

# 'BRIDGING THE GAP' THROUGH THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK SYMPOSIUM

27 AUGUST 2010 - THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

## PRESENTATIONS: BIOGRAPHIES & ABSTRACTS

### SESSION 1 KEYNOTE

#### BREAKING THE CYCLE OF INTERGENERATIONAL DISADVANTAGE IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

The Hon Linda Burney MP, Parliament of New South Wales

Linda Burney was elected Member for Canterbury in 2003. She was appointed Parliamentary Secretary for Education and Training in 2005 and joined Cabinet as Minister for Fair Trading, Youth and Volunteering in 2007. In September 2008 she was promoted to Minister for Community Services and in December 2009 she was appointed Minister for the State Plan. She is also the Coordinating Minister for the Department of Human Services: the umbrella agency for the portfolios of community services, housing, ageing, disability and home care, juvenile justice and Aboriginal Affairs. Linda is the first Aboriginal Australian to be elected to the NSW Parliament and a proud member of the Wiradjuri nation. Her commitment to Indigenous issues spans 30 years. She began her career as a teacher in Western Sydney and spent many years working in education. In 2002 her expertise was formally recognised when she was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in Education from Charles Sturt University. Linda was the first Aboriginal graduate of this respected institution.

Linda has held senior leadership positions in the non-government sector; she has served on a number of boards including SBS, the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board and the NSW Board of Studies. Linda was also an executive member of the National Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation, President of the NSW Aboriginal Consultative Group and is a former Director-General of the NSW Department of Aboriginal Affairs. She has also represented Australia at various United Nations forums. As a member of the Keneally Government's Cabinet she continues to be a passionate advocate for social justice and as Minister for the State Plan, she is a key driver of improvements in the delivery of public services. In the Community Services portfolio her primary concern is the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children. Linda took over the Community Services portfolio prior to Justice Wood handing down his report following the Special Commission of Inquiry into Child Protection Services. She is leading whole of government reform of child protection in response to Justice Wood's recommendations through the five year-plan Keep Them Safe.

ABSTRACT: Linda will speak about her experiences as an educator; activist; MP and Minister over the last 30 years.

### SESSION 2 KEYNOTE

#### INDIGENOUS EDUCATION IN 21ST CENTURY. SCIENTIFIC TRENDS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOLS AND LITERACY

Professor Lester-Irabinna Rigney, Flinders University

Professor Lester-Irabinna Rigney is Director of the Yunggoendi First Nations Centre for Higher Education and Research, Flinders University. He is a Professor of Education and is one of the most influential Indigenous educationalists in Australia today. Professor Rigney is an Adjunct Professor at the National Centre for Indigenous Studies Australian National University. In 2009 he received a United Nations award from the Australian chapter for his contribution to Aboriginal Education. Last Year Professor Rigney completed a review of the National Indigenous Education document Australian Directions for the Federal Government on which the COAG 'Closing the Gap' in Education is now based. He is also a research expert member on the Scientific Reference Group for the COAG Clearing House on "Closing the Gap" on Indigenous Disadvantage. He is involved in writing the National Curriculum as member of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, Reference Group for Languages. Professor Rigney is the Co-Chair of the Ethics Council of the National Congress of Australia's First People. He is working across the Pacific on Indigenous Education in Hawaii, Taiwan and Canada. Professor Rigney's leadership in education is evident through his election by his academic peers since 2002, to the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Research Advisory Committee as expert on education and cultural transmission. His professional standing in education saw him inducted into the Australian College of Educators (ACE) in 1998. He is recognised as a national and international authority in the area of Indigenist Research Methodologies. Interest in Professor Rigney's work by National and International universities has seen him uptake several prestigious Visiting Research Fellowships including Cambridge University, UK; Fort Hare University, South Africa; and University of British Columbia, Canada. He has also been chief/co- investigator, led research teams for reports and policies for key benchmarking research/government agencies including: United Nations; DEST; ATSIIC; NCVET; AIATSIS; The office of the SA Premier and Cabinet; SA Department of Education and Children's Services. Similarly, Professor Rigney is an active editorial board member of several scientific journals. Professor Rigney is in constant demand as a commentator on national and international Indigenous matters and has

published widely on Education, Languages and Knowledge transmission. His recent 2006 co-edited book titled *Sharing Spaces: Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Responses to Story, Country and Rights*, is the most up to date Australian text on Indigenous and non-Indigenous race relations and how this converges in the vulnerable, vital and contested space called 'education'.

**ABSTRACT:** Poor performance indicators in education and literacy for Indigenous Australians are unacceptable and unsustainable. Too many observers have reduced this phenomenon to a symptom of economics and welfare - policy failure. Subsequent studies reveal a more complex picture. This paper will examine the state of Indigenous Education and its challenges toward seeking optimistic evidence-based solutions.

### SESSION 3: CONCURRENT PRESENTATIONS

#### POLITICAL WILL = FAITH + SCIENCE

Louise Bye, NSW Dept of Education and Training

Louise works for the NSW Department of Education and Training and is the Assistant Director, Aboriginal Education and Training. Louise is an Aboriginal woman from Nyampa Wongaibon Country in far western New South Wales. Louise worked for three years as the Project Manager for the Murdi Paaki COAG Trial, a whole of government approach to delivering services more effectively to 16 Aboriginal communities in the Murdi Paaki region. In 2008 she was engaged by What Works to support schools and communities in developing school–community partnerships. Louise has been a primary school teacher for nearly 20 years and since leaving the classroom has spent 10 years in the various fields of Aboriginal employment, Aboriginal education policy and curriculum development and monitoring and reporting state wide outcomes for Aboriginal students.

**ABSTRACT:** Since the 1967 referendum, government policy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has moved through assimilation, self-determination, consultation, partnerships, practical reconciliation, mainstreaming and now closing the gap. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have always said that it is about our right to be Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and our rights as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Standing here in 2010, what would it look like in your community, in your school, in your university if we closed the gap in education, health and employment outcomes. Do we believe that we can do it and do we know how to do it. These and other questions will be discussed in this workshop.

#### SEEDING SUCCESS

Professor Rhonda Craven, University of Western Sydney

Rhonda Craven is Head of the Educational Excellence and Equity (E<sup>3</sup>) Research Program, Centre for Educational Research which has contributed to UWS being ranked as fourth in Australia for the attraction of ARC grants in education research and seventh in the world and first in Australia for Educational Psychology. She is a highly accomplished researcher having successfully secured over 6 million dollars in nationally competitive funding for 38 large-scale research projects including 26 ARC Grants. This performance is arguably one of the strongest for an Australian educational researcher. She is the recipient of the Meritorious Service to Public Education Award, Betty Watts Award (Australian Association for Research in Education), and the Vice Chancellor's Award for Excellence on Postgraduate Research Supervision and Training. Her research interests include: the structure, measurement, development, and enhancement of self-concept and key psycho-social drivers of potential; the effective teaching of Indigenous Studies and Indigenous students; closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students; improving relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians; maximising life potential in diverse settings; and interventions that make a tangible difference in educational settings. She is the National Project Coordinator for the Teaching the Teachers: Indigenous Australian Studies Project of National Significance which has resulted in the majority of Australian universities introducing core studies in this area into their teacher education course. NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group (AECG) considers that this national project is one of the most widely consulted national projects in the field and a model for future Indigenous projects, which attests to her ability to undertake sensitive national research that makes a difference. She is the editor of the best selling text 'Teaching Aboriginal Studies' published by Allen & Unwin, a founding member of the national Aboriginal Studies Association (ASA), the inaugural recipient of the ASA's Life Achievement Award, and an Associate Member of NSW AECG.

**ABSTRACT:** Aboriginal Australians have remained the most disadvantaged Australians on all socio-economic indicators for decades. Clearly education has failed to provide our first Australians with educational outcomes and life opportunities commensurate to other Australians. Actions taken to close the gap are often based on widely held assumptions rather than evidence of tangible results and sustainability. The identification of ways forward to making a real difference require scientific and systematic investigations that can inform policy and practice on the basis of evidence derived from rigorous testing with sound methodology. This session presents new strategies for seeding success for Aboriginal students with an emphasis on the need to intertwine theory, research, and practice.

## WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MANDATORY AND ELECTIVE INDIGENOUS EDUCATION SUBJECTS IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS?

Katrina Thorpe, Cathie Burgess & Sharon Galleguillos, The University of Sydney

Katrina Thorpe is a descendant of the Worimi people of Port Stephens, New South Wales. Katrina is currently a lecturer at the Koori Centre and has 14 years experience in teaching Indigenous Studies in higher education. Prior to this Katrina was a staff trainer involved in cross cultural awareness training and a high school teacher. She has taught across a wide range disciplines including education, Australian Studies, sociology, gender studies, health and Nursing. Katrina's interests include anti-racism and social justice education and quality teaching and learning in the evolving discipline of Indigenous Australian studies.

Cathie Burgess is currently a lecturer in education in the Koori Centre at the University of Sydney and is also Professional Experience Coordinator for Aboriginal students completing their secondary teaching degree through the 'block-mode' of study. Prior to this, Cathie has 23 years experience as a secondary teacher, head teacher and deputy principal in inner city disadvantaged and selective schools in Sydney, as well as various consultancy roles. She has long-term involvement in Aboriginal education including membership of the Inner City Aboriginal Education Consultative Group and current president of the Aboriginal Studies Association.

Sharon Galleguillos is descendant of the Warumungu people of Tennant Creek. She is currently a lecturer in education at the University of Sydney and has 12 years experience in teaching Indigenous Studies in the tertiary sector. Sharon graduated as a primary teacher in Queensland in 1976 and has taught extensively throughout Queensland and New South Wales. She worked for six years as a Senior Education Officer in the Aboriginal Education Unit within the NSW Department of Education and Training helping to develop the 1996 Aboriginal Education Policy. She is course Convenor for Diploma 1 of the Block Program and is the Co-ordinator of Koori Kids in the Classroom. Sharon is Vice-President of the Aboriginal Education Council.

**ABSTRACT:** This presentation will address the key issues involved in implementing mandatory Indigenous education in primary and secondary teacher education courses. As a mandatory subject in a controversial and often misconceived discipline area, students often display a range of reactions from open hostility to passionate anticipation. Koori Centre lecturers will explore some of the 'educational gaps' of students enrolled in these subjects and discuss strategies to meet the needs of all students including designing and facilitating culturally safe learning environments which encourage active engagement in the learning process. The different yet important roles of Indigenous and non-Indigenous presenters in Indigenous education will be highlighted as well as the power of these subjects to prepare students for the real world of teaching.

## ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA: ASSIMILATION AND SEPARATION AND THE TRAUMA AFTERMATH

Karen Menzies, The University of Newcastle

Karen Menzies has an extensive background in child protection, education, health and human rights. Karen currently works part-time as a Lecturer in the Wollotuka Institute at Newcastle University. Karen is also a conjoint Lecturer in the Social Department at the University of Newcastle. Karen works as a Social Work Consultant conducting research, developing curriculum and delivering training to government and non-government organisations. Karen is an Aboriginal woman from the Wonnarua people in the Hunter Valley. Karen has a Bachelor and Master of Social Work and also a Master of Medical Science. She is currently doing a PhD through the Children and Research Centre, Macquarie University.

**ABSTRACT:** This workshop aims to enhance participant's awareness of the experience of Aboriginal Australia in relation to assimilation and separation. The workshop will explore the Aboriginal experience in three contexts, political milieu, personal impact and a trauma framework. The exploration of these themes provides the platform for understanding the cumulative effects of welfare intervention and the implications for contemporary health and welfare service delivery.

## SUCCESSFULLY SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS STUDENTS TO GRADUATION IN THE FACULTY OF VETERINARY SCIENCE

Dr Melanie Collier, The University of Sydney

Melanie Collier is a lecturer in physiology in the Faculty of Veterinary Science. As Associate Dean Students, Melanie's portfolio covers Admissions, orientation and the welfare and support of the 800 students enrolled in the two degrees offered by the Faculty, Bachelor of Veterinary Science and Bachelor of Animal and Veterinary Bioscience.

**ABSTRACT:** The Faculty is, in 2010, celebrating its Centenary of providing education in veterinary science. The current curriculum in Bachelor of Veterinary Science (BVSc) was introduced in 2000 and in 2004 the Faculty introduced a new degree, Bachelor of Animal and Veterinary Bioscience (BAVBS). Since 2004 the Faculty has graduated 5 Indigenous students from the Bachelor of Veterinary Science, a demanding course for which the entry UAI/ ATAR is 98.4. One of these 5 graduates has subsequently undertaken a PhD within the faculty and should

be awarded her degree in this Centenary year. The Faculty currently has 10 Indigenous students enrolled in either the BVSc or Bachelor of Animal and Veterinary Bioscience. With the exception of one student who transferred after one successful year in BAVBS to another degree within the University, all Indigenous students commencing study in the Faculty have successfully graduated.

The factors that the Faculty considers play a role in Indigenous student's completion will be outlined. These include aspects of the admissions process that create pathways for student entry into their chosen degree, changes to the normal pattern of enrolment and the increased support offered through provision of interviews with students at all stages in the Staying on Track scheme where students fail to meet the progression requirements for their respective degree.

Whilst some strategies have been introduced specifically to help Indigenous students, many of the strategies are the result of a concerted effort to support all students during their studies, the benefits of which are enjoyed by all students enrolled in the Faculty of Veterinary Science.

## SESSION 4 KEYNOTE

### A SMALL APOCRYPHA OF INDIGENOUS EDUCATION A STORY OF GODS, SCHOLARS AND YANADA OF REFUGEES, DEMOCRACY AND CLIMATE CHANGE OF CABBAGES AND KINGS AND OF THE SURVIVORS OF IT ALL

Professor Eric Willmot AM

Dr Eric Willmot is a leading Aboriginal scholar, engineer, administrator and author. He graduated from the University of Newcastle in 1968 with a science degree and worked as a maths teacher before gaining a Master's degree in educational planning. In 1987 he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Laws from Melbourne University, and in 2005 received a Doctorate of Letters from the University of Newcastle. Eric is well known for his publications *Australia: the Last Experiment* (1987), *Pemulwuy the Rainbow Warrior* (1987) and *Below the Line* (1991). He has made many radio broadcasts, including his critically acclaimed 1986 ABC Boyer Lecture series, *Australia the Last Experiment*.

Eric Willmot is one of Australia's leading educationists and during his career has held numerous senior positions in both government and non-government sectors. These include Director-General of Education in South Australia; Secretary of the ACT Department of Education and the Arts; Chief Education Officer for the ACT Schools Authority; Professor and Head of School of Education at James Cook University in Northern Queensland; Deputy Secretary of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs; Chairman of the Taskforce into Broadcasting and Telecommunication in Remote Australia; Member of the Australian National Commission to UNESCO; and, Principal of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. He has also held positions on the boards of numerous statutory authorities and companies.

Eric has also pursued a career in the physical sciences, in particular mechanical engineering. In recognition of his achievements in this field he has received several awards, including twice winning the coveted *Medaille d'Or Geneve Salon des Inventions*, and was named 'Australian Inventor of the Year' in 1981.

(Adapted from 'Australian Literature Resource', <http://www.austlit.edu.au/run?ex=ShowAgent&agentId=A85>; 'Who's Who in Australia', <http://www.crowncontent.com.au/whoswho.html>; and 'Questech', <http://www.questech.com.au/advisors.htm>)

**ABSTRACT:** All of the humans that still live on Earth belong to the hominid species *Homo sapiens*. Most of them come from that huge Northern hemisphere wide crescent of land that reaches from Europe in the North, through the Middle East, then through Africa India and China. All of these people were connected in various ways during the early period of human intellectual and social development. But there was another part of humanity that was not. This second group of people, hidden by great oceans, include those of America, Australia the Pacific Islands, the islands of South East Asia and the strange and tiny island continent of New Zealand. This group of humanity developed in ways different to the others. They developed differently in their approach to thinking and to the ways they formed and managed their societies. They achieved much the same sort of intellectual outcomes but did it differently.

They also made the journey to common memory and to common mind but they did that differently as well. As a result of this they remained different even after contact with the rest of the world. Even today, they are different and have a distinctive otherness that sets them apart from the people of the Northern land crescent. However, that contact with the rest of humanity had a profound effect on them. They are now overwhelmed by the problems brought upon them by the Northern part of the human species. This appears most clearly in education. It is not disability in terms of human learning, nor is it apparently a difference in learning which is simply the product of social and economic deprivation is. There is a real difference in cognitive developmental.

This paper describes these differences found from real scientific evidence. These differences are most profound in children but also appear in adults. The problems that indigenous children and young adults experience with European based education are much more than a cultural or socio-economic problem. However, it is not insurmountable. The author draws on his own experience and that of other indigenous educationists to explain

why certain educational programs work and others don't. He also explains the consequences of using the successful forms of this approach. He also uses empirical evidence for this which highlights the complications introduced into the processes by socio-economic deprivation. Nevertheless, some of the difference results from some indigenous ideas of human learning.

This paper then explores the effects of miscegenation on indigenous education and suggests some surprising results. This discussion is next extended to the nature and development of indigenous based mixed-race societies. The paper examines the possibility that the mixed race societies may be the end of the nature of indigenous societies and the social and political consequences of this for the future. Are these societies likely to retain the distinctive character and nature of the indigenous world? If not, what is to become of them? This raises the question of a kind of cultural extinction.

## SESSION 5 CONCURRENT PRESENTATIONS

### THE BEMEL-GARDOO PROJECT, SYDNEY REGION: EMBEDDING CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE

Michael Genner, NSW Dept of Education and Training & Lynette Riley, The University of Sydney

Michael came to teaching in the 1980s after a chequered past as a musician, actor, glazier, business proprietor and traveller. Positions as a secondary classroom teacher of English, Music, Drama, Maths etc led to Executive positions and several consultancy roles including Creative Arts Consultant, Curriculum Implementation K-12 Consultant, part-time University Lecturer and currently Team Leader Quality Teaching for Sydney Region DET. Michael collaborated with the regional Aboriginal Education team to initiate the Bemel-Gardoo project (2005–present), focusing on embedding Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge content across key learning areas. Michael is particularly interested in multi-modal literacy and the application of Authentic Pedagogy models (such as the NSW Quality Teaching model) as tools for planning, programming and assessment and, crucially, as vehicles for social justice.

Lynette Riley is a Wiradjuri and Kamilaroi woman from Dubbo and Moree; her current employment is as Senior Lecturer; Academic Co-ordinator in the Koori Centre, the University of Sydney. Lynette has over 30 years working experience, as a teacher and in Aboriginal education and administration within: primary school; high school; TAFE; state office and Universities. Lynette was one of the founding members of the NSW DET Aboriginal Education Unit which created the first Aboriginal Education Policy in 1982, much of which was based on her research undertaken in 1980, whilst completing studies at ACAE. She was extensively involved in establishing the NSW AECG, and co-ordinated the first ever AECG conference in the early 80's. She has been instrumental in establishing Aboriginal presence in Universities establishing one of the first support programs within Australia at the UNE, Oorala Centre (1986–1992); and programs with TAFE as an Aboriginal Development Manager for the Western Institute of TAFE (1994–1999); then going on to be one of the few female/Aboriginal, Campus Manager for the Dubbo TAFE Campus (2000–2003); and then as State Manager for NSW DET Aboriginal Education (2003–2006). As an Aboriginal person Lynette has been required not to just theorise about what was occurring to and for Aboriginal children, and their communities; or the interwoven interactions with non-Aboriginal people, communities and organisations; but rather to be actively involved in researching new solutions and effecting sustainable change for Aboriginal programs. Lynette has a long history working for Reconciliation at the local level, as Chair of the Dubbo Reconciliation Group; and as State Chair for NSW Reconciliation. Her belief is that Reconciliation is an imperative; if we are to create understanding and move forward in this Nation. Lynette is also a proud mother of 7 children and a growing number of grand-children; and it is for them and many other Aboriginal children and communities that she has dedicated her life to achieving change and equity

**ABSTRACT:** The power, focus and challenges of the Bemel-Gardoo project are spoken to in the meaning of its Dharawal name: 'where the salt water meets the land' – reflecting the central concept of multiple ways of knowing. The project has involved 26 regional schools from 2005–2010. School teams of teachers and Aboriginal Education Officers (AEOs) collaborate in addressing the stated intention of the Aboriginal and Indigenous cross-curriculum content statements in all 7–10 subject areas and the implications of these statements for all schools. School team develop units of work and related assessment tasks embedding Aboriginal and Indigenous content, in both broad and localised contexts. Support is provided from regional consultants in both Aboriginal Education and curriculum and academic partner Lyn Riley (from the University of Sydney). The project centrally involves ongoing consultation and collaboration with schools' Aboriginal communities. All schools report enhanced involvement with community and remarkable engagement and learning outcomes for all students.

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DEVELOPMENTS IN ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES INITIATIVES AND PROGRAMS AT SCHOOL AND TERTIARY LEVELS

John Hobson & Susan Poetsch, The University of Sydney

John Hobson has spent many years supporting bilingual programs and training Indigenous Australian language workers in Central Australia. He has worked on dictionary projects, and delivered Aboriginal language and literacy courses in several languages. He is currently a lecturer at the Koori Centre, the University of Sydney.

Susan Poetsch has worked as a curriculum officer at the Board of Studies NSW supporting Aboriginal community members, linguists and school staff across the state to implement the NSW Aboriginal Languages K–10 Syllabus and develop local programs. She has recently joined the Indigenous languages education program at the Koori Centre.

**ABSTRACT:** This workshop will provide an overview of the work of Aboriginal community members actively engaged in the reclamation of their languages as a means of maintaining and strengthening their unique cultures and identities. The workshop will describe ways in which the learning and teaching of Aboriginal languages is being supported by curriculum development and program implementation in a number of schools and TAFE colleges in New South Wales. It will also outline options for trained Aboriginal teachers to gain skills and accreditation in Indigenous languages education through the programs offered by the Koori Centre at the University of Sydney.

## BRIDGING THE GAP WITH AUTHENTIC KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDINGS

Cindy Berwick, NSW Aboriginal Education and Consultative Group

Cindy Berwick is currently the President of the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group, sitting on a number of key state and national committees. She is a Ngunawal woman with a long history in education, starting as a secondary mathematics teacher working in predominately in disadvantaged schools in the inner city of Sydney. Cindy has worked in consultancy roles including South Western Sydney region and Acting Principal Education Officer for Department of Education and Training in the Aboriginal Education and Training Directorate. Cindy was instrumental in the organisation, research and writing of the groundbreaking Report into Review of Aboriginal Education in 2004.

**ABSTRACT:** Bridging the Gap – What does this mean in the current state and national climate for Aboriginal communities and their educational aspirations? This session will discuss the role of the NSW Aboriginal Education Consultative Group in setting the agenda and responding to current trends in education at a state and national level. The importance of engaging local Aboriginal communities in these conversations will be emphasised in terms of embedding authentic Aboriginal knowledges and experiences into educational policies and procedures rather than positioning these as peripheral to core business.

## DECOLONISATION: AN ESSENTIAL PROCESS FOR AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

Associate Professor Sue Green & Associate Professor Eileen Baldry, The University of New South Wales

Sue Green is Associate Professor of Indigenous Education and Director of the Nura Gili Centre at the University of New South Wales (UNSW), and is a member of the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council. Sue has worked extensively in Indigenous education, supporting tertiary students, teaching and conducting collaborative research. She has also worked with government organisations to provide appropriate services to Aboriginal communities and one of her research projects includes urban Aboriginal peoples' experiences and expectations of human service organisations. Other research projects have included developing the Indigenous content within the Social Work curriculum, building social capital with disadvantaged clients, identification of benchmarks and best practice for Aboriginal housing and an oral history of Mum Shirl.

Eileen Baldry is an Associate Professor, School of Social Sciences and International Studies, and Associate Dean Education in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, at the University of New South Wales. She has taught social policy and social development in UNSW's Social Work program; with Associate Professor Sue Green assisted in developing a core Indigenous Social Work course; and has been involved with the Indigenous Social Work winter and preprograms for many years. Her areas of research and publishing include people with mental health and cognitive disability in the criminal justice system, women (Aboriginal women in particular) in prison and post-release and community development with social housing residents.

**ABSTRACT:** Australian social work education has recognised the importance of developing social workers skilled in working in partnership with Indigenous Australians and communities. This means ensuring Indigenous ways of working and being are embedded in the social work curriculum; recruiting, retaining and graduating Indigenous students and educating non-Indigenous students to work alongside Indigenous peoples in a culturally safe and anti-oppressive manner. Social Work program staff members play a large role in ensuring that the program supports these aims. We reflect on our experiences over the past eight years in working towards these goals and on the developments we see in ourselves and in our students. We discuss contemporary Indigenous and non-Indigenous

colleagues working in partnership and our rethinking of contemporary social work values and practices in the light of contemporary Indigenous emancipatory theory. In particular we explore what we have come to see as the centrality and importance of decolonisation for us, and our students both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, and tease out what decolonisation means in a social work education context.

## RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF INDIGENOUS HEALTH WORKERS: A TRANS-TASMAN PERSPECTIVE

Dr Clive Aspin, The University of Sydney

Clive Aspin holds a joint appointment at Bullana, The Poche Centre for Indigenous health and the Menzies Centre for Health Policy at the University of Sydney. He received his doctorate from the University of Otago in New Zealand and has worked for many years in the areas of Maori public health, research management, government policy and community development. His current research interests include chronic disease management and health service delivery as they relate to improved health outcomes for Indigenous peoples.

**ABSTRACT:** Indigenous health workers have a key role to play in enhancing the health and wellbeing of Indigenous peoples, yet they remain highly under-represented in the health workforce. A range of strategies needs to be developed and implemented within the education sector in order to rectify this imbalance. Drawing on research in Aotearoa, this presentation will outline a number of strategies that can be employed to improve the recruitment and retention of Indigenous health workers and contribute to a reduction in current health disparities.