

Editorial

REFLECTING ON THE 'POWER' OF CLINICAL LEGAL EDUCATION

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In this issue contributors from across the world have been reflecting critically on the implications of clinic in different academic and geographical settings. In particular, how student's experiences of clinic within the university impacts their work outside the university. The flow of skills, knowledge and values between the university and the community invites us to look beyond the classroom and consider the multifaceted impacts of clinical legal education.

Firstly, Melanie Walker asks us to think about epistemic justice and the role of legal educators in shaping public good professionals go on to use their skills for the benefit of others. Using critical theory she draws out the ways in which legal educators and students must engage with epistemic inequalities in legal knowledge making. These elements are encapsulated perfectly in the closing quote from Nelson Mandela; "to be free [is] to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedoms of others".

Claudia Man-yiu Tam's study of student perceptions of clinical legal education at Hong Kong University indicates a successful integration of experiential legal education in Hong Kong. She finds that students feel that working in the clinic

enriches their understanding of the law and injustices in society more broadly and that they take this with them outside of academic spaces.

In Australia, Francia Cantatore explores the effects of clinic experience during university on student's approaches to pro-bono work post-graduation. She draws together data from the Law Alumni and Clinic Client surveys to illustrate the ongoing commitments of law graduates to pro-bono work based on altruistic motives and the deep appreciation that recipients of these services feel. The benefits of clinic are shown here to extend outwards into the community as students move into professional work.

Louise Whitehouse's illuminating pilot study of research based clinical legal education at the University of Hull assesses the impact of clinic work to address the information deficit in housing possession cases. The student clinic alongside other services such as the Citizens Advice Bureau acted to give occupiers in housing possession cases a raft of information to help them engage effectively with the judges. Here students contributed to a joined up service addressing a lack of knowledge and legal empowerment amongst the public.

In contrast to the work on the benefits of clinic for students, clients and the community Alex Nicholson and Alireza Pakgohar turn our attention to addressing the workload strains that clinic can put on university staff. Their article applies the principles of "lean" management to the design of clinical programs at Sheffield Hallam University in order to make them more efficient and ease the burden of ongoing assessment and the demands of experiential learning on legal educators.

Moreover, in Part II of Bryan Horrigan's detailed piece on the design and implementation of an enhanced clinical program in the "age of disruption" he addresses the macro-level challenges of today's world. He stresses the need to react to ever-changing technology, and the effects and trends of globalisation and democratisation to ensure that clinical programs work well for everyone.

Finally, we have two From the Field Reports. Jennifer Lindstrom provides an informative and detailed summary of the IJCLE conference at Monash in November 2018, so for anyone who could not attend be sure to give that a read. Malcolm Combe also gives us an insight into the University of Coventry and Clinical Legal Education Organisations' event "Clinics and SQE – What Next?". Many important questions were asked and issues raised by members of various universities and professional bodies including The Law Society. Combe concisely covers some of the implications of the Solicitor's Qualifying Exam in England, Wales and perhaps further afield.

I am also excited to share this video on the power of clinic produced by the Law School at the University of Bergamo and shared by Angelo Maestroni. It's a great watch and you can find it here; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nNyqP4j5as>

In other news, the GAJE (Global Alliance for Justice Education) conference which ran from the 4th-10th December 2019 in Bandung was a great success.

We are very much looking forward to the IJCLE conference which this year is happening in Dublin from the 13th-15th July. For more information and instructions for submitting a proposal follow this link; <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/about-us/news-events/events/2020/07/ijcle-dublin-2020/>

Last but not least, I would like to wish everyone Seasons Greetings and hope that you all find time to rest and enjoy the festive period.