**In this issue**

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Happy New Year to all our readers. I am delighted to introduce you to the articles in our first issue of 2022. We start with an article on the use of touch by Lisa Warwick. It is Lisa’s first single-authored article and is titled: *“Depends who it is”: towards a relational understanding of the use of touch in residential child care*. Based on a six-month ethnographic study in England, Lisa conceptualises residential child care as a Lifespace, defined in her article as ‘a complex space where children live, adults work and adult-child relationships are recognised as a central component’. Lisa makes a strong case that touch must be understood as ‘a nuanced, contextual and relational practice’. The second article in this issue is also impressive. It is written by Nina Veetnisha Gunnarsson and is a personal reflection of self-injury scars. At the time of writing, Nina’s article has had 10127 views and downloads. Nina’s reflections are powerful:

‘The present, the past and the future are written on my body. I am who I am now, who I was yesterday and who I will be in the future, all written together, in the multiple scars that all have a presence, a past and a future’.

This resonates with my own work on tattoos and haunted futures (Morriss, 2018), the co-existence of stigma and shame alongside resistance and a sense of identity. As Nina writes: ‘It is a remembrance of a life lived and survived’.

The third article in this issue is by Hana Yoo, Stefana Racorean and Victoria Barrows and uses interviews to gain the perspectives of 10 mental health clinicians in relation to parents involved with Child Protective Services in the USA. The authors found that the mental health professionals viewed parents as having the potential to resolve their presenting issues, and that parents face issues such as financial struggles, and limited social support. This is followed by an article based on 16 interviews with seven imprisoned women in Finland who had both experienced and perpetrated violence. In this interesting study, author Vera Virolainen uses membership categorization analysis. She examines the abused child, substance user, object of intimate violence, perpetrator of violence and inmate categorizations by which the imprisoned women accounted for their relationship to violence. Relatedly, the article by Madeleine Wirzén and Asta Čekaitė is informed by conversation analytical methods. In their article, *Assessing and assisting prospective adoptive parents: social workers’ communicative strategies in adoption assessment interviews*, the authors provide a detailed analysis of how social workers ask follow up questions to prospective adopters. They conclude that the questions allow social workers to accomplish two hybrid institutional goals: i) the assessment of applicants’ suitability and ii) applicants’ preparation for future parenthood.

The next article is a very interesting collaborative, multi-voiced autoethnography which weaves together the personal narratives of three doctoral students and one early career faculty member based within a large public university in the United States. Austin Gerhard Oswald, Sarah Bussey, Monica Thompson, and Anna Ortega-Williams employ a participatory and intersectional approach; and point out that little attention is given to pedagogical approaches in social work education. As the co-Editor of a qualitative journal, it was notable to read in the article about the study by Drisko et al. (2015) who analysed 69 US social work PhD programmes. Drisko et al. found that 100% of the 69 programmes required at least one quantitative/statistical analysis course compared to 33% that required at least one qualitative methods course. I loved how hallways, coffee shops, and classrooms featured as places where three of the authors met. The narratives from the four authors are powerful. The authors argue that ‘critical reflexivity is a tool to document, resist, and transform hegemonic discourse that narrowly defines what it means to embody social work research, practice, and education’.

Claire Willey-Sthapit, Sarah Jen, Heather L Storer and Odessa Gonzalez Benson argue that Critical Discourse Analysis is a powerful and necessary tool within social work. They draw on concrete examples from their own work to provide a conceptual roadmap for designing, implementing, and disseminating a project underpinned by Critical Discourse Analysis. The examples are an excellent way of deepening understanding of this approach. Guided by post-structural feminist epistemology, Stephanie Wahab , Gita R Mehrotra and Kelly E Myers discuss *Slow scholarship for social work: a praxis of resistance and creativity* using a case study. The authors embodied slow scholarship across various aspects of a multi-year project focused on different dimensions of domestic violence advocacy training in Oregon, USA. The case study demonstrates that slow scholarship meant ‘reimagining time, understanding power as complex and dynamic, centering relationships, and doing value-driven and aligned research’.

In their article, *Narratives and processes – Developing a responsive parent–child program to empower local facilitators in a remote Aboriginal community*,Carolin Stock, Maggie Kerinaiua Punguatji, Carmen Cubillo and Gary Robinson critically examine the development of the Play to Connect parenting program in a remote Aboriginal community on the Tiwi Islands in the Northern Territory of Australia. A Participatory Action Research approach was used, and this enabled local Aboriginal staff to participate meaningfully in the processes of developing and delivering Play to Connect. The penultimate article in this issue is based on interviews with 38 street homeless people in New York City about their experiences of outreach services. Based on their findings, Lynden Bond, Christina Wusinich and Deborah Padgett recommend that ‘outreach workers provide greater consistency in their engagement with service users and more transparency in service eligibility criteria, while respecting service users’ autonomy’.

This final article in this issue is by two authors, Stine Thygesen and Trine Øland, based in Denmark and has an intriguing title: *Montage and the illumination of developmental thinking in welfare work*. The study uses field notes from observations of meetings and conversations in which social workers, case managers, and supervisors discussed foster children’s development and opportunities alongside historical material from 1886 onwards relating to foster care. Based on Walter Benjamin’s philosophy of history, the authors use montage to illuminate ‘the hauntings of welfare work at any point in time in a way that has made it possible to see and understand the depth and persistence of the social logics of welfare work’. It is an interesting read.

The issue ends with four book reviews. Two of these are from two social work MSc students based at Brunel University, UK. It is a pleasure to publish these reviews by Dawn Harker and Gabrielle Smith. Dawn reviews *Shuggie Bain* by Douglas Stuart and Gabrielle reviews *Radical Help* by Hilary Cottam. Thank you once again to Senior Lecturer Yohai Hakak for encouraging Dawn and Gabrielle to review these books for Qualitative Social Work. The next book review is from our Associate Editor, Lissette M. Piedra alongside Bruna Cardoso Lopez, who review *Elderhood* by Louise Aronson. The final book review is one close to our heart. Jeanne C. Marsh provides a glowing review of *New York Newsboys: Charles Loring Brace and the Founding of the Children’s Aid Society* written by QSW Editor, Karen M. Staller. I agree with Jeanne that ‘Staller’s work is exceptional in several ways’. It is an absolute honour to work with Karen on the journal and I am delighted that her exceptional contribution has been recognised in this review.