Educating family group conference coordinators

A 'family of origin' perspective

Michael Clare

This paper considers the challenges to social work students and their educators and to graduate social workers and their supervisors, of acquiring beginning-level confidence and competence in working with 'other people's families'. There is a review of important educational contributions to our understanding of the necessary and sufficient preparation for 'pure and applied' social work theory and practice with families. In this review, the writer describes the educational rationale for a 'Family of Origin' workshop which has been offered to social work students at the Universities of Sussex and Western Australia and to experienced practitioners in a Perth child and family welfare agency. Finally, the writer reflects on the intellectual and the emotional dimensions of knowing and doing in family-based practice – with particular reference to Family Group Conferencing.

Michael Clare, BA(Hons), MSW
Senior Lecturer, School of Social work and Social Policy
University of Western Australia
Nedlands, WA 6097
Email: mclare@cyllene.uwa.edu.au

PREPARATION FOR PRACTICE WITH FAMILIES

> In no other area of our existence are ideology, feelings, fantasy, wishes and reality so completely intermingled.
>
> (Flex 1982: 223)

> Self awareness and critical self-reflection are also necessary to ensure confidence that our responses arise from the client's or user's situation rather than our past or needs.
>
> (Lishman 1998: 94)

The introduction of local adaptations of the Maori model of Family Group Conferencing into a broadening range of health and public welfare social work tasks and settings across the English-speaking world raises a number of policy and practice questions. Lupton (1998) and Jackson and Morris (1999) review research evidence of the effectiveness of the model in New Zealand practice and reflect on the integrity of its core principles when adapted and implemented in other cultures. In this paper, I would like to focus on the necessary professional qualifying education and in-service agency training and supervision processes to enhance this new but also familiar method. I shall review the central principles and assumptions of the model before describing complex educational processes in preparing social workers for the challenging task of entering into the lives of people who are in distress, conflict or trouble. I shall give particular attention to cultural sensitivity and ethnic stereotyping.

Preparation for competence in statutory practice with children and families is intellectually problematic because of the breadth of theoretical and practical knowledge relevant and necessary for informed judgement. Both Flex (1982) and Lishman (1998) identify additional difficulties given the potential impact of private experiences shaping complex professional judgements. The student social worker and the beginning practitioner may be challenged on many levels – simultaneously – when working with 'other people's families'. The whole process becomes even more complex when the selection of relevant theoretical perspectives about 'normal' behaviour is made in a multi-racial society.

Preparation for complex practice with families requires academic knowledge about families as systems – both how they develop over time and how they embrace or resist challenge and change. This paper will outline an educational strategy developed initially on the qualifying social work course at the University of Sussex (Clare 1991c) and describe a 'Families Workshop' offered initially to social work students. More recently, the Workshop was offered to a staff group of a child welfare agency in Perth, Western Australia, as developmental in-service training for practice.

Policies, protocols and guidelines for child welfare practice seek to prescribe and structure normative good practice – in the general. Also, learning to become a competent social worker with children and families requires teaching and learning of an academic nature. However, there is more to learning about understanding and action than complying with 'the correct formulation'. There is more to attempting to understand and change the assumptions, beliefs and behaviour of others than 'a good idea'. Firstly, there is the need for informed professional judgement in the particular. Then, there is the likelihood of objection, of argument, of hostility, of covert sabotage on occasions – whether from

colleagues or from direct recipients of services. This set of reactions will be even more strident in high-risk situations such as investigations of family violence or responding to potential adolescent suicide or family breakdown. Working with children who have been removed from their families, or with parents seeking 'family reunification', will also challenge levels of teaching and learning and informed understanding and judgement.

Social workers do not deploy a visible or acknowledged 'technology'. There are no equivalents of the white coat, psychometric test or sophisticated physiotherapy facility. Students and qualified workers are required to respond to 'problems in living' of a material and/or emotional kind, likely on occasions to provoke powerful feelings of sadness, frustration, disgust, despair, anger or compassion. At the root of social work technology is the practitioner's use of self – with practice assertions about 'self awareness', 'non-judgmental attitudes', 'client-centredness', and 'professional neutrality'. The shadow of these requirements includes 'self-preoccupation', 'prejudice', 'self-protection' and 'personal over-involvement'. Expectations such as those listed above raise crucial questions about the quality of educational preparation and maintenance of students and workers – in terms of 'family of origin' awareness (Clare 1989 a), gender awareness (Fook 1986; Fitzroy 1999), a feminist ethical awareness (Wise 1995) and 'racism awareness' (Dominelli 1988), for example.

RELEVANCE TO COORDINATORS OF FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCES?

Family Group Conferencing was developed initially following a Ministerial Enquiry into New Zealand's child welfare system. There was widespread concern about the over-representation of Maori children in the state care system (Department of Social Welfare 1988). Parallelling dominant practice assumptions in many English-speaking countries, there was a powerful professional practice norm of 'rescue to care by strangers' as preferable to negotiated extended family involvement.

The Ministerial Advisory Committee Report (Department of Social Welfare 1988) echoed UK research concerns about the failure of social workers to work collaboratively with children, parents and wider kin. 'Control over families' was one of the unintended consequences of a greater emphasis on case planning to prevent the 'withering of links' and 'drift' in out-of-home care practice (Department of Health and Social Security 1985). The practice style was unhelpfully adversarial so that responsibility for problem solving in family difficulties was not negotiated. Professional workers made decisions that were imposed – and children frequently lost contact with their families during their care experience (Millham et al 1986).

Detailed explanation of the underlying practice assumptions of Family Group Conferencing, particularly the critically important role of the coordinator, is presented by Ban (1995), Connolly (1994), Ban and Swain (1994) and Ryburn and Atherton (1996). Essentially, there is a commitment to identify significant members of the 'personal community' of a child for whom there is a statutory concern. The coordinator invites these members to the Family Group Conference which is organised in such a way that members understand the concern and the agency's Duty of Care. The members are invited to accept responsibility for problem solving in a way that fits both the family's culture and the legal requirements.

Family Group Conferencing is a good example of 'practical family systems practice' requiring an experienced and competent Coordinator to prepare a genogram and an eco-map of the kinship and inter-agency networks of each referred 'family'. The family group will be challenged to work collaboratively to find a workable and acceptable solution to the problems facing them. The decision-making process will be open and transparent – challenging any family culture's preference for 'triangulation', indirect communication and maintaining 'secrets'. Clearly, the Coordinator will need a sophisticated practice framework for working with family systems – integrating child and family welfare law, family systems practice and essential groupwork skills in chairing family meetings while paying careful attention to ambiguous power and authority aspects of the role and task.

SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION AND SUPERVISION – CONTENT AND/OR PROCESS?

Clearly, there are implications for the necessary syllabus for a sufficient social work education and for in-service training and professional supervision for this task. Jones (1997) and Simmonds (1997) consider the complexity of preparation for child protection practice – including the risk of reductionist technical training at the expense of education for professional judgement. This perspective would support Hough's (1995) concerns about the shift in some Australian child welfare agency practice cultures towards a more technical and decon-textualised approach to service delivery.

There are also questions about the most appropriate range of academic and practice assessment for social work education. Some core competencies may be out of the range of formal academic assessment, eg, the ability to confront an aggressive client. Besides the ever-increasing pressures to add essential content to a social work curriculum, there are a number of writers challenging social work educators and practice supervisors to think carefully about educational processes and outcomes as well as about the intellectual input and content. This initiative comes from research into the teaching and learning processes likely to achieve 'constructive and deep' rather than 'reproductive and surface' learning (Gardiner 1989; Gray & Gardiner 1989; Cooper 1994) – to arrive at an informed judgement rather than at 'compliance'. This has particular resonance when reflecting on the likely impact of emotionally provocative academic content.

Writers informing this appreciation of processes in social work education include:

(a) Bertha Reynolds (1965) who presents an important framework for social work educators, students and

supervisors when assessing the stage of learning achieved by the student. The five-stage developmental model from an initial Acute Self-Consciousness of Self, through a Sink-or-Swim Adaptation to the final stage of being able to Teach What One Has Mastered is particularly relevant to examining acquired competence in the practice and supervision of complex tasks. We are reminded that practice competence requires sufficient and stretching practice opportunities, including effective feedback and honest self-appraisal. This developmental process seems equally applicable to acquiring the knowledge, skills and authorities essential in becoming a competent practitioner and practice supervisor.

(b) Harris (1985) writes helpfully about the processes of the 'transfer of learning' – both in relation to the application of learning from the familiar to the less familiar and in relation to the development of critical thinking and creativity in practice. Clearly this is an essential educational component if the syllabus design has been influenced by the quest for a few generalisable principles rather than by the demand for ever-increasing content. However, this transfer process also involves the ability to switch from the 'emotionally-cool' context of the university lecture theatre to the 'emotionally-hot' environment of the practice task. The ability to transfer learning and apply it appropriately is critical to the evaluation of all training and education – and argues against content-only coverage of complex processes as probably de-skilling because the learner will still be at the 'self-conscious' and dependent stage on completion of the training. This has implications for the educational strategies used to enhance the transfer of learning.

(c) Bowen (1974) analyses the impact on rational action of powerful emotions such as guilt, fear or anger. He suggests that the capacity for systemic thinking, familiar to many social work educators concerned to expose the limitations of 'cause-and-effect' thinking is likely to be disrupted when panic impulses are received. Bowen suggests that when we are tense and anxious we are as

> ... inaccurate, unrealistic , irrational and overly righteous ... as were (our) ancestors who pursued a different kind of evil influence, who eliminated different kinds of witches and dragons (p. 175).

(d) What price 'self-awareness', 'client-centredness, 'professional neutrality' and 'non-judgmental practice'?

Preparation for complex practice with families requires academic knowledge about families as systems – both how they develop over time and how they embrace or resist challenge and change.

This perspective is developed by Moore (1982) in her analysis of the effect on social workers in the early stages of dealing with cases involving violence. She describes a form of 'frozen watchfulness' in which academic knowledge may be abandoned by the practitioner in the quest for 'emotional safety' – hence some of the 'mistakes' in some child protection practice. The Beckford Inquiry Report (1985) is unequivocal about child protection work and potential distortions of judgement by practitioners and supervisors ('the rule of optimism'):

> The loss of objectivity is a common factor in the management of high-risk cases (p.217).

In a paper on management and supervision (Clare 1991a), I identify other examples of high-risk work in social work and include work with the suicidal and the disturbing. Other examples might include children in out-of-home care, torture victims and the long-term unemployed. To what extent are placement tasks presenting social work students with the range, intensity and challenge of 'high-risk' tasks so that the personal and the professional, the theory and the practice are integrated? To what extent are agency tasks and the ongoing practice supervision enabling new graduates to continue this essential developmental process? To what extent does the agency culture maintain and enhance professional and 'team' development in pursuit of its mission and vision? Against what practice culture will Family Group Conferencing be implemented?

SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION FOR COMPLEX FAMILY PRACTICE – A CASE STUDY

Since its inception in 1965, the postgraduate (MSW) qualifying social work course at the University of Sussex (UK) was organised with an explicit orientation to enhancing the 'purposeful use of professional self' by the social worker in whatever practice setting. Hugh England (1986) has analysed its educational rationale, particularly the explicit attention to the achievement of sufficient congruence amongst its graduates in terms of their intellectual, emotional and behavioural dimensions.

Social work students and every qualified practitioner have to deal with complex and demanding tasks which are likely to challenge the nature and appropriateness of familiar coping mechanisms. In an important study of students' motivation for entering social work, Christie and Weeks (1998) reflect on the nature of challenging 'life experiences' of a sample of students prior to professional education. How will their previous experiences help or hinder their academic, emotional and behavioural progress towards becoming a competent social worker?

Firstly, practitioners need to make sense of the intellectual and emotional material generated in client contact so as to establish a sufficient understanding of the client system, agency mandate and context and personal responses in whatever presenting situation. Then, in the light of this evolving data, they need to negotiate personal, agency and community intervention – in effect, a complex process involving a multi-system assessment process leading to an informed problem-solving process. In a paper prepared for an International Association of Schools of Social Work Conference held in Jerusalem, the Sussex faculty (Clare et al 1978) asserted:

> On the reasonable assumption that valued principles are more likely to be acquired through a process of personal discovery, the courses rely heavily on a case-study approach where the student is invited to consider themselves as a participant observer (p.3).

A major focus of the course was a case-study approach to the psycho-social experiences of students and tutors as they engaged each other in learning to learn about social relations and to institute planned change. Such activities as the rigorous selection process, residential induction courses each year and a four-day residential workshop on group processes had long been integral elements of the Sussex program. Following a major curriculum review in 1980, the Sussex course designed and offered a 'Families Workshop' to final year students prior to the start of their final placement (see below for a description of the Workshop as included in the invitation to students to attend). The Workshop was designed to create opportunities for student social workers to identify and reflect on their personal assumptions, their family experiences and different family cultures prior to academic units in both welfare law and social work practice with families.

In this way, the course tutors developed a coordinated theoretical, experiential and practice-based 'case-study' opportunity for intending social workers to approach critically the developmental and social sciences literature on 'the family' – as well as the intervention literature on family assessment and social work practice with families. Hopefully, students would continue to recognise their own conceptual map of families and their values-in-action of families as systems – before being allocated work in 'other people's families'.

The Families Workshop was 'voluntary' – with all the hidden implications of such an activity on a social work course! Initially, only six students chose to attend the first Workshop but within a few years, as a result of positive feedback from participants, the majority of the cohort attended. While the professional argument for participation might be convincing, I remain in favour of the arrangement requiring students to choose to attend. This echoes Munson's (1984) concerns about the rights of social work students to choose whether to participate in educational or supervisory strategies which focus on 'family of origin' material. Compulsory units such as the one described by Magee (1982) raise ethical issues for students working to understand conceptual material about inter-generational processes, triangular relationships and the impact of ethnic cultures.

While the Workshop was 'an original design' by Sussex Social Work faculty, we later discovered the work of Bowen (1978) and Lieberman (1979) who described more sophisticated training programs for intending family therapists which made use of family of origin material. The concept of 'differentiation of self from one's family of origin' refers to the objective of 'coaching' offered to family therapy trainees to enable them to intervene in their own families to achieve greater independence in their relationship with a parent or a sibling. Bowen (1972) and Lieberman (1982) have described their experiences of attempting to differentiate themselves from their own families of origin. Other accounts of efforts to understand and intervene directly in their own families are offered by Friedman (1971) and by Colon (1973).

Subsequently, this process of 'differentiation' is explored by Williamson (1981) who writes persuasively about the complex stage in the family life-cycle in which adult children need to take emotional responsibility for their own lives through achieving a termination of the hierarchical boundary (p.441). 'Leaving home' emotionally involves no longer being intimidated nor bound by duty nor obligation so that the subsequent relationship between adult children and their 'former parents' can be freely chosen in an adult-to-adult manner. This seems an important part of the process of 'differentiation of self' central to addressing the different sources of 'authority' in becoming a social worker in statutory practice. It also informs the processes in moving from 'compliance' towards 'informed professional judgement' in complex practice. It has obvious relevance to 'family meetings' in aged care (Walsh 1987).

To: MSW 2nd Year Students

FAMILIES WORKSHOP

Wednesday 7 to Friday 9 January

This is an opportunity to consider different family systems and patterns of family life, using material which members bring about their own families. It will therefore raise questions about the impact of histories on family behaviour and some of the ways that families shape the behaviour of their members. The emphasis is on families as a system of interconnected elements and is not about individual personalities except in so far that any member chooses to talk about himself or herself.

It will be necessary for each member to produce a family tree, being as specific as you can about people, significant events and so on. This 'tree' will be one of your important working documents. Having prepared the material, you may then either elaborate the tree by following themes, issues or recurring events or give an account of a specific and significant event and its impact (from your point of view) on other members of the family – moving house; serious illnesses; births and deaths; unemployment, etc. Alternatively, you may describe a regular event or happening which in your mind indicates how your family operates as a system.

The Workshop will begin with coffee at 10.30 on Wednesday 7 January and finish on Friday afternoon, the 9th. We hope that the staff for the Workshop will be: etc.

LEARNING POSSIBILITIES FROM THE FAMILIES WORKSHOP

The Families Workshop with the preparation and presentation of a genogram enabled each social work

student to reflect on important relationship structures and patterns while developing an appreciation of the potent, idiosyncratic, transgenerational system of 'the family' – using case-studies from the small group, including their own personal experience of presenting and reflecting on the material. Sometimes this included family photographs to illustrate family likenesses. Carter and Orfanides (1976) report on the impact on a family of preparing a genogram:

> Their own awareness and thinking about themselves may be altered just by making up the genogram or the family chronology (p.205).

There was no 'coaching' element in the Workshop, but a number of links can be made with Bowen's training program. Firstly, students were introduced to a number of family presentations illustrating the major adaptations in parent/adult-child relationships and 'leaving home' – enmeshment, superficial and impersonal, completely cut-off and adult-to-adult relationships (Framo 1976). The nature and quality of the process of differentiation of self from one's own family of origin is highlighted by Bowen (1978) – with the risk of 'emotional fusion' (loss of self) in emotionally provocative situations. Given the stressful nature of much statutory practice with children and families, including coordinating Family Group Conferences, there is a risk of such emotional fusion either in direct work with clients or in potential 'parallel process' working relationships with colleagues or other agency staff.

Secondly, preparation of the genogram often brings about some changes in the patterns of communication within the family of origin. This can illustrate the potency of family myths, secrets and 'life-scripts'. Sometimes the name of a child or the position in the family can be associated with a particular life-script for that person as they grow older. More generally, the process of preparing a genogram and talking about family matters in the group can bring home some of the implications of taking a social history or preparing a court report. More specifically, the process can sometimes illustrate Bowen's (1978) concerns that those using physical distance to achieve and maintain 'emotional cut-off' from their family may seek relationships through work to satisfy their emotional needs. This is an important observation for managers and supervisors of complex practice tasks. Bowen (1978) applies the 'differentiation of self' principles in all areas of relationships – whether in the family or with friends, colleagues or clients:

> Basic relationship patterns developed for adapting to the parental family in childhood are used in all other relationships throughout life (p.462).

There are implications for social workers actively engaged in 'team', agency and inter-agency relationships – with obvious links between 'emotional cut-off' responses and the possibility that some client situations will be challenging to the worker – and to the supervisor. This is a likely pre-requisite for 'the parallel/reflection process' (Kahn 1979; Mattinson 1975). Whether in education or in supervision, the student/practitioner may need to be convinced of the potential for change through negotiation, compromise and conflict resolution in their practice with family systems – requiring a good-enough role model for influence and change.

Finally, a careful analysis of the pattern of communication within the family system, particularly during a significant life transition or a crisis, can illustrate Bowen's (1972) concept of 'triangulation'. In stressful periods, an outsider can be recruited by a family member as an ally, eg, 'I'll tell you – but it's a secret'. Such triangular patterns of alliances and communication can reveal fixed roles of members and have predictable moves and outcomes. Understanding the process of triangulation with the preference of indirect communication can be vital in assessing family interaction and 'stuckness'. Intending social workers need to be adept in anticipating and dealing with potential triangulation. In all of this, there can be a heightened recognition and respect for the potency of family cultures – and the practice difficulties in trying to change some family patterns.

THE FAMILIES WORKSHOP AS IN-SERVICE TRAINING

In recent years, since moving to the University of Western Australia, I have prepared a number of papers for publication using the family of origin perspective, in relation to out-of-home care and 'permanency planning' (Clare 1989b), to the arguments for and against 'open adoption' (Clare 1991b), to the development of ethnic sensitivity (Clare 1991c) and to 'community' (family) care of the elderly (Clare 1992). This perspective has, also, informed my research projects piloting the UK Looking After Children practice materials in the government and non-government agencies providing out-of-home care services to children and young people (Clare 1997).

More recently, I was invited to offer a Families Workshop to management and field staff in a small child and family welfare agency in Perth. I used the same Workshop design, beginning with an outline of the educational strategy that was discussed at a planning meeting some weeks before the two-day Workshop. We ended up running two separate workshops because of the commitment to voluntary participation: the first Workshop with 6 participants went well so there was support for the second one some months later.

The format was the same as described earlier, with people preparing and presenting a genogram. Other participants listened and made links with their own experiences – highlighting similarities and differences. However, this time the participants were all experienced practitioners with current and difficult case-loads. While feedback from the participants of all the student Workshops has been positive, there has not been any systematic evaluation of the longer-term outcomes in terms of any identified impact on understanding and intervention with client families. This was a missed opportunity to explore 'transfer of learning'.

The feedback from a subsequent evaluation of this in-service training conducted by one of my university colleagues included the following comments:

Participant One:

The content was fascinating. ... it was very hard work ... very intense and it generates so much thinking ... I think everybody here who has done that workshop ... we all share that fascination ... it's kind of an ongoing process almost.

Participant Two:

I thought it was excellent ... Just noticing patterns in families and being respectful ... I could see the value in it and have ever since.

Participant Three:

The training and the workshop we did was very easy for people ... but how do you transfer that to clients who don't want it?

As in the initial design, the in-service educational process sought to address the theoretical, emotional and values-in-action issues triggered by social work practice in other people's families. The arguments in support of such an educational strategy include both the potential for differentiation of the social worker's self from his/her family of origin, as well as their learning to respect the diversity of 'normal' family systems and the coping capacities of colleagues who have emerged with a sound personal and professional ego despite emotionally and materially deprived histories.

Participants will hopefully develop a greater capacity to observe and control the level of emotional reactiveness to family experiences. This involves developing the essential practice skills of distancing the self from emotionally provocative situations, slowing down emotional reactiveness and making observations that enable greater control over the self and the situation. All of these skills are essential for practitioners and supervisors who are implementing a Family Group Conference model – in line with the practice assertions about 'self-awareness', 'client-centredness' and 'professional neutrality'.

CONCLUSION

It remains to be seen how this ethnically respectful Family Group Conferencing model is implemented in different agencies and cultures. How culturally appropriate are the local adaptations developed and negotiated – or imposed? How will they be resourced and implemented? Hudson et al (1996) provide a helpfully detailed summary of developments in Canada, the UK and North America alongside accounts of a number of New Zealand projects. There are obvious tensions around the risks of an apparent confirmation of the traditional role of women as family carers and the imposition of the 'myth of the competent family'. Bernardes (1985) explores the myth and the ideology of the modern 'family' – a powerful challenge to effective family-based practice. Time – and rigorous professional practice, supervision and evaluation research – will tell whether Family Group Conferencing becomes another 'colonial' imposition or a liberating process.

Clearly, Family Group Conferencing is not a panacea. An excellent and timely paper by Ainsworth and Maluccio (1998) warns against ideological rather than research-informed moves towards kinship care for children. Coordinators will be faced by fraught and dangerous family problems. They will need knowledge and skills in facilitating working groups and in family-based practice. The ability to assess risk and signs of safety, to negotiate directly and unambiguously, to challenge effectively and to manage statutory authority while understanding and respecting family patterns and processes will require sophisticated and ethical practice. Certainly it will challenge the practitioner's 'professional ego'. This will be family-based problem-solving in line with the unique culture of each family – beyond ethnic stereotyping (Clare 1991c).

In important ways, Family Group Conferencing points the way for other family-based practice tasks – including mediation work in adoption, in aged care, and custody and access work, as well as preparing family members for the predicted loss of a loved one. Practitioners will need a sophisticated and flexible intellectual and practice map of 'the family' – beyond the nuclear model. They may well need to have reflected on their own 'family of origin' experiences and assumptions. Clearly, there will be particular challenges when we think about the complexities of kinship rights and responsibilities and strong feelings of anger, guilt and blame in the growing number of blended families.

The Families Workshop provided a potent opportunity for students and fieldworkers to reflect on their own family processes and to appreciate diversity within and between family cultures. Families are like every other family in some developmental and structural respects but are more like some other families when variables such as ethnicity, structure, class and religion are highlighted. However, to avoid the worst of stereotyping and categorising, professional judgement and practice requires an assessment of the uniqueness of each family – whatever the structural variables. Long-overdue concerns about 'cultural-blindness' in work with the Irish in Britain are presented by O'Meachair (1988) and by Garrett (1998) as good examples of challenges to any complacency. Given that effective social work practice with family systems requires education beyond the complex intellectual frames of reference and compliant practice skills and strategies, such appreciation, respect and integration is vital.

Finally, the Families Workshop can also enable students and practitioners to recognise the potency of family experiences, both for themselves personally and professionally and for their clients. As Oakley (1984) asserts:

> It is in our families that our personalities are formed, smooth or scarred, and obeisance to parental power, or its opposite, is with us all our lives (p.84).

□

REFERENCES

Ainsworth, F. & Maluccio, A. (1998) 'Kinship care: False dawn or new hope?', *Australian Social Work*, 51(4), pp. 3-8.

Ban, P. (1995) 'Family Decision-Making: The model as practiced in New Zealand and its relevance in Australia', *Australian Social Work*, 46(3), pp. 23-30.

Ban, P. & Swain, P. (1994) 'Family group conference: Australia's first project within child protection', *Children Australia* 19(3), pp. 19-21.

Beckford Inquiry Report (1985) *A Child in Trust*, London Borough of Brent.

Bernardes, J. (1985) 'Do we really know what 'the family' is?' in P.Close & R.Collins (eds), *Family and economy in modern society*, Macmillan: London, pp. 192-211.

Bowen, M. (1972) 'Towards the differentiation of self in one's own family of origin', in J. Framo (ed), Family interaction: *A dialogue between family researchers and family therapists*, Springer Publications: New York.

Bowen, M. (1974) 'Cultural myths and realities in problem-solving', *Ekistics*, 37(220), pp. 173-179.

Bowen, M. (1978), *Family therapy in clinical practice*, Anson: New York.

Carter, E. & Orfanides, M. (1976) 'Family therapy with one person and the family therapist's own family', in P. Guerin (ed), *Family Therapy – Theory and Practice*, Gardner Press: New York, pp 193-219.

Christie, A. & Weeks, J. (1998) 'Life experience: A neglected form of knowledge', *Practice*, 10(1), pp 55-68.

Clare, M., Simmonds, J. & Smale, G. (1978) *Knowledge about teaching social work with individuals and groups*, unpublished paper at the IASSWE Conference, Jerusalem.

Clare, M. (1989a) 'Understanding "the family": A case-study approach', in D.James & T Vinson (eds), *Advances in social welfare education*, University of NSW, pp. 48-58.

Clare, M. (1989b) *A 'Family of Origin' perspective and the 'Permanence Movement'*, unpublished paper presented at the National Substitute Care Conference, Perth.

Clare, M. (1991a) '"Supervision-and-consultation" in social work: A manageable responsibility?', *Australian Social Work*, 44(1), pp 3-10.

Clare, M. (1991b) 'Family systems thinking and adoption practice', *Australian Social Work*, 44(3), pp 3-13.

Clare, M. (1991c) 'Preparation for family-centred social work: A case-study approach', *The Asia-Pacific Journal of Social Work*, 1(2), pp 7-16.

Clare, M. (1992) 'Working with the aged: Beyond common sense?', *Australian Social Work*, 45(3), pp 3-11.

Clare, M. (1997) 'The UK 'Looking After Children' project: Fit for out-of-home care in Western Australia?', *Children Australia*, 22(1), pp 29-35.

Colon, F. (1973) 'In search of one's own past: An identity trip', *Family Process*, 12(2), pp. 429-438.

Connolly, M. (1994) 'An act of empowerment: The Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act', *British J. of Social Work*, 24(1), pp. 86-100.

Cooper, L. (1994) 'Improved assessment practices in field education', Chapter 6, in J. Ife, S. Leitmann & P. Murphy (eds), *Advances in Social Work and Social Welfare Education – National Conference (Perth)*, AASWWE / School of Social Work: University of Western Australia, pp. 110-124.

Department of Health and Social Security (UK) (1985) *Social work decisions in child care: Recent research findings and their implications*, HMSO: London.

Department of Social Welfare (NZ) (1988) *Puao-te-Atu-Tu : Ministerial Advisory Committee Report*, Government Printer, Wellington, New Zealand.

Dominelli, L. (1988) *Anti-racist social work*, Macmillan: Basingstoke.

England, H. (1986) *Social work as art*, Allen & Unwin: London.

Fitzroy, L. (1999) 'Offending mothers: Theorising in a feminist minefield', Chapter 6, in B. Pease and J. Fook (eds), *Transforming social work practice*, Allen & Unwin: NSW, pp. 84-96.

Flex, J. (1982) 'The family in contemporary feminist thought: A critical review', Chapter 10, in J. Elshtain (ed), *The Family in Political Thought*, Harvester Press: Brighton, pp. 223-253.

Fook, J. (1986) 'Feminist contributions to casework practice', in H.Marchant & B Wearing (eds), *Gender reclaimed: Women in social work*, Hale & Iremonger, Sydney, pp. 54-63.

Framo, J. (1976) 'Family of origin as a therapeutic resource for adults', *Family Process*, 15(2), pp. 193-210.

Friedman, E. (1971) 'The birthday party: An experiment in one's own extended family', *Family Process*, 10(2), pp. 345-359.

Gardiner, D. (1989) *The Anatomy of Supervision*, Open University Press, London.

Garrett, P. (1998) 'Notes from the Diaspora: Anti-discriminatory social work practice, Irish people and the practice curriculum', *Social Work Education*, 17(4), pp. 435-448.

Gray, J. & Gardiner, D. (1989) 'The impact of conceptions of "learning" on the quality of teaching and learning in social work education', *Issues in Social Work Education*, 9(1), pp. 74-92.

Harris, R. (1985) 'The transfer of learning in social work education', Chapter 10, in R. Harris et al (eds), *Educating social workers*, Association of Teachers in Social Work Education: Leicester, pp.80-90.

Hough, G. (1995) 'Dismantling child welfare', Chapter 13, in S. Rees and G. Rodley (eds), *The human costs of managerialism*, Pluto Press, New South Wales, pp. 173-182.

Hudson, J., Morris, A., Maxwell, G. & Galaway, B. (1996) *Family group conferences: Perspectives on policy and practice*, Federation Press, NSW.

Jackson, S. & Morris, K. (1999) 'Family group conferences: User empowerment or family self-reliance? – a development from Lupton', *British J. of Social Work*, 29(4), pp. 621-630.

Jones, J. (1997) 'Training for child protection practice: A question of competence?', Chapter 25, in K. Wilson & A. James (eds), *The Child Protection Handbook*, Bailliere and Tindall: London, pp. 475-493.

Kahn, E. (1979) 'The parallel process in social work treatment and supervision', *Social Casework*, 60(9), pp.520-528.

Lieberman, S. (1979) *Transgenerational family therapy*, Croom Helm: London.

Lieberman, S. (1982) 'Going back to your own family', Chapter 12, in A. Bentovim, G.Gorrell-Barnes & A. Cooklin (eds), *Family therapy: Complementary frameworks of theory and practice*, Academic Press: London, pp. 241-256.

Lishman, J. (1998) 'Personal and professional development', Chapter 8, in R. Adams, L. Domenilli & M. Payne (eds), *Social work: Themes, issues and critical debates*, Macmillan: Basingstoke, pp. 89-103.

Lupton, C. (1998) 'User empowerment or family self-reliance ?: The family group conference model, *British Journal of Social Work*, 28(1), pp.107-128.

Magee J. (1982) 'Integrating research skills with human behaviour and social environment: Assessing historical and cultural influences on students' family structure', *Journal of Education for Social Work*, 18(1), pp. 14-19.

Mattinson, J. (1975) *The reflection process in casework supervision*, Institute of Marital Studies: London.

Millham, S., Bullock, R., Hosie, K. & Haak, M. (1986) *Lost in care: the problems of maintaining links between children in care and their families*, Gower: Aldershot.

Munson, C. (1984) *Family of origin applications in clinical supervision*, Haworth Press: New York.

Moore, J. (1982) 'Like a rabbit caught in the headlights', *Community Care*, 4 November, pp. 18-19.

Oakley, A. (1984) *Taking it like a woman*, Fontana: London.

O'Meachair, G. (1988) 'The Irish: Britain's forgotten immigrants', *Social Work Today*, 21 April, pp.18-19.

Reynolds, B. (1965) *Learning and teaching in the practice of social work*, Russell & Russell: New York.

Ryburn, M. & Atherton, C. (1996) 'Family group conferencing: partnership in practice', *Adoption and Fostering*, 20 (1), pp.16-23.

Simmonds, J. (1997) 'Finding a focus in child protection training', Chapter 26, in K. Wilson & A. James (eds), *The Child Protection Handbook*, Bailiere Tindall: London, pp. 494-505.

Walsh, F. (1987) 'The family in later life', Chapter 14, in B. Carter & M. McGoldrick (eds), *The changing family life cycle (2nd edition)*, Gardner Press: New York, pp.311-332.

Williamson, D. (1981) 'Parental authority via termination of the intergenerational hierarchical boundary: A new state in the family life-cycle', *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 7(3), pp. 441-452.

Wise, S. (1995) 'Feminist ethics in practice', Chapter 6, in R. Hugman & D. Smith (eds), *Ethical issues in social work*, Routledge: London, pp. 104-119.