

Indigenous Storytelling and Digital Storytelling in Social Work

An Annotated Bibliography 2021



Transforming the Field
Education Landscape

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Transforming the Field Education Landscape (TFEL) project, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's (SSHRC) partnership grant program, aims to better prepare the next generation of social workers in Canada by creating training and mentoring opportunities for students, developing and mobilizing innovative and promising field education practices, and improving the integration of research and practice in field education.

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PURPOSE AND METHODS

The purpose of this annotated bibliography is to gain a better understanding of the Indigenous storytelling and digital storytelling in social work practice, teaching and education. A literature search on Indigenous storytelling and digital storytelling in social work was conducted using the University of Calgary online library system. After reviewing the titles and abstracts of the search results, 12 articles were found relevant for this annotated bibliography.

Database Search, Keywords and Modifications

Database	Keywords	Search Modifications
Academic Search Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Digital storytelling in social work field education" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2011-2021 English language Peer Reviewed
CINAHL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Digital storytelling in social work field education" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2011-2021 English language Peer Reviewed
Google Scholar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Indigenous storytelling in social work field education" "Digital storytelling in social work field education" "Digital storytelling in social work education" "Digital storytelling" "social work" "education" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2000-2021 2011-2021
Social Work Abstracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Digital storytelling in social work field education" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2011-2021 English language Peer Reviewed
SocINDEX with Full Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Digital storytelling in social work field education" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2011-2021 English language Peer Reviewed
University of Calgary Quick Search	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> "Digital storytelling in social work field education" "Digital storytelling AND social work field education" "Indigenous storytelling AND social work field education" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2011-2021 English language Peer Reviewed

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chan, C., & Sage, M. (2021). A narrative review of digital storytelling for social work practice. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 35(1), 63-77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650533.2019.1692804>

Digital storytelling (DST), broadly defined, is a storytelling method that is interwoven with digitised images, texts, sounds, and other interactive elements, and it has been increasingly used for social work and healthcare interventions. While the term DST has become more popular, its role in actual social work interventions is not clear. The ambiguity of DST presents a hurdle to further theorisation for social work practice and research. This article aims to provide a narrative review and derive a conceptualisation that is in line with social work's psychotherapeutic and systems orientation. The review has derived a two-layer conceptualisation. In a broad sense, DST can be seen as an umbrella term covering different sorts of storytelling activities that use digital communication media. Practitioners and researchers can adopt a set of parameters for describing and comparing different practice designs. More specifically, DST can be seen as a kind of narrative practice utilising digital communication media. This definition offers a conceptual base for DST, which helps further theorisation and research in social work practice.

Chan, C. L., & Yau, K. M. (2020). *Digital storytelling for social work interventions*. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. <https://research.polyu.edu.hk/en/publications/digital-storytelling-for-social-work-interventions>.

Digital storytelling is a storytelling method that is interwoven with digitized images, texts, sounds, and other interactive elements. It can be used for social work intervention purposes. Digital storytelling activities can be applied at different levels of practice: i) micro-level: individuals, families, and small groups; ii) meso-macro-level: community, organization, society, and culture; and iii) multiple-level: targeting micro, meso, and macro levels in the same

intervention. Digital storytelling practice emerged with the advent of accessible media production hardware, editing software, and media sharing platforms. In addition, there are sustainable organizations that have gradually developed their unique methods and funding models. This growing network has popularized the concept of digital storytelling. Further, there are academic networks studying the phenomenon, which have further positioned the field in scholarly discussion. Digital storytelling faces challenges that are common to all other forms of technology application in social work, but a key debate is over the extent to which digital stories are representations of service users' voices. Since digital storytelling practices adopt diverse terminologies with various media tools and methods, future research is suggested to have rigorous experimental designs, theoretically based research, and critical appraisal of its effectiveness. The references here were selected based on their quality, as well as their contrasting differences. In order to illustrate the development of the field, the annotated references introduced are generally discussed in a chronological order.

Clark, N., Drolet, J., Mathews, N., Walton, P., Rene'Tamburro, P., Derrick, J., Michaud, V., Armstrong, J., & Arnouse, M. (2010). Decolonizing field education. *Critical Social Work, 11*(1).

<https://doi.org/10.22329/csw.v11i1.5812>

This article shares our reflections and learning on decolonizing field education programs based on exploratory research in the Interior of British Columbia (BC). Because there is no existing research on field education by or with urban Aboriginal people this article aims to contribute to the development of new literature on the process of decolonizing field education practices through cultural safety and intersectional frameworks. The findings call for a transformation in social work and human service field education policies and practices.

Clark, N., Reid, M., Drolet, J., Walton, P., Peirce, J., Charles, G., Vedan, R., Samuel, M., Mathews, N., Burke, S., & Arnouse, M. (2012). Indigenous social work field education: "Melq'ilwiye" Coming

together towards reconciliation. *Native Social Work Journal*, 8, 105-107.

<https://zone.biblio.laurentian.ca/handle/10219/1985>

This article describes a participatory action research project currently unfolding across five university/community sites from British Columbia to South India that is working to reveal, review and reconcile Indigenous social work and human service field education. Subsequent to a research development project identifying culturally safe practices in Aboriginal social work field education (Clark, Drolet, Arnouse, Mathew, Michaud, Walton, Tamburro, Derrick, & Armstrong, 2009) our intersectional research team set out to expand and center this Indigenous knowledge in five diverse university/community sites and begin a reconciliation process between mainstream dominant social work and human service theories, policies or practices that may be harmful for Indigenous students who are doing their field placements. The article considers how field education, and working by example, the researchers and the research project, can create fissures in the dominant normativity of this social work domain. The authors argue for an Indigenous intersectionality framework as an important component of reconciliation within social work field education. One of the goals of this research project is to center indigenous and local knowledges and to begin a reconciliation process within the social work and human service field education programs while maintaining strong commitments to social justice and activism.

Fernando, T., & Bennett, B. (2019). Creating a culturally safe space when teaching Aboriginal content in social work: A scoping review. *Australian Social Work*, 72(1), 47-61.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2018.1518467>

Teaching Aboriginal content in social work education presents risks of re-traumatisation for students. There are international calls for a trauma-informed teaching model that creates cultural safety in the classroom. This study aimed to develop a trauma-informed model for

social work education by reviewing the literature on cultural safety for Aboriginal peoples. This model incorporates key aspects of ensuring Aboriginal cultural safety: de-colonise social work education; collaborative partnerships; build relationships; critical reflection; develop cultural courage; and yarning and story-telling. It provides a valuable framework for creating a more equitable teaching and learning environment that also ensures the essential academic content is covered.

Hafford-Letchfield, T., Dayananda, A., & Collins, D. A. (2018). Digital storytelling for interprofessional collaborative practice to develop quality and service improvements. *Social Work Education, 37*(6), 804–812. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2018.1484087>

'Service Development and Quality Improvement' is a professional development module within an interprofessional leadership program accessed by health and social care professionals. It focuses on acquiring skills and knowledge in quality enhancement, quality improvement and service user and patient involvement essential to transforming services. Emphasis is on the co-production of service improvement and enhancing skills in using information technology and different media supported by a virtual and blended learning environment. This Ideas in Action digital storytelling case study used a virtual learning activity supported by a combination of multimedia, discussion boards, group work and structured activities to engage students in peer support. Aspects of the digital storytelling process provide a useful distance learning tool for engaging different professionals in identifying common issues in improving services. Our reflective account of the process by drawing on both tutor and students own commentary on the potential of digital storytelling. Learning digital storytelling within a collaborative virtual learning environment gave rise to three key observable outcomes: a leveling effect in interprofessional collaboration; enhancing curiosity as a vehicle for enriching

interprofessional exchange; and emphasizing service users and patient perspective in service improvements.

Hewson, J., Danbrook, C., & Sieppert, J. (2015). Engaging post-secondary students and older adults in an intergenerational digital storytelling course. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research (Littleton, Colo.)*, 8(3), 135–142. <https://doi.org/10.19030/cier.v8i3.9345>

A five-day Digital Storytelling course was offered to Social Work students, integrating a three-day workshop with older adult storytellers who shared stories related to the theme stories of home. A course evaluation was conducted exploring the Digital Storytelling experience and learning in an intergenerational setting. Findings from surveys distributed at the end of the course to students and storytellers revealed that students' knowledge of and interest in Digital Storytelling and its application was enhanced. The intergenerational component was positive for students and older adults. Students identified the intergenerational component as a highlight of the course which improved their awareness of older adult issues and knowledge of working with aging populations. Older adult participants enjoyed working with the students which increased their understanding of younger generations. This innovative course enhanced students' learning experiences, meriting consideration for the incorporation of intergenerational learning opportunities and Digital Storytelling into future social service and aging related courses to better prepare students for gerontological practice.

La Rose, T., & Detlor, B. (2021). Social work digital storytelling project: Digital literacy, digital storytelling, and the makerspace. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 104973152199242. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049731521992427>

The Social Work Digital Storytelling project was a research study undertaken to (1) enhance digital literacy of practitioners and students through digital storytelling training, (2) diversify engagement in a local public library technology hub (the “makerspace”), and (3) understand

and enhance social work leadership knowledge among students and practitioners through the creation and sharing of leadership-focused digital stories. Method: Free hands-on digital storytelling workshops where social workers/students created stories about leadership exposed social workers to technologies accessible in the community and provided hands-on experience using hardware (e.g., iMac computers, digital cameras, portable data recorders, and a recording booth) and software (e.g., Adobe Photoshop, iMovie, and GarageBand) as well as online social media platforms (e.g., Flickr, YouTube, and Facebook). Results: Before and after the workshops, participants completed a brief online qualitative self-evaluation survey through which they reflected on their skills, values, and beliefs about digital technology in practice. Participants gained knowledge of perspectives of online ethical tenants and exposure to Creative Commons Copyright and the NASW Technology Standards of Practice. Discussion: Prior to participation, the social workers reported fear and hesitancy using technology. After workshop completion, workers experienced a greater sense of confidence using digital technology as well as identifying organizational and systemic issues, which hindered field-based technological engagement.

Rossiter, M., & Garcia, P. A., (2010). Digital storytelling: A new player on the narrative field. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, (126), 37–48. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.370>

Digital stories add a multimedia dimension to narrative. The authors highlight some of the most promising features of digital storytelling for adult learning.

Sunderland, N., Robinson, K., & Burgess, A. (2021). Overcoming future professionals' fear of digital storytelling. *Australian Social Work*, 74(1), 13–28.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2020.1762098>

Digital storytelling assessments at university can develop emerging human service and social workers' skills in contemporary social media production and related advocacy. Despite

growing interest in digital storytelling in these disciplines, there is little support for developing the technical sides of the practice. This article shares key learnings from an Australian teaching and learning project used to develop a digital storytelling module for social work and human services students at university who are not filmmakers. Students across a range of courses undertook digital storytelling assessments using the module. A key finding was that students still experienced considerable fear but were able to turn that into significant personal and professional development. This article explores these and other key learnings from the project and offers tips for others wishing to implement digital storytelling.

IMPLICATIONS Emerging social work and human services professionals studying at university often exhibit fear and resistance to new tasks such as digital storytelling. Such students need to be supported to navigate that discomfort to achieve learning. Students can be supported using online modules that support the technical and creative sides of digital storytelling. This project found that students were able to develop confidence and skills in digital storytelling after completing this module and assignment.

Tsui, E., & Starecheski, A. (2018). Uses of oral history and digital storytelling in public health research and practice. *Public Health, 154*, 24. <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2017.10.008>

Oral history (OH) and digital storytelling (DST) have been used in a range of ways in public health, including educating populations about health-protecting practices, advocating for improved clinical care and reflecting on public health efforts to combat infectious disease. Yet, these methods are rarely recognized for their potential to contribute to public health research and practice. The aim of this article is to assess how OH and DST have been used in the health fields and to provide examples of ways that these methods have contributed to work in several domains of public health. We conducted a narrative review of articles gathered from PubMed using the search terms 'oral history' and 'digital storytelling', which resulted in 102

articles relevant to public health. We then conducted a thematic analysis to create a typology of article topics and to examine cross-cutting themes. OH and DST have been used for both research and interventions in public health. Specifically, they have been used to 1) examine health risks and experiences; 2) engage and educate populations; 3) educate clinical professionals and organizations; and 4) inform public health practice. Despite the time, resources, and training required to do OH and DST well, we argue that these methods have substantial potential for supplementing public health activities, allowing the field to glean additional lessons from its experiences, to educate its practitioners further, and to better learn from the experiences of communities affected by public health problems.

Zuchowski, I., Savage, D., Miles, D., & Gair, S. (2013). Decolonising field education-challenging Australian social work praxis. *Advances in Social Work and Welfare Education, 15*(1), 48.

Social Work's contribution to Australia's legacy of colonisation, the Stolen Generation and ongoing child welfare interventions, may make entering the profession a contentious issue for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Yet the profession is poorer for their absence, and closing the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous social work graduates is a quest aligned with social justice, and with social work as a human rights profession. Field education is considered a significant and important process through which students are socialised into the profession. Questions arise about how professional enculturation might occur for Indigenous students as they put theory into practice, when this theory and practice derives from dominant western frameworks. In this article we present findings from research exploring the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social work and welfare students in field placements. The findings identify racism as ever-present, highlight the impact of Eurocentricism on practice, and reveal the disregard of Aboriginal cultural ways of helping and the potential for disempowerment. These findings have implications for social work praxis

and social work education. Recommendations for improved practice and further research are made.

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