Concerned about increased migration to New Zealand, the government challenged the ruling and was accused of a breach of faith and racism.

The 1981 South African rugby tour was one of the watershed events in the development of public opinion regarding racism. Prior to the 1981 Springbok tour, the issue of racial discrimination in South Africa had sparked significant debate in Aotearoa New Zealand. A number of organisations emerged in the 1960s in opposition to the tours, including Halt All Racist Tours (HART), Citizens' Association for Racial Equality (CARE) and National Anti-Apartheid Council (NAAC). There was also active support for the tour promoted by Society for the Protection of Individual Rights (SPIR). In 1960, 150,000 New Zealanders signed a petition against sending a race-based rugby team to tour the Republic of South Africa. However, the call for 'No Maoris — No Tour' was ignored by the New Zealand Rugby Union, and the tour proceeded. In 1970, the All Blacks toured the Republic with a multiracial team, although this did not reflect a change in the attitude of the South African government — Māori were allowed to enter the Republic only as 'honorary whites'.

In 1981, public opposition to the race-based policies of the South African government resulted in protests aimed at halting the Springbok tour of Aotearoa New Zealand. Over 200 demonstrations were held, with more than 150,000 protesters taking part, of which 1500 faced prosecution. The focus of the anti-tour protest was racism, and many Māori participated. One of the consequences of the protest against the tour was to heighten public consciousness regarding race relations in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Feminism was also gaining momentum as an international social and political movement. The United Nations (UN) marked 1975 as International Women's Year, and organised the first World Conference on Women in Mexico. Since 1976, 8 March has been celebrated as International Women's Day, and the United Nations Decade for Women (1976–1985) was established. The UN organisation dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women, UN Women, was established, with five priority areas for intervention: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. In Aotearoa New Zealand, a national committee continues to be responsible for coordinating activities.

The contentious public issue of abortion, reflected in the debate between pro-choice and pro-life lobby groups, was addressed in the Contraception, Sterilisation, and Abortion Act 1977. This Act specified 'the circumstances in which contraceptives and information relating to contraception may be supplied and given to young persons, to define the circumstances under which sterilisations may be undertaken, and to provide for the circumstances and procedures under which abortions may be authorised after having full regard to the rights of the unborn child'. The Abortion Supervisory Committee was established, and reports annually to the New Zealand Parliament. The committee's key functions are to maintain the list of certifying consultants and to monitor the quality of abortion services.

The International Year of the Child in 1979 was a United Nations initiative which marked the twentieth anniversary of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. In New Zealand, various events, such as a fundraising Telethon, conferences and exhibitions were held. While the International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP) was marked in 1981, it had been proclaimed in 1976 by the United Nations General Assembly, which

had called for action aimed at equalising opportunity, and promoting rehabilitation and the prevention of disabilities. The following year the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons was adopted, and this thrust was continued during the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons (1983–1992).

The above review highlights the political dominance of the National Party, characterised by interventionist economic policy. However, in spite of low economic growth and rising unemployment, opposition parties had been unable to gain sufficient support to form an alternative government. The establishment of Mana Motuhake was to foreshadow later developments in Māori political consciousness and organisation. Key legislative changes engaged biculturalism, family relationships and civic rights. Significant bicultural developments reflected increasing Māori self-determination, a focus on race relations, and the significance of *te reo*. Finally, concern with issues affecting race relations (particularly the ‘dawn raids’ and the South African rugby tour), women, and the needs of children and disabled persons were all harbingers of a developing social consciousness.

The development of social work

The social work profession was emerging within the above social and political context. The New Zealand Association of Social Workers, formed in 1964, was now over 10 years old, and the Department of Social Welfare Act 1971 acknowledged social workers in law for the first time in New Zealand. Concern with establishing the professional identity and credibility of social work as a profession was evident when, in 1975, the New Zealand Social Work Training Council (NZSWTC) introduced measures aimed at raising standards in social work training. These included instituting basic minimum standards, a system of accreditation, and, in 1980, a Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW).

Formal social work education during this period consisted of the Diploma in Social Science through Victoria University. In 1976, the University of Canterbury started offering an MA in Sociology with an option in Social Work. The University of Auckland offered an MA in Sociology in Social Welfare and Development (with financial support from Mobil Oil); however, this offering was subsequently removed in 1980. In 1982, the Auckland College of Education established a Diploma in Social Work.

During this period, the issue of the registration of social workers was a contentious issue among members of the NZASW. While the advantages of registration were identified (protection for clients and employers, professional development, training, skills development and protection for social workers), there was concern that the proposed eligibility criteria for registration (the holding of a professional qualification) would exclude the vast majority of those then practising as social workers. The debate regarding registration and the professionalisation of social work has continued across the decades to the present day.

Further concern regarding the construction of social work as a professional enterprise was evident in the 1981 report *People in the social services*, which was commissioned by the NZSWTC. It was found that 78 per cent of paid social service workers held no social service qualification, while the figure was 85 per cent for the unpaid worker group. The authors drew attention to the importance of social workers receiving appropriate training in light of the complexity of practice and the fact that social work intervention could have a long-term impact on clients.

In 1980, the NZASW membership was also engaged in a debate over professionalism and social work. A proposal to restrict membership to those who had completed training, which would lead to the NZSWTC CQSW, was resoundingly defeated. This reflected concern for the position of unqualified but experienced practitioners who would be excluded from membership. This concern with training and competence to practise is

a theme that has continued to influence the development of policy and legislation to the present time.

Concern with broader social issues was also evident. The theme of the 1982 NZASW Biennial Conference, held in Auckland, was 'Social justice — a social work concern for the '80s', and conference speakers included Alf Kirk, a Federation of Labour economist. Lecturer Ian Shirley called for social workers to link the private troubles of their clients to the social structures and systems of privilege and power which made them poor. Sister Pauline O'Connor, a staunch and well-known community worker from Christchurch, gave a practical example of working with the powerless to bring about change. It was noted that Māori input to the conference was welcomed (Nash, 1998a).

Throughout this decade, the NZASW was divided over professionalisation, the desire to prevent the social work/welfare split that had become established in Australia, and the twin issues of criteria for membership of the Association and the introduction of a system of registration. The decade ended with attention becoming focused on equality issues, including feminism, racism, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and social work delivery within Department of Social Welfare institutions. An illustration of public interest and concern with the broader social work sector was evident in the inquiry of the Auckland Committee on Racism and Discrimination (ACORD) into allegations of the ill-treatment of residents in Auckland Social Welfare homes. This led to an inquiry and report by the Human Rights Commission that made public its investigation into practices, in particular responses to 'the racial, ethnic and cultural identity of children and young people who were placed in the Homes' (Human Rights Commission, 1982, p. 41).

During this period, a focus on professional identity, credibility, registration and training was evident in the work of the NZSWTC and the NZASW. While the number of social work training providers was limited (Victoria University, University of Auckland, Auckland College of

Education, University of Canterbury and Massey University), there was clear emphasis on expanding the academic and professional foundations of social work practice.

During the 1975–1982 period, broader societal and political influences provided a context characterised by changes in public consciousness (in particular regarding bicultural development, race relations, and concern for specific populations) that would require a response from both social work education programmes and the broader social work profession. With this in mind, attention now moves to the establishment and early development of the Massey University social work programme.

The development of the Massey University social work programme began in 1975 with the appointment of Merv Hancock and Ephra Garrett. Merv Hancock was determined to establish a university degree programme that would include both theory and practice, and have strong links to the profession and social services sector. It was also considered important that the degree be connected to the other programmes offered in the Bachelor of Arts, such as education, psychology and sociology, as this would ensure that social work students were being taught by subject specialists as well as achieving a foundational understanding of these social sciences. Further, the degree was to be accredited internationally, and it was this requirement that was part of the process of constructing a curriculum with a distribution of theory and practice across four years. International colleagues monitored the programme and ensured that graduates could be employed overseas.

Merv had been one of the first cohort of 15 students to complete the highly respected Diploma in Social Sciences at Victoria University. In the 1960s and 1970s, the social work occupation in Aotearoa New Zealand was largely driven by people who had the Victoria University diploma.

Ephra (Te Ātiawa and Ngāti Mutunga, as well as Irish and English descent)

had been a Māori Welfare Officer, was the first Māori woman to receive a Diploma of Social Science, and worked as a child psychologist in the mid-1960s. She was appointed as a lecturer in the Education Department at Massey in 1968, and over time had built a Māori dimension into teaching and research in the Departments of Social Work and Psychology. In 1978, Ephra established and ran the university's first Women's Studies paper.

Merv had a clear vision, and wanted to develop a relevant and cutting-edge programme that responded to the needs of practice, but also had the potential to lead and influence practice. This included having a programme that both met international standards and also responded to the unique context of Aotearoa New Zealand. Merv believed that it was important to maintain strong connections with the social work sector, and that staff were encouraged to engage in research, thus contributing to an indigenous construction of practice.

He recognised the importance of having Māori and Pasifika students in the programme, and of respecting their voices within the profession of social work. Together with Ephra Garrett, he was very clear that it was a bicultural programme, and Māori development was integrated from the beginning of the degree. This included critical analysis of how practitioners could embrace and sustain effective ways of working with both tangata whenua and tauwiwi. As the years progressed, the curriculum was cemented from a cultural and indigenous perspective, with Ephra playing a central role.

Drawing on Merv Hancock's vast practice experience, a consultative process involving those in the social work occupation was implemented, with meetings held at Massey, and Massey staff attending local fora. There was a significant challenge to develop the programme by early 1975 in order to be submitted for approval at the outset of the university quinquennium plan for the University Grants Committee. Regular meetings were held involving staff members Graeme Fraser (the Professor of Sociology, who originally approached Merv to undertake the development of the

social work programme), Merv Hancock, Ephra Garrett and Tom Curran (Department of Psychology). The location of the Social Work Unit within the sociology department was important, as this afforded social work staff the opportunity to work alongside other academics.

The Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) was to have an applied professional focus that would offer opportunities for students to both understand theory and apply knowledge and skills in practice. Massey had a long tradition of providing applied education, and the Bachelor of Technology provided a model upon which the BSW was developed; the four-year degree from the University of Sydney was also considered. The curriculum was broad-based and offered a liberal arts component alongside social work and the social sciences. There was a strong connection between theory and practice, and a connection between social work and social policy. Graeme Fraser noted that this also contributed to the decision to opt for a four-year Bachelor degree when he said:

We opted for a four-year degree because we really wanted to see partnership between theory and practice, and they were to be contrapuntal themes throughout the four years.

In order to support students undertaking the applied part of the degree, it was recognised that a network of qualified supervisors would be required. This was to involve both the provision of training at Massey University and the establishment of a qualification to recognise the status of these supervisors. Graeme Fraser notes that there were challenges associated with establishing the academic credibility of the social work programme that reflected the experiences of other applied professions. However, the focus of social work (with a broad concern for the provision of support for people with a diverse range of needs) did not fit as easily into the paradigm that existed for other professions, such as nursing (care of unwell people) or teaching (educating children). The successful establishment and

expansion of the programme was dependent upon student enrolments, which was the basis for determining the appointment of additional staff.

Merv Hancock recruited staff from around the globe — from England, South Africa and the United States — those he considered could best contribute to the development of the programme; and their different perspectives on social work practice and theory created a dynamic mix. This overseas recruitment continued until Aotearoa New Zealand personnel had acquired the relevant qualifications for teaching social work to take on lecturing positions.

It was acknowledged that it was important for staff to develop not only teaching but also research skills. However, opportunities for staff to undertake research were extremely limited, due to the demands of developing courses, writing study guides, teaching internally, teaching during the vacation period, and supporting colleagues to complete their higher research degrees.

Merv Hancock and Ephra Garrett had a strong sense of aligning social work learning to the community. The university connection to community and to the issues of the community was considered to be critical. There was a significant focus on community development and social justice, and a concern about poverty and the impact of this on the marginalised populations. The teaching of community development approaches in the curriculum remains an important influence to the present day, and emerging perspectives, such as community-led development, are a core component of the teaching and practice of social work.

Wheturangi Walsh-Tapiata, a student of both Merv and Ephra, emphasised the importance of their leadership, passion and contribution when she said:

Both Merv and Ephra, as the leads in our programme at that time, there was never ever any doubt about their passion and their commitment and their connection with community . . . We were

incredibly lucky to have Merv and Ephra as our original guides, as our original kaitiaki.

Initially, the programme was provided only on campus, with students placed for one day each week with local agencies in Palmerston North; placements were also held over the summer vacation. In 1976, the first students enrolled in the BSW, and second-year papers were taught to students with practice experience and those who had already commenced study towards a Bachelor of Arts. Field placements were completed in years three and four, with concurrent placements (three days each week) during the academic year and 'block' placements (12 weeks) held over the summer vacation. Following a visit from the NZSWTC in May 1979, the BSW was accredited from January 1980.

The provision of an extramural study option was developed in response to a more diverse group of students, including those in rural areas and mature students who were unable to study full-time at the university; this has been a distinguishing characteristic of the Massey programme. Furthermore, the inclusion of a more diverse range of students also enriches the degree, as they bring with them many different perspectives. Many distance students were already employed or working voluntarily in the broader social services, and these students were able to remain in their own communities and apply the different perspectives gained through the social work programme.

Graeme Fraser observed that in the initial years of the degree there was a great deal of diffidence within the wider university community about whether or not extramural study was really university education; the only papers offered by distance were at the 100 and 200 levels. However by 1977/78 the 300-level course was also made available. A feature of the distance programme is attendance in person at contact courses held on the Manawatū campus, based on the importance of face-to-face contact between students and the academic staff.

A feature of the field education experience for students was the establishment of specialist student units that were overseen by supervisors who were also appointed as associate lecturers. The units were located in the Department of Social Welfare, Palmerston North Hospital, Community Health (Palmerston North), and the Department of Justice (Probation).

The broader programme expanded quickly. In 1977, Master of Social Work (MSW) papers were first offered, and in 1980 Roy Bowden became the first MSW graduate; his study examined the position of senior social workers from the Department of Social Welfare. A key finding was that while the participants experienced satisfaction in task performance, they also experienced difficulty in balancing agency requirements with those of their supervisees. In 1979, the Certificate in Social Service Supervision papers were first offered. In 1980, the task-centred approach was adopted as the practice model used for the application of theory to practice, drawing on the work of William Reid and Laura Epstein, whose research suggested that, in a majority of cases, durable change in a client's situation took place in the early stages of a relationship. The system's emphasis on time-limited intervention aimed at alleviating target problems identified by the client was designed to increase the efficacy of social work practice, and to enable clients to exercise a degree of control over the helping process (Reid & Epstein, 1992).

In 1982, Professor Bradford Sheafor, Fulbright Scholar from Colorado State University, was asked to review the social work programme for the Social Work Unit, with particular reference to the relationship between academic requirements and the actual practice of social work in New Zealand (see Chapter 2 for Professor Sheafor's observations). The ongoing success of the Massey social work programme owes much to the work completed in the early years, during which a number of principles were

NEWS RELEASE

Massey University establishes a new Social Work Unit

From the beginning of 1977, Massey University will have a Social Work Unit. Professor G.S. Fraser explained that the Social Work Unit will be an integral part of the Department of Sociology but will function independently for purposes of contact with social work agencies throughout the community and in the general relationship of the University to community welfare programmes.

Mr M.W. Hancock is Senior Lecturer in charge of the Social Work Unit. Mrs Ephra Garrett and another staff member, to be appointed early in 1977, complete the Unit staff.

Since the establishment of the Bachelor of Social Work degree at Massey University introduced in 1976, there has been very considerable student interest. Enrolments in Part I of the degree for 1976 were more in number than had been anticipated. A transitional course was also offered for a group of people to commence Part II of the degree. In 1977 Part III of the degree will be offered.

The first significant steps in offering the Bachelor of Social Work degree on an extramural basis will be taken in 1977 when the first professional paper from Part I of the degree will also be offered. In 1978 it is anticipated that the Part II professional papers will be added to the extramural programme. The majority of papers from the other contributing academic disciplines are already offered by the University on an extramural basis.

The establishment of the Social Work Unit will not only facilitate the development of the new Bachelor of Social Work degree but will permit the development of social welfare research and facilitate the securing of funds for that purpose from the community.

Social work practitioners in the community will be encouraged to take a close interest in the operation of the Social Work Unit and make use of it in support of their interests.

This news release (1976) highlights the success of the programme and intention to create a Social Work Unit. **SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

established that are now hallmarks of the programme:

- the relationship between theory and practice
- the linkage between social work and social policy
- a commitment to bicultural practice and Māori development
- a strong connection between the programme and the community
- a commitment to student access to the programme via distance learning.

In addition to establishing the first four-year BSW in Aotearoa New Zealand, postgraduate opportunity was available through the MSW, while the Certificate in Social Service Supervision provided a significant opportunity for professional development for those already in practice. A foundation had been established that would enable the social work programme to engage effectively: within the university system, with the professional development of social work (both locally and internationally), and with the changing requirements of individuals, families and communities.

During the establishment period of the programme, staff were heavily involved in developing and teaching the core curriculum. Notwithstanding the pressures associated with the founding of the Social Work Unit, a number of salient points can be made regarding the contribution of the programme.

The BSW programme addressed the significant need for social work education and training. In 1974, the majority of social workers in Aotearoa New Zealand (405 staff) were employed by the Department of Social Welfare. The hospital boards employed 186 staff, the Department of Justice employed 167 staff, and the Department of Māori Affairs employed 99. Only 17 per cent of the combined staff had a recognised qualification in social work. In 1976, Massey University launched the first four-year social work degree in Aotearoa New Zealand. The first 10 BSW graduates were capped in 1979, followed by 28 in 1980, the numbers of graduates

Academic staff appointments and changes, 1975–1982

- 1975: Merv Hancock and Ephra Garrett appointed to Department of Sociology.
- 1976: The Social Work Unit established; Merv Hancock is appointed as Director.
- 1977: Ian Shirley appointed as a lecturer.
- 1978: Mary Ann Baskerville and Eve Hessey appointed.
 - Associate lecturers and student unit supervisors appointed:
 - Department of Social Welfare — G. Stenton.
 - Palmerston North Hospital — Anne Thompson.
 - Palmerston North Student Unit Community Health — R. A. Clement.
 - Department of Justice (Probation) Student Unit — Murray Short.
- 1979: Rajen Prasad and Randy Herman appointed.
- 1980: Jenny Pilalis appointed.
 - Ian Shirley promoted to senior lecturer.
 - Mike O'Brien appointed.
- 1981: Fiona Fordham and Angie Herman employed as demonstrators.
- 1982: Merv Hancock resigns as Head of Social Work Unit to return to private practice.
 - Mary Nash and Bruce Asher employed as demonstrators.

continued to grow to the extent that the graduate destination survey undertaken from 1979–1983 in 1984 identified 150 graduates.

The 1978 NZASW Biennial Conference was held at Massey University, Palmerston North, on the theme of ‘The Disabling Professions’. The keynote speaker was Ivan Illich, an Austrian philosopher and the author of *Deschooling society* and *Medical nemesis*. He argued that powerful professional groups tended to disable the non-professional’s ability to think and act for themselves. Illich’s address to the conference was considered influential in encouraging an emerging focus on social justice (Nash, 1998a, p. 265). Eve Hessey, along with Professor Graeme Fraser, presented at the conference on ‘Small-scale research for practising social workers’.

During the initial years of the degree, staff worked under considerable pressure developing and teaching the programme, and, as noted above, consequently had limited time to conduct research. However, the Department of Social Work staff published articles on a range of themes, with Ian Shirley leading the way with notable contributions on community development. In 1979, his *Planning for community: The mythology of community development and social planning* was published by the Dunmore Press. This was followed in 1982 by *Development tracks: The theory and practice of community development*, which he both contributed to and edited. The significance of the contribution of *Development tracks* was noted by Gavin Rennie in 2006:

Little of the standing of this work had been written either before or since on the theory and practice of community development in New Zealand. Twenty-three years on, this book is still read by students and teachers of community development.

Ian Shirley also engaged with social policy issues, and along with Paul Spoonley and David Pearson edited *New Zealand: Sociological perspectives*. A focus on the family was maintained by Jenny Pilalis,



This photograph is of the first Bachelor of Social Work graduates and staff outside Wharerata, on Massey's Manawatū campus, April 1979. *Back row, from left:* Robyn Munford, Penny Wood, Louise Auret, Angela Gilbert, Mike Behrens, Ian Shirley, Merv Hancock, Tim McBride, Graeme Fraser, Ephra Garrett. *Middle row:* Eve Hessey, Bruce Asher, Robert Asplin. *Front row:* Keith (Jacko) Jackson, Richard Tocker, Russell Taylor (in absentia Sonya Hunt). **MASSEY UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES**

including commentary on challenges for social workers with family groups, and consumer feedback from short courses in family therapy. Mike O'Brien provided commentary on social values, while Eve Hessey discussed group supervision for social workers.

During the period 1975 to 1982, the social work programme was established at Massey University against a broader political context driven by the shift from rights-based social policy — characterised by the emergence of feminist discourse and growing demands from Māori for both rights and self-determination — to the emergence of neoliberalism — characterised by economic deregulation and the diminution of the welfare state (Stanley-Clarke, 2016). These movements were responding to the paternalism, patriarchy and monoculturalism in society that reflected in Muldoon's dominance and in New Zealand being one of the most regulated societies in the world. Concern about social justice is a hallmark of the social work mandate, and this was reflected in the core characteristics of the social work programme team's engagement with the need for political analysis, recognition of the role of social policy, and a commitment to bicultural practice. As noted previously, concern with establishing the professional and academic foundations of social work practice was evident amongst the limited number of social work providers in Aotearoa New Zealand. The NZASW and the NZSWTC also played influential roles within this development (as ANZASW and subsequent regulatory bodies have continued to do).

At Massey University, much of the focus of the early period concerned the development and accreditation of the social work programme within the university and academia, and in particular the vision of social work as a graduate discipline. A strong connection was established with the social work practice community, where students were able to consolidate theoretical knowledge and develop skills while completing placements.



Ivan Illich, with Graeme Fraser to his right, in 1978. MASSEY UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

The stewardship exercised by the foundation staff set a benchmark against which subsequent programme development and achievement can be considered. The legacy of Merv Hancock, Ephra Garrett and Graeme Fraser continues to influence the current School of Social Work at Massey.