

## National Drug Research Institute Student Information Evening 2010



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# Research Overview and Opportunities

Professor Simon Lenton  
NDRI Deputy Director

# Overview

- History
- Part of Faculty of Health Sciences and Tier 1
- WHO Collaborating Centre
- Relevance of NDRI to national strategy and beyond
- Key result areas:
  - Conduct high quality research that will contribute to primary prevention of harmful drug use and reduction of drug related harm
  - Disseminate research findings to policy makers, practitioners, public health professionals, other researchers, community interest groups and the public; and contribute to the building of national capacity for research in the prevention of drug related harm
- Links to a range of stakeholders (e.g. Health; Police; Drug consumers; Community)

# Activities, outputs and outcomes

- Wide range of opportunities for HDR supervision and for casual work/research careers
- Varied professional background
  - Psychology
  - Public Health
  - Epidemiology
  - Anthropology
  - Medicine
  - Sociology



## Engage in range of research and related activities

- Alcohol policy
- Indigenous Australians
- Offender health
- Primary prevention and early intervention
- Social contexts of drug use
- People who continue to use alcohol and other drugs
- Tobacco
- New technologies

# Alcohol Policy Research

# Examples of current projects

- National Alcohol Indicators Project (NAIP)
- Alcohol outlet density and related harm
- An investigation of the nature, extent and effects of point-of-sale promotions for alcohol beverages
- Australian Alcohol Aetiologic Fractions for Emergency Department Presentations (AAAFED)
- Evaluation of public health and safety impact of Extended Trading Permits for Perth hotels and nightclubs
- Impact of changes to outlet density of public health and safety
- The estimate of the direct and indirect economic costs of alcohol incurred by Local Government
- The range and magnitude of alcohol's harm to others
- Alcohol and other drug use at school leaver celebrations in Western Australia

# Alcohol policy research team



Tanya Chikritzhs



Richard Pascal



Wendy Loxley



Paul Catalano



Michaela Evans



Tina Lam  
(PhD Scholar)

# Prevention, Early Intervention and Inequality

# Research Strands

- Impact of early intervention (maternal health, child health and early learning and care) on health and well being (including substance use) among marginalised populations; e.g. evaluations of early learning initiatives in East Kimberley & central Australia
- Child-focused, family-centred, youth-led models of community development; e.g. *Jaru Pirrjirdi* project
- Social inequalities and their impact on health and substance use outcomes e.g. ARC Catalyst
- Mixed-method, participatory approaches to research and evaluation, e.g. NH&MRC Indigenous research training
- Alcohol and pregnancy longitudinal cohort and data linkage studies; e.g. Effect of dose, pattern, and timing of prenatal alcohol exposure and fetal effects; and Effect of a maternal alcohol-related diagnosis on children

# Prevention, Early Intervention & Inequality Team



Prof Sherry Siggers



Dr Lynn Roarty



Dr Kate Frances



Dr Colleen O'Leary

- Collaborative research also with Professor Dennis Gray, A/Professor Ted Wilkes, Ms Annalee Stearne, Dr Mandy Wilson & Mr Michael Doyle (Indigenous Australian Research Team)

# Community and School Interventions

# Examples of Research Strands

- Alcohol Use and Pregnancy
  - Formative intervention research
  - Systematic literature review of interventions to reduce alcohol use during preconception, pregnancy and breastfeeding
  - Surveys with pregnant women who drink – demographics, situation and circumstances – directions for potential intervention
  - Impact of low level alcohol use during pregnancy
- Kalgoorlie Alcohol Action Project
- School Health and Alcohol Harm Reduction Project (SHAHRP) - ongoing national and international dissemination
- School Drug Education

# Community and School Interventions Team



Dr Nyanda McBride



Dr Rina Cercarelli

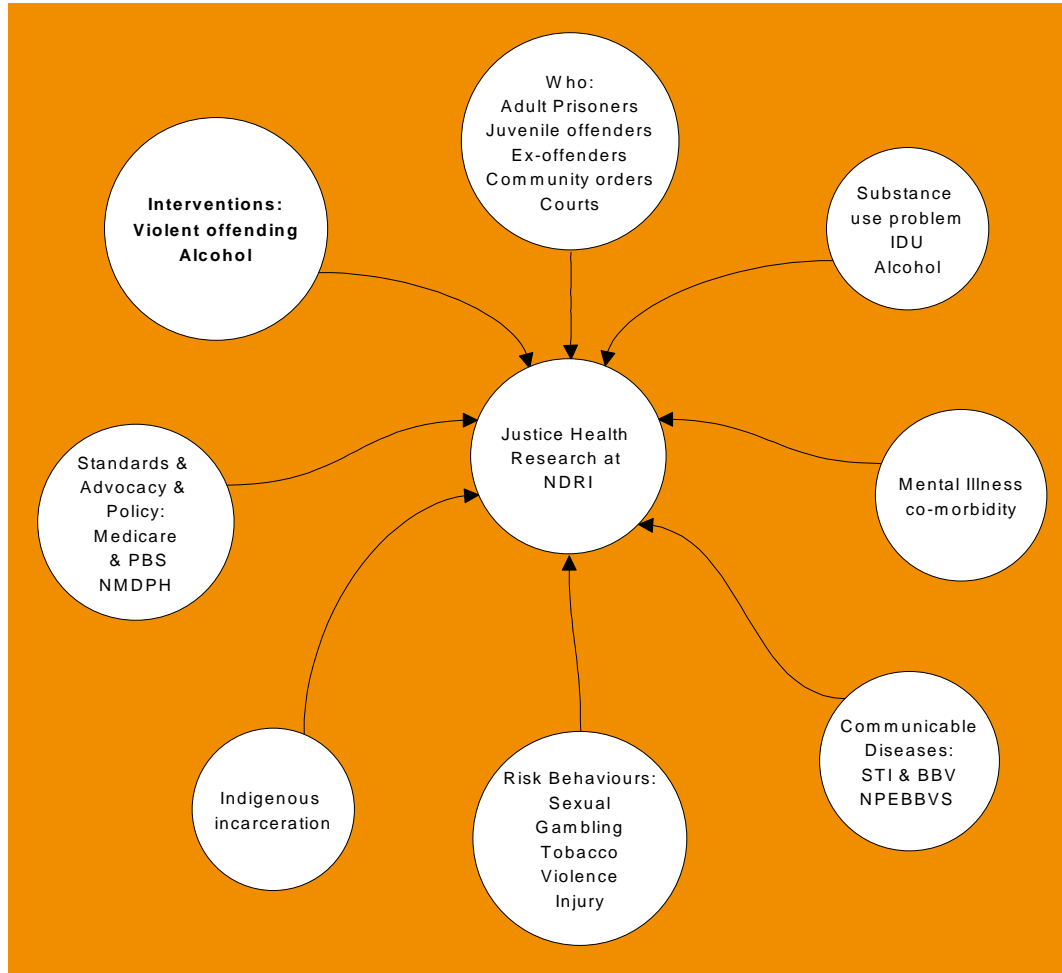


Andreia Schineanu (KAAP)

- Susan Carruthers, Sherry Saggars and Colleen O'Leary also involved in FASD research

# Offender Health

# Offender Health Research



# Offender Health Team



Prof Tony Butler



Dr Susan Carruthers  
IDU/ Hepatitis C



Dr Eva Malacova  
TBI & offending



Jocelyn Jones  
PhD Scholar  
(Juvenile offending)



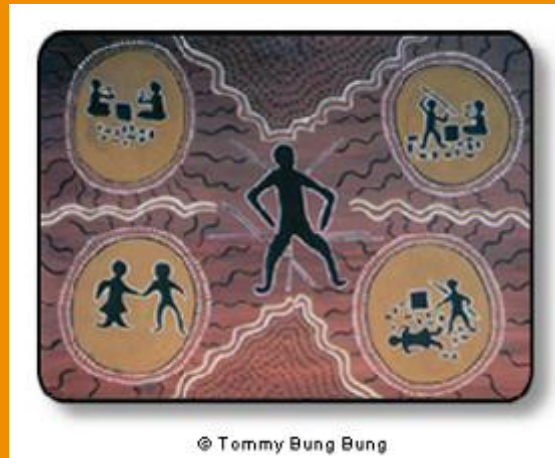
James Fetherston  
PhD Scholar  
(Hepatitis C)



Michael Doyle  
MPH Scholar



Clare Stevens  
Research  
Associate



## Indigenous Australians

# Examples of Current Projects

- Identifying Areas of Greatest Need in Indigenous Substance Misuse Intervention
- Enhancing the management of alcohol-related problems among Indigenous Australians
- Evaluation of Central Australian Aboriginal Congress' *Safe and Sober Support Service*
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cannabis Interventions
- Randomised controlled trial of an intensive smoking cessation intervention in Kimberley Aboriginal PHC settings
- Longitudinal study of the impact of alcohol restrictions in Central Australia
- Support of Tangentyere Council Research Hub

# Indigenous Australians Research Team



Prof Dennis Gray



A/Prof Ted Wilkes



Dr Julia Butt



Dr Mandy Wilson



Anna Stearne



Ed Garrison

# Illicit Drug Use Research

# Drugs and Policy

## Legislative and Regulatory Approaches

- Legislative options for cannabis
- Research on strategies to respond to drink and drug driving
- Research and advocacy for peer access to naloxone (Narcan)

## Illicit Drug monitoring

- IDRS - Illicit Drug Reporting System (IDUs)
- ERDS – Ecstasy and Related Drugs ('party drugs')

## Other projects and interests

- Drug users and the on-line environment
- Knowledge Transfer – Bridging the research to policy gap



# Drugs and policy team



Prof Simon Lenton



Candice Rainsford



Jessica George



Monica Barratt  
(PhD Scholar)

# Ethnographic Research

# Examples of Current Projects

- Understanding and reducing alcohol-related harm among young adults in urban settings: Opportunities for intervention
- Analysing addiction concepts for improved public health outcomes: A Victorian Pilot Study
- Understanding the barriers to improved access, engagement and retention of methamphetamine users in health services
- Under construction: The social and cultural politics of hepatitis C in Australia
- An examination of injection drug use sites in Vancouver: The influence of social and physical context on drug-related harms and public health interventions
- The harms associated with concurrent alcohol and party drug use amongst young people: Risk environments and the implications for prevention
- The ethnography of party drug use and related harms in the Melbourne club/rave scene
- The ethnography of recreational party drug use and related harms in Perth
- Improving understanding of psychostimulant-related harms in Australia: An integrated ethno-epidemiological approach

# Ethnographic research team



David Moore



Robyn Dwyer



Suzanne Fraser



Nicola Thomson  
(PhD Scholar)



Rachael Green  
(PhD Scholar)



Amy Pennay  
(PhD Scholar)



Christine Siokou  
(PhD Scholar)

PhD project:  
Doing drugs in an internet  
society

Monica Barratt

PhD Scholar

[m.barratt@curtin.edu.au](mailto:m.barratt@curtin.edu.au)

# Reflecting on my time at NDRI

- Started 2002 as research assistant; completed Honours thesis with NDRI co-supervision; since held positions as research officer and fellow in Melbourne
- Excellent mentorship and work experience
- Peer-reviewed publications
- Opportunities to work on national level projects
- Networking opportunities with researchers and AOD professionals locally and across the country
- National and international conference presentations
- Great friendships and collegial relationships
- Excellent administrative and infrastructural support

## *Future career aspirations:*

- To submit thesis end 2010 or start 2011
- Submit academic papers arising from thesis
- Application for competitive funding to continue work from thesis
- Post doctoral fellowship / development of program of research

# Doing drugs in an internet society

Monica Barratt, supervised by Simon Lenton & Matthew Allen

Aim: To explore and document the relationship between drug use & related harms and the use of online forums where drugs are discussed

- Description of settings & participants
- Seeking & sharing information
- Assessing accuracy & credibility
- Constructing norms/discourses
- Constructing/negotiating identities
- Accessing real world social scenes

Outcome: To inform how drug use is understood in an era of widespread internet use



# Benefits and Challenges

- Completing my thesis in Melbourne while receiving supervision from Perth
- Choosing an exploratory research topic about which little was known (in 2006 in any case!)
- Stretching my quantitative psychology training by doing a mixed-methods project involving online research methods



# Honours project: Public attitudes to drug dependence

Tanzi Collinge  
Bachelor of Psychology  
Curtin University

# Public attitudes to drug dependence

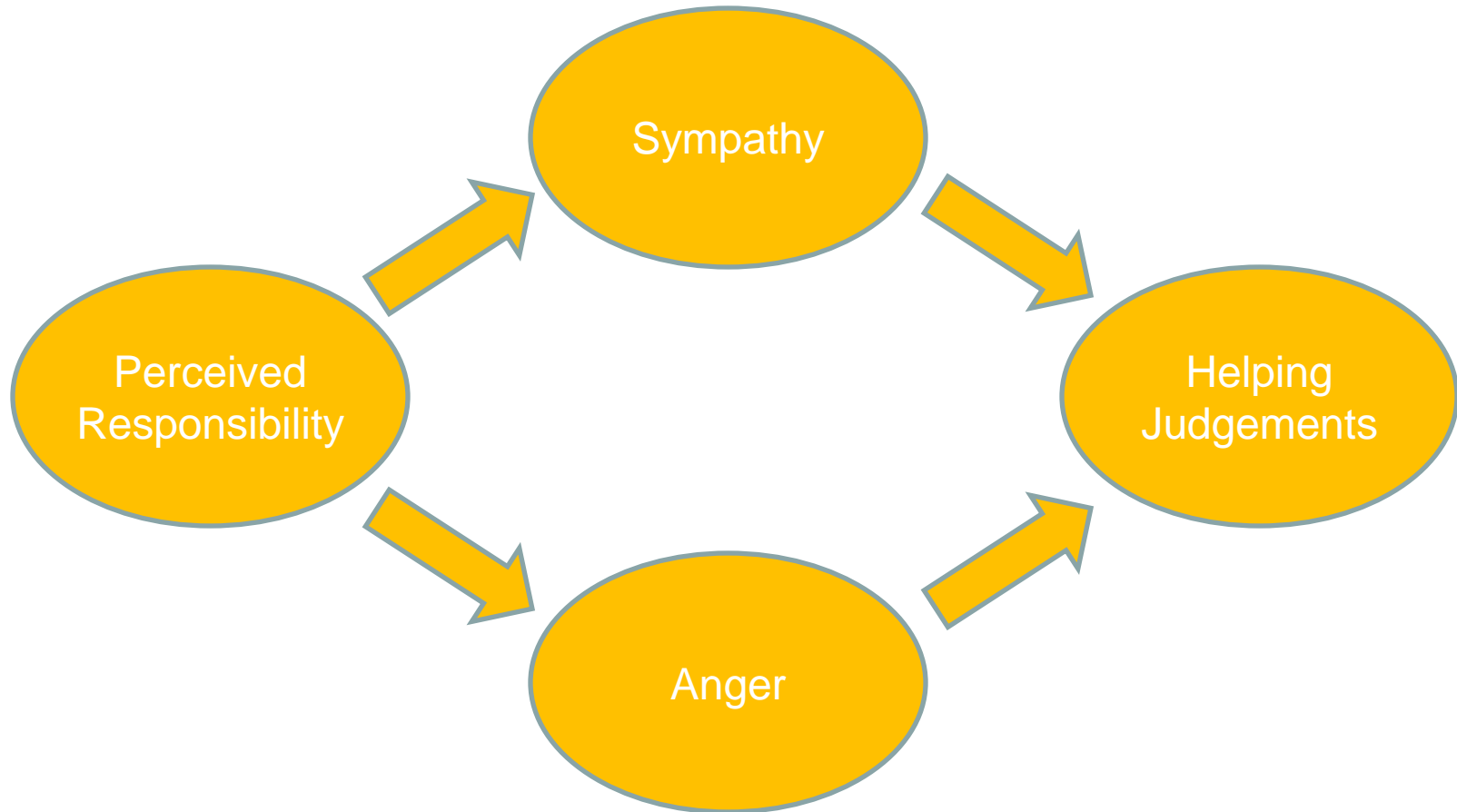
## *Research questions*

- Parental status of drug user
- Legal status of drug
- Predicting attitudes towards helping

## *My study*

- Online questionnaire
- Quantitative + qualitative component
- MRA for comparisons, and SEM for model testing

# My results



# My experience studying with NDRI

- Real-world research project
- Co-supervision from an expert in the field
- Research grant
- Networking opportunities with researchers and AOD professionals
- The potential for publication and national conference presentation

## *Career aspirations*

- Registration as a psychologist
- Working with children in the AOD field

# Research Bursaries:

**TWO RESEARCH BURSARIES in 2011**

**CLOSING DATE: 31 January 2011**

**VALUE - up to \$2500**

**For any bona fide research expenses**

**e.g. recruitment, data coding, conference registration & travel**

**Expectation – refereed journal submission**

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

### **Essential**

- 1. Good undergraduate grades**
- 2. Capacity to undertake a successful project.**
- 3. Enrolment in honours or masters program at a WA university**
- 4. A supervisor in enrolling department who is willing to supervise a drug-related project with a co-supervisor from NDRI**
- 5. Availability of a potential co-supervisor at NDRI**

### **Desirable**

- 1. Previous study / experience in the alcohol and other drugs area.**

# Scholarship opportunities, and other Postgraduate info

Susan Carruthers

For further information on  
scholarships, bursaries and research:

CD

Please take an information CD with you

NDRI

[ndri.curtin.edu.au/students](http://ndri.curtin.edu.au/students)

Curtin

[curtin.edu.au/research/futurestudents/](http://curtin.edu.au/research/futurestudents/)

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