

have lived experience of mental illness, disability, social exclusion or marginalisation. In the spirit of encouraging collaborative reciprocal partnerships with service users, many academics form relationships with agencies, and these relationships extend to invitations to consumers to engage in educational processes. Such presentations often involve emotive content about loss and bereavement, trauma, violation of human rights or discrimination that can result in many responses, sometimes unanticipated. This paper presents findings from a small learning and teaching project that developed a set of resources to prepare guest presenters and students for engaging with potentially emotive content, and provides strategies to safeguard consumer rights by ensuring that a safe and supportive environment is created for enhancement of learning.

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### **35 | Activism: Optional Extra or Essential Everyday Practice in Australian Social Work? Results of a Classroom-Based Inquiry**

Author/s: Susan Gair

**James Cook University**

Australia's inconvenient history includes British invasion that contributed to enduring individual and structural racism and discrimination for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and they remain significantly overrepresented as social work clients. An antiracist stance is understood to be core to social work practice. Some literature has suggested that cultivating empathy can help reduce racism, and provoke activism for social justice. This presentation reports on a recent classroom-based inquiry exploring barriers to activism. The study extends previous student-centred research by the presenter exploring empathy and racism. The findings suggest that some students hesitant to commit to action for social justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians for reasons including a lack of confidence, and a lack of time and information. Advancing social work students' confidence and skill development, including facilitating 'critical empathy', may bolster students' embrace of everyday acts of activism for social justice.

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### **36 | "Will Learning This Get Me a Job?" Community Development, Social Work Standards and Employability**

Author/s: Helen Betts, Gail Pollard and Ellen Beaumont

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████████ University, School of Human Services and Social Work, operates a student unit in a volunteer-run community centre to provide students with field education experience in community development knowledge and practice. After 6 years, that