



Welcome to this Issue on the Australia Community Psychology Experience

Tom Wolff and Vince Francisco

Keywords: community psychology practice, gjcpp

Author Biographies: *Tom Wolff* is Senior Associate Editor of the GJCPP, and a practicing clinical and community psychologist in Amherst Massachusetts, USA.

Vince Francisco is Editor of the GJCPP, and an Associate Professor at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with broad community psychology practice experience.

Welcome to this Issue on the Australia Community Psychology Experience

Many of us followed the battle for survival of community psychology in Australia when official bodies decide to eliminate community psychology as an endorsed field of psychology, knowing that we all face some version of this saga in our own countries. Australian community psychologists mobilized, organized and fought back and emerged victorious! The GJCPP is honored to have a group of Australian community psychologists tell their story in the lead article in this issue: "Lobbying for Endorsement of Community Psychology in Australia" by Lynne Cohen, Julie Dean, Heather Gridley, Rebecca Hoge, Ken Robinson, Emma Sampson, Anne Sibbel, and Colleen Turner.

In reading their story it seemed to us that many of the underlying themes in the struggle have international implications. So we asked a group of prestigious community psychologists from around the globe to comment on the Australian experience. Our questions:

- Could this struggle also happen in your country?
- What does it say about whether or not community psychology has to be connected to organized psychology – advantages, disadvantages?
- How does the invisibility of community psychology can work to our disadvantage?

The responses from our international colleagues were absolutely fascinating and well beyond our hopes for depth and thoughtfulness. This indeed emerged as a profound discussion about the future of community psychology around the world. Please enjoy reading the article, and the commentaries from: Maritza Montero (Venezuela), Wolfgang Stark (Germany),

Neville Robinson (New Zealand), Donata Francescato (Italy), Francine Lavoie (Quebec), Sylvie Taylor & Gregor Sarkisian (USA), Jim Cook (USA), Caterina Arcidiacono (Italy).

Some of the issues raised were echoing the experience of our Australian colleagues, but others were quite unique and equally challenging. We will learn from Maritza Montero that the experience of community psychology across Latin America varied greatly with individuals, not being based on broader programs. We learn from our colleagues in Quebec that formal recognition is a two-edged sword, in that it can raise quality, but then reduce the number of programs and diversity in training experience for students. Similarly in Europe, we see that the opportunities for making a difference (the need of communities) is increasing, but the training opportunities are decreasing relative to programs and positions open for other types of psychologists. In the USA, the challenges faced are significant, but have more to do with competencies taught and with increasing the visibility of community psychology relative to other disciplines (such as public health). In New Zealand, the challenges of hegemony, of the competing roles of clinical/mental health, and relatively low visibility predominate.

There is a lot to be learned from our colleagues across the globe. We hope you will value this issue of the Global Journal.

Tom Wolff
Senior Associate Editor

Vince Francisco
Editor