



Community, Identity & Displacement Research Network Seminars

Thursday May 23, 3.30 pm,

Venue: Footscray Park campus, room A 432

Community Development: Past, Present and Future

Prof. Jim Ife, Victoria University

The world is now experiencing a series of major crises – economic, environmental, food, water, etc, and the inevitable corresponding political crises – and this at a time when new technology and social media are transforming the ways we relate to each other, and the very idea of ‘community’. At this time the idea of community development, as traditionally understood, is problematic.

There are four historical strands to traditional understandings of community development. One is the social justice tradition, seeing community development as a way of bringing about a fair society, and addressing social problems. Another is the agenda of economic development, especially in the international development field. A third is the planning tradition, seeing the idea of community itself as intrinsically valuable, and as a necessary correction to the individualisation and fragmentation of modern life. The fourth is the ecological tradition, seeing community as the most sustainable form of living, and as necessary if we are to deal with present and future ecological crises.

These four imply different ontologies, and are not always compatible in contemporary community development. Yet it will be important to incorporate these different traditions in the future trajectory of community development from this time of crisis. Each raises different issues for researchers and practitioners.

Details: http://communityidentity.com.au/?page_id=2327

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