

The University of the Sunshine Coast social work program presents two free public lectures:



1 Professor Jim Ife 'Reasserting the human: rights, community and democracy in an uncertain world'

Date: Wednesday, 8 September 2010

Time: 3-4pm

Venue: University of the Sunshine Coast, Sippy Downs
LT1, Building K

The world we experience is increasingly uncertain, and we now realise our existence as precarious: environmental crisis, peak oil, food and water shortages, climate change, globalisation, economic uncertainty and natural disasters have left many people feeling vulnerable, and questioning the sustainability of the way we live, economically, socially, politically and environmentally. In this uncertain world it is essential that we both reassert the values of humanity, and also redefine what that humanity means. Three important aspects of this redefinition are human rights, community and democracy: all these are under threat, yet new forms of all three are essential for a future world that is both just and sustainable. We are currently moving tentatively towards new understandings of human rights, new forms of human community, and new ways of 'doing' democracy, which open up a very challenging but also a potentially exciting future.

Emeritus Professor Jim Ife is the former Professor of Human Rights Education at Curtin University and Professor of Social Work and Social Policy at The University of Western Australia. He is currently an Honorary Professor at the Centre for Citizenship, Development and Human Rights at Deakin University. His main interests have been in community development and human rights, and he has published books in both these fields. His most recent book is "Human Rights from Below: Achieving Rights through Community Development" (Cambridge University Press 2010). He has been actively engaged in various community activities, including a period as President of Amnesty International Australia, and Convenor of the Human Rights Commission of the International Federation of Social Workers. He is now retired and lives in Melbourne where he is active in several community organisations.

2 Professor Jan Fook 'Social Work: What is it good for?'

Date: Wednesday, 29 September 2010

Time: 3-4pm

Venue: University of the Sunshine Coast, Sippy Downs
LT1, Building K

It is easy to take social work for granted: either to assume it is an absolute necessity, or to blame it for failing to right our social ills. But what do the experiences of social workers themselves actually tell us about what is good about social work? In this paper I draw from many years of my own experience in helping social workers critically reflect on significant events in their professional lives. What I find from these accounts is an affirmation of the work of social work, particularly in the micro-dynamics of making meaning of personal lives, within an uncertain social and political context.

Professor Jan Fook has been a social worker and educator for nearly 30 years. She is currently Professor of Professional Practice Research and Director of the Interprofessional Institute at the South West London Academic Network (Royal Holloway, St Georges (University of London) and Kingston University). She has born and educated in Australia where she has worked most of her life. She has held a variety of academic positions (including professorial positions at La Trobe University, Southampton University and Diakonhjemmet College, Oslo) but has an ongoing interest in professional education. Over the last 15 years she has focused on developing critical reflection, and has conducted hundreds of workshops with professionals in many countries.

Her research work involves the empirical research of professional practice, and developing better methods for representing the complexity of this. Her books include: Radical Casework (Allen & Unwin); Professional Expertise (with Martin Ryan & Linette Hawkins, Whiting & Birch); Social Work: Critical Theory and Practice (Sage) and Practising Critical Reflection (with Fiona Gardner, Open University Press).