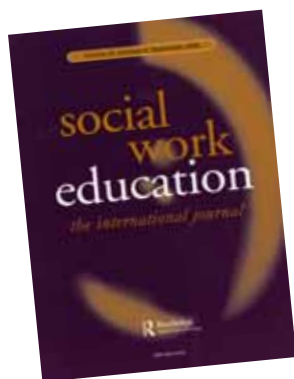


Sexualities

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Guest Editors:

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Historically, social work has seemed reluctant to admit its connections with sexuality policies, or to address sexuality issues in education or practice. Nor has it been willing to acknowledge its lesbian and gay colleagues. As 2007 saw the 40th anniversary of the legalisation of homosexuality (in private, for men over 21 years) in the UK, it has been interesting to see the shift in the political landscape over the last decade with civil partnerships and the repeal of Section 28 and other repressive legislation. It could be said that British society has never been so accepting of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people. However, this is far from reality. For example, as recent reports reveal, homophobic bullying is 'almost epidemic' in Britain's schools and workplaces. Globally, homophobic violence and torture is reported in Poland, Latvia, Indonesia, Jamaica and elsewhere, and the growing interest in Christian fundamentalist religious beliefs pose serious challenges for social work educators and practitioners throughout the world. Much has still to be done.

This special issue aims to extend and strengthen our knowledge and understanding of how sexuality effects social work education and how our own and others' sexualities impact on learning and teaching, with particular emphasis on challenging homophobia and questioning the norms of heterosexuality. It introduces new understandings and key messages for the next generation of social work education.

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