

Critical Social Marketing Symposium Programme

Wednesday 12 June 2024 / 10.00-17.00 / School for Business and Society, University of York and online

Location: CL/A/057, Church Lane Building, Campus West, University of York and Online

10.00-10.30: Welcome to the Symposium

Welcome from Professor Bob Doherty, Dean of the School for Business and Society, University of York

Welcome from Dr Nadina Luca, Chair of the European Social Marketing Association; School for Business and Society, University of York

“What is Critical Social Marketing” by Dr Fiona Spotswood, University of Bristol Business School

10.30-12.00: Keynote Session

“Reflections and opportunities for Transdisciplinary Behaviour and Social Change” by **Professor Ross Gordon** (University of Technology Sydney, Australia)

“Critical social marketing in disability: reflections on a Royal Commission and implications for theory, research, practice, and policy” by **Dr Nadia Zainuddin** (University of Wollongong, Australia; AASM)

“For profit organisations and social marketing partnerships or conflict” by **Professor Jeff French** (iSMA, Strategic Social Marketing; Brighton University, UK and Doshisha University, Japan)

12.00-13.00: Lunch

13.00 – 15.00: Workshops

Workshop 1: Critical approaches to equality, diversity, and inclusion

Chair: Professor Victoria Wells (School for Business and Society, University of York, UK)

Speakers: Professor Thomas Anker (University of Dundee School of Business, UK): ‘*Sameness As Male Privilege: The Representation of Power in Public Discourse*’; Ave Le Blanc (University of Technology, Sydney, Australia): ‘*She cyar sell me Nothing*’: *The Shift from Social Media Influencer to Content Creator in the pursuit of Authenticity*’; Dr David Rowe (School for Business and Society, University of York, UK): ‘*Last Orders for Loneliness: Older Men’s Temporary Enclaves in LGBT+ Pubs*’

Workshop 2: Theoretical innovations in social marketing drawing on critical social theory

Chair: Dr Joya Kemper (University of Canterbury, New Zealand)

Speakers: Dr Sahar Bakr (Nottingham Business School, UK): ‘*The power of personal self-tracking technology - a conceptual appraisal*’; Dr Fiona Spotswood (University of Bristol Business School, UK): ‘*Leveraging passion politics in outdoor action sport: Theoretical advances for pro-environmental action and sustainable consumption campaigns*’; Yujia Liu (School for Business and Society, University of York, UK): ‘*Out-of-home food consumption and waste*’.

Workshop 3: Bringing under-represented voices into pro-social change

Chair: Dr Nadia Zainuddin (University of Wollongong, Australia; AASM)

Speakers: Dr Samantha Gallage (Nottingham University Business School, UK): *'Underrepresented voices of Social Marketing: Bottom of the Pyramid Communities of the Global South'*; **Dr Martin Owusu Ansah** (KNUST School of Business, Kumasi, Ghana): *'Critical Social Marketing on Ghana's Free Education Policy: An Exploratory Study'*; **Dr Diogo Verissimo** (University of Oxford, UK): *'Another Brick on the Paywall: How Current Social Marketing Academic Publishing Perpetuates Inequity and Hinders Impact'*;

** Workshop attendees are encouraged to read the abstracts/expressions of interest available in this document prior to the event to facilitate participation and discussions in the workshops.

15.00 – 15.30: Coffee break

15.30 – 17.00: Panel: 'Research with impact – how Critical Social Marketing can contribute to the new wave of doing research for impact?'

Speakers: Professor Thomas Anker, Professor Jeff French, Professor Ross Gordon, Dr Joya Kemper, Dr Fiona Spotswood, Dr Diogo Verissimo, Professor Victoria Wells, Dr Nadia Zainuddin

KEYNOTES ABSTRACTS & BIOS

Reflections and opportunities for Transdisciplinary Behaviour and Social Change

In this presentation, Ross will reflect on his experiences from working with the WHO, European Commission, Australian Government and a range of other organisations and stakeholders on transdisciplinary behaviour and social change initiatives. Ross will consider some of the key issues, challenges, and opportunities for transformative change, and the role that social marketing can play. He will end with a challenge to social marketers, and indeed anyone working in behaviour and social change to acknowledge our socio-political context, engage with constructive criticality, and adopt collectivist approaches – providing some practical ideas on how to do this in our everyday practice.

Speaker Bio: Ross Gordon is a Professor of Behaviour and Social Change at UTS Business School, University of Technology Sydney. He researches social issues and behaviour and social change, through a critical, reflexive, and multi-perspective lens. Ross is also Director of a new UTS research centre: Change for Good, working in the same area. Ross currently serves on the WHO Technical Advisory Group on Behavioural Insights and Sciences for Health. He works on various behaviour and social change issues including gambling, non-communicable diseases, Covid-19, energy hardship and energy efficiency, climate action and environmental sustainability, alcohol, tobacco control, mental health, workplace bullying, and the neoliberalism of education. Ross has been a principal or named investigator on projects attracting over \$8.7m in research funds. He has published over 120 academic journals, book chapters and conference papers and a leading book: Strategic Social Marketing: For Behaviour and Social Change published by SAGE. Ross also enjoys playing and watching football and is a techno DJ.

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Critical social marketing in disability: reflections on a Royal Commission and implications for theory, research, practice, and policy

In 2019, the Disability Royal Commission was established in response to community concern about widespread reports of violence against, and the neglect, abuse and exploitation of people with disability in Australia. The Final Report was released in 2023, providing a list of 222 recommendations covering a range of issues and systems to strengthen the rights and inclusion of people with disability. In this presentation, Nadia will discuss how a critical social marketing approach can contribute to addressing some of these recommendations, integrating ideas from recent critical social marketing research in the disability area. Participants will be provided with suggestions for how this can translate in other social issue areas and contexts, and in work examining the experiences of other consumer segments experiencing various forms of marginalisation and vulnerability.

Speaker Bio: Dr Nadia Zainuddin is a behaviour and social change researcher, whose research aims to understand the lived experiences of people, to inform programmes, interventions, and policy to improve well-being. Conceptually, she is a specialist in value theory, having pioneered work developing and applying the frameworks of value creation and destruction across a range of social marketing and consumption contexts. These include the cost-of-living crisis, cancer screening, wellness, disability, and transportation. Her projects focus on people who are more likely to experience marginalisation and vulnerability, such as women, older people, people with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups, and people in insecure work. She is a mixed methodologist, trained in both qualitative and quantitative research techniques. Nadia has experience working on funded research projects in partnership with a range of government and industry collaborators, including the Australian Research Council, Australian Marketing

Institute, The Scottish Universities Insight Institute, Queensland Health, New South Wales Health, and the Australian Red Cross Blood Service. She is also the President of the Australian Association of Social Marketing, the peak body representing social marketers in industry, academia, and government in Australia. She has chaired the International Social Marketing Conference (the leading Australasian social marketing conference) and the World Social Marketing Conference, guest edited special issues for the Journal of Social Marketing, sits on the Editorial Advisory Board of the Journal of Services Marketing, and is an ARC Detailed Assessor for Marketing.

X: @Dr_Nadz

For profit organisations and Social Marketing partnerships or conflict.

This presentation aims to explore the potential contributions of the for-profit sector in integrating resources with social marketing organisations for value co-creation. The presentation will address the need for further theorisation and understanding of how value co-creation can be achieved by cross sector collaborations. The presentation will draw from social marketing, value co-creation and eco-systems literature and emerging guidance from the UN and WHO about the need for inter sectorial collaborations. The presentation will conclude with proposals for four dimensions of resources which can be integrated: cognitive, labour, economic and networks. Additionally, it will be argued that three benefits of co-creation between for profits and not for profit in the field of social marketing can be achieved better – co-learning, co-design, and co-production. This presentation draws on theoretical contributions set out in: Jeff French, Rebekah Russell-Bennett, Rory Mulcahy, (2017) “Travelling alone or travelling far?: Meso-level value co-creation by social marketing and for-profit organisations” Journal of Social Marketing, Vol. 7 Issue: 3, pp.280-296. Link to this document: <https://doi.org/10.1108/JSOCM-12-2016-0088>

Speaker Bio: Jeff French is a visiting Professor at Brighton University UK and Doshisha University Japan. Jeff was a senior civil servant in the UK. In 2004, he headed the UK government review of social marketing and set up the National Social Marketing Centre in 2006. Jeff has worked for the WHO, the UN and the European Centre for Disease Control. He is the co-author of the European Centre for Disease Control (ECDC) technical guidance on social marketing and is author of three UN tool kits. He also sits on the editorial boards of five journals. In 2021, he was elected President of the International Social Marketing association. Key publications: Social Marketing and Public Health: Theory and Practice (2nd edition), highly commended in the 2018, BMA Medical Book Awards. Co-authored with Ross Gordon: Strategic Social Marketing (2nd edition 2020) is a standard textbook on many university reading lists.

Abstracts/Expressions of Interest accepted for workshop presentation

Workshop 1: Critical approaches to equality, diversity, and inclusion

Sameness As Male Privilege: The Representation of Power in Public Discourse

Author: Professor Thomas Anker, University of Dundee School of Business, UK

The possession and enactment of power is intricately linked to its representation in public discourse (Martin, 1977). Using a critical social marketing lens (Gordon, 2011; Kamin et al., 2022), this project analyses the way in which men and women in powerful positions are represented in the media. The analysis focuses particularly on the semiotic cues of power conveyed by the clothing worn by people in powerful positions (Owyong, 2009). Based on an analysis of recent front pages of the Financial Times, a clear pattern of representation is emerging. Men in powerful positions are overwhelmingly represented in similar types of clothing, whereas powerful women tend to differentiate themselves far more. Across 24 days a total of 131 men in powerful positions featured on the FT landing page. 90% of these conformed to the same dress code: dark suit and neutral shirt with or without a tie. This is a statistically very significant professional norm which associates male power with conformity. Only 10% of men in powerful positions diverge from the norm and when they do so, they are predominantly dressed in dark colours (i.e. black, grey and blue). By contrast, there is no clear overarching pattern of representation among powerful women: as a group, women are associated with far more semiotic diversity and there is no single dress code to which one as a women can conform. Across the same period, FT's landing page featured 21 women in powerful positions.¹ Of these, 67% wore clothing that signifies individuality (bright red, pink and purple 24%; patterned and multicoloured 24%; white and beige 19%). 33% wore clothing that could be attributed to the predominant dress code among powerful men (i.e. dark blazer and neutral shirt/blouse). As such, female power is associated with differentiation and individualization. There may be multiple different explanations of this social phenomenon. For example, tradition may offer a functional explanation. However, the focal point in this study is not on the cause of the phenomenon. Rather, it is the implications of the significant difference in the representation and visual enactment of power among powerful men and women which is under investigation. The hope is to understand what it does to men and women in professional positions to be subject to different normative ideals of what it is to have, negotiate, take and use power. We argue that the homogeneity offered to men in power is a male privilege that denotes a specific set of advantages for men. Conversely, the differentiation offered to women is a vulnerability. The behaviour of males in powerful professional positions – although done by individuals – is semiotically attributable to the social group constituted as 'men in power' through the uniform visual representation of men in powerful positions. This is a male privilege because it normalises individual behaviour as a group behaviour and thereby anchors the individual in the group. The normalisation offers a form of 'social security' in the sense that you as a man in power know that what you do is OK because it reflects – not who you are and what you believe in – but who your group is and what it stands for. It may also create a sense of male entitlement to power because the conformity confers both a subjective and intersubjective perception of power (Manne, 2020). By contrast, the behaviours of women in powerful professional positions are semiotically attributed to the singular subjects through the individualised representation of women in powerful positions. This is a female vulnerability because there is no social group-based normalisation of your behaviour and you are entirely accountable as a singular individual. The argument is further complicated by the observation and axiological assumption that diversity is highly valuable and should be encouraged. The solution, therefore, is not to make the representation of female power more conform but to encourage diversification in the semiotic enactment of male power in professional positions. Critical social marketing can play a pivotal role in breaking the link of semiotic normalisation and homogenisation found in the visual enactment of male power through systematic,

¹ The large difference in the number of powerful men and women featured on the frontpages is a significant concern as it demonstrates a very uneven distribution of power. But it is a topic beyond the scope of the present paper.

evidence-based critique of existing norms of power, and advocacy of inclusive and differentiated ideals of power that pertain equally to men and women in powerful positions.

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‘She cyar sell me Nothing’: The Shift from Social Media Influencer to Content Creator in the pursuit of Authenticity

Authors: Ave Le Blanc, PhD candidate, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia; Professor Ross Gordon, UTS Business School, University of Technology Sydney; Dr. Sue Ann Barratt, Institute for Gender and Development Studies, University of the West Indies; Dr Lisa Schuster, QUT Business School, Queensland University of Technology

This paper investigates the implications of gendered interactions between Social Media Influencers (SMIs) and their followers in Trinidad and Tobago (T&T). Through in-depth interviews, we explore the perceptions and dynamics between SMIs and their followers, particularly focusing on why many SMIs prefer to be called 'Content Creators' instead of SMIs. This study reveals that the rejection of the SMI label is deeply connected to social identity frames that foreground gender as an intersectional identity—intersecting with race/ethnicity, sexuality, sex, language, and class. Using thematic analysis within a Caribbean Feminist framework, we explore how the term 'content creator' better aligns with SMIs' quest for authenticity. This involves navigating complex follower interactions that relate to their social and moral responsibilities, fears of cultural backlash, the need to remain appealing to their audience, and striving for originality in their content. We explore the implications for Critical Social Marketing (CSM) as researchers are increasingly interested in leveraging SMIs to promote behaviour change (Alsalem et al., 2020). SMIs are individuals with substantial followers on platforms like TikTok and Instagram who leverage their reach to influence the perspectives and behaviours of their audience. Key insights from current scholarship are that SMIs build para-social relationships (one-way) with their audiences and that SMI's authenticity is pivotal to their successful influence over their followers (Lee and Eastin, 2021). However, Lehto and Manneuvo (2022) identify significant challenges for SMI women, including online harassment from followers, when they discuss social and political issues related to sex, sexuality, class, and ethnicity to maintain their authentic self-image. These challenges extend to SMIs' managing intimate messages from followers. Disagreements with an SMI's opinions and advice can lead to breakdowns in para-social relationships. Mardon et al., (2023) note instances where such breakdowns fuel negative feedback from followers, often targeting the authenticity of SMI

women, with specific criticism aimed at their appearances, relationships, and careers. To this end, several researchers like Mardon et al., (2023) have called for further studies examining how factors like race and gender shape SMIs and consumers interactions. Our study adopts an intersectional framework (see Crenshaw, 1991) that considers how factors such as sex, gender, sexuality, class, and race overlap to influence experiences of privilege and oppression. Guided by the research question, "How do gender dynamics influence SMIs' shift from 'Social Media Influencer' to 'Content Creator'?", our research draws on Caribbean Feminist scholarship. We analysed interviews from 21 SMIs and 20 consumers of varying backgrounds living in T&T. Our findings suggest that the shift occurs as SMIs navigate their social and moral responsibilities, manage fears of cultural backlash, strive to appeal to their audience and seek originality in their content. These factors contribute to SMIs' rejection of the traditional SMI role. Our research has implications for CSM, especially in guiding its use of SMIs for social and behavioural change initiatives. Our findings encourage marketers to practice reflexivity by recognising cultural and personal stereotypes when selecting SMIs for CSM projects. This approach supports CSM's emancipatory agenda to critically address gender inequalities using an intersectional lens (Gordon et al., 2022). Additionally, our study aims to advance CSM's commitment to integrating insights from Global South perspectives (Gordon et al., 2022).

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Last Orders for Loneliness: Older Men's Temporary Enclaves in LGBT+ Pubs

Author: Dr David Rowe, School for Business and Society, University of York, UK

LGBT+ pubs are faced with multiple problems; they have to deviate from the trend of pub closures in the UK (Wells and Waehning 2022) and overcome commercial rivalry from mainstream venues. The decline in LGBT+ pubs can be partly attributed to the loss of their traditional consumers as venues shift away from being safe community hubs exclusively for LGBT+ patrons to consumption-oriented venues catering to a diverse clientele (Coffin et al. 2016). At the same time, mainstream venues have increasingly become more gay-friendly (Ghaziani 2014, 2015; Nash and Gorman Murray 2017). This queering and de-queering of space between mainstream pubs and traditional LGBT+ venues can leave gaps in the social and cultural provision that often accompanies LGBT+ venues. This paper examines the context of unpartnered older adult gay male patronage of LGBT+ pubs where temporary enclaves emerge as a way for these patrons to create therapeutic social spaces to craft solace, camaraderie and belonging in the broader societal context of an epidemic of male loneliness. Temporary enclaves have been theorised in consumer research as spaces where consumers can temporarily escape their everyday reality, for example, cosplaying the mountain man myth in fantasy enclaves (Belk and Costa, 1998) or engaging in temporary anti-market enclaves such as Burning Man (Kozinets 2002).

Temporary enclaves here are conceptualised within a range of serious play concepts, including edgework and other forms of complex leisure (Kjølsrød, 2009; Tumbat and Belk, 2011). Permanent enclaves have been theorised in contexts of segregation and homogenisation, for example, in classed and raced urban areas (Pinheiro-Machado and Scalco, 2022) as a form of spatial domination (Castilhos, 2023) or to create ostensibly authentic touristic hospitality regions based on ethnicity (Song and Kim, 2022). Studies in other disciplines highlight the therapeutic effects of enclaves (Tseng, et al, 2023) and how enclaves can increase social capital and psychological well-being (Guo et al., 2023). However, consumer research has focused less on temporary enclaves as spaces of belonging and solace and as a palliative to loneliness. To examine and theorise these therapeutic temporary enclaves, we develop a novel theoretical model based on the tensions this emergence of therapeutic space within LGBT+ pubs imply. We argue that as LGBT+ bars attract more straight and mainstream consumers, they become more de-queered; at the same time, the mainstream enclave embracing the diversity and inclusivity of societal changes engages in a degree of queering, leading to more diverse interactions. Our research demonstrates that older gay men engage in temporary enclave activities, effectively temporarily requeering the social space. Temporary re-queered enclaves emerge within these settings, reflecting a dynamic negotiation of identity, belonging, and community in the face of evolving social norms. This phenomenon underscores the fluid nature of social spaces and the important role that LGBT+ pubs have in the ongoing need for spaces that affirm identity and foster community.

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Workshop 2: Theoretical innovations in social marketing drawing on critical social theory

The power of personal self-tracking technology - a conceptual appraisal

Author: Dr Sahar Bakr, Nottingham Business School, UK

The use and ownership of self-tracking technology is at an all-time high (Statista, 2021). Wearable self-trackers (i.e. Fitbit) are promoted as healthy living devices that can ‘motivate you to reach your health and fitness goals’ and ‘boost your mind, and wellbeing’ (Fitbit.com, 2021, 2023). Further, researchers emphasise their ability to support healthy habits and foster behaviour change (Attig & Franke, 2019; Lupton, 2016). More recently however, a darker narrative started to emerge focussing on the deleterious effects associated with their use. Of these, obsession, anxiety and eating disorders are increasing (e.g. Toner 2018, Berry et al., 2021; BBC, 2024), and consequently, academics are beginning to call for the dark side of self-tracking to be further explored (Berry et al., 2021; Lupton, 2021; Toner, 2018). I am interested in studying the power and impact of smart self-tracking device on users for two reasons. Firstly, for their intimate nature, attachment to the body, and ‘always on, always tracking’ approach (Crawford et al., 2015; Piwek et al., 2016). Secondly, the embedded Behaviour Change Techniques (BCT) design (Abraham & Michie, 2008; Lyons et al., 2014) aiming to shape usage activities and influence outcomes. In my most recent project, I pose questions on how and why we witness and/or experience negative impacts from self-tracking, and what is the role of the device in this scenario. I am particularly interested in unpacking how self-trackers impact related behaviours, building on a stream of literature that calls for an alternative view to how behaviours manifest, and indeed, change (Cohn, 2014; Hargreaves, 2011; Spotswood, 2016). In this study, I apply practice theory to understand self-tracking as a social practice considering its intricacies, antecedents and consequences (Warde, 2005, 2014; Blue et al., 2016). Practice theory considers the practice as a unit of analysis proposing that they are composed of observable behaviours, and underpinning factors including: tools and materials, users’ skills and know-how, and users’ emotional and cognitive experiences (Schau et al., 2009; Shove et al., 2012; Spurling et al., 2013). This theoretical orientation de-emphasises the human, considering the role of all agents together (i.e., the human and the non-human) and looks at the practice itself as the site of (behaviour) change (Spotswood, 2016). I argue that by understanding the power dynamics manifested in the practice of self-tracking, as well as the specific negative outcomes, and experiences across users, will not only shed light on the nature and scale of the problem but will have broad societal implications. This body of work is expected to raise awareness of the potential power imbalance in the self-tracking experience, and aid government, health

professionals, users' and their friends and families to recognise both symptoms, and indicators of harm, and safeguard those exposed to such technologies.

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Leveraging passion politics in outdoor action sport: Theoretical advances for pro-environmental action and sustainable consumption campaigns

Author: Dr Fiona Spotswood, University of Bristol Business School, UK

It's essentially about understanding the 'core meanings' of mountain biking in the context of the Protect our Winters and Trash Free Trails campaigns designed to mobilise pro-environmental activism amongst outdoor/nature users. Their goal is to foster nature connectedness as a mechanism to energise pro-social change. But the tendency remains to rely on notions of responsibility and risk, which have limitations for mobilising socio-cultural shift. The mountain biking case study offers a way to interrogate the politics of sustainable consumption amongst consumers who have become invested in the satisfaction of market-generated 'needs'. Mountain biking is a market-driven consumer subculture centred principally on technofetishism. Yet it also offers a means to interrogate the possibilities of marketing for pro-environmental change; in unravelling and restitching the elements of the practice to include stewardship, nature connectedness and sustainable consumption.

Out-of-home food consumption and waste

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This research explores sustainable food consumption and waste reduction, focusing on out-of-home context. The aim is to contribute to the dialogue on critical social marketing and food consumption and waste, and social marketing's application in fostering sustainable practices. Current interventions often target individual behaviours without addressing broader factors such as those in the physical environment or earlier stages in the food consumption chain. This observation has prompted the adoption of practice theory as a lens to explore these issues from a broader perspective, emphasising the meso-level of society where individual actions intersect with larger social structures. Using a practice theory lens, it is argued that out-of-home food consumption practices are entrenched in established patterns, formed and solidified through collective enactments and the interplay of materials, competences, and meanings. Recognising that sustainable future initiatives must address these ingrained practices, this research utilises a practical theoretical approach to understand the practice of out-of-home food consumption and propose constructive changes for a more sustainable out-of-home food consumption. I seek to explore the phenomenon of out-of-home food consumption through a nuanced map emerged from practice theory: firstly, investigating the target practices' constituent elements and organisations, secondly, placing the target social practice within a broader web of practices, investigating the interactions and orderings of the target practice with other social practices, thirdly, emphasising on personal practice trajectories, investigating the ebbs and flows of personal enactment of sustainable out-of-home food consumption practices. These investigations have potential to inform a more sustainable out-of-home food consumption. However, significant challenges remain, particularly in how to translate theoretical insights from practice theory into actionable strategies that can affect holistic 'practice changes'. The practicality and effectiveness of these strategies are crucial areas for exploration, as they hold the potential to bridge the gap between academic theory and practical application in social marketing.

Workshop 3: Bringing under-represented voices into pro-social change

Underrepresented voices of Social Marketing: Bottom of the Pyramid Communities of the Global South

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The aim of this abstract is to shed light on an underrepresented group in social marketing, namely bottom-of-the-pyramid communities in the global south. Social Marketing gained a significant traction over the last few decades in addressing various complex, social issues ranging from health, environment, injustice, poverty etc. Since its inception, social marketing has undergone significant evolution, marked by challenges to the traditional managerial perspective (Tadajewski et al., 2014), changing the narratives of victim-blaming or responsabilization (Gallage et al., 2020), and embracing a systemic approach (French and Gordon, 2015). In addition, social marketing has extended its scope beyond traditional marketing paradigms, drawing insights from diverse disciplines such as public health sociology, education, health promotion, and communication (Dietrich et al., 2022). This interdisciplinary approach has profound implications for various fields, including public health, sustainability, inequality, and injustice. However, the majority of social marketing scholarship and practice still largely concentrates on western, middle-class individuals in the global North (Gordon et al., 2016). While there are notable exceptions aiming to expand the discipline into the global South (e.g., Cateriano-Arévalo et al., 2022, Pang et al., 2021), certain critical areas remain overlooked, and one of which is bottom-of-the-pyramid communities. Fundamentally, these communities operate differently, residing in low-income levels, lacking standard housing, education, sanitation, or healthcare, and facing limited access to resources (Viswanathan and Rosa, 2007). They navigate an uncertain reality with minimal margin for error, exposing them to various vulnerabilities and facing disastrous health and social issues on a daily basis. This is even more so in the post pandemic world and in the face of climate crisis, as they experience a disproportionate impact. A significant portion of the global population resides within the bottom-of the pyramid, primarily in regions such as Asia, Africa, and Latin America. These individuals, with low literacy levels, struggle to understand abstract concepts such as the climate crisis, good health and form realities based on concrete information (Viswanathan et al., 2020). Additionally, they have little space and time to understand and change their behaviour given their uncertain realities (Viswanathan and Rosa, 2007). Furthermore, the serious institutional voids in these contexts make it even more challenging to implement health policies, and these contexts are inherently unfamiliar for social marketers seeking to effect changes.

Thus, in this discussion, I aim to draw attention to the following questions:

1. How can we understand bottom-of the pyramid communities prior to implement any social marketing intervention? Can we use a bottom-up approach to immerse ourselves in these contexts to understand them, rather than relying solely on our top-down social marketing knowledge and toolkits?
2. Can we encourage voluntary behavior change? If so, how should it differ for these communities given their vastly different ground realities?
3. How can we adopt macro-level changes in these contexts, which have different institutional arrangements and voids?

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Critical Social Marketing on Ghana's Free Education Policy: An Exploratory study

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The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore diverse stakeholders' views and expectations about Ghana's Free Senior High School policy's (FSHS) effectiveness and the prospects for sustainability. Evidence from this study could inform the tactical use of critical social marketing campaign elements to facilitate the future sustainability of the policy. Although, the author did not view Critical social marketing as a cure-all for the FSHS policy, it is believed that the concept, if effectively implemented on a variety of policy issues around the globe – most especially in Africa, has the potential to bring about substantial, supportable change if the ideologies are closely trailed and expended to support a country wide research. The study might not only reveal some inherent issues surrounding the policy and how the findings could contribute to enriching the historical and prospective documentation of critical social marketing research. The presentation is also aimed to spark discourses with both the academics and the practitioners within the social marketing field and about the role of the critical social marketing in addressing complex social intervention issues in developing economies.

Another Brick on the Paywall: How Current Social Marketing Academic Publishing Perpetuates Inequity and Hinders Impact

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Academic research and publishing play a crucial role in advancing the field of social marketing. Only through documentation and reflection on past experience can we develop effective strategies for positive behaviour change. However, the current publishing landscape in social marketing is problematic. The two primary social

marketing journals operate on models that limit access - one charges high article processing fees for open access, while the other sits behind a subscription paywall.

These publishing models create significant barriers to knowledge equity within the social marketing community. Researchers and practitioners in developing countries, at smaller institutions, or working independently often cannot afford the steep costs to publish in or access these journals. Students, policymakers, and NGOs also face paywalls when trying to engage with the latest social marketing research and evidence. As a result, the ability to contribute to and benefit from social marketing knowledge is increasingly dictated by financial resources.

This has troubling implications for the advancement of social marketing as a discipline and practice. It means that many of the voices and perspectives most valuable for developing contextually-relevant and effective social marketing interventions - such as scholars and practitioners intimately familiar with local contexts and communities - are often excluded from academic conversations. Barriers to knowledge sharing along economic lines reinforce broader global inequities, limiting the reach and real-world impact of social marketing research.

To address these issues, the social marketing community must critically examine our current publishing norms and explore alternative models that align with our values of inclusivity, collaboration and equity. This presentation calls for social marketers to look to emerging diamond open access publishing frameworks, policies and initiatives, dominant in areas of the world such as Latin America, as potential paths forward. By transforming academic publishing to be more universally accessible and inclusive, we can create a scholarly ecosystem that leverages diverse knowledge and expertise in service of more effective and just societies.

It is imperative that social marketers lead the change in critically evaluating and redesigning the macro structures of knowledge production that shape our discipline. Only by ensuring our own academic practices embody principles of equity and empowerment can we build a strong foundation for social marketing as an inclusive, responsive and impactful field. Let us reimagine a future where all social marketers can access and contribute to the evidence base, unlocking the full potential of research to inform positive social change.