



Melbourne Social Equity Institute

Annual Report 2018

First printed April 2019

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Melbourne Social Equity Institute



Supporting interdisciplinary
research for fairer societies



About the Melbourne Social Equity Institute

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute brings together researchers to address disadvantage across social life, including health, education, housing, culture, work and transport.

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute acknowledges an imperfect world. Chances of birth such as class, race, ability or gender can lead to marginalisation and societies are sometimes beset by divisions of culture, economic status or creed. The Institute supports collaborative research between academics, members of community organisations, policy makers and people with lived experiences which helps build fairer societies.

The Institute prioritises rights-based and interdisciplinary research, involving partners from the community and giving those with a lived experience of disadvantage voice in the focus, design and outcomes of research. Interdisciplinary research means drawing on the strengths of each of our university's faculties in order to better solve complex problems of disadvantage. Involving community partners ensures that research is relevant to those outside the academy.

In 2018, the Melbourne Social Equity Institute's research focused on refugees and forced migration, universal access and design, strengthening institutions and community-engaged research. The Institute also auspiced the important work of the Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence against women and their children (MAEVe). Intersecting with each of these research programs are the lived experiences of disadvantage, such as people with disabilities, Indigenous people, children, LGBTQIA, people seeking asylum, women and older people.

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute is staffed by a small directorate, the members of which co-ordinate research and engagement activities.

The 2018 members of the directorate were:

Professor Bernadette McSherry
Foundation Director

Associate Professor Sara Wills
Deputy Director

Charlene Edwards
Executive Officer

Kathleen Patterson
Project Coordinator

Claire Smiddy
Marketing, Communications and Events Coordinator



The Melbourne Social Equity Institute's work is underpinned by a commitment to community-led research, as exemplified by its highly-regarded Community Fellows Program

Letter from the Director

In 2018, the Melbourne Social Equity Institute developed two new programs of research focusing on Universal Access and Design and Strengthening Institutions to sit alongside the Institute's continuing program on Refugees and Forced Migration. MSEI's research programs are underpinned by a focus on community-engaged research and it was wonderful to be able to seed fund nine interdisciplinary research projects that emphasise co-production of research with various communities. You'll find information about some of these projects in the ensuing pages.

Associate Professor Sara Wills from the Faculty of Arts took on the role of Deputy Director in August. Her enthusiasm, support and advice have been greatly appreciated by everyone associated with MSEI. It never ceases to amaze me how a small, dedicated team can achieve so much. MSEI is fortunate to have an outstanding professional team in Executive Officer, Charlene Edwards, Project Coordinator, Kathleen Patterson and Communications, Marketing and Events Coordinator, Claire Smiddy. It is their work which really underpins the events, activities and projects highlighted in this report.

As well as continuing to host postdoctoral researchers, Dr Piers Gooding and Dr Yvette Maker, throughout 2018, MSEI hosted Dr Rimi Khan and Eugenia Zoubtchenko. Rimi and Eugenia are researching how a new University student precinct which is co-designed with students can extend and challenge existing thinking about social inclusion, access and diversity. Several visitors to the office also helped ensure MSEI continued to be a vibrant place in which to work.

I hope you enjoy reading this overview of MSEI activities and achievements in 2018 and that you'll keep up to date via our email newsletter, Twitter and Facebook.



Professor Bernadette McSherry
Foundation Director, Melbourne Social Equity Institute





**Professor Bernadette McSherry,
Foundation Director of the
Melbourne Social Equity Institute,
with Toby the Social Equity Dog.**

Photo: Lliam Murphy

Reference Group

Members of the reference group act as champions of the Melbourne Social Equity Institute and its research, as well as providing input on matters of management and strategic focus.

The reference group is comprised of academics with demonstrated strengths in social equity research from across the University. As well as the directorate and research program leaders, the following researchers made up the 2018 reference group:

Dr Jane Dyson
School of Geography

Professor Julie McLeod
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Capability)

Professor Guyonne Kalb
Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic
and Social Research

Associate Professor Kylie Smith
Melbourne Graduate School
of Education

Professor Susan Kneebone
Melbourne Law School

Dr Victor Sojo
Faculty of Business and Economics

Advisory Board

The advisory board is made up of leaders in the business and community sectors. It provides strategic guidance to ensure that research supported by the Institute is relevant to and aligned with important, contemporary social issues.

The advisory board also increases opportunities to disseminate research and to engage with like-minded organisations with the aim of making societies fairer. The advisory board is made up of:

Jan Owen AM (Chair)
CEO, Foundation for Young Australians

Roz Hansen
Former Ministerial Advisory Committee for the
Metropolitan Planning Strategy

Durkhanai Ayubi
Restaurateur, freelance writer and inaugural
Atlantic Fellow for Social Equity

Ross Honeywill
Executive Director, Centre for Social Economics

Robin Banks
Former Anti-Discrimination Commissioner,
Equal Opportunity Tasmania

Nyadol Nyuon
Lawyer, Arnold Bloch Leibler

Michael Black AC QC
Former Chief Justice, Federal Court of Australia

Paul Ronalds
CEO, Save the Children

Paige Burton
Australia's 2017 Youth Representative to the
United Nations

Michael Traill AM
Chair, Goodstart Early Learning and Social
Ventures Australia Leadership Council

Research Programs

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute supports interdisciplinary research on social equity issues across the full spectrum of social life including health, law, education, housing, culture, work and transport. In 2018 research was focused on the following key themes:

Community Engaged Research

Led by Dr Cathy Vaughan

Through all of the Institute's research programs there is a commitment to community-led and community-engaged research. The key feature of this approach is a high level of community decision-making about the purpose, design, conduct and use of research. It moves beyond seeing members of communities as research 'subjects' to enabling them to drive the research agendas that concern them. The Melbourne Social Equity Institute has created a Community Fellows Program which brings members of community organisations into the University to develop research skills while assisting scholars to understand the context in which their research may be used. In addition, wherever possible, those with lived experience of the research issue being addressed will advise and co-design institute-supported interdisciplinary research projects.

Refugees and Forced Migration

Led by Dr Karen Block, Professor John Tobin and Associate Professor Sara Wills

The aim of this research program is to coordinate and support interdisciplinary research on issues relating primarily to the resettlement and social integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Resettlement generally refers to the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to another state that has agreed to admit them and ultimately grant them permanent settlement. This program draws together a number of researchers working in this field to examine which programs and services best assist with the social integration of refugees both in Australia and in the Asia-Pacific region.

Strengthening Institutions

Led by Associate Professor Hari Bapuji and Professor Shelley Mallett

Strong institutions, based on principles of pluralism, participation, social norms and the rule of law, provide the foundation for societies in which the rights and interests of all can be promoted and protected. The aim of this research program is to discover ways of ensuring institutions are effective, accountable, and responsive to the diverse populations they serve. This encompasses ways to strengthen democratic institutions and processes of institutional change, as well as examining business practices to identify how firms can prevent, manage and learn from crises that affect both organisations and societies.

Universal Access and Design

Led by Dr Andrea Cook and Professor Jeannie Paterson

The aim of universal access and design is to simplify life for everyone by making environments, products and services equally accessible, usable and understandable. It emphasises user-centred design and extends beyond issues of accessibility to buildings and public spaces to policy-making and planning regarding all aspects of society, including communication, information technology, goods and services. The aim of this research program is to coordinate and support interdisciplinary research that focuses on ways in which products, processes, services, systems, environments and information can ensure access for all, regardless of age, ability or status.

Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence Against Women and their Children (MAEVe)

The Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence against women and their children (MAEVe) is an interdisciplinary research network of researchers, survivors, practitioners and community organisations engaged in creating research that helps prevent and respond to violence against women and their children.

Auspiced by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute, MAEVe is headed by co-chairs Professor Kelsey Hegarty and Professor Cathy Humphreys, and a diverse steering committee of academics from across the University. These academics variously specialise in health sector responses to family violence, children's voices and experience of family violence, sexual violence, technology as a tool in the early intervention of family violence, family violence in migrant and refugee communities, gender-based violence throughout history and across the Asia Pacific, legal responses and Indigenous experiences of family violence. Its overall aim is to bring together researchers in partnership with community, industry and government agencies, to tackle the problem of violence against women and their children. MAEVe is focused on the production of research that is rigorous, significant and arises from a deep engagement with those who have lived experiences of domestic and family violence.

As part of our commitment to putting the voices of women and children at the centre of our research, MAEVe is advised and guided by the WEAVERs panel (Women and their children who have Experienced Abuse and Violence: Researchers and advisors). In 2018 the WEAVERs worked with MAEVe to identify and prioritise research areas. Some of the WEAVERs attended research training sessions offered by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute. In November 2018, supported by MAEVe, the Safer Families Centre of Research Excellence held an international conference. The WEAVERs took part in opening and closing the conference as well as conducting a workshop and an oral presentation. The conference was attended by over 400 delegates from a number of countries, including a number of international experts on family violence as well as practitioners, survivors, carers, researchers, students, policy makers, community leaders, managers and advocates.

Throughout 2018 MAEVe published a monthly newsletter and ran a monthly seminar series highlighting the work of University of Melbourne research and research partnerships on a range of topics including, working with fathers who use violence, housing and family violence, family violence and pregnancy, the kNOwVAWdata project: using data to end violence against women in Asia and the Pacific, and working with children who have experienced trauma and violence. The final seminar for 2018 was given by The Hon. Professor Marcia Neave AO who chaired the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence. Her topic, Solving Wicked Problems, provided an analysis of the complexity of family violence and how we can identify current successful approaches to the problem and build on those. MAEVe has also hosted forums on early intervention to prevent violence against women and their children and the use of technology to prevent and respond to violence against women and their children.

MAEVe researchers have provided evidence to develop the MARAM (Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Management) framework to increase the safety and wellbeing of Victorians by ensuring relevant services are contributing effectively to the identification, assessment and management of family violence risk. MAEVe researchers are also looking at interventions for men who use violence in the family. A Victorian trial of the 17-week, evidence-based, intervention program Caring Dads for fathers who use family violence is being undertaken. The trial is being evaluated to explore how successfully the Caring Dads program fills the existing gap for referral pathways for fathers who use violence. Better Man, a healthy relationships website, is also being trialled. It is an innovative digital intervention designed to strengthen healthy relationships, enhance communication skills, and promote positive values with men who use violence in their intimate relationships.

maeve.unimelb.edu.au



Lived experience advisory panel, The WEAVERS, presented at the Safer Families Conference in November. The first international conference to headline early intervention for domestic violence in health settings. The conference was attended by over 400 delegates from all over the world.

Latest Research Projects

The following projects were seed-funded by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute in 2018.



CO-DESIGNING BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAMS WITH THE AFRICAN-AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY

What are the barriers to success for African-Australians in business and how can we address them?

The project aims to strengthen the capacity of African-Australian entrepreneurs at the individual level, through their own enterprises, and as a community group, to provide an economic and social benefit for all Australians. The intention is to obtain a deeper understanding of the economic obstacles and unmet business education needs of recently arrived African-Australians operating in business communities within Australia. This will then be used to design a teaching program that best fits those needs. This program will be co-designed with the African-Australian community. It will provide a safe space to explore community-specific obstacles and build the business capabilities and networks of African-Australians.

NARRATING NEIGHBOURHOOD

How do communities of difference narrate their neighbourhood? Can storytelling be a tool for building social capital and cohesion?

The social aspects of urban spaces are often what differentiate good, livable and vibrant cities from those that are not. A 'right to the city' underpins a range of philosophical and practical planning approaches that enrich social connections in cities and enable people to move around but also to linger, to be and to feel safe, to be accepted and welcomed and to encounter those the same – and those different – from themselves. A person's 'right to the city', however, can be complicated by difference and by perceptions of those differences. Difference is often the basis of stigma, fear, 'othering' and exclusion rather than inclusion. This research project trains and supports a team of community researchers, people of varied lived experiences of the Victoria Street neighbourhood in North Richmond, to act as community researchers. Supported by the research partners, community researchers gather stories, photographs and film as a multimedia narration of the neighbourhood's complex and contested social, spatial and civic landscapes.



Visit socialequity.unimelb.edu.au/projects to learn more about these projects

IS ZERO-TOLERANCE A ZERO-SUM GAME?

Perceptions of 'dangerousness' and issues of equity in mental health settings

Research into risk in mental health settings typically portrays consumers as violent, and fails to acknowledge violence potentially perpetrated by staff and services. Yet consumers of mental health institutions also experience services as dangerous, in relation to compulsory treatment, restrictive practices, and rights violations. Associated practices are rarely viewed as violence, and 'zero tolerance' policies do not apply to such sanctioned acts by staff. This project explores differing perceptions of 'dangerousness' held by consumers and nurses, including perceptions about themselves and others. It aims to inform more equitable approaches to understanding 'dangerousness' for all people in mental health settings.



EXPLORING THE VALUE OF RHYTHM-BASED SUPPORT WITH CHILDREN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED TRAUMA

How can drumming and hip-hop be used to support young people in out of home care?

More than 10,000 Victorian children are living in Out of Home Care, with authorities considering their safety and wellbeing at immediate risk in the care of biological parents. Little evidence exists about best practice in support programs for these young people but recent theories, informed by neuroscience, suggest that rhythm-based activities may be one innovative and engaging approach with the potential to make a difference. This project engages young people who have had adverse experiences in exploring how drumming together and creating hip-hop songs might support their ability to understand and process emotional responses during challenging moments.

Latest Research Projects

Continued



DEVELOPING A MODEL FOR PEER SUPPORT IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

Improving supports for people experiencing mental distress in emergency departments

Emergency departments are often poorly equipped, in relation to the physical environment, knowledge and personnel, to respond appropriately to people who present with mental distress. There is good evidence that peer workers improve people's experience of mental health services by using their personal experiences of distress and recovery to support others. This project will identify the optimal role for peer workers in emergency departments. It will co-produce an innovative service model drawing on research evidence in mental health and the built environment, stakeholder perspectives, and expertise from lived experience. This model will complement current innovations in peer roles and emergency settings.

CO-DESIGNING TECHNOLOGY TO SUPPORT INDIGENOUS PEOPLE EXPERIENCING FAMILY VIOLENCE

How can we use technology to support help-seeking among Wadawurrung people experiencing violence?

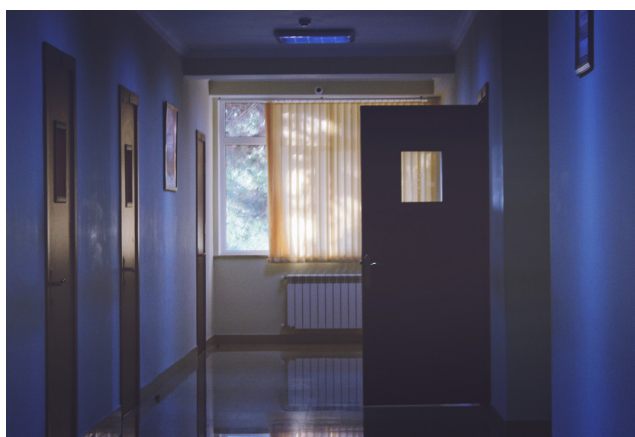
The Wadawurrung family violence project aims to enhance support and healing for Indigenous peoples who experience family violence on Wadawurrung Country (of the Kulin Nations). This will be achieved through working with the community to co-design a technological tool that encourages risk assessment, prioritisation of needs, safety planning and using culture as a resource for healing and building resilience. This tool will be community-owned and address the barriers to help-seeking accessibility (such as shame, issues with confidentiality and fear of child-removal) which have been highlighted by the Wadawurrung peoples as significant deterrents to accessing support.



THE LIVING ARCHIVE OF ABORIGINAL ART

Developing a team of Indigenous researchers in the production of a digital art archive

In southeast Australia, Aboriginal people and their artwork is often considered less authentic or 'real' compared to the more remote areas of the country. Yet, their artwork continues to reveal the complexity of Indigenous knowledge systems. However, no archival system adequately reflects these 'ways of knowing'. The Living Archive of Aboriginal art aims to work with a team of Indigenous co-researchers to design an interactive digital art archive that is representative of Indigenous peoples' lifeworlds.



REINTEGRATION AND RESETTLEMENT: POST-RELEASE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR AFRICAN-AUSTRALIANS IN VICTORIA

Investigating the post-release supports for African-Australians who have been imprisoned in Victoria

The number of African-Australians in contact with the Victorian justice system has been increasing in the last five years. However, little is known about the imprisonment experiences and post-release reintegration needs and resettlement outcomes of this cohort. Using a social ecological framework, this project will explore the role of family (immediate environment) and community (wider sociocultural context) supports for African-Australians with lived experiences of previously being incarcerated in a Victorian correctional facility.



LEADING THE CHANGE – CO-PRODUCING SAFE, INCLUSIVE WORK PLACES FOR MENTAL HEALTH CONSUMER WORKERS

How should we change the mental health system to safely include consumer workers?

Consumer workers are an essential feature of a mental health service system that is equitable, democratic and responsive to the needs of mental health consumers. Yet they experience ongoing problems with their treatment in the workplace. While this workforce is growing in size in Victoria, there has been minimal consideration of the organisational change required to fully incorporate consumer workers in a way that is safe and inclusive. Co-produced with consumer workers, this project aims to increase the understanding of the workplace safety experiences of the consumer workforce in order to develop recommendations for organisational and systemic change.

Postgraduate Students

Each year the Melbourne Social Equity Institute gives Australian Government Research Training Program Scholarships and other scholarships to students whose interest in social equity issues aligns closely to our research agenda.

Aviva Beecher Kelk

Sustainability vs profitability: locating stakeholders of Australian disability services in the individual support package model

Supervisors: Professor Lynette Joubert, Department of Social Work and Associate Professor Helen Dickinson, School of Business, University of New South Wales (Canberra)

Jaz Dawson

Queering constructivist international relations: analysing norm implementation in sexual orientation based refugee law

Supervisors: Professor Michelle Foster, Melbourne Law School and Associate Professor Sarah Maddison, School of Social and Political Sciences

Vrinda Edan

Consumer and clinicians experiences of Advance Statements under the Victorian Mental Health Act (2014)

Supervisors: Associate Professor Bridget Hamilton, Centre for Psychiatric Nursing, Associate Professor Lisa Brophy, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health and Professor Bernadette McSherry, Melbourne Social Equity Institute

Liz Gill-Atkinson

How do women with disability in the Philippines understand and experience participatory research practice?

Supervisors: Dr Cathy Vaughan, Gender and Women's Health Unit and Professor Marilys Guillemain, Centre for Health Equity

Kelly Hutchinson

Social impact of technology: digital social innovation in Australia

Supervisors: Professor Jenny Lewis, Melbourne School of Government, Dr Daniel McCarthy, School of Social and Political Sciences and Professor Leon Sterling, School of Computing and Information Systems

Lauren Kosta

Parenting after a disaster: experiences since Black Saturday

Supervisors: Professor Louise Harms, Department of Social Work, Professor Lisa Gibbs, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health and Dr David Rose, Department of Social Work

Micheline Lee

Disability, law, and all that romance: a cross-disciplinary approach to equality rights for people with disabilities

Supervisors: Dr Eddie Paterson, School of Culture and Communication, Professor Bernadette McSherry, Melbourne Social Equity Institute and Professor Beth Gaze, Melbourne Law School

Samantha Mannix

Gender equity, social transformations and education

Supervisor: Professor Julie McLeod, Melbourne Graduate School of Education and Dr Cathy Vaughan, Gender and Women's Health Unit

Erika Martino

From shelter to security: affordable housing for intimate partner violence survivors

Supervisors: Professor Carolyn Whitzman, Melbourne School of Design and Associate Professor Rebecca Bentley, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health

Hala Nasr

Safe spaces as a response to gender-based violence in refugee settings: possibilities and limitations

Supervisors: Dr Cathy Vaughan, Gender and Women's Health Unit, Dr Karen Block, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health and Dr Elise Klein, School of Social and Political Sciences

Carol O'Dwyer

The gender sensitive care project

Supervisors: Professor Kelsey Hegarty and Dr Laura Tarzia, Department of General Practice, Dr Sabin Fernbacher, North West Mental Health

Jacqui Parncutt

The social determinants of health of people with disability

Supervisor: Professor Anne Kavanagh, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health

Alana Roy

Mental health & wellbeing of people who are deaf-blind

Supervisor: Professor Keith McVilly, School of Social and Political Sciences

Claire Sullivan

Syrian refugees adoptions, adaptations and rejections of legal responses to experiences of family violence and Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Supervisors: Dr Cathy Vaughan, Gender and Women's Health Unit and Dr Karen Block, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health

Juan Tellez

Model laws and guidelines to regulate the use of chemical restraint on persons with disabilities

Supervisors: Professor Bernadette McSherry, Melbourne Social Equity Institute, Professor John Tobin, Melbourne Law School and Associate Professor Lisa Brophy, Melbourne School of Population and Global Health

Amita Tuteja

Reproductive health and contraceptive needs of migrants from Burma

Supervisors: Associate Professor Meredith Temple-Smith, Associate Professor Lena Sanci, and Dr Lester Mascarenhas, Department of General Practice

Alicia Yon

Enabling sociospatial justice: an integrated local planning approach to addressing the disability-gender violence nexus

Supervisors: Professor Carolyn Whitzman, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning and Dr Cathy Vaughan, Gender and Women's Health Unit

Doctorates Awarded in 2018

Dr Kelvin Lau

Understanding emotional distress and help-seeking in young people from a migrant background in Australia using photo-elicitation interviews

Supervisor: Dr Victoria Palmer, Department of General Practice





*Read more about
Dr Katie Lamb's work
on Pursuit
go.unimelb.edu.au/3fr6*

Children Speak Out on Family Violence

Young people who have experienced family violence have a lot to tell us, says Dr Katie Lamb, but too often there's nobody listening.

“When I spoke to young people whose fathers use violence, I found that they really appreciated the opportunity to have their voices heard. They talked about how people made all these assumptions about the way that they felt toward their fathers, and many of those assumptions were wrong.”

Lamb’s doctoral research, funded by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute, was focussed on capturing these missing voices and finding ways to have them represented in men’s family violence programs. Her work was embedded in an Australian Research Council project looking at fathering in the context of family violence.

“That was one of the criteria I had, I wanted to be part of a larger project,” she says.

“I approached the University and Professor Cathy Humphreys wrote back to say that my timing was excellent. A position had just come up on the ARC project, and my experience and interests were a perfect fit with what they were looking for.”

Before her PhD, Lamb spent fifteen years managing programs, developing policy and in research roles across the criminal justice and child and family welfare sectors.

Supported by an advisory panel of sector experts, Lamb interviewed children and young people between the ages of nine and 19 years. Children experiencing family violence were clear that they wanted their perspectives to be included in the project and disagreed with some of the common assumptions made about their circumstances.

“The young people felt that there is a view in society that contact with fathers is always a positive thing. The young people I spoke to really pushed back on that. Sometimes, they said, they really need time away. They spoke about the impact on their self-esteem, their mental health and confidence.

“You can’t assume all children have the same perspective though, even within the same family. Some were optimistic about having a relationship with their fathers, others really clearly said that they were done. And there was everything in between, too.”

The strongest message came when Lamb asked if there was anything the fathers could do to make up for the violence. “Children and young people from both groups – the ones who wanted a healthier relationship with their fathers, but also the ones who said they wanted nothing further

to do with him. They all talked about wanting to engage in a process of reparation and said that a lack of closure was holding them back from healing, even as young adults.”

In terms of what reparation looked like to young people, “They wanted their fathers to acknowledge that he had caused harm, to admit it and apologise” she says. “That seems like a really small thing – when anyone wrongs someone else, you expect an apology. For these children and young people though, it was so hard for them to even imagine it happening that they would laugh as they said ‘My Dad would never apologise’.

“Then I’d ask what it would mean if he did. They’d stop laughing, they’d become really serious. They’d say that it would be amazing”.

After the interviews, Lamb invited the participants to a two-day workshop at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI). Eight young people wrote scripts, recorded their voices and picked imagery, music and sounds to produce a digital story of the key messages that they think fathers who use violence need to know about the impacts of their behaviour on their children. These stories were designed to be used in men’s family violence programs (with protections in place to protect the young people’s identities). Some of the stories made by the young people can be viewed at <https://www.counterpointadvisory.com.au/phd-research>.

“Empowerment was a guiding principle for me, so it was really important to make sure that the young people in the study were getting something tangible out of participating.”

ACMI is an amazing place with amazing staff, and the young people also walked away with new skills in editing and film making.

“I tried to take every opportunity I could to highlight their voices and to let them speak for themselves. This way, they are able to speak directly to the community, and to fathers more specifically, about their experiences and what they felt.”



After completing her PhD, Dr Katie Lamb established Counterpoint Advisory to support the development of evidence-informed responses to better meet the needs of vulnerable children.

This type of research with young people – empowering, participatory work – is more common in Europe, but is starting to grow in Australia. Lamb says that while it was rare when she started five years ago, most conferences she goes to now have a presentation using this approach. She credits the university and her advisory panel with supporting her method despite the challenges.

“It ticked all the boxes for risk, but because of the really valuable input I gained from the front-line workers, it was really well thought out. It actually sailed through the ethics process.

“I presented my PhD findings in the UK and Ireland, and they couldn’t stop asking me questions about that. Both here and overseas PhD students are struggling to get sensitive research with children through their human research ethics committees which I think is disappointing. It’s great that the University of Melbourne supports the importance of undertaking this type of work with children – so long as it’s done safely.”

When asked to reflect on her experience as a PhD student, Lamb has nothing but good things to say.

“Doctoral study is really challenging, but I was lucky to work on a topic that I was passionate about and to have wonderful supervisors in Professors Cathy Humphreys and Kelsey Hegarty. I have to be honest and say I loved everything about the PhD experience, (except for the final proof reading!), it was one of the best things I have ever done”.

The Rockheads are all about teamwork and self-expression through music.



Making Music Accessible for Young People with Disability

Dr Mel Murphy saw the benefits of music for both young people and adults in her years as a music therapist. She had been thinking about doctoral study for a long time when she began her PhD.

“I had been a practitioner for so long and I was ready for a change of pace. I had more and more questions emerging in my work and I was interested in exploring some of those.”

At the same time, the University of Melbourne and Scope, one of Australia’s largest disability services provider, were in the early stages of establishing a research partnership. A conversation between Professor Katrina Skewes McFerran and Scope CEO Dr Jennifer Fitzgerald revealed a mutual interest in the role of music in social connectedness for young people.

“That was the vague question that started the whole thing,” Murphy says. She began her PhD late in 2013 under the supervision of Dr Nick Hagiliassis (a clinical psychologist with Scope)

and Professor McFerran, a classmate from her undergraduate years.

“In the beginning I was looking at how, for young people with disabilities, being involved in music might improve social connectedness. Over time, my focus moved away from young people themselves and toward the larger structures around them, and how that was impacting their ability to access music.”

Murphy’s project coincided with the first stages of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, which was being trialled in Barwon Heads, near her home in Geelong. The values inherent in the scheme’s design – particularly the rights model that prioritises choice and control for people with disabilities – encouraged her to rethink the way she approached her professional work.

"It got me thinking about my identity as a music therapist. At day services I had been working with people in isolation to their communities, to their families, to anybody else.

"The idea of the NDIS, of giving people freedom through control of their finances, is to allow them to break out of that and choose their own pathways. It was really interesting to think about that in terms of access to music. Not just therapy, but music in general – going out to a gig, joining a band, even just having a personal device to make playlists."

Those values came to be embedded in the research.

"I wondered what would happen if I found young people interested in music and said, 'let's design something together'. The idea was that it would be participatory – I wanted young people to be co-researchers with me and to investigate the role of music."

The group started with three people, and though there was interest in the instruments that she brought, Murphy says that the focus was more on meeting new people. When she mapped their social networks, she found that many of the young people didn't have strong relationships outside of their families. Her sessions provided an opportunity to connect with others with similar interests.

Over time the music became more central, and participants became more confident in making choices. They pushed for a livelier practice space and began to recruit others to come along. One member in particular, she says, grew enormously while in the group and was instrumental in what happened next.

"We turned ourselves into a rock band."

Since completing her PhD in 2017, Murphy has been teaching, and is supervising Master of Music Therapy students on their school placements.

*Dr Mel Murphy is now a
Lecturer and Clinical Supervisor in the
Faculty of Fine Arts and Music at the
University of Melbourne.*

"We bandied around a few different names and settled on The Rockheads. We've had a few gigs and it has been really, really fun."

"It has been really fantastic going back to being a clinician again, but now with this body of knowledge behind me. I have a real interest in setting young people up for life outside of school, making them feel like they have resources, and giving them options."

But just because she finished her doctorate doesn't mean she is finished with the band.

"One of the things that came out of the research was the need for more opportunities to perform. We had this idea for a music festival for all abilities music, dance, whatever. It's called 'Diversity Rocks' and it's coming up in November.

"The Rockheads will be there. We're not quite headliners yet – we have a few cool professional bands headlining – but we will definitely be there."



Externally Funded Projects

The SEREDA Project

SExual and Gender Based Violence in the REfugee Context: From Displacement to Arrival

Funded by the Wellcome Trust, Volkswagen Stiftung and Riksbankens Jubileumsfond through the Europe and Global Challenges Initiative, the SEREDA Project is a major new research initiative being undertaken in the United Kingdom, Australia, Sweden and Turkey by a multi-country research team (University of Birmingham, University of Melbourne, Uppsala University and Bilkent University). The research will increase understanding of the incidence and nature of sexual and gender-based violence experienced by refugees fleeing unrest in the Levant Region (with a focus on Syria and Iraq), to strengthen mechanisms for recognising and recording the extent of sexual and gender-based violence, and for providing appropriate responses – from the time of displacement, whilst in transit, and upon resettlement. The project is examining how the health and social consequences of sexual and gender-based violence are identified and treated, and how they shape inequalities in life chances in different countries of refuge. The project is being conducted in partnership with national and international NGOs providing services and support to refugees who have experienced violence, including the Women's Refugee Commission, Doctors of the World, Foundation House and the (Turkish) Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants.

Better Support for Consumers with Cognitive Disabilities

Assisting industry to develop practices and processes to support consumers with disabilities

The practices of essential and basic service providers in relation to consumers with disability have come under growing scrutiny from consumer watchdogs, advocacy groups, and the media in recent times. In partnership with retailers in the electricity, water, and telecommunications sectors, University of Melbourne researchers undertook a research project to develop, in consultation with consumers, clear, best-practice guidance to assist retailers to improve access and support for consumers with cognitive disabilities at different stages of transactions. The research team worked with seven industry partners who are involved in the new Thriving Communities Partnership, a collaboration of essential service providers working to improve access to services for all Australians. These industry partners are AGL, City West Water, Energy Australia, Origin Energy, Telstra, South East Water and Yarra Valley Water.

Promoting the Rights of Mental Health Consumers

A literature review for the Department of Health and Social Services, Victoria

This project produced a literature review for Victoria's Office of the Chief Psychiatrist. The review analysed existing Australian and International material to assist the Chief Psychiatrist to fulfil the obligation under the *Mental Health Act 2014* (Victoria) to promote the rights of persons receiving mental health services. While there have been several policies and guidelines about protecting human rights, less consideration has been given to promoting human rights. The review found that promoting human rights requires the active involvement of mental health consumers, their families and carers as well as members of the mental health workforce in ensuring everyone understands just what human rights are and how they can be exercised, especially in situations where treatment is given without consent. As part of this project, Professor McSherry also assisted in developing an action plan outlining short, medium and long term actions, priorities and resources to ensure human rights are promoted and provided advice on developing a Victorian Consumer Rights Advisory Group.

Alternatives to Coercion in Mental Health Settings: A Literature Review

A systematic review for United Nations High Commission for Human Rights in Geneva

Professor Bernadette McSherry and Dr Piers Gooding were commissioned by the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights in Geneva to undertake a systematic review of practices that aim to reduce, prevent and end coercive practices in mental health settings. The review informed a report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Ms Catalina Devandas, whose role is to promote the human rights of persons with disabilities worldwide.

Thanks a Bundle

Making telecommunications services more accessible for people with cognitive disabilities

The Thanks a Bundle project sought to develop practical tools to enable telecommunications providers to make their online information and sales materials more accessible to consumers with cognitive disabilities. The project's final research report and resources for the telecommunications industry were developed in consultation with representatives from People with Disability Australia (PWDA) and the Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council (VMIAAC), as well as an expert advisory board, to ensure that the research outcomes were appropriate and useful for the community. This project was funded via the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN) 2017-18 Grants Program. The operation of ACCAN is made possible by funding provided by the Commonwealth of Australia under section 593 of the Telecommunications Act 1997. This funding is recovered from charges on telecommunications carriers.



Australia's Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Alistair McEwin (right), joined University of Melbourne researchers in December to officially launch the Thanks a Bundle reports.

Visiting Fellows

International

- Michael Brown OBE, Mental Health Coordinator, National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing, UK
- Professor Dr Theresia Degener, Chair of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Professor of Law and Disability Studies, Protestant University of Applied Sciences, RWL, Germany
- Professor Colleen M. Flood, University of Ottawa Centre for Health Law, Policy and Ethics, Canada
- Dr Margaret Hagan, Director, Legal Design Lab, Stanford Law School, USA
- Dr Mark Rainey, University of London, UK

National

- Francesca Lee, President, Brain Injury Matters and Consumer Advocate, Voice at the Table
- Frances Quan Farrant, Senior Research and Policy Officer, University of Sydney and Manager, Strategic Projects, People with Disability Australia
- Eva Sifis, Director, By Accident and Consumer Advocate, Voice at the Table



Professor Theresia Degener (left) with Senior Research Fellow Dr Yvette Maker

Partnerships

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute is committed to working in collaboration with like-minded organisations and individuals with lived experience to ensure that research is relevant and impactful.

Scope Australia

The Institute works closely with Scope Australia, a leading provider of disability services throughout Australia. Jointly, the partners strive to improve the lives of individuals with disabilities through research, teaching and learning and public engagement programs. This partnership is led by Professor Keith McVilly, Chair of Disability and Inclusion, a shared position between Scope Australia and the Faculty of Arts at the University of Melbourne. The main partnership activity between Scope and the Institute in 2018 was establishing an initiative to support Scope employees to undertake doctoral research at the University of Melbourne. The first employee will commence her PhD research in the first half of 2019.

The Smith Family

The Smith Family is a national, independent children's charity helping disadvantaged Australians to get the most out of their education, so they can create better futures for themselves. The University of Melbourne and The Smith Family formalised a partnership to jointly pursue their common commitment to improving educational opportunities for young Australians from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Melbourne Social Equity Institute hosted the partnership between 2016-2018. In 2018, the partnership management was transferred to the Melbourne Graduate School of Education, where the Memorandum of Understanding was renewed for a further term.

Institute for Research into Superdiversity, University of Birmingham

Over a number of years, the Melbourne Social Equity Institute has developed relationships with the Institute for Research into Superdiversity (IRiS) at the University of Birmingham, UK.

IRiS and the Institute are currently undertaking research in to sexual and gendered-based violence experienced by people seeking asylum. For the Australian component of this research project, the University of Melbourne has partnered with the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (known simply as Foundation House). Foundation House provides services to advance the health, wellbeing and human rights of people of refugee backgrounds in Victoria who have experienced torture or other traumatic events in their country of origin or while fleeing those countries. This project is funded by the Volkswagen Foundation.

Community Fellows Program

The Community Fellows Program is the Institute's signature initiative that enables small to medium-sized organisations to access academic expertise for the benefit of their organisation and the communities that they serve.

The program began in 2016 with a pilot of six fellowships. Its key objectives are to generate quality research outcomes, meet community-based needs for research and to foster community-academic collaborations. Each fellow is assigned an Academic Mentor with relevant expertise. The mentors and the program team work with the fellow to design the project. During their placement Community Fellows are encouraged to participate in a range of academic and professional development activities.

In 2018, the program expanded to include two fellowships supported by the newly launched Melbourne Disability Institute. Two additional Community Fellows Projects were embedded within projects funded through the Institute's 2018 seed-funding round, further demonstrating the commitment to community-led and community-engaged research.

The following research projects commenced in 2018 as part of the Community Fellows Program:

Tessa Hens, Bayley House

Academic Mentor: Dr Kim Dunphy

Developing a participant self-assessment tool for people with an intellectual disability

Supported by Melbourne Disability Institute

Hayley Black, Carringbush Adult Education

Academic Mentor: Dr Julie Choi

Accessing online government services: digital literacy teaching strategies

Simon Andersson, Deaf Victoria

Academic Mentor: Dr Piers Gooding

Determining the needs of the deaf community for peer advocacy

Supported by Melbourne Disability Institute

Kelly Whitworth, Homeless Persons Union Victoria

Academic Mentor: Professor Carolyn Whitzman

Improving institutional responses to housing and homelessness activism

Freya Dinshaw, Human Rights Law Centre

Academic Mentor: Professor Susan Kneebone

Modern-day slavery in Australia

Mike Collins, Moreland City Council

Academic Mentor: Professor Carolyn Whitzman

Improving institutional responses to housing and homelessness activism (Public Policy Fellowship)

Kate Teggelove, PaKT4change

Academic Mentor: Professor Katrina Skewes McFerran

Benefits and challenges in delivering rhythm based programs for children

Linked with the Exploring the Value of Rhythm-based Support Research Project

Greg Hordacre, Residents for Victoria Street Drug Solutions

Academic Mentor: Dr Andrea Cook

Evaluating community actions taken by the residents for Victoria Street drug solutions

Linked with the Narrating Neighbourhood Research Project

Indigo Daya, Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council

Academic Mentor: Associate Professor Bridget Hamilton

Equitable consumer advocacy in mental health

Minh Nguyen, Vietnamese Community in Australia - Victorian Chapter

Academic Mentor: Dr Rimi Khan

Learning how to support the children of Vietnamese immigrants to thrive in Australia

Dalal Smiley, Wellsprings for Women

Academic Mentor: Dr Mohajer Hameed

Engaging men in gender equity and the prevention of violence against women

Tess Matthews, WEstjustice (Western Community Legal Centre)

Academic Mentor: Professor Jeannie Paterson

Creating Clearer Contracts: Consumer Law and New Australian Residents

Emma Wagg, Women's Health Goulburn North East

Academic Mentor: Associate Professor Jane Tomnay

Understanding stigma and social barriers to testing and treatment for STDs

Sarah Bright, Young Workers Centre

Academic Mentor: Professor Joo-Cheong Tham

Wage theft and young workers





Trauma Informed Practice in Education

It's likely that every classroom in the world has at least one student with an experience of trauma. For educator Rebecca Harris, that makes it essential that schools are paying close attention to their students' wellbeing.

Rebecca is the Co-ordinator of Student and Family Wellbeing at Carlton Primary School. She says that it's unusual to have a full-time person in this role at a school of only 120 students, but that it is recognition of the importance of the work.

"Carlton Primary is fiercely committed to student and family wellbeing. That comes from decades of experience with, and knowledge of, trauma-informed education. We know that students who do not feel safe, or who feel highly stressed, do not learn."

Most people understand trauma to be the result of a single overwhelming event, but it can also be a response to repeated experiences of neglect, abuse, poverty or family violence. When children experience trauma, they can develop physiological and psychological responses that, if not dealt with, can last the rest of their lives.

Our brains aren't set in stone though, and problematic responses can be corrected.

Rebecca says that schools play an important role in encouraging this positive development.

"Schools can be therapeutic places, they can be safe and reliable. Staff at schools can help children to regulate, they can do their best to be reliable and emotionally available.

"When children experience school as a place where they know just what to expect, this can mitigate other chaos in their lives."

This is a particularly urgent concern at Carlton Primary School. The largest group of students at the school are refugees from the Horn of Africa, who can face significant educational barriers: they often won't have a high-quality pre-schooling literacy, which greatly impacts their ability to learn.

Many also have had direct and vicarious experiences of trauma.

“They live in high density public housing, which can be very busy. There are frequent moments of violence that the children are exposed to, and sometimes are victims of. Their parents are often living with high levels of stress – financial, of course, taking care of large families, stress for relatives back in home countries, and psychological processing of their own experiences.


“All of this impacts the children.”

Rebecca was among the first Community Fellows supported by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute. She had decided that she wanted to understand trauma-informed education more deeply, and contacted the Institute to see what opportunities might be available. Serendipitously, a pilot of the Community Fellows Program was about to be announced.


“My motivation was to dig deeper into the link between developmental trauma and education. There wasn’t much written about it, but everything I was reading made so much sense. I wanted to know more, and I wanted to put it in our context, to create a kind of practice manual.

With support from her academic mentor Gregory Donoghue (Melbourne Graduate School of Education), she conducted a literature review on neurobiology and trauma-informed education, and gathered information about Carlton Primary School’s approaches to supporting student wellbeing.

“Greg validated the work a great deal. His own experience and knowledge helped me. He helped me set out what I was doing and where to start. He read quite a few drafts and gave feedback.”



“Making long-term connections with educators and students, and the opportunity to apply research directly in the field, was invaluable.”



“It was a very positive experience for all involved,” said Gregory. “Making long-term connections with educators and students, and the opportunity to apply research directly in the field, was invaluable.”

Rebecca’s project in the Community Fellows Program, ‘Trauma informed practice in education’, has been made available as a digital resource. She says the program gave her the time and support to dig deeper, and has improved the way she approaches her work.

“I would say that my project has absolutely improved my practice, and that of my colleagues. It gave us a framework to operate in a trauma-informed way. We worked out ways to gather data about what we were doing, so we didn’t just have our feelings to rely on. We use the resource to bring new staff, and volunteers on board, and to remind ourselves about the importance of socio-emotional learning, and differentiated responses to behaviour.

“We worked really hard on having a whole of school approach – that is a really significant shift, an enhancement to what we were already doing.”

The resource is being picked up more broadly as well, including by academics at other institutions.

“I have had people from all around Australia contact me about it. I have spoken at conferences and personal development sessions. A group from a primary school in Shepparton is coming to visit in March! I am so happy that it is out in the world and helping other people.”

That is central to the work that Rebecca does. Equity and social justice are important values, she says, as is the recognition that everybody deserves the same opportunities regardless of the circumstances that life puts us in.

“Greg commented to me once that it isn’t really the done thing to talk about love in education, but I would have to say that love guides me in my work. I do my best to have unconditional positive regard for all the students and families I work with.”

Visit traumainformedpractice.com.au to learn more about Rebecca’s work.



Ending the exploitation of refugee and migrant workers

Getting work is the most important step to successful settlement in a new country, says lawyer Catherine Hemingway, but for people who have recently arrived in Australia it can also be the start of a lot of new problems.

“There are so many issues that people face. Underpayment and non-payment, high workplace injury rates, job insecurity, discrimination and bullying, people losing their jobs in unfair situations, people not being aware of their rights or where to go if they have a problem.

“These injustices continue when people are unable to take action.”

Catherine is the Policy Director and Employment & Practice Manager at WEstjustice Community Legal Centre in Footscray. When she began her role in 2013 she quickly found that work rights were an area of unmet need for clients.

“Employment law issues were coming up a lot in our work with newly-arrived people, but there are very few community legal centres that offer those services.”

To get a fuller picture of the problem, the legal centre began a project to explore and document the working experiences of newly-arrived and refugee communities across Melbourne’s west.

“The first stage of the project was research and consultation: we did a literature review, we met with a lot of stakeholders to get an idea of what the problems are, what services are out there, what the unmet needs are and how we can address them.”

This preliminary work confirmed that the problems are widespread, and found that the mainstream services offering solutions – the Fair Work Ombudsman, Worksafe – weren’t always appropriate for newly-arrived communities. With that in mind, WEstjustice piloted an employment law service and a community legal education programme.

“Over and over again we were hearing that mainstream services are great for clients who are able to use those self-help models, but they weren’t accessible for those who were really vulnerable. Some of our clients don’t speak much English, some may have experienced torture back home and have a real fear of government agencies.

“We found there to be a real need for face-to-face assistance from a trusted community organisation.”

Catherine joined the Melbourne Social Equity Institute’s Community Fellows Program in 2016. She took the evidence collected through three years of consultation and trial, conducted a literature review, and used both to make recommendations for changes that could better protect vulnerable workers.

“The Community Fellows Program enabled me to get out of the office and have a space to work on that report. It was very helpful to be in that environment, and to have some relief from my day-to-day duties so that I could really focus on it.”

Professor Joo-Cheong Tham (Melbourne Law School) served as academic mentor on the project. Catherine says that his guidance was very helpful.

“I had worked closely with Joo-Cheong on other campaigns. He was instrumental in this project from the beginning too – he connected me with other academics and provided guidance on the surveys that we used in the consultation phase.

The result was the ‘Not Just Work’ report, an evidence base on which WEstjustice have built much of their advocacy work in the years since.

“We really rely on the report when we make submissions.

“That has included advocating to change the Fair Work Act to better protect vulnerable workers. Underpayment is one of the biggest issues that our clients face, but it can be really hard for them to make claims if they haven’t kept records of what hours they’ve worked. The law says that employers must keep a record, but the onus is on our clients to prove their claim.

“Off the back of the report, we lobbied for and were able to get an amendment that said that if employers don’t provide those records on request, what the employee says stands in court unless the employer can disprove it. That’s had a huge impact in terms of our clients being able to confidently bring claims even if they don’t have perfect evidence.

“That was really exciting to be able to work towards that.”

The employment law service and community legal education program are ongoing at WEstjustice, and the centre has just launched a working group for Victorian community legal centres. Catherine says that as many as ten are now trying to do work in this space.

“There’s so much need, it’s so specialised and on such short timeframes. The aim of this network is to try to share our knowledge and skills, and to support those centres that are just starting out.”

Professor Joo-Cheong Tham said that the feedback he gets from community fellows is that the program fills a real need.

“It’s a significant innovation for the university, in terms of fostering collaboration and exchange between academics and civil society.”

Catherine agreed. She said that building and sharing knowledge is the best of the university-community organisation relationship.



“That is exactly why initiatives like the Community Fellows Program are so important. Applying academic rigour to the work that we do in the community only strengthens our arguments for change.”

Interdisciplinary PhD Program in Refugee and Forced Migration Studies

Forced displacement is a major contemporary global challenge demanding responses based on enhanced understanding of its complex and multifaceted causes and consequences. Across 2018, the Melbourne Social Equity Institute ran an interdisciplinary PhD program to provide advanced training to doctoral candidates from across the University of Melbourne.

Co-ordinated by Dr Karen Block, the program addresses the contemporary issues of asylum-seeking, forced migration and statelessness across the areas of law, health, culture, education, creative arts, history, social policy, housing, social sustainability, community wellbeing and mental health. It includes research training informed by a range of disciplinary, theoretical and philosophical perspectives.

Masterclasses, workshops and seminars include a focus on ethics, research methods and approaches for communicating research to diverse audiences across and beyond the academy. The program enriches the PhD experience by creating a strong cohort and intellectual community that assists students in developing their post-doctoral pathways.



Program Participants and Thesis Topics

Adrienne Anderson

Every woman is an island: bridging the gap between 'mainland' refugee claims and women's domestic abuse cases

Sayomi Ariyawansa

Tackling the exploitation of migrant workers in the Australian agriculture sector

Estelle Boyle

Mobilising belonging: the role of networked communication in facilitating social inclusion of resettled refugees

Deirdre Brennan

Campaigning for citizenship in Nepal (2006 – 2018): assessing how activism impacts upon law reform and the public perception of the stateless

Louisa Bufardeci

There's beige in brown: towards an aesthetic language to challenge white superiority

Renee Davidson

The evolution of Jordan's domestic refugee policies

Lukas Davis

Dealing with terror and insecurity in the contemporary city: assessing and operationalising adaptive-based urban resilience for urban security threats and challenges

Caitlin Douglass

Young people of refugee backgrounds in Victoria

Shane Harrison

Sexual exploitation and abuse of boys in conflict

Rose Iser

Realising the academic and social potential of second-generation children of African refugees in the classroom

Rasika Jayasuriya

Protecting the right to family unity: the impact of low-waged labour migration on children left behind

Evan Jureidini

Trauma and the altered self

Ebony King

The role of services in facilitating the resilience of unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors

Hala Nasr

Safe spaces as a response to gender-based violence in refugee settings: possibilities and limitations

Renee Miller-Yeaman

Home, hospitality and confinement: the Villawood Migrant Hostel

Tafireyi Marukutira

Beyond the UNAIDS 90-90-90 targets: gaps and opportunities for HIV epidemic control (HIV and migration)

Anh Nguyen

Towards a new historical and psychological perspective of acculturation and success: oral history of Vietnamese Australian child refugees as adults

Shannon Owen

Projecting futures through documentary film

Kelly Soderstrom

The 'I' in Team: an analysis of the implementation gap in EU refugee policy. A case study of solidarity

Sarah Strauven

Exploring collective narrative work with traumatised refugees

Claire Sullivan

Syrian refugees' adoptions, adaptations and rejections of legal responses to experiences of family violence and SGBV

Tamara Tubakovic

Responsibility sharing on refugees: an analysis of policy change to the Dublin system

Dana Young

Understanding the contextual factors that generate social capital and promote health and wellbeing for refugee and migrant young people through sports participation.

Brandais York

The legal rights and protections of Cambodian women within international marriage migration to China

Publication Highlights

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute and its affiliated researchers produced 54 publications in 2018. A select few are highlighted below.

Humphreys, C. and Diemer, K. 2018. Working with domestic violence. In M. Connolly, L. Harms and J. Maidment (eds) *Social Work: Contexts of Practice*. Oxford, Oxford University Press. 121-134.

Roper, C. and Gooding, P. 2018. 'This is Not a Story: From Ethical Loneliness to Respect for Diverse Ways of Knowing, Thinking and Being' in E Flynn, A Arstein-Kerslake, C De Bhailis, M Laura Serra (Eds) *Global Perspectives on Legal Capacity Reform: Our Voices, Our Stories*. Routledge 154-164.

Maker, Y., Arstein-Kerslake, A., McSherry, B., Paterson, J., and Brophy, L. 2018. Ensuring Equality for Persons with Cognitive Disabilities in Consumer Contracting: An International Human Rights Law Perspective. *Melbourne Journal of International Law*. 19(1) 178-199.

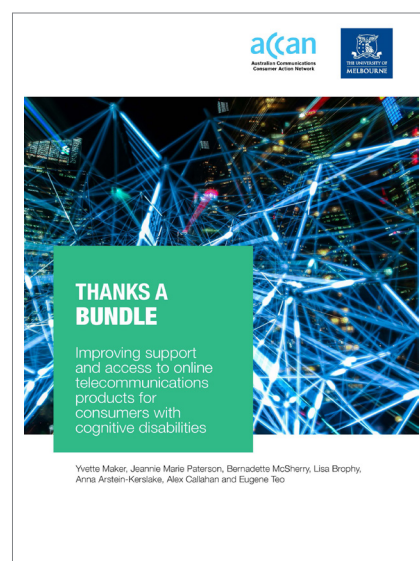
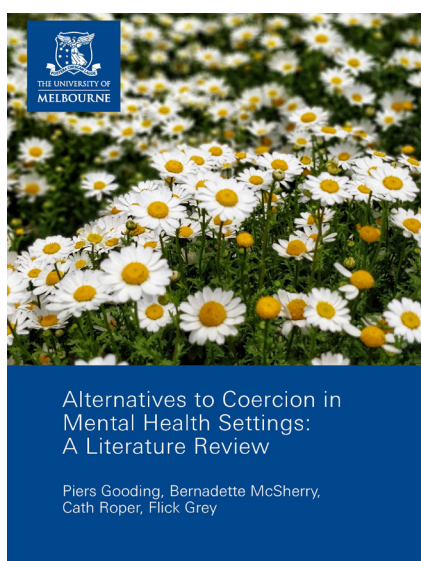
McSherry, B. 2018. Computational Modelling, Social Media and Health-Related Datasets: Consent and Privacy Issues. *Journal of Law and Medicine*. 25(4) 894-898.

Vaughan, C. 2018. Disability Inclusive Health Toolkit: A Resource for Asia and the Pacific 2018 Promoting disability inclusion in sexual and reproductive health research and programming: Experiences from W-DARE 2018

Palmer, V. and Furler, J. 2018. A room with a view: a metaphor analysis of Vietnamese women's representations of living with depression using photo elicitation. *Visual Studies*. 33:3

Maker, Y. (Contributor) University of Melbourne, Human Rights and Technology: Response to Australian Human Rights Commission Issues Paper. October 2018.

Gooding, P. 'The Right to Independent Living and being included in the Community: Lessons from the United Nations' (2018) 24 *International Journal of Mental Health and Capacity Law* 32-54.



Media Highlights

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute counted 45 media mentions in 2018. They were related to a broad range of themes including family violence, mental health, deaths in custody, LGBTQIA rights, artificial intelligence, refugee policy and accessibility. A selection include:

Jeannie Marie Paterson and Yvette Maker, “The people behind the tech”: Why artificial intelligence discriminates, *Smart Company*.

Bernadette McSherry, ‘Medication as a restraint in the aged-care sector, The Law Report, ABC Radio National

Denis Muller, The Hanson effect: how hate seeps in and damages us all, *The Daily Bulletin*.

Kelsey Hegarty, One country’s plan to solve the world’s hidden health crisis, BBC News.

Piers Gooding, “Send me back to Iran”: Australia blocks mentally ill man’s wish to go home’, SBS Online.

Katie Lamb, The greatest myth of family violence, *The Age*

Cathy Humphreys, ‘Men need to change’: anger grows over police response to comedian’s murder. *Guardian Australia*.

Bernadette McSherry. ‘Unfit to Plead’, *Meanjin*, Autumn 2018.



Refugee Alternatives Conference

In February 2018, the Melbourne Social Equity Institute partnered with the Refugee Council of Australia to present the second annual Refugee Alternatives Conference.

The Refugee Alternatives Conference is a major project initiated by the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA), the national umbrella body for refugees and the organisations and individuals who support them. RCOA seeks to support projects that directly enhance capacity to serve the refugee community.

The conference is built on its premise from the previous year that lived experience is the foundation of better policy development, and that the voices of those from refugee and asylum seeker backgrounds should drive policy design, content, and delivery. The 59 speakers and moderators, over 53% of whom had lived experience of seeking asylum, living as a refugee or a stateless person, were joined by 450 attendees from refugee backgrounds, academia, service provision, advocacy, policymaking and other engaged individuals.

The conference's goal of seeking alternatives was expressed through 15 diverse sessions on a broad range of themes, each seeking to conclude with purposeful and actionable strategies and recommendations at the global, regional or national levels. The conference also saw a focus on the local, and included specific recommendations for local governments and civil society organisations.

A session-by-session recap of the conference, including all its emerging ideas and policy recommendations, is available in the Full Conference Report at refugeealternatives.org.au.



Public Events

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute hosted and supported over 60 events in 2018 including public lectures, research seminars, film screenings and workshops.

A busy, year-long events program began in the second week of January with a booked-out public lecture by Professor Theresia Degener, Chair of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Professor Degener spoke about the latest draft General Comment on Equality and Non-Discrimination which seeks to establish a new model of equality in international human rights law.

Throughout the year the Institute supported a range of research seminars and presentations, including MAEve's popular monthly lunchtime seminar series. Topics covered by this series across the year included reproductive coercion, working with fathers who use violence, domestic violence in housing and using data to end violence against women.

In August, Michael Brown OBE, mental health coordinator for the UK National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing, visited Melbourne to deliver a lecture on the role of police in mental health. In the same week, the Institute partnered with Melbourne Law School to host a presentation by Dr Margaret Hagan from the Stanford Legal Design Lab on human-centred design for legal help.

In December, the Melbourne Social Equity Institute welcomed its final visitor for the year. A week before Christmas, Professor Colleen M. Flood, Director of the University of Ottawa Centre for Health Law, Policy and Ethics, spoke to a packed-out room about power and limitations of health as a human right.



Financial Statement

INCOME		
Balance brought forward		\$125,265
Funds from Chancellery		
– Core Melbourne Social Equity Institute funding		\$1,094,000
– Alliance to End Violence Against Women and their Children		\$150,000
– Space charges contribution		\$30,000
Internal grants		\$111,247
External grants		\$288,229
Philanthropic donations		\$9,582
	Total income	\$1,808,323
EXPENDITURE		
Directorate staff salaries		\$513,202
Research staff salaries		\$301,403
Research project costs		\$412,249
Operating expenses		\$16,348
Alliance to End Violence Against Women and their Children		\$150,000
Seed funded projects		\$279,006
Partnership development		\$24,367
PhD scholarships		\$27,938
Events		\$8,702
Space charges		\$30,000
	Total expenditure	\$1,763,215
	Surplus	\$45,108



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

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Billibellary's Walk is a cultural interpretation of the Parkville campus landscape that provides an experience of connection to country which Wurundjeri people continue to have both physically and spiritually.

Visit go.unimelb.edu.au/97d6 to learn more and to download the App.

Current Research Projects

The Melbourne Social Equity Institute supports interdisciplinary research on a broad range of topics and themes.

Choice, control and the NDIS

To what extent is the National Disability Insurance Scheme achieving its aims and objectives from the perspective of people with disability?

Supporting refugee background students

Supporting outreach, recruitment and retention of students from refugee backgrounds at the University of Melbourne.

19 stories of social inclusion

Lessons from the lives of everyday Australians on belonging, disability and community contribution.

Unfitness to plead project

Practical options to address the problem of people with cognitive impairments being found “unfit to plead” and subjected to indefinite detention in Australia.

Model laws to regulate the use of restraint on persons with disabilities

Addressing the current lack of a common legal framework for regulating the use of restraint on persons with disabilities in mental health, disability and aged care sectors.

Who cares?

Examining the invisibility of migrant women in care and domestic work in Australia.

Sexual harassment and everyday sexism

Definitions, regulations, strategies and support for young people and children.

The WEAVERs project

Exploring the feasibility and impact of a lived experience panel in the area of violence against women and their children

Ethical fashion and preventing violence in Bangladesh

This project examines the role of ethical fashion enterprises in Bangladesh in the primary prevention of violence against women.

Using theatre to raise awareness of HIV and PrEP

This project seeks to build a set of cultural and ethical protocols around making performance work on HIV.

Listening for (a) change

Identifying strategies for preventing family violence through dialogical research with women with refugee backgrounds.

Violence prevention and respectful relationships

Violence prevention approaches within social policy across the life course, starting in early childhood.

Title transfers and housing quality

Examining the effect of title transfers on housing quality and tenant outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians.

Contested waterfronts

Informality, floods and capital in Indonesian cities.

A novel cure

A pilot study examining the health and wellbeing outcomes of creative practices in ageing.

Support for consumer transactions

Working with consumers and industry to develop practices and processes to improve access for consumers with disabilities.

People with cognitive disabilities who may experience difficulties with decision-making have a right to be recognised as legal actors. An interdisciplinary team of researchers led by Professor Bernadette McSherry is undertaking a program of research to build expertise and tools for supporting consumers with cognitive disabilities to engage as economic actors on an equal basis with others.



The Rockheads are all about teamwork and self-expression through music

Making Music Accessible for Young People with Disability

Dr Mel Murphy saw the benefits of music for both young people and adults in her years as a music therapist. She had been thinking about doctoral study for a long time when she began her PhD.

“I had been a practitioner for so long and I was ready for a change of pace. I had more and more questions emerging in my work and I was interested in exploring some of those.”

At the same time, the University of Melbourne and Scope Victoria, the state’s largest disability services provider, were in the early stages of establishing a research partnership. A conversation between Professor Katrina Skewes McFerran and CEO Dr Jennifer Fitzgerald revealed a mutual interest in the role of music in social connectedness for young people.

“That was the vague question that started the whole thing,” Murphy says. She began her PhD late in 2013 under the supervision of Dr Nick Hagiliassis and Professor McFerran, a classmate

from her undergraduate years.

“In the beginning I was looking at how, for young people with disabilities, being involved in music might improve social connectedness. Over time, my focus moved away from young people themselves and toward the larger structures around them, and how that was impacting their ability to access music.”

Murphy’s project coincided with the first stages of the National Disability Insurance Scheme, which was being trialled in Barwon Heads, near her home in Geelong. The values inherent in the scheme’s design – particularly the rights model that prioritises choice and control for people with disabilities – encouraged her to rethink the way she approached her professional work.



*Read more about
Dr Katie Lamb's work
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Children Speak Out on Family Violence

Young people who have experienced family violence have a lot to tell us, says Dr Katie Lamb, but too often there's nobody listening.

"When I spoke to young people whose fathers use violence, I found that they really appreciated the opportunity to have their voices heard. They talked about how people made all these assumptions about the way that they felt toward their fathers, and many of those assumptions were wrong."

Lamb's doctoral research, supported by the Melbourne Social Equity Institute, was focussed on capturing these missing voices and finding ways to have them represented in men's family violence programs. Her work was embedded in an Australian Research Council project looking at fathering in the context of family violence.

"That was one of the criteria I had, I wanted to be part of a larger project," she says.

"I approached the university and Professor Cathy Humphreys wrote back to say that my timing was excellent. A position had just come up on the ARC project, and my experience and interests were a perfect fit with what they were looking for."

Before her PhD, Lamb spent fifteen years managing programs, developing policy and in research roles across the criminal justice and child and family welfare sectors.

Supported by an advisory panel of sector experts,

Lamb interviewed children and young people between the ages of nine and 19 years. Children experiencing family violence were clear that they wanted their perspectives to be included in the project and disagreed with some of the common assumptions made about their circumstances.

"The young people felt that there is a view in society that contact with fathers is always a positive thing. The young people I spoke to really pushed back on that. Sometimes, they said, they really need time away. They spoke about the impact on their self-esteem, their mental health and confidence.

"You can't assume all children have the same perspective though, even within the same family. Some were optimistic about having a relationship with their fathers, others really clearly said that they were done. And there was everything in between, too."

The strongest message came when Lamb asked if there was anything the fathers could do to make up for the violence. "Children and young people from both groups – the ones who wanted a healthier relationship with their fathers, but also the ones who said they wanted nothing further to do with him. They all talked about wanting to engage in a process of reparation and said that a lack of

closure was holding them back from healing, even as young adults.”

In terms of what reparation looked like to young people, “They wanted their fathers to acknowledge that he had caused harm, to admit it and apologise” she says. “That seems like a really small thing – when anyone wrongs someone else, you expect an apology. For these children and young people, it was so hard for them to even imagine it happening that they would laugh as they said ‘My Dad would never apologise’.

“Then I’d ask what it would mean if he did. They’d stop laughing, they’d become really serious. They’d say that it would be amazing”.

After the interviews, Lamb invited the participants to a two-day workshop at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI). Eight young people wrote scripts, recorded their voices and picked imagery, music and sounds to produce a digital story of the key messages that they think fathers who use violence need to know about the impacts of their behaviour on their children. These stories were designed to be used in men’s family violence programs (with protections in place to protect the young people’s identities). Some of the stories made by the young people can be viewed at <https://www.counterpointadvisory.com.au/phd-research>.

“Empowerment was a guiding principle for me, so it was really important to make sure that the young people in the study were getting something tangible out of participating.”

“I tried to take every opportunity I could to highlight their voices and to let them speak for themselves. This way, they are able to speak directly to the community, and to fathers more specifically, about their experiences and what they felt.”

This type of research with young people – empowering, participatory work – is more common in Europe, but is starting to grow in Australia. Lamb says that while it was rare when she started five



After completing her PhD, Dr Katie Lamb established Counterpoint Advisory to support the development of evidence-informed responses to better meet the needs of vulnerable children.

years ago, most conferences she goes to now have a presentation using this approach. She credits the university and her advisory panel with supporting her method despite the challenges.

“It ticked all the boxes for risk, but because of the really valuable input I gained from the front-line workers, it was really well thought out. It actually sailed through the ethics process.”

“I presented my PhD findings in the UK and Ireland, and they couldn’t stop asking me questions about that. Both here and overseas PhD students are struggling to get sensitive research with children through their human research ethics committees which I think is disappointing. It’s great that the University of Melbourne supports the importance of undertaking this type of work with children – so long as it’s done safely.”

When asked to reflect on her experience as a PhD student, Lamb has nothing but good things to say.

“Doctoral study is really challenging, but I was lucky to work on a topic that I was passionate about and to have wonderful supervisors in Professors Cathy Humphreys and Kelsey Hegarty. I have to be honest and say I loved everything about the PhD experience, (except for the final proof reading!), it was one of the best things I have ever done”.