



THE LONDON MET'S SOCIAL WORK STUDENT NEWSLETTER



THE SOCIAL WORK NEWSLETTER #4 ● DECEMBER 2021

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Welcome

Welcome to the fourth edition of the , a publication co-produced with social work students. The Loop is a termly vehicle for students to use to share their views, not just of the social work course, but other issues of interest both within and without of the university. The Loop will be a platform to share news and events from The North East London Teaching Partnership, and the teaching, learning and research interests and activities of the academic team and wider colleagues.

The Editorial Team would encourage and welcome contributions from students and staff for the next edition. Please be a part of this exciting initiative.

Your newsletter. Your voice.

Editorial Team

Georgiana Ndlovu
Final Year MSc Student

Jennifer Shaw
Final Year BSc Student

Dawn Shanghanoo
Final Year BSc Student

Donna Jones
Head of Social Work

Cover image:
Donna Jones Head of Social Work (bottom left) and Greg Ryan, Senior Lecturer (bottom centre) with BSc L6 students

Know your Social Work student reps

BSc

Level 4
Samantha Halil
Emma Birbeck

Level 5
Amanda Costello

Level 6
Godwin Akinyemi

MSc

Level 7.1 (1st year)
Emilienne Hovessou
Moya Biggs

Level 7.2 (2nd year)
Inese Oren
Tawanda Mhizha

Your student reps are here to represent your cohort's views at formal meetings like the Course Committee Meetings that happen once a term or informally via the Open Door! that has been set up for each cohort. They will highlight any concerns to the Course Leads and also share with the academic team when things are going well. They are in regular contact with the Course Leads, so do please let them know if there are things you feel we need to know!

BSc Course Lead

Donna Jones
(my pronouns are she/hers)
d.jones1@londonmet.ac.uk or
find Donna on MS Teams hat
Office: BEUG-2 (Green Zone)

MSc Course Lead

Hazel Cutts
(my pronouns are she/hers)
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find Hazel on MS Teams chat
Office: BEUG-6 (Green Zone)

course leads



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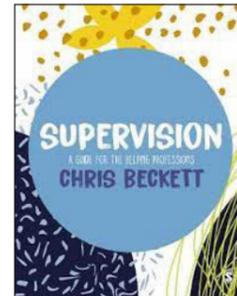
Social Work

Supervision: A Guide for the Helping Professions

Beckett

Supervising work that takes place outside your view is a challenge, as is making the best use of the supervision you receive. This guide aims to help both supervisors and supervisees use supervision to maximise learning, and to support best practice.

£27.99 **£19.59** | November 2020 | 192 pages | SAGE Publications Ltd | ISBN: 9781529700725



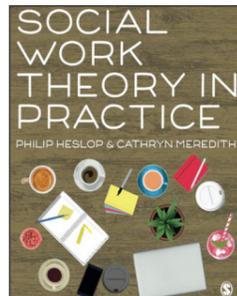
Social Work Theory in Practice

Heslop & Meredith

A step-by-step guide to the underpinning theoretical knowledge in social work helping you confidently apply theory in practice.

- Explore a range of different practice experience, theoretical perspectives and approaches to understanding situations and identifying possible courses of action with case studies from eight fictional social workers.
- Get to grips with the essentials and reflect on your learning through exercises.
- Prepare for the reality of practice and learn from the authors' own experiences highlighting the importance of reflection, supervision and continual learning.

£24.99 **£15.39** | November 2020 | 232 pages | SAGE Publications Ltd | ISBN: 9781526492364

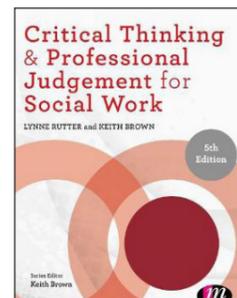


Critical Thinking and Professional Judgement for Social Work

Rutter & Brown | Fifth Edition

Taking a pragmatic look at the range of ideas associated with critical thinking, this fifth edition continues to focus on learning and development for practice. The authors discuss the importance of sound, moral judgement based on critical thinking and practical reasoning, and its application to different workplace situations; critical reflection, and its importance to academic work and practice; and the connection between critical thinking ideas and professionalism.

£22.99 **£16.09** | October 2019 | 104 pages | Learning Matters | ISBN: 9781526466969

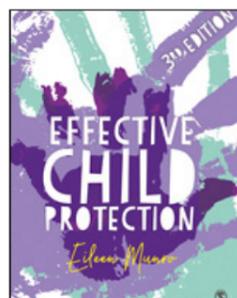


Effective Child Protection

Munro | Third Edition

Eileen Munro, author of the seminal Munro Review, returns in this fully revised and updated third edition. With new chapters on 'Child Protection Agencies as Complex Adaptive Systems' and 'How organisations can support more effective practice', it shifts its focus from individual workers to look at the critical role that organisations play in child protection, and how individuals are affected by the complex enterprise of people, processes, cultures and agencies. It remains an essential guide to strengthening analytic and intuitive skills to improve children's safety.

£30.99 **£21.69** | November 2019 | 256 pages | SAGE Publications Ltd | ISBN: 9781526464743



SOCIAL WORK WELCOMES A NEW SENIOR LECTURER COLLEAGUE TO THE TEAM!

Dr Katrin Bain



I joined London Met as an associate lecturer in autumn 2020 while all teaching was online. I enjoyed the culture and community, so when a permanent position was advertised in the summer I applied, and am very happy to have joined London Met as a senior lecturer in August. I currently teach across the BSc programme and it has been lovely to meet everyone in person now that we are back to face to face teaching. I am also the academic lead for the BeSpoke Team. At London Met we are fortunate to have a group of committed people with lived experience who contribute to our programme and enrich it with their experiences.

I qualified as a social pedagogue in Germany before starting my PhD at the University of Warwick. What started out as a year of living abroad has turned into 18 years and counting, the last 17 in South East London. Before moving into teaching, I worked as a social worker in child protection, as an advisor and advocate for the Family Rights Group, and as an outdoor education facilitator for

team and personal development mostly using high ropes courses and abseiling.

I still try to be outside whenever I can, but these days stay closer to the ground: growing raspberries at my allotment, cycling along the river, or on day trips to the Kent coast.

Social pedagogues share a 'Haltung' (inner ethos, attitude) that sees all humans as inherently worthy and full of potential. It is not deficit oriented but understands that everyone at times need support to achieve and develop. It is therefore not surprising that I have a strong interest in study skills and research skills to try to better understand how we learn and what influences the learning process. At the heart of social pedagogy is a relationship-based approach based on trust and respect for the individual and their journey, and I hope this comes across in my teaching and interactions with students.

My research interests include: Social Pedagogy in England, the relationship between state organised and /or

provided social services and citizens / service users, and the representation of parents within social policy and social work practice.

My office is **BEUG-10**, feel free to come by for a chat.

Partnership with Big House Theatre Company goes from strength to strength!



London Met is proud to announce a new working partnership with The Big House, an Islington based charity that supports 16-25 year old care leavers, using a combination of drama, skills development, mentoring and counselling to help them build the skills, aspirations and resilience to lead fulfilling, independent lives.

Through this exciting new partnership, The Big House will provide work placements for London Met students to improve their employability skills and The Big House, discount student tickets for their in-house theatre productions and form strong links with London Met's social work and education departments.

Donna Jones, Head of Social Work at London Met, said:

“This amazing theatre company has been a favourite of mine for several years, and I have supported all their productions because the stories they tell are powerful and real. I am thrilled that having introduced them to London Met, we have now entered into a mutually beneficial working partnership. I am looking forward to my social work students and the London Met community continuing to benefit from their exciting performances.”

[Sophie Cloutterbuck](#), Director of London Engagement said:

“We are delighted to announce this new partnership with The Big House Theatre, and I’m excited to see how our partnership develops over the next 5 years. This partnership will enable co-created digital community engagement and unique opportunities for our staff and students to engage with The Big House.”

<https://thebighouse.uk.com/>

@BigHouse Theatre
151 Englefield Road
London
N1 3LH
Tel: 020 7923 9955

Life working as a Social Worker on the Exploitation Team and training as a Practice Educator



Sophie Cullen qualified in Social Work in 2018 and now works on the Exploitation Team at Tower Hamlets. She is currently training to be a Practice Educator and has a student on final placement with her now.

How did you come to train as a practice educator?

I went into it because I enjoy working collaboratively and sharing my knowledge - Tower Hamlets have a clear development programme with clear progression and being a practice educator is a stage to do before becoming an advanced practitioner.

What do you think makes a good social worker student from your point of view?

Being open to learning and trying out things, good communication skills, someone that takes responsibility for their workload and is self-motivated.

What do the exploitation team do?

They work with young people that are high risk of exploitation, quite a lot of children

who are criminally exploited, sexually exploited and involved with gangs and youth violence. We work quite intensively and have a lower case load because of that. We have a relationship-based ethos and we are led by the child. We are a co-located team and have police officers that we work closely with to try and disrupt exploitation. We have a daily briefing that allows information sharing. We offer information to other teams who have exploitation issues within their caseload, and we quality assure exploitation for the whole borough.

How long have you been working with the exploitation team and what attracted you to working there?

I have been working since June 2020 and I really like working with teenagers. I find that it's an interesting life stage to work with young people as they are usually figuring out their understanding of the wider world and their independence so they can be fun to work with. They also give push back which I like! I like the lower caseload where I can build closer relationships with young people.

What are the main challenges in your role from a multi-agency perspective?

That teenagers are really hard to engage! I often find that it might take some chasing but mostly young people are willing to engage if you are able to show them that you are interested in them, care for them and that you are genuine.

What's the most common misconception about working in exploitation?

That a lot of young people that I work with don't fit into the "systems", so many find it difficult to fit into education or have additional needs that haven't been picked up, so sometimes it feels like battling against something that doesn't work for

them.

They also may not be seen as victims by the police.

What do you find the most interesting part of your role?

Getting to know lots of different children and families who constantly surprise me or teach me new things.

What advice would you give to a student social worker who wants to work within child protection social work?

Good luck! Remember to take a lunch break! And look after yourself.

Jenny Shaw
Co-Editor

Practice Education Training at London Metropolitan University

Limited places still available

January
2022
entry

Are you...

- able to offer practice learning opportunities that are appropriate to London Metropolitan University social work students
- a registered social worker with at least two years' experience post qualification, but at least three years at the point of qualifying for the PEP course
- currently working in a social care setting
- ready for the next step in your continued professional development

Limited places are still available on our popular combined (stages 1 & 2) Practice Education course - January 2022 Entry!

For more information or informal chat about the course please contact **Catherine Schumann**, Course Lead
c.schumann@londonmet.ac.uk

For and application form please contact:
PE@londonmet.ac.uk

STUDENT VOICE



The Social Work Team continues to show their commitment to student voice being central to the development and design of the course.

- Student Reps Co-Chair termly Course Committee Meetings and hold Academic team and key senior colleagues in the university to account.
- Students will be central to the Periodic Review of both the BSc and MSc Courses in readiness for Social Work England reapproval in 2022. From changes in modules to redesigning assessments - students will contribute to this important process!
- Open Door! Events are a popular informal & social space for students from each cohort to share their views with members of the academic team.
- The Loop, Social Work publication, is developed and written with student Co-Editors.
- Students sit on interview panels for Senior Lecturer positions and are part of the decision-making process for appointment

Social Work within my Culture

Level 4 students shared collages and wrote about their cultures and Social Work within their cultures on Padlet during the Communication, Skills & Values module.

This demonstrates how diverse our student community is and how Social Work is understood within a more global context.

Here are the padlets so that you can take a look:

<https://padlet.com/baink4/i0pmcuy8db9gijca>

<https://padlet.com/baink4/6s4yiwllx8mddr3a>

:Padlet

Social workers in school project within Haringey

Haringey
LONDON

The aim of the social workers in schools project SWIS is to reduce social care involvement and keep children living safely at home. The team of 7 social workers are embedded in 7 secondary schools, as part of the school's existing pastoral/safeguarding structures.

The social workers offer support on safeguarding issues and concerns to teachers, parents and pupils identifying abuse and neglect earlier alongside other professionals including the Police School Liaison Officers CAMHS and the Early Help, practitioners supported through Haringey's Early Help Panel. The aim is to support the pastoral team with early preventative work to reduce families being escalated to tier 3 and tier 4 threshold. The social workers are issue holding alongside the school.

The remit of the work is very flexible, i.e., home visits where concerns have arisen, advocacy for parents and signposting them as appropriate.

SWIS was initiated in October 2020 initially when six months' worth of funding was awarded by the Department of education. This was subsequently extended in March 2021 for a further 12 months taking the funding award period to March 2022. Thus far the project is making a significant impact in terms of the reduction of referrals to the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) across the seven schools highlighting the positive impact of the project.

Dionne Pompey-Peters
Social Workers in Schools Project Lead

Photographic Exhibition: Our Collective Voice

Tuesday, 1 February - Monday, 28 February 2022

LGBTQI+ History Month

Brixton Library

'Our Collective Voice' Photovoice exhibition specifically represents the Covid-19 lockdown experiences of Black, Asian and/or other minoritised LGBTQI+ communities through photographs.

The exhibition is part of the wider research project LamQ+, funded by London Metropolitan University's Transformation Fund, and developed in collaboration with Lambeth Council and an advisory group of local LGBTQI+ organisations, which looked at the experiences of lockdown of LGBTQI+ communities in Lambeth. Open to the public, it was launched and displayed at London Metropolitan University, Aldgate Campus from 18th October until the end of November 2021 and received hugely positive feedback.

Donna Jones, Head of Social Work is the Academic Research Lead for the Photovoice element of the wider research project out of which came the stunning images in the Our Collective Voice Exhibition.

"Photovoice is an anti-racist, decolonial research methodology underpinned by feminist perspectives, documentary

photography and raising critical consciousness through empowerment. It speaks to both my personal and political beliefs as a black lesbian feminist scholar activist, in that it challenges traditional research power hierarchies and hands the power directly to the co-researchers. I am excited to continue developing my research interests to bring about social change."

Our Collective Voice is the original work of 11 Photovoice Co-Researchers from Lambeth and other boroughs, designed to develop new understandings of the experiences and needs of under-represented communities in previous studies, allowing complex, transformational counterstories to emerge, be honoured and to ensure greater diversity within the research project.

"What I really enjoyed was photographing with a few other people because there was safety there. There was creative energy as we were photographing in a group. But we were on the same flow and so many, thousands

of stories came out from it, so, that's what happened to me. Thank you everybody." (Co-researcher 1, Workshop 1)

Information about the whole research project can be found at

www.londonmet.ac.uk/lamq

For more information about Photovoice contact [Donna Jones](mailto:d.jones1@londonmet.ac.uk).

d.jones1@londonmet.ac.uk



Photovoice Co-researcher Sonny with Donna Jones before the opening of the exhibition at London Metropolitan University, October 2021.

Listen to the Photovoice Podcast Series!

LamQ+ Podcast: Queer POC Voices from Lockdown:

<https://anchor.fm/lamq>

or on Spotify:

<https://open.spotify.com/show/7vdgSjBWiCIROnSToIFOCc>



LamQ+

Student under the Spotlight: FEMI BARUWA



“ I was born in Paddington, London and from the age of 5 raised in Nigeria before returning to the UK at the age of 17 and have lived here ever since. ”

What's it like to study social work at London Met as a mature student? GEORGIANA NDLOVU speaks to fellow 2nd year MSc student FEMI BARUWA and learns why she chose social work, her student experience so far and her plans for the future.

I was born in Paddington, London and from the age of 5 raised in Nigeria before returning to the UK at the age of 17 and have lived here ever since. I did my A-levels and took a degree at Goldsmiths before reading up on UCAS about London Met and deciding to apply for a place on the MSc.

Leading up to that, I've always wanted to be a social worker and took a combined honours degree in social work and health studies without realising that it would not qualify me to become one. With a health background I was able to go in and provide medical expertise and assistance but wanted to be a qualified social worker.

I steadily moved from A-levels to college doing IT for a year before getting married and having a baby then worked with the Ministry of Defence for 19 years!

I also completed a 2-year HNC at Thames Valley University and a part-time post-graduate diploma in business and finance for 4 years

4:30 pm - 5 pm
All of this combined with raising a child and studying took its toll. In fact when my kids were younger it was very difficult to balance everything and I had to bring in an au-pair to help. I can understand how tough it can be to be a student who is also a parent.

It always appealed to me to work with children and families. Raised by my mum who was a single parent bringing up 5 children alone in Africa it was a real struggle. With no welfare or other help in Africa, looking back it might have been easier for her to have come to live in the UK. I think her experience reinforced my passion to help others like her.

I'm enjoying the course and my favourite subject at the moment is Effective Social Work Practice with Kim Detjen. I thoroughly enjoy it as it talks about what to expect in the field. You get to discuss real-life scenarios that get your brain in motion and give you the reality of how practice will be. This can be eye-opening and you learn things you might not have otherwise known.

I've bought lots of transferable skills to social work – I'm naturally drawn to people and enjoy meeting new people, I'm very

sociable and have a wealth of experience.

I have communication skills, critical thinking skills, am organised, can time-manage and multitask and have technical and leadership skills. I spent almost 3 years with the Ministry of Justice and 1 year at the Ministry of Transport so have a rich portfolio of experience.

Within those roles I worked as a project supervisor and PA working directly with 3 directors coordinating and facilitating meetings and being the first point of call. I assisted the deputy directors with their role, prioritising their diaries. It was very challenging as each director had more than 30 people under them and they all came to me! I worked within a range of systems – all different, and had to quickly acclimatise.

After finishing my first BSc in 2009 I applied for a masters but decided to take a job within the NHS instead. I worked at Moorfields Eye Hospital as a clerk and was promoted to team leader within 2 years before later working as a project manager for UCLH.

It was well-paid and fast-paced and challenging which I loved.

My first placement at university was for 70 days in a secondary school for girls with special educational needs. Being a student

during covid 19 in a school was tough but very rewarding and the girls I worked with had very challenging behaviour.

It was all new to me and a huge culture change working with 11-16 year old girls.

The girls were tough with no boundaries and I had to spend a lot of time talking to them. There was fighting, swearing – it was a life changing experience that opened my eyes what to expect working in this kind of environment. Most were looked after or had parents who misused drugs and the girls abused drugs too.

I had to learn how to interact with them, understanding how they talked etc. Being a mother myself I was able to come down to their level and talk to them when they do not want to listen or study.

I found that I was able to reach them by asking about what they did in their day to day lives, their activities.

If I were to give any advice to students that might be going on placement in a school I would say brace yourself, that no two days are the same and to be flexible, vigilant and use your skills as a student social worker to engage.

In terms of the future I would like to visit children and their families in their homes. In the next 5 years I hope to be a senior practitioner, be as advanced as possible and more adept, strong and competent in my work.

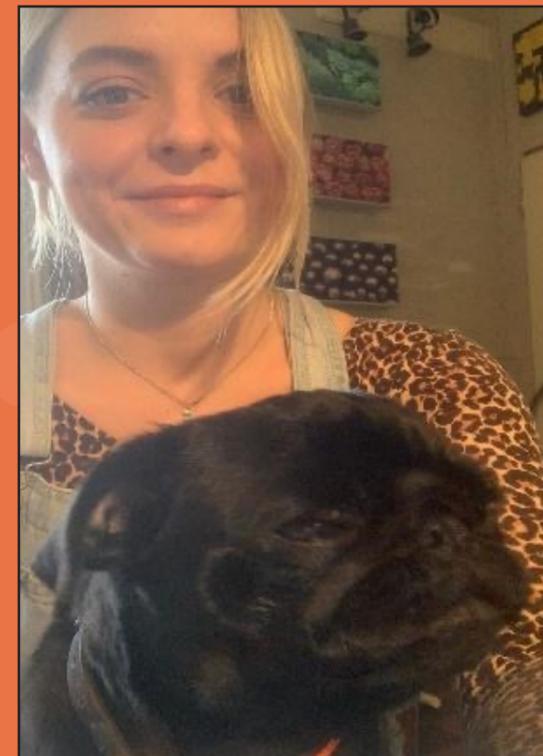
In terms of my dissertation my placement has inspired me thanks to a particular case I worked with. The pupils mum was on heroin and cocaine and the daughter was very sweet and good at school but the total opposite at home. Looking at her profile I have begun to understand why this has happened and would like to explore further. She hits her head on the wall while at home, screams and shouts when walking along the road, jumps out of moving

vehicles – I want to explore how the substance misuse of a parent can have a detrimental effect on children. I am excited about my dissertation and would advise other students to get going with it sooner rather than later!

WANT TO BE FEATURED IN OUR STUDENT IN THE SPOTLIGHT SERIES?

Email **Georgiana Ndlovu** with a recent photo and a bit more about you.

gen0120@my.londonmet.ac.uk



Florence Boothby

is studying Social Work at London Metropolitan University and is on her second placement within Barnet Social Services on the Carer's assessment team, specialising in viability and special guardianship assessments.

A day in my life...

9 am - 10 am Reference call to a female to discuss a special guardianship applicant that she had been listed as a reference for. I got information on how she thought the applicant would cope with more children and insights into her parenting style. These go into the court report so I summarise what they have said.

10 am - 1 pm I shadowed my manager making a call to a Special Guardianship Applicant about his **police checks** that had come through. This call took around three hours and it was complex as we needed to go into detail what had arisen from them.

1 pm - 2 pm Lunch

2 pm - 3 pm Wrote up **court notes** for the 9am reference check

3 pm - 4 pm This was another **reference call** to ascertain more information from another reference of the SGO applicant. It was the same applicant I did an earlier reference for, which helps to build a picture around if they are appropriate carers for the child.

4 pm - 5 pm **Child in Care Review.** This was a multi-agency meeting to talk about next steps for a refugee child who is about to turn 18 and may need future help and support and what we can do around this.

4.30 pm - 5 pm Daily reflection

SPOTLIGHT ON: INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK



*Thinking of practicing overseas? All things-American-enthusiast, MSc social work student co-editor and freelance writer **GEORGIANA NDLOVU** chats to one of the London Met's newest social work lecturers, American born Kim Detjen, and finds out about her background in the states, her experience of practice and academia and her top tips for*

Kim Detjen *tomorrow's social workers.*

“ *I got in touch with a UK recruiter prior to the financial crisis and was flown to the UK for an interview!* ”

G: So tell us more about your role at London Met and your background in the States.

K: I'm associate lecturer on the effective social work practice module and also do some dissertation supervision at London Met. I'm also an independent social worker. I've been a social worker for over

20 years and have supervised students for a lot of that time. I got my MSW from the US in 1999 and since then have been a licensed clinical social worker – which I keep updated.

In the states I worked full-time in a paediatric hospital, ER department and new-born intensive care unit and also

worked as a family therapist. I came to the UK about 16 years ago because I was looking for a change and I had learned that there was a shortage in the UK. I got in touch with a UK recruiter prior to the financial crisis and was flown to the UK for an interview for a child protection role. That would be unheard of now! I got the job and 16 years later I'm still here!

G: How did you find the move from the US to the UK?

K: It took me a good 3 months to settle into my new circumstances. It was my first time outside of the US and I accepted a 2 year contract and with time realised that after 5 or 6 years I could apply for British citizenship and went for it. But it took a good year to acclimatise and stop thinking of the move as a holiday! Many of my peers who moved on 1 year contracts ended up going back but I stayed.

G: Were you required to complete any additional training to pursue social work in the UK?

K: I didn't have to do any extra training but I did have to submit a hugely detailed application to the regulator of the time GSCC which was overseen by my manager.

G: How does practice differ in the US compared to the UK?

K: In the US the majority of mental health practitioners are social workers – in fact you cannot be a licensed clinical social worker without a master's degree but there are other roles such as private therapists available but you would need to have a MSW and be a LCSW (licensed clinical social worker) for these roles. Many private therapists are LCSWs. I think social work is seen in a better light in the States

and is more respected as a profession. The training seems to be much more prescriptive in the UK whereas in the US you have core modules with lots of chances to specialise.

G: What advice would you give to student social workers thinking about working in another country?

K: If you are looking at the US consider which state you want to locate to since each state has its own criteria although this is something that the *NASW is trying to support with reciprocity between states. But whatever country you choose to move to, consider the practical things like house prices, and salary and research the legislation that applies in that area. Most of all give it time. I had to take it in stages, 3 months, 9 months and now 16 years!

G: You branched into academia alongside your social work practice. Tell us more about the transition

K: I have supervised students for many years, in the states as well. I undertook the practice educator training in the UK and I would say that was my route into academia. I sat on fitness to practice panels for social work programmes, and was asked to teach certain sessions at various universities, whilst I was working full time in front line child protection. About 9 years, I took a full time academic post at the University of East London and was involved in organising placements, teaching PE courses, etc and really enjoyed being involved in social work education. I'm undertaking a PhD and needed to devote more time to it so I am now an independent social worker. I know Donna (Jones) and Chris

(Lane) and some of the other staff at London Met through the North East London Teaching Partnership.

G: What do you wish you had known before becoming a social worker and are there any pitfalls we can avoid?

K: I knew, but didn't appreciate as much as I now do, that people are really complex and it's necessary to constantly challenge our own values when working with them. We will work with people who have done some things that we might not dream of doing but we still need to show empathy and humanity. Supervision is key for this – as social workers we take in a lot of stuff and we need outlets.

G: What is your top tip for students wishing to work in the US?

K: I had a student who moved to the states – it can happen. Your first port of call would be *NASW for registration information for each state.

G: Thank you for a great interview - any final thoughts?

K: Yes, simply that I have greatly enjoyed working with the students at London Met and to thank them for their passionate engagement.

For more information on NASW visit socialworkers.org

Kim Detjen is on Twitter: [@kdetj](https://twitter.com/kdetj)

MEET YOUR FULL TIME STUDENT UNION OFFICER



Denise Morrison
(pronouns are she/her)

Denise has represented fellow students in roles as a Student Rep, PASS Facilitator and secretary of Mums @ Uni society, as well as being the Co-Chair of Peabody Housing Association Strategy and Policy group, representing over 133,000 residents. Denise has also worked with a group of students, lecturers, and senior members of London Metropolitan University, reviewing changes to the graduate attainment report 2019/20, an Inclusive Curriculum Framework and Education for Social Justice Framework. By reviewing ways the university's regulations and institutional strategy can align with their student's success strategy to enable student's success, in a fair and inclusive way.

Prior to Denise's role at the Student Union, she was a teaching assistant in a primary

school for 11 years in her local community. She holds a BA (Hon) Degree in Education and Social Policy and had just completed her Masters in Health Social Care, Management and Policy from Londonmet University.

Denise is passionate about her role and about supporting students within the School of Social Sciences and Professions. Her priorities are ensuring that she gets to know both students and staff and that students know she is available to meet with them at any time to discuss their successes as well as any concerns.

Denise is keen to get in front of students in the classroom to explain her role and all the things she is doing to support students.

Denise has recently been invited to the Social Work Course

Committee meeting to give a brief report of her achievements and to be accountable to the student reps. Student reps felt it was really valuable having her in the meeting - so she can come again!

Denise invites you to contact her on

Denise.Morrison@londonmet.ac.uk

☎ 07912 464 422



BLACK CULTURE FESTIVAL A HUGE SUCCESS!

Denise Morrison, Student Union Officer, was the driving force behind the Black Culture Festival event for students and staff on 28th October 2021 in The Rocket Bar.

The event included music & painting, film screenings, Open Mic for slam poets and singers, a discussion on 'Black Joy as Revolution' facilitated by Donna

Jones, Head of Social Work and a session hosted by Speaker Box Street Party - a local community group of activists from different arts disciplines.

'The vibe was fantastic and the food delicious' Donna Jones said, *'I am so pleased to have been invited to contribute, along with my co-researchers'*.

There is so much going on in the Students Union!

Students, get involved and see what the Students' Union can do for you!



North East London Social Work Teaching Partnership successfully awarded funding by the Department for Education for 5 Projects

The North East London Social Work Teaching Partnership (NELTP) comprises the London boroughs of Barking and Dagenham, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Waltham Forest and Tower Hamlets together with the University of East London and London Metropolitan University.

The NELTP has been funded by the Department for Education from 2018 to 2020 to improve standards in the Social Work workforce in our region.

The teaching partnership aims to help people at all stages of their social work careers – including students, newly qualified staff and more experienced practitioners.



'Glass Ceiling' Research Project

This research project will help to identify progression and development opportunities for our social work colleagues within the NELTP and to challenge the 'glass ceiling' preventing those from Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic (B.A.M.E) backgrounds from progressing.

NELTP partnership with The London Innovation and Improvement Alliance (an organisation of London's 33 Directors of Children's Services)

This project builds on, and significantly further develops, our work on data sharing and analysis we have undertaken for the past four years. The initial work had developed and refined approaches to data sharing between the six local authority partners and two higher education institutions. Our project aims to improve access to data and analysis that will inform planning for all stages of initial training provision, recruitment and career development.

IRO Practice Development Forum

Our six North East London IRO Services – Barking & Dagenham, Havering, Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest, responded to the invitation from the local CAFCASS Service (Children & Family Court Advisory & Support Service) to establish a specific forum in which joint training and development opportunities could be offered. The group came together in September 2020 to develop a joint Guardian/IRO workshop which would provide the space and framework for everyone to consider their role and relationship to the child and the oversight of their care plan. They have in total delivered

2 workshops (3 sessions per workshop) over the past year, which have received positive feedback and demand for further opportunities from IRO and Guardian attendees

Action Learning Bid

Strengths Based Practice (SBP) is a widely endorsed model of intervention in Adult Social Care and adopted by our Local Authority partners across North East London, promoting as it does the strengths of the individual in a person-centred way.

Placed Based Recruitment

We have identified that currently our region has significant difficulties recruiting and retaining social workers and social work managers. This is a challenge which is reflected across our Local Authority partners to varying degrees. Our project will seek to develop a set of processes and tools (initially at Newham Council) to support with our challenges, and be in a position for it to be scaled across other Local Authorities and to raise the profile of social work as a profession.

Workforce instability, mainly through higher turnover rates and lower workforce retention, leads to poorer outcomes for children and young people. The aim is to develop new solutions and build capacity to manage this.

For more information please visit
www.neltp.org.uk



Listen Up! Money Saving tips for Students...

Jenny Shaw
Co-Editor

For students that are living in the city, finding discounts and free stuff in London is invaluable, especially with what seems like constant rising costs of everything from food to travel! Here I have some money saving tips (that aren't just for students!) using apps, discount cards and student exclusives to save you extra bits of cash!

OLIO – Olio is an app to get food and other household goods, all for free! Register yourself and you can pick up from neighbours of things they either don't want anymore, or have collected from local shops that have surplus. Some amazing local bakeries pass on from these and sometimes Pret!

KARMA – Karma has lots of restaurants/delis/takeaways that sell food for half price throughout the day. It ranges from sushi, to bakeries to supermarket salad bars!

TOO GOOD TO GO – Too good to go is a new trend that has been around for a while, but you pay a set price and go and collect surplus food at the end of the day or at certain times. Lots of favourites will be on there such as Pret, Caffe Nero, Greggs and your local shops with prices for 'goody' bags as low as £2.59.

NEXTDOOR – Nextdoor is a community app which discusses local matters, but on it they have a 'finds' section where people give away freebies (which can be anything!) and sell on their too, and because you can select 'local neighbourhood' its much easier to collect.

GUMTREE – Gumtree has a freebies section on their app which allows you to select a distance from your house and see what people have to give away!

UNIDAYS/STUDENT BEANS/TOTUM – These are all student discount apps and websites. They offer a range of discounts from retailers such as New Look, ASOS, GymShark and Dominos Pizza! These are all free to join, except Totum which charges around £25.

STUDENT TRAVELCARDS - Oyster offer student discounts on monthly or weekly travelcards, but try and work out which will be cheaper because sometimes using pay-as-you-go bank card/Oyster can be! Try not to travel by buying individual tickets from the machines through zones or you pay more.

RAILCARDS – There are now an array of Railcards available for everyone, including students and those aged 26-30 which entitle you to 30% off most travel around the UK by train. If you don't fall into those categories, there are family and friend's railcards which means that if you travel with the person named when buying the tickets, you get that discount. Check it out for all the different types!

STUDENT BANK ACCOUNTS – Many bank accounts offer student accounts and incentives to switch to them. Log into E-vision to get your bank letter without having to go to the Hub.

FIRST TABLE – Want to try some restaurants in London but without paying the price tags? First table offers early or late tables for breakfast, lunch and dinner at 50% off all food! You need to pre-book and pay a £5 booking fee (which they occasionally make cheaper on promotion) as it is totally worth it!

MONEY SAVING EXPERT – Money saving expert offer tons of advice around the best deals and ways to save money in current time. Be aware that often the ones at the top are deals they are paid to promote, so check over before you decide on the first one!

JORDONCOX.com (the coupon kid) – Jordan became popular working with money saving expert and then branched out by himself. He again tells you in real time the best way to save with coupons for all sorts of things like restaurants, coffee shops and online shopping!

ONLINE SURVEYS - you can earn yourself money by doing surveys online which can take anything from one minute for one hour! Sites such as 'opinium' and 'prolific' have worked for me and I have made over £100 doing them so far.

Impact of long-Covid 19 as an invisible disability

By BeSpoke Member Thana Narashiman

The Covid-19 virus pandemic has left some with the legacy of enduring multiple on-going symptoms referred to as long-Covid or Post-Covid syndrome.

As someone who caught Covid in April 2020 and now suffering from long Covid – as diagnosed in Oct 2020 – the impact has been debilitating on my day to day activities and in my view should now be classed as a long-term disability. The NHS has rightly focused on the main Covid pandemic with billions of funding allocated but sadly the funding for long-Covid has lagged with sufferers not being referred for rapid response diagnostics coupled with appropriate treatments. It seems like we have been forgotten while clinical pathways are being evaluated. In contrast, the USA has classified long-Covid as a long term disability and enacted laws (Americans with Disabilities ADA) to protect sufferers from discrimination.

One of the main symptoms is the severe lethargy, short term cognitive impairment memory loss (brain fog) and breathing issues, which has prevented me from wearing the mask but I have counted over 24 symptoms (although some 200 symptoms have been linked to long-Covid). Overall, I had to curtail many of my usual activities and am mostly housebound

at the moment. Even travelling to the local supermarket is challenging having to rest along the way and feeling generally very uneasy.

Having asserted for more focused treatment, I have been referred by my GP to specialist cardiologist and neurologists (with long waiting lists) for full diagnostics related to heart palpitations and internal potential nerve muscle pain manifesting in “body tremors / vibrations” but other symptoms remains unresolved pending clarity on clinical pathways.

There is also a stigma around long-Covid as I have encountered medical staff being worried thinking I might transmit the Covid virus – which is untrue. I have had both doses of the vaccine after the diagnosis of long-Covid and the vaccine was not the causal factor for long-Covid or its associated symptoms. I wanted to share this to dispel any myths.

Nationally around 2 million are impacted by long-Covid but many remain undiagnosed or unaware of the issues related to long Covid. Many I suspect have not been diagnosed with this “invisible” disease due to lack of public health dissemination. There should be specialists Covid unit with expertise to treat – and

not simply diagnose this condition and collaborate with an integrated approach to treating this syndrome holistically. It is much more than simple breathing issues.

As aspiring social workers, it is imperative that you comprehend the complexity of this syndrome and its impact on both the cared for person and carers in the community. This is especially pertinent when you undertake a care needs assessment for both the client and the carer so that the appropriate social care package and hours allocated for a care package is assessed. Unless you have the expertise to comprehend this syndrome, it is prudent for you to capture the issues based on interviewing the client and the carers so that an holistic view can be captured.

If left untreated the overall impact on health and social care costs will escalate drastically with inherent long term implications including on the persons' wellbeing. The primary focus on the main Covid virus has masked the health inequalities for long-Covid sufferers and we need to level-up better outcomes – and it needs to start now – which I have articulated to my local MP to seek accountability.



**KUUMBA NIA ARTS
UNLOCK THE CHAINS COLLECTIVE**

**WEEK BEGINNING
7TH FEBRUARY**

Bring the performance

SOLD

**To School of Social Sciences
and Professions!**

The story of Mary Prince, born into enslavement in Bermuda 1788 and who helped end slavery

Her book *The History of Mary Prince* was the first account of the life of a black woman to be published in the UK. This first hand description of the brutalities of enslavement, released at a time when slavery was still legal in Bermudas and British Caribbean colonies, had a galvanising effect on the anti-slavery movement.

Dates, times and booking details to be confirmed!

'A powerful, emotionally charged performance and a vital story for too long left untold. The impact stayed with me long after I left the theatre.'

Donna Jones, Head of Social Work



My Career as a Social Worker: From Beginning to End

Two experienced Social workers who are retiring talk about their experiences, both good and bad, within their different roles and various changes they have experienced over the years in social work practice.

What roles in Social Work have you done throughout your career?

J:

- Child protection 'Duty and Community' Social Worker
- Connexions Personal Advisor
- Fostering agency Senior Social Worker

R:

- Adult services Social Worker
- Community Team Adults and Children Social Worker
- Community Services for Adults and Children Social Worker
- Disabled Children's Team
- Internal Social Work Trainer (secondment),
- Researcher at University of Bristol around children's centres
- Safeguarding Children's Team Social Worker
- Fostering team as a Trainer
- Short Break Team Senior Social Worker
- Placements Team as Senior Social Worker

What was your most challenging job and why?

J: Child protection team – It was my first job and having to go and investigate families without much protection was daunting. I was still building my confidence.

R: Child protection roles have a lot of paperwork and the safeguarding job in the community team had a lot of it. I am dyslexic so I found that part challenging especially since it's just got more and more. Generally, I struggle with writing a lot, which also took time away from the service users.

What was your most rewarding job and why?

J: My current job (Fostering Agency SSW). I have done it for much longer than my other jobs and have worked intensively with foster carers for years and seen the children placed with them throughout their childhood and many now living independently as successful adults. Some children have had a lot of challenges and I have helped contribute to some really good outcomes with amazing foster carers.

R: I really enjoyed the training in the

Foster Care Team and empowering foster carers to build on their skills. I like making them feel comfortable and enabling them to do that job by walking alongside them. I like seeing the foster carers grow, develop, and build their confidence about what they can do.

What is a moment that stands out in your career?

J: A young girl that I worked with over a long period of time with her foster carers contacted me after she finished her degree. She sent me a picture of her being a midwife and thanked me. It was really nice because I often never hear from children after I have worked with them or what has happened to them.

R: When I did the fostering training, people said they were learning so much and they felt like it was natural, and they just enjoyed it so much.

What is the biggest change you've seen to Social Work Practice over your career?

J: The introduction and demise of Connexions. It was meant to be an amazing support service for 13-19 year olds, and it was intensive work with

children that had barriers to learning, but this never really happened and so many cuts were made. Initially I had a caseload of 30, which quickly went as high as 2000, so we could work in schools. It was unachievable and unattainable. It became more of a careers service than intensive work, which it initially was, and it just morphed back into that.

R: We have stopped blaming families totally, and we look at the positives and negatives of people and their families now. At the start we used to list all the things that were wrong, but now we look at it holistically and what people can do and gaps they may need help with. There is less blame on people.

What do you think makes a good Social Worker?

J: Someone who treats people with respect and isn't judgemental. They listen and start from where the service user is at and works at their pace. Don't force your views onto them and build on their skills.

R: Respect, empathy and listening. Be a positive enabler of the service user, you're there to try and improve their lives (hopefully with their consent!) I don't believe that someone is a bad person. I often had to enforce things that the law told me too, but tried to do it softly. You also need to be nosy!

Is there one main thing you wish would be different about Social Work Practice?

J: I wish there was more funding so we could have more staff and more resources and people can do the job properly. There are lots of staff trying to do a good job and children are being let down because of the resources. There is always a backlog of work and it isn't fair. There is a lot of bureaucracy and having to prove targets.

R: There are a lot of assessments and

less direct work, which isn't why I came into the job.

What would you say to a newly qualified social worker?

J: You can only do what you can do. Don't beat yourself up if you feel like you haven't achieved everything you thought you were meant to, and look after yourself and take time to prioritise your own needs. Your job isn't to rescue everyone and solve all the problems. Also, wear decent shoes!

R: Make sure you have a variety of jobs to make it more interesting, and if you're ambitious, plot your plan-ahead and be strategic about your future.

Political agenda: did you notice a change from the Labour government to the Liberal Democrats/ Conservative leadership?

J: I think lots of services went so there was less preventative work under austerity.

R: I have noticed a change in doing what the law says you must as the work, rather than putting money into preventative work. All the councils now are trying to find ways not to do things to save money because they have none. There has also been changes in policies that I felt worked, such as using the Every Child Matters agenda within communities and targeting work with children who may have otherwise slipped through the net.

Final words;

R: I have enjoyed all my time as a social worker, if service users are thinking about what you've said or implementing things you've worked on together it's really rewarding.

J: You remember the successes and it's so rewarding seeing positive outcomes from both children, families and foster carers. Some of them really recognise

the work you do and are genuinely sad to see me leaving!

Jenny Shaw
Co-Editor



Jane Hardingham-Chesters

qualified with a diploma in Social Work at The University of the West of England in 1996 and currently is a Senior Supervising Social Worker for a Co-operative fostering agency. She has always worked in Bristol and is retiring next year.



Richard Dixon

qualified in 1988 with a CQSW and did a Masters in 'Policy Studies' at Bristol University. His last job was a Senior Social Worker in the Short Break Team for disabled children. Richard has worked in Swindon and Bristol and retired in November 2020.



2nd Annual Social Work Employability Conference 2022

Live and Direct on Campus!

(Government Guidance on Covid-19 allowing)

Monday, 14th February

10 - 5 pm



I am so impressed my uni has organised this conference to support us into our ASYE year. It has been a great event.

Andrew, BSc year 3, 2021

This annual conference is offered to all final year social work students and will cover:

Interview 'Do's' and 'Don'ts'
 ASYE application processes
 Workshops
 Employer agency stalls
 And more....!

HOLD THE DATE!

Details of how you can book YOUR place on the conference will be announced in the New Year.



Social Work

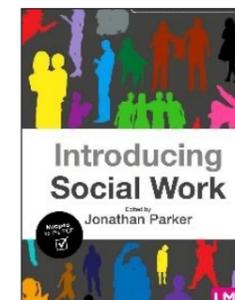
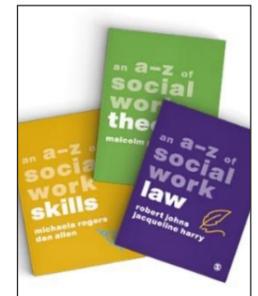
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This practical guide provides you with a comprehensive introduction to contemporary social work, helping you navigate core areas of your course with ease. Written by subject experts, including best-selling Transforming Social Work Practice authors, this essential guide introduces you to key theory and approaches, supporting you while you develop and build the skills and knowledge that you'll need for practice.

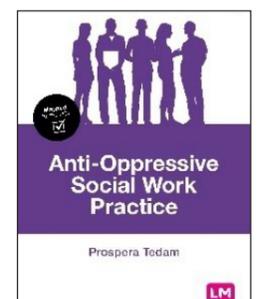
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Journalist turned social worker?

THE LOOP CO-EDITOR GEORGIANA NDLOVU SHARES HER CHANGE OF CAREER STORY.

I affectionately called them – to teen magazines and even took a role with the regional BBC relishing the glow I got from having my name in lights and my portfolio boosted.

But the hours of unpaid and often thankless work experience took its toll and some 25 years later my work in editorial offices and as a freelance at home opportunities simply dried up – along with my enthusiasm.

You might not think it at first but I'd argue that my former life as a reporter has held me in good stead for a future as a social worker.

Yes really!

Some 25 years ago as an enthusiastic 15 year old school pupil with an endless supply of ambition and enthusiasm I zealously scoured local newspapers and magazines desperate to find my next opportunity to work in an editorial space and have my name against a story.

I did stints everywhere from local newspapers – or rags as

See I managed to get ill during the explosion of twitter et al. I missed out on vital training in digital journalism and at the time could not fund – and did not want to pursue - further study.

Freelancing was tough and I found it difficult to make ends meet.

Taking a break from reporting I conducted extensive voluntary work – helping everybody from the homeless to those who had been affected by substance misuse and domestic violence.

And you know what? I relished it. I was able to utilise well-honed

journalistic skills in interviewing, report writing and evidence based working while helping and empowering vulnerable people. It was satisfying, enriching and eye-opening. I was able to explore my values of social justice and exposing the truth while helping members of the public with human interest issues. From the blind woman whose life line was cut off after her local bus service was stopped to the man who was suing his local hospital for malpractice, it was hands-on grafting for the people and I loved it. I also looked at single parents who were struggling to bring up their children and residents of a poverty-stricken estate with nothing to engage its large population of young people.

As a volunteer I relished the chance to advocate for people and it wasn't long before other professionals were suggesting I retrain into social work using my transferable skills as a stepping stone.

So was the drive and determination of that young girl of 15 with visions of her own office in Manhattan with 'editor' embossed upon the door –forgotten all of a sudden?

Do not believe a word of it.

In my new role as a student social worker I am more ambitious and motivated than ever- yet this time it's more about the people I am helping than having my own name up in lights.

I still keep my hand in journalism. I was recently offered the chance to write a piece for a New York based social work magazine and of course I am now a co-editor of the Loop.

I am planning to pursue a criminology PhD next year part time alongside work – to marry my passions for criminal justice and forensic social work and writing.

The journey never ends – and frankly why should it? I believe skills bought from other backgrounds can only extend the scope of social workers to fulfil their roles.

So what skills have I bought? Well writing skills is an obvious journalistic skill, alongside interviewing, keeping evidenced-based records and translating complex principles into user-friendly copy - a skill in itself.

Sharing information and putting a spotlight on little-known issues is useful for social work as is communicating with members of the public far and wide to capture

a story.

Storytelling of course is fundamental to journalists, who act as conduits who narrate on real events and facts and this might be necessary for social workers who might be representing their clients at interdisciplinary meetings or in court for example.

Persistence, tenacity and self-motivation are key and the values of empathy, social justice and exposing the truth are concerns for journalists and social workers alike.

As a journalist I was often involved in advocacy reporting and as a social worker in making, human interest agendas like these are once again at the fore.

I was a proud journalist and I'm a proud social work student.

And I'm happy that I have not had to forgo my passion for writing for my new role when the two can work so beautifully together.

Moral of the tale?

Embrace the transitional skills that you have gleaned in your former work and life experiences and bring them full force into your social work practice.

You and your clients will thank you for it.

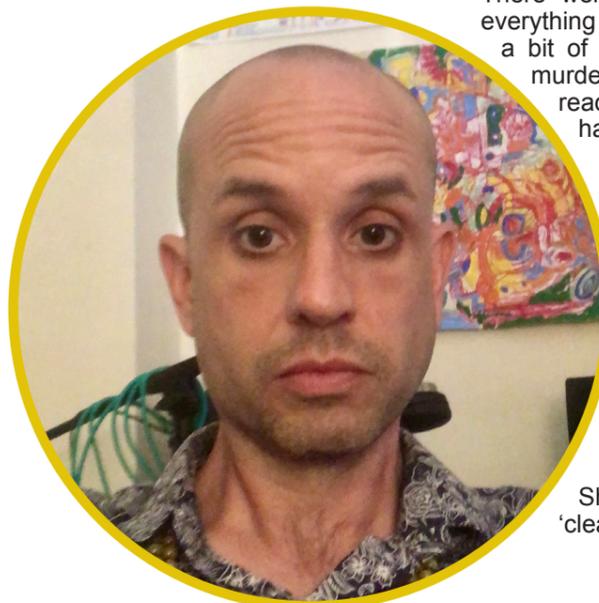
SPOTLIGHT ON INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL WORK

SOCIAL WORK IN SECURE SETTINGS: RIKERS ISLAND JAIL, THE BRONX, NYC

According to recent reports, there have been 5 suicides and 8 additional deaths this year alone in New York's notorious men's jail complex Rikers Island.

With tales of inmates relieving themselves into paper bags because of lack of toilets, faeces, blood and maggots covering the floors, and individuals walking around with open wounds from self-harming and sleeping in their hundreds on cell floors the jail is set to close in the next five years.

Our new associate lecturer and independent social worker, **JEFFREY BAKER**, who teaches the evaluating research module to MSc students, reveals to **GEORGIANA NDLOVU** why his three and a half years spent assessing inmates as a social worker at the jail just under 20 years ago persuaded him to become a prison abolitionist who is convinced that most forms of imprisonment are wrong and should be abolished.



Jeffrey Baker

“I suppose you could compare Rikers Jail in the states to cells at the police station in the UK. It is not the same as prison but is a holding facility for individuals who have been accused of a crime but are yet to stand trial. Yet to be convicted, some have been shipped down from other prisons.”

It was my job to assess them and decide which area of the jail they would be housed and how they would be dealt with.

I was also involved in giving out drug and HIV results and worked within the maximum security area. It was a rapidly-changing A & E type environment with newly admitted inmates described as 'hot bodies' – prison jargon for individuals who were withdrawing from alcohol and drugs. This was dehumanising and wrong in my view.

There were men awaiting trial for everything from being caught with a bit of weed on their person to murder and child rape. Many readily admitted what they had done.

And most of those that found themselves incarcerated were black.

In fact a female American colleague once said to me: 'You know what this is? This is a holding cell and warehouse for black and Latino people.'

She said it was a way of 'cleaning up' the homeless.

It still shocks me that even being a bit menacing or having a bit of weed was enough to be bought to the jail.

It was not therapeutic work. But I was privileged to work with a range of people including trans women who had been sent to the jail who were often wrongly identified as mentally ill.

There were lot of individuals who were very sick and had learning disabilities as well and nobody shared any medical records.

The sights on show were often shocking. It was a common sight to see inmates masturbating in hallways and attempting suicide in public view.

There was also shocking man on man sexual violence that was so brutal that it's impossible to describe.

It was like a war zone with inmates treated like animals and people being killed and killing themselves.

People were chained to each other and punished – there was no care – and this was America not Cambodia or the killing fields but there were similarities like the stained walls, noise and chaos. I'd compare it to slavery times.

Jail staff referred to the state as needing its 'pound of flesh'.

I think the biggest challenge is care v punishment – when we take on a statutory function this gets confused. The fact remains that I have always wanted to provide care even when people are going through a process like jail.

I remember on one occasion giving a greetings card to an inmate to send to his mother in Puerto Rico and breaking all kinds of rules. One of the most humane 'social work' gestures I had ever done and I was

reprimanded for it.

It was tough to maintain any kind of boundaries with people withdrawing from drugs, sobbing and confessing. It's different when you are both locked in to stick to boundaries and we arguably became one and the same with the inmates. I was often told 'You're a jailer too, now'.

And the need for social workers was immense and I was often almost forced to come in and work. If you want to work in any kind of prison or jail environment you need quick assessment skills, need to understand what is happening in a situation and fast and be on your guard since it's very dangerous. You need to understand when you are being sociopathically manipulated and understand that it can make you very unhealthy.

We were all so unhealthy.

“

“When humanity does appear in jail it appears brightly.”

”

Rikers was a for-profit company wanting to make maximum returns with minimal staff. You have to bear that in mind if you are working for a for-profit facility.

But all that said I think social workers have played a very important role in prisons and jails because the line between care and punishment is important for social workers to police.

After my time in Rikers, I now class myself a prison abolitionist which means I have a blanket rejection of

forced incarceration except for in cases of temporary incarceration to protect. I cannot sanction the idea of putting people inside in warzone conditions with no care.

One thing I noticed was that when humanity appears in jail it appears brightly. I met one gay drug-dealing man who was the same age as me and physically suffering but so cheerful. When humanity was visible it was really visible.

The staff matched the inmates in many ways. Most were debilitated by drugs and food addiction. You would see things go on and then pretend you hadn't. It was just the way things were in there.

As an anarchist stroke prison abolitionist and social worker I feel it is my job to say when something isn't right. I believe we all participate in the creation of the monsters that are among us and have the right to stand up and have our say.

In terms of alternatives I would suggest embracing the desperate – the young mothers, those who are addicted – early and providing care so they are less likely to find themselves in jail.

Interestingly I never felt much threat from other inmates and was not 'scared' during my time at Rikers though the environment itself is intimidating. I had more problems I believe with officers and guards who made up what I'd describe as one big dysfunctional family.

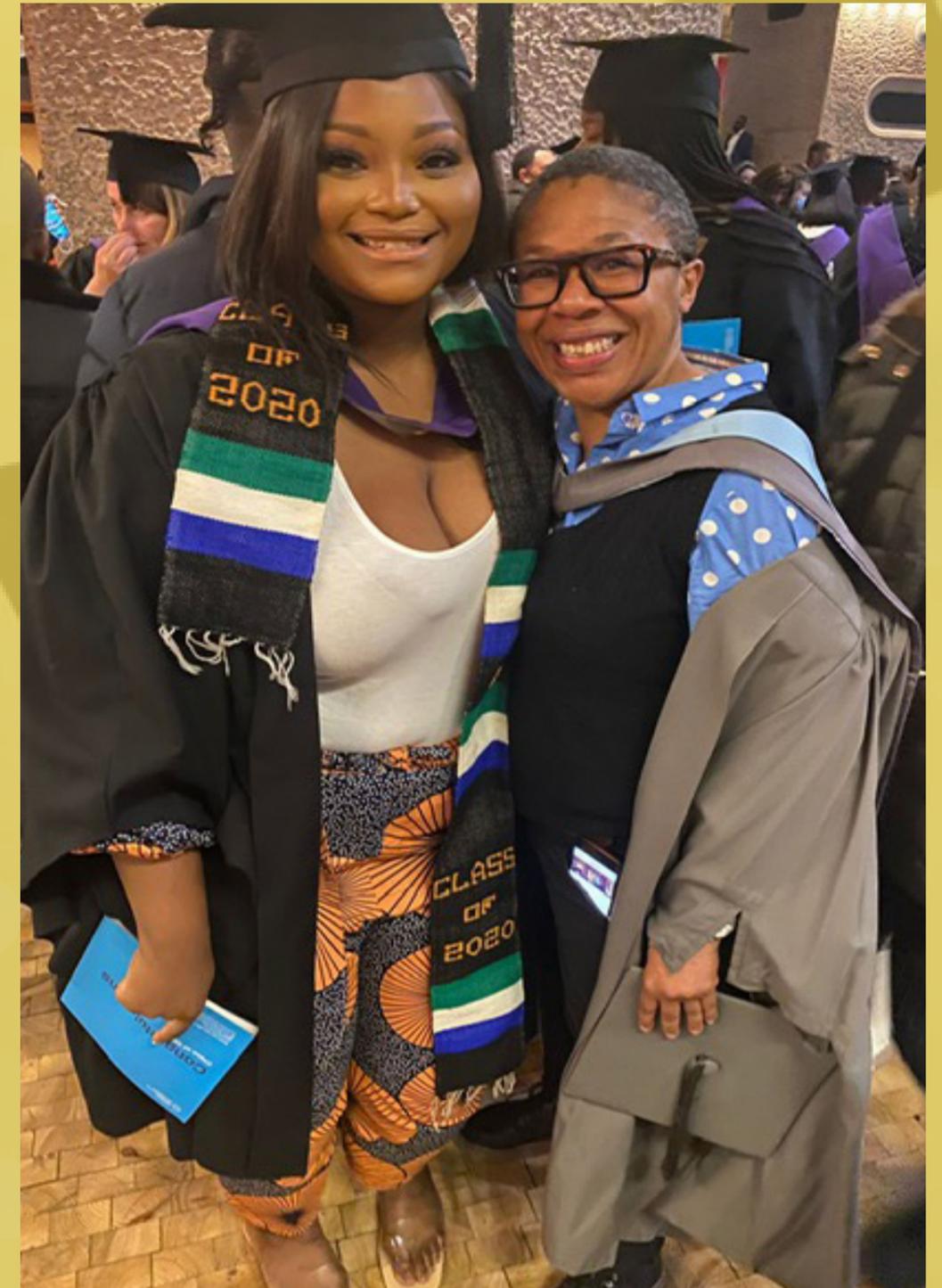
It's important to point out that this kind of 'isolating' of those accused of crime will only make a person more dangerous. You need to get closer to these individuals, not further away.

RIKERS ISLAND FACTS:

- This 413.17 acre island sits in the east river between Queens and the Bronx
- There are 5,700 inmates being held in jail in NYC with most at Rikers,
- Most inmates are un convicted of a crime and are awaiting trial because they cannot afford to pay the high levels of bail set by judges

At last! Graduation Ceremony, November 2021. You did it!!

It was fantastic to finally be able to celebrate with our BSc and MSc graduating student cohorts of 2020 at The Barbican Centre. The original graduation celebrations were interrupted due to the pandemic, but to see our students stride confidently across the stage and to meet their family and friends was a proud moment for the academic team.





@LondonMetSW
@NELSWTeaching

To contribute to the next newsletter, contact

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