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Social Work Artfully: Beyond Borders and Boundaries

Christina Sinding and Hazel Barnes, editors

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The past two decades have witnessed a vigorous challenge to social work. A growing global convergence between the market and the public sector means that private sector values, priorities, and forms of work organization increasingly permeate social and community services. As challenges facing people and communities become more layered and complex, our means of responding become more time-bound and reductionist.

This book is premised on the belief in the revitalizing power of arts-informed approaches to social justice work; it affirms and invites creative responses to personal, community, and political struggles and aspirations. The projects described in the book address themes of colonization, displacement and forced migration, sexual violence, ableism, and vicarious trauma. Each chapter shows how art can facilitate transformation: by supporting processes of conscientization and enabling re-storying of selves and identities; by contributing to community and cultural healing, sustainability and resilience; by helping us understand and challenge oppressive social relations; and by deepening experiences, images, and practices of care.

Social Work Artfully emerges from collaboration between researchers, educators, and practitioners in Canada and South Africa. It offers examples of arts-informed interventions that are attentive to diversity, attuned to various forms of personal and communal expression, and cognizant of contemporary economic and political conditions.

Christina Sinding is an Associate Professor at McMaster University (School of Social Work and Department of Health, Aging and Society). Her research focuses on cancer and social marginalization; service user involvement; and arts-informed social science, especially in social work and social-justice contexts. She is the author, with Ross Gray, of *Standing Ovation: Performing Social Science Research about Cancer*.

Hazel Barnes is a Senior Research Associate in Drama and Performance Studies at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, and Chair of the Research Committee of Drama for Life, University of the Witwatersrand. She has published a number of papers on drama and theatre applied to interculturalism and post-traumatic stress in national and international journals, and has also recently edited three books on applied drama/theatre.

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