The midwifery of power? Reflections on the development of professional social work in Western Australia

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This paper explores the emergence of the social work profession in Western Australia from beginnings in the 1920s through to 1970 when the first local graduates gained employment. The authors illustrate how WA’s history both connects with and diverges from patterns of the profession’s development in more populous states, through the use of interviews conducted with pioneering social workers. These oral histories illuminate how gender, class and other markings of privilege and power framed, and were framed by, the education, practice, sites of practice and career paths of social workers in the early years. Two interacting themes identified in this research were restricted employment possibilities for social workers in the State and a lack of locally available professional education until the mining boom of the sixties. The paper concludes by listing six lessons for current practitioners: the transcendent importance of reading contexts; identifying and developing relevant sites of practice; maintaining flexible boundaries of professional practice; being able to articulate a dynamic value base to drive practice; the importance of practitioners in shaping education, and continuing practitioner reflexivity.

Keywords
history, power, social work

Introduction
A pressing challenge for social work is remaining relevant in a changing world. In such self-renewal it is useful to reflect on what lessons can be drawn from our history. Certainties on the effectiveness of the welfare state model are unraveling. This has implications for the positioning of social work and the design of its services. History reminds us that this is not the first time the profession has needed to be creative in designing, selling and delivering services that benefit those we would serve (Ife 1997).

Though there has been documentation of the history of Australian social work, much remains unrecorded except in the lives and memories of those involved. In valuing doing, practitioners often see this in oppositional terms to scholarly writing. To date the history of Australian social work is relatively sparsely documented (Lawrence 1965; Parker 1979; Marchant

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This paper is a small contribution to the growing emic\textsuperscript{1} or insider history of social work.

It interprets some of the findings of a project researching the oral and documentary histories of early practitioners of social work in WA. To date we have interviewed 16 social workers (13 women and three men), two educated in the UK, nine in the Eastern States and five locally. All commenced practice in this state by 1970, when the earliest local graduates entered the profession. The following themes were explored in open-ended interviews: early upbringing, choosing social work as a career, experiences of social work education, career paths, people and ideas shaping practice, reflections on practice, participation in the professional association and where applicable, leaving the profession. All interviews were audiotaped and transcribed.

The information gathered both orally and written is bountiful\textsuperscript{2}. To do justice to the complex and differing viewpoints articulated requires ongoing reflection and dialogue. In this paper we have sought to initiate such processes by placing on public record an initial interpretation in response to the materials gathered.

**The midwifery of power in the birth of Western Australian social work**

Power is productive. It shapes the worlds we live in and drives history. Power is not necessarily ‘over us’, it can be ‘with us’. Social workers can use power for their ends. There is no way of escaping power. It is everywhere. This Foucauldian concept of power has been used in framing this paper (White 1991). Foucault and other post-structuralists propose that power in our postmodern era can no longer be usefully conceptualised as centralised in the major structures of society and government (Foucault 1980). The oral histories recorded give accounts of the ongoing subjective interactions between early players in bringing professional social work to WA. In these accounts it is possible to track the emergence of what have now become objective markers of the profession. These markers include sites of practice, rates of pay and employment conditions, nature of professional education and membership of the professional body.

Early West Australian social workers and those involved with them were not operating in empty space. They engaged with and worked through established societal institutions of education, welfare and government. These institutions were themselves structured by the workings of class, gender, race, religion and other markers of privileging. Human agency is often cast, in a Western culture of individualism, as ‘free willed’, divorced from the workings of social structures (Reamer 1983). Current social theories highlight the ways in which individual agency and structures, far from being mutually exclusive, are in practice mutually constituted, both determining and enabling of each other (Leonard 1997).

Subjects could not exist without the structures that provide possibilities and constraints and structures could not exist without subjects who reproduce and transform them (Leonard and Nichols 1994, p. 8 in Leonard 1997, p. 47)

The first three Western Australian women, Norma Parker, Connie Moffatt and
Elaine Davidson, to undertake professional social work education did so in the late 1920s and early 1930s in the United States under the patronage of the Catholic Church (The West Australian Social Worker 1996). All three women were active members of the Newman Society at the University of WA during their undergraduate studies (The Record 1973, p. 5).

Monsignor J.T. McMahon, Director of Catholic Education in WA while studying in America from 1926–1928, found social work was a flourishing university course with graduates making tangible improvements in people’s lives. Dr Ethel Stoneman, a clinical psychologist lecturing at the University of WA, had taught Moffatt and Parker and inspired their interest in social work.

As summarised by Norma Parker:

*It was a result of (Dr Stoneman’s) stimulation of our interest and of Dr McMahon’s exploration on our behalf of possible opportunities for further study in the US that we eventually sailed off* (1979, p. 17).

It was to be a further 40 years before the AASW WA Branch effectively worked with sympathetic power bases to establish locally based professional education.

In unpacking the workings of power in the birth of social work in this state, the outcomes can be understood as produced by a range of practitioner actions from compliance and acquiescence through to disruption and contestation. In reflecting on our past through these grounded stories, are there lessons to be learned in creating our futures? Many early social workers felt their professional preparation would improve the delivery of human services but their stories detail the ways in which this unfolding path of progress did not always run smoothly.

### The false spring of Western Australian social work

In 1929 the Perth Catholic Diocese arranged American Catholic University scholarships for two young Perth women, Norma Parker and Constance Moffatt to qualify as social workers (The Record 1973, p. 5). They were joined in America a year later by Eileen Davidson. It was expected that all three would return to work in the Child Guidance Clinics being established by Dr Stoneman.

Norma Parker returned from these studies to Perth, in 1932, at the height of the depression. The clinics were not to be. With no employment to be found, she moved east, founding the Almoner’s Department at St Vincent’s Hospital, Melbourne. Norma Parker, still living in the Eastern States, is widely remembered as the first Australian Association of Social Workers national president, an appointment she held from 1946–1953. Trailblazer that she was, she never practised in her home state. Neither did Moffatt and Davidson (Lawrence 1976; Parker 1979; Browne 1996).

One can only speculate on what might have been the local path of social work had these talented women remained in WA. It was to be another 10 years before the profession began to establish itself in this state. Until the Second World War there was only one professional working in the state (Aimee Eakins at Royal Perth Hospital). The social disruption of the war years saw a demand for social work emerge.
The early years of professional social work in Western Australia

Red Cross was a key agency in paving the way for the use of trained professionals. The 1943 Annual Report of the Australian Red Cross Society minuted a decision that

*in view of the valuable work of almoners, the Army had requested the Society to supply one social worker for each 400 beds at base hospitals (Australian Red Cross Society 1943).*

In responding to this request, the Society instituted scholarships for social work students and undertook a recruiting drive in the UK and the US for experienced social workers.

By 1947 seven female social workers were employed in WA by health-related agencies. In the period from 1947 to 1970 our interviewees worked for the Red Cross, the Repatriation Hospital, the Department of Social Services, the Immigration Department, Royal Perth Hospital, Fremantle Hospital, Princess Margaret Children’s Hospital, Lady Gowrie Children’s Service, the Navy, the Department of Child Welfare, and the Department for Mental Health. These sites of practice very much reflected national agendas focusing on reconstruction and nation building.

At this time WA was the ‘Cinderella’ state, where most people lived frugally with little wealth to sustain a private web of philanthropy. Unlike the larger states with networks of voluntary welfare organisations professionally staffed, in Western Australia by the 1960s the presence of social workers was primarily confined to the public sector (Hickey 1971).

With the mining boom of the late 1960s came a rapid expansion of the population, especially young working families in remote areas and in the city. Perth came of age with this development and the government could now afford to professionalise the delivery of public services. This meant even more government social workers.

By the late 1960s State Government bursaries funded the education of social workers along with other professions (Hickey 1971; White 1996). In 1968 the Catholic Church employed their first trained social worker, to screen all child referrals to Catholic institutions.

In 1970 the Catholic Welfare Bureau was created to provide a professional service to Catholic families. The cost of this was subsidised by the State Government paying a fifth of the salary (Hickey 1971). In capitalising on such state subsidies, the Catholic Church was the best organised of the non-government sector at the time.

Those interviewed describe patterns of work marked by three consistent factors. They were: working with little; operating at levels of responsibility and leadership disproportionate to formal position and pay; and the importance of home visiting and community based work. There were few specialised resources and back-up services. Poor families and families under stress had to be supported by creative and resourceful practitioners, taking leadership initiative. One interviewee told of her skilfulness as a 22-year-old in convincing the all-male Red Cross board of management to provide discretionary funding to the social work department to support families in need.
The birth of the schools of social work

Browne (1996) observes that Australian social work was largely founded on the generosity of benefactors. Private philanthropy and the influence of the well connected, including women’s groups, provided the finance and social networks necessary to facilitate the establishment of the NSW Board of Study and Training in 1929 and the Institute of Almoners in 1936 (Marchant 1985).

The WA story around the establishment of a school of social work unfolds differently. One of the objectives of the newly formed WA branch of the AASW in 1946 was to ‘to help in the eventual promotion of a course of social studies at the University of Western Australia’ (Gardner 1990). Over the next 10 years, branch members, led by Barbara Evans and then Teddie Stockbridge, worked tirelessly to make this goal a reality (Gardner 1990). One of our informants recalls this time as ‘involving interminable meetings that were going nowhere’.

Members recognised the value of enlisting the support of committed, energetic and well-connected men to plead their case within the university. In 1957, on the branch’s initiative, an ad hoc committee was called with the goal of establishing a school of social work at the University of Western Australia (UWA) (then the only tertiary institution in the State). The committee was chaired by Professor Walker, Professor of Psychology, with Professor Saint, Dean of Medicine, a member. Both men had already demonstrated interest in establishing social work within the university (Gardner 1990).

In 1959, the university senate approved in principle the establishment of such a course though the matter was shelved until funding could be set-aside in the 1961–63 triennium budget. That this well-endowed university pled financial exigencies is noteworthy. The course actually started only when the Menzies Government increased the funding of higher education, significantly expanding student places (Karmel 1990). Universities were then looking for courses ready to go on offer and social work now became well placed.

The school was further delayed in commencing until a suitable head could be appointed. As no local social worker had appropriate academic qualifications, Mr Walter Tauss (later Dr) from the psychology department was appointed first as course co-ordinator in 1964 and then as head of school in 1970. The first intake of six students was in 1965.

Two social work practitioners, Mrs Margaret ‘Teddie’ Stockbridge and Mrs Jean Teasdale, were appointed as temporary lecturer and senior tutor respectively. Being married women, permanent appointment could not be offered. Similar gendered shaping of staffing occurred in other Australian schools of social work. From the end of the 1960s, heads were in nearly every case male, many from overseas and few were experienced social workers (Browne 1988). In contrast, the few female heads were Australian with considerable practice experience. Social work, having entered the academy, had now to conform to an ‘academic culture, with its emphasis on higher degrees rather than social work qualifications and experience’ (Browne 1988, p. 127).

Three interviewees, involved in the lead-up to establishing the UWA school,
expressed disappointment that a non-social worker head had responsibility for developing the curriculum. There were signs of a rift between the practitioners and those who ran the course. There was some loss of confidence on the part of practitioners as to how well the school would prepare students for practice and further the interests of the profession.

In separate developments the state government announced in 1966 that a second school of social work was to be set up the following year at the West Australian Institute of Technology (WAIT), (now Curtin University). WAIT, which commenced operation in 1965, provided ‘an academic base for many occupations and newly emerging professions that no other institution could accommodate’ (White 1996, p. 6). Association members, not having been consulted, were shocked. Concern was expressed that a second course should begin before the first was established.

More than one interviewee expressed strong feelings that the second course smacked of ‘technical rather than professional education’. The difficulty already experienced by UWA in appointing suitably qualified staff, led many practitioners to doubt that a less ‘prestigious’ and non-university institute of technology could attract quality staff and build the reputation of social work.

Our interviewees spoke of the importance the Association placed on achieving university education for social work. Speaking of their perceptions from within the pre-Dawkins binary tertiary education system, practitioners concluded that only a university base could give an appropriate degree of status, an opportunity to forge links with other powerful professions and access to academics from high status programs to teach social work students.

This agenda was superseded by the economic development of the State. An expanded and technically educated labour force was required to support growth. The government committed to financially supporting and fast-tracking a tertiary institution capable of producing graduates quickly. The WAIT social work course took three-and-a-half years to complete compared to the five-and-a-half year UWA program (White 1996). WAIT’s sandy, bare campus in a working class area, dominated by concrete functional buildings told a powerful story when contrasted with the ivied sandstone buildings and landscaped grounds of the wealthy UWA campus by the Swan River.

Local interpretations of this story had long-term repercussions for the new schools and for the profession. Bitter divisions occurred. While most practitioners and office holders of the Association retained their links and loyalty to the university, a few elected to take up appointments at the new institute. The split this caused is still healing.

Arguably there was a gendered dimension to this division. While several dedicated female presidents of the WA AASW branch worked for a university course it was a male president, Ray Vincent, who became the first head at WAIT.

Because of the failure by government to consult meaningfully on the development of the WAIT course, Association members felt duty bound to push to delay national accreditation until their concerns were addressed. Several of the interviewees were proud that their Association had been able to exert this limited power.
Women and men in social work

Social work was, and still is, a female dominated profession. The interviews reveal that in the early years, a social work career attracted many bright, well-educated and independently minded women. Six of the 11 women interviewed (compared to one of the three men) had to move away from home to pursue their education. For five this involved travelling interstate. All had the monetary means to do this. Today such travel is unexceptional, but from earlier vantage points these young women had stepped outside conventional gender boundaries. This required an independence of mind. Even while stretching gendered boundaries in this way, they were pursuing a career that did not disrupt the received wisdom of what constituted suitable women’s work.

Our male participants also pushed gendered boundaries by moving into a career primarily marked out for women. Two male interviewees linked their Christian beliefs to their pursuit of studies on discharge from the army after World War Two. One commented:

My father initially disapproved of me commencing social work. He said he didn’t think it was the right sort of work. I mean for a man to do.

None of the men faced any difficulty in being accepted into the course. In fact, being a man could be an advantage. One participant offered a telling story of his entry to the UWA social work course:

I happened to see a notice board and on the notice board there was a thing about social work. Now I knew absolutely nothing about this, and I just read it and thought ‘That’s interesting’, ... and on the bottom was the name Wally Tauss, Course Controller. So I went home and mentioned this to my mother. And she said: ‘Oh Wally Tauss, I wonder if he’s related to old Mr Tauss. And I said: ‘I don’t know’. Now old Mr Tauss was the Watkins man, they used to go door to door selling Watkins products. .... And anyway, my mother being the person she is, when he came knocking on the door mentioned this to him. And old Mr Tauss said: ‘Oh yeah, he’s my son, and if you’re son’s interested tell him to ring Wally he’d be happy to talk to him.’ ... So I rang up Wally and he invited me round to his house in Mt Lawley. And he said: ‘Well, er..’ you know he sort of explained what social work was about as best he could. Because he wasn’t a social worker, he was in the psych department. And I said: ‘Well, that’s terrific but there’s no Commonwealth scholarship and there’d be difficulties with money’. And he said: ‘Oh you apply for a State Government cadetship’. And I said: ‘Well, are they very competitive?’ and he said: ‘Don’t worry I’m on the selection panel’. It’s a true story. I said: ‘That’s great. Now I don’t have all the prerequisites ‘cos you’ve just explained that there are prerequisites. I’ve done no anthropology or sociology.’ He said: ‘Don’t worry, I’m on the selection panel.’ So I fronted up and the penny dropped the day I fronted up, I was the only male on the course. So, you know, quite clearly he was trying to get the numbers and particularly to get males.

This connects with research (Williams 1992) that while women often face a glass ceiling entering male dominated fields, a glass escalator facilitates men’s movement upwards in female dominated professions.

In WA social work, women had an opportunity to take on defacto leadership
positions developing social work services where they had not existed before. While they may not have held formal positions of authority their input and advice was regularly sought by those in power. So an early practitioner reflecting on her work, which started in 1946, said:

I felt that it was very important to try and interpret social work. (We had) public meetings to discuss social matters. I gave several talks on the ABC.
The thing was to promote social work and our understanding of it. And work towards training being established here. That is something we wanted to do.

Equally women established and led the professional association, at that time a leadership experience not widely available to women. This trend reversed from the 1970s onwards as the number of men entering the profession increased (Browne 1988).

Women themselves were sometimes relieved to enlist the services of the ‘right kinds’ of men. Marjory Hill, an AASW WA branch member since it’s beginning, reported back on the meeting she attended between the Federal AASW and schools of social work, in Sydney, in 1961.
The main stimulus seemed to be from the men … particularly Mr Tierney (Melbourne School) and Mr Breenan (Sydney School) Both of them are well qualified mature men, with a body of experience behind them. They were able to give insights into the impact of social work thinking already taking place in their respective states, with suggestion for further development, but also the need for research … The fact that social work is now showing at least in Victoria that it has something to offer men as well as women, and with increasing status, gives hope for greater professional stability and maturity. All this seemed to offset the preoccupation with sub-professional courses and the depression evoked by the high wastage that has taken place to date, particularly as far as young women are concerned (Hill Delegate Report, 11th October 1961).

The Prince Charming narrative is familiar to many women. The only way for a woman to free herself from the drudgery of her existence is to find ‘the right kind of man.’ In return for giving her power over to him, he will unveil to her, her hidden beauties and protect and guide her through the hazards of life. A feminist take of this tale warns that such protection can become control where female identity is subsumed and colonised by the other (Spender 1982).

One aspect of being a female dominated profession was that salary levels were low with no security of employment once women married. For our interviewees pay and conditions were vexed questions. On the one hand many practitioners were little concerned with pay. As one said,

I really didn’t get concerned about the pay. I left that to other’s like Teddy (Stockbridge). Good on them if that is what concerned them. I was just pleased to be working as a social worker and the money was enough. I mean compared to my clients I had so much.

When quizzed on her feelings that the male social workers at the time received an extra 197 pounds per year for being male (Australian Journal of Social Work 1964, p. 4) — she responded with surprise,

They didn’t! I never knew that! If I did I would have been upset about that.
This exchange and the previously mentioned Hill Report suggest that, having been inscribed with the dominant patriarchal discourse, many female practitioners did not actively pursue issues of poor salary and conditions. There was also little consciousness of the impact of the marriage bar and how this contributed to the wastage of trained social workers. Wastage from the profession would be addressed by recruiting more males (Lawrence 1965).

Though the WA branch successfully appealed to the State Public Service in 1959 to secure the reclassification of social work from the general division to professional class 3 (three years diploma equivalent to occupational therapist; physiotherapist; medical technologist), it took another eight years until the branch, through the efforts of Teddie Stockbridge, sought pay parity with the engineering profession (AASW WA Branch Minutes 1959).

Female interviewees graduating in the late 1960s had differing expectations, anticipating equal employment conditions to males. Despite this, the majority of women reflecting back, concluded that ‘being a man in social work made it easier to get ahead’.

When the men were asked how being a man impacted on their social work career, one dismissed this as of no consequence. Another acknowledged that being male was an advantage in gaining course entry, but then spoke of other factors being important in gaining the ‘plum jobs’.

Well I was on a government cadetship ... (On graduating) I put my first choice down to go to Child Welfare. On judgment day I got a letter from the Public Service saying I would go into the Mental Health services. And I took exception to that because that was my third choice. ...Well X won the toss, but she had more pull than I did.... Well I mean, she was from one of West Australia’s kind of important families. I knew the game ... It’s important who you know.

This relational knowing and the importance of class and family connections in this sparsely populated state is another example of power in action, shaping the birth of social work. Our interviews evidenced historical dimensions to plays of power. This is particularly apparent with regard to issues of race and Aboriginal people’s welfare. Addressing such issues was marginal to the development of the profession. A number of the interviewees commented on particular personal interaction with Aboriginal people, sometimes because of their rural background. At a professional practice level, many commented that few of their clients were Aboriginal.

This mirrors Gale’s (1966) findings with regard to the South Australia situation. Aboriginal people there were either unaware of government services or unwilling to seek help from government departments. Little direct social work involved Aboriginal clients, particularly in agencies that were not health related.

Most social workers felt that Aborigines should be dealt with by any agency without discrimination. However, few could give any explicit statement of their agency’s policy in relation to Aborigines (p. 9).

With the 1967 referendum on including the Aboriginal population as citizens, consciousness as to the circumstances of Aboriginal people developed among social workers at much the same time as the general population. Two years later, in 1969, there was a social work conference
held at Princess Margaret Children’s Hospital, in Perth, to address issues of working with Aboriginal people. An interviewee who participated at that conference, commented that as a newcomer to Australia she had noticed that

... no social worker was involved with this population ... I mean there was not one single social worker anywhere near Aboriginal welfare at all. So (the conference) was fairly controversial ... I was being critical of the profession actually in that we weren’t involved. Then afterwards I got cold feet over it. I didn’t want to publicly criticize my profession which I think was a pity. Anyway it stirred the pot a bit which was good. But it was quite a few years before anything much happened.

What lesson can be learned from social work history?

Reflecting on the interviews, we as researchers identify six ‘lessons’ with the potential to inform practice, both in Western Australia and more generally.

1. The profession has to continually reposition in a changing landscape. A fertile soil for the growth of early WA social work was the Red Cross. By 1960, with the growth of government services, this agency discontinued employing social workers. Now in 2001 as all Australian governments downsize, social workers need to locate themselves in previously unimagined sites. This will not be new to the profession.

2. Social work needs to maintain flexible boundaries and be able to work with and across changing practice styles. Early practice in WA was located in the medical model of health related agencies and then became layered with the casework required in supporting families, from those of returned soldiers to newly arrived migrants. Then community development work emerged in settling families into new rural and urban areas. Several interviewees commented on the flexibility and resourcefulness developed by practising across settings. Social work needs to maintain itself under a broad umbrella sanctioning diverse ways of practising rather than becoming intent on policing boundaries.

3. It is important to be able to publicly articulate and name our practice to the ends of social justice and respecting the worth of each individual. An inability to articulate our concerns can leave us marginalised. An interviewee spoke of how returned soldiers suffering from psychiatric conditions were treated:

A patient came into my office to ask for some material help for his family. And two burly orderlies burst into my office and grabbed him by the arms and shoved a needle of largactyl into him and took him to Claremont (a psychiatric hospital). Now when I think about it they were using ECT and one psychiatrist was using LSD. The suicide rate among those patients was just horrific and I suppose that’s when I started my habit of reading the death notices. I would gradually see one after the other of those patients’ deaths over the next few years. It was very sad, those men and their histories I still remember clearly, it was dreadful. When I left Hollywood (Repatriation Hospital) I felt I really did not want to do social work again.

This quote connects to the quote of Aboriginal issues above and captures the importance of being able to name what is wrong. There is an immense weight
practitioners carry when they cannot publicly bear witness to and act on their experience.

4. **Understanding and returning to a value base is central to what we do and can sustain us through difficult times regardless of the particular contexts in which we work.** Values were often what kept our participants moving forward in times of uncertainty. One interviewee spoke of how the childhood learnt values of equality and fairness were reinforced and took on added meaning when she began her practice. Recalling her time working with the elderly she said:

_It was all about justice. They were often treated badly and the nursing homes were often quite appalling. I saw my role (as a social worker) was to make things different, to work with (the rest of the team) to improve the scope and range of services available._

5. **The practitioner is central to the shaping of practice and education for practice.** Many of our informants could remember practitioners who influenced their practice but few could recount the names of texts they had read during their studies. Negotiating the tensions of race, class and gender in the Western Australian setting was informed by academic understandings but achieved in practice. The birth of the two schools of social work similarly was about the productiveness of the tensions between the academy and practice.

6. **With hindsight it is easy to confidently critique past practices.** How will present practices be critiqued in future? Interviewees spoke of being blind to issues they could now name as race, domestic violence, sex abuse and post traumatic stress syndrome. All practitioners will have blindspots brought about by their inevitable positioning in particular times and places. The challenge for practitioners is to remain open to ongoing learning without being paralyzed by guilt at a consciousness of our limitations.

All six lessons signal for us the importance of praxis in navigating the uncharted territory that the future always is. These histories affirmed the active agency of practitioners, both individually and collectively, in struggling creatively and reflectively to act with and against sites of power to produce new actualities in keeping with social work values and changing times.

**Acknowledgement**

We would like to acknowledge the participation of the 16 pioneer social workers who gave so much of themselves in their interviews with us. These interviews were testimony to the idea that in social work so often the complex work we do are texts that leave no trace in the written word but are inscribed in the living effectiveness of social work. We are also grateful for the ongoing support of the AASW, particularly the WA Branch in this project.

In addition we appreciate the comments from the two anonymous reviewers whose suggestions have doubtless made this a more coherent text. Any limitations remain of course the authors.

**Notes**

1 Emic, a term drawn from anthropology, indicating a participatory ‘native’ view on a meaning making cultural system rather than an etic or outsider view.

2 As well as transcriptions, these included minutes and correspondence of the AASW WA branch, 1946–1970 and annual reports of both government and non-government agencies over the same period.

3 A nurse, Aimee Eakins, established the Royal Perth Hospital Social Services Department in 1928. In 1935–1936 she completed a six months course at the Victorian Institute of Almoners and obtained a Diploma. She retired in 1947 (The West Australian Social Worker, 1996, p. 7).

4 Barbara Evans, 1908–, from an early WA merchant family and niece of pioneering WA feminist, Bessie...
Rischbieth. Gained Diploma in Social Studies at Sydney University 1954 and then headed Social Work Department of Commonwealth Department of Social Services until retirement, in 1974.

5 Margaret E. Stockbridge, BSc(Lond), CertPsycSocW(Manch.), PhD(UWA) known as ‘Teddie’, migrated to WA from the UK in 1958. A Marxist at one stage, she was the first social worker employed by the Child Guidance Clinic and a pivotal figure in the WA branch of AASW. She was a key figure in the establishment of the first social work course in WA.

6 In 1967 the university supported Tauss to gain a social work qualification from the University of Sussex.

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