

Editorial

Welcome to the third issue of 2014 of the Scottish Journal of Residential Child Care. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the publication of the Kilbrandon Report (1964). This special issue is entitled Commemorating Kilbrandon's Vision: Fifty years of aspiring for Care and Justice for Children in Scotland.

Charles James Dalrymple Shaw, Baron Kilbrandon (1906 -1989) was a Scottish Judge and Law Lord. He served as a Sherriff before being appointed as a Senator of the College of Justice and Lord of Session. He also led the Kilbrandon Commission on the Constitution which was set up in response to political pressure for greater Scottish devolution within the United Kingdom.

The Kilbrandon Report's (1964) optimistic communitarian vision had a strong influence on the Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 which led to the creation of Children's Hearings, Scotland's unique system of care and justice for children. The report was radical in 1960s conservative Scotland because of its recognition of the importance of a child's upbringing. It recommended terminating the long established juvenile justice system, which had focused on determining innocence or guilt, and replacing it with one which, whilst protecting the legal rights of parents and children, addressed children's needs.

The Kilbrandon Report considered how the judicial system and associated services should best respond to young offenders and children in need of care and protection. Among its main principles were first, that all children in difficulty should be dealt with in similar ways since their needs were similar, as were the origins of their problems. Second, the main needs common to children requiring compulsory intervention were education in its widest sense and support for those bringing them up. Third, decisions about the facts in any case should be separated from decisions about what is best for the child. Finally, lay panels 'vested with coercive powers' should decide outcomes rather than courts (Hill and Taylor, 2012 p.7).

This is also a time of significant change in residential child care in Scotland. The Scottish Government is committed to a new 'standard' by introducing a Level 9 qualification (undergraduate degree) for residential child care workers, supervisors and managers in residential child care. Through this new qualification, it is envisaged that workers will be equipped with the high level of skills that are necessary to respond effectively to the diverse needs of the children and young people for whom they care (Scottish Social Services Council, 2013).

The opening article in this special issue by the children's author Professor Frank Cottrell Boyce and child care consultant Dr Irene Stevens is a reflection on the 11th Kilbrandon lecture, Tell A Different Story, and its relevance to residential child care. The Kilbrandon Lecture series was inaugurated in 1999 and is supported by the Scottish Government and the University of Strathclyde. In the article, the authors focus on the power that stories have to change lives. They also highlight the possibility of developing fresh narratives for young people and for residential child care practice itself.

The article which follows also began life as a lecture, forming part of The Sutherland Trust series, an initiative which serves to stimulate thinking about psychodynamic approaches to health, social care and education. In his paper, *Young People in Conflict with the Law - 50 years after the Kilbrandon Report*, Professor Bill Whyte critically considers what contemporary policy and practice tell us about the extent to which the legacy of Kilbrandon has continued. Professor Whyte finds parallels between Jock Sutherland's work, including the importance of social relatedness and the values which informed the Kilbrandon Report. He highlights in particular the need for the Scottish youth justice system to remain alert to its obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This paper, in common with others in this issue, is of relevance to the new degree level residential child care qualification referred to above.

Malcolm Schaffer, head of practice and policy at the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration, has spent most of his career working within the Children's Hearings system. In his paper he outlines major changes that have taken place over the last 50 years, including those introduced by the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011. He notes the increased regulation and control that has been placed on residential child care placements, especially concerning the use of secure accommodation.

In a peer-reviewed article, Dr. Michael Nunno and his colleagues, Ms. Martha Holden and Dr. Deborah Sellers, provide a history of translational research and introduce several relevant debates within the field, including the relationship between practice-based knowledge and research in therapeutic residential child care. The paper also provides a model of translational research which is of relevance to residential child care practice, research and policy.

The three articles which follow address key issues for practice. The first, by Patrick Fisher of The Reader Organisation, describes inspiring work to encourage reading with children in a Glasgow primary school. The article has been included in this special issue because of Professor Cottrell Boyce's support of the work of The Reader Organisation and because of his specific mention of this work in his Kilbrandon lecture. In the second practice article, Professor Kirsten Stalker revisits what Kilbrandon had to say about disabled children and young people and considers the progress that has been made over the last 50 years. Her paper acknowledges the positive developments that have taken place, especially at policy level, but also highlights the challenges which remain in translating these into practice.

The third paper, by Dr Claire Lightowler and her colleagues, David Orr and Nina Vaswani, highlights the work of the Centre for Youth and Criminal Justice (CYCJ) at the University of Strathclyde, including its role in supporting workers in the residential child care sector. One of their case studies addresses an initiative which seeks to assist young people who are serving prison sentences to respond positively to the pain of loss and bereavement. This will be of particular interest to residential child care practitioners.

An additional feature of this special issue, in keeping with the theme of commemoration, is the inclusion of examples of photography and creative writing. In the first reportage item, entitled *Beautiful Institution*, Amy C. Davidson, a young photographer whose work has appeared in national publications, contributes images captured at the former Lennox

Castle Hospital, a long-stay mental health institution which operated in a rural setting north of Glasgow between 1936 and 1987. In the second example, a member of the audience who attended the lecture delivered by Professor Cottrell Boyce contributes a personal response to *Tell a Different Story*. Both contributions are linked by themes of time and memory, and they illustrate important aspects of hope, resilience and our shared humanity.

In the book review section, David Orr provides a very positive review of an edited collection, *The Psychology of Emotion in Restorative practice: How Affect Script Psychology Explains How and Why Restorative Practice Works*, edited by Kelly and Thorsborne.

Sadly this edition also includes an obituary written by Karen Vandervan celebrating the professional career of Mark Krueger, a name that will be familiar to many SJRCC readers.

It has been a privilege to be invited to serve as guest editor of this special issue. I would like to note my appreciation of all of those who contributed so willingly, to the journal's joint editors Dr Laura Steckley and Dr Graham Connelly, and to Janelle MacMillan who kept this edition on track. Reflecting back over 50 years has provided an opportunity both to commemorate Kilbrandon's legacy and also critically analyse a period of significant change in the provision of child care services. As many contributors to this issue have noted, there are many challenges ahead and, of course, opportunities too, including the new residential child care qualification, a development very much in keeping with Kilbrandon's vision.

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