

Obituary: Professor Anna Stewart

Professor Emeritus Anna Louise Stewart died on 23 April 2021, only six months after retiring from Griffith University. She is survived by her husband of 24 years Gerard, brothers Duncan and Hamish, and their extended families.



Anna was born in New Zealand, attended school in Nelson and earned undergraduate and Masters degrees in psychology at Canterbury University. She came to Australia in the early 1980s and was awarded her PhD from the University of Queensland in 1994. Before academia she worked in a variety of jobs, including on prawn trawlers and as a barmaid, and then for departments of social welfare in New Zealand, and Children's Services in Queensland. These latter experiences shaped her life-long interest in improving the lives of children, young people and their families, and corralling data and science to help achieve this. She became a passionate advocate for the need for an evidence base to guide better social policy design and implementation systems.

Anna began her academic career at Griffith University in 1992 as a part-time statistics adviser, and in 1994 was appointed an Associate Lecturer in the then School of Justice Administration. She went on to serve two terms as Head of the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, and was for a time Deputy Faculty Dean, and later the Director of the Key Centre for Ethics, Law, Justice and Governance. She also served on Queensland's Child Death Review Committee, the Crime Research Reference Committee of the Queensland Government Statistician's Office, and the ABS National Crime Statistics Advisory Group. From 2012 until 2015 Anna was co-editor of the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*. She published some 108 books, chapters, articles and reports, and earned nearly \$8 million in research funding during her career.

Anna's research passion was using government administrative data to understand complex social disadvantage and how it could be better addressed. She was committed to improving service delivery systems to better target preventive social interventions, especially in the areas of child safety, family and domestic violence, and mental health. Anna led the development of a valuable longitudinal data resource, *The Queensland Cross-Sector Research Collaboration*. Primarily supported by three ARC Linkage and two Criminology Research Council grants, this resource includes de-identified data linked at the individual level for anyone born in 1983, 1984, and 1990 who has ever had contact with the Queensland government for matters relating to child protection, youth justice, adult offending and corrections, mental health, and domestic violence. Successive waves of linkage mean that the data is now inter-generational, including the records of the children of the original cohorts. Researchers are using this data to understand people's pathways through systems, and the complex interactions occurring between child abuse, mental health, domestic violence, and criminal offending, and their intergenerational effects.

Anna was also instrumental in establishing the *Griffith Social Analytics Laboratory* (SAL). This secure facility improves researcher access to sensitive government administrative data. Analysis of this data makes theoretical and policy-relevant research contributions to major social problems. Over 60 accredited researchers from around Australia and overseas are now using it to understand problems including the impact of COVID-19 and other major events on crime and victimisation, patterns of crime harm concentration, and the overlap between social disadvantage and youth offending.



Throughout her career Anna mentored and developed a team of junior colleagues and collaborators. In 2014 her team received the *Griffith Vice Chancellor's Research Excellence Award* for a research group or team - The Queensland Linkage Project: Advancing Life-Course Criminology. She supervised and graduated 17 PhD students with three still current, and 28 Honours and Masters students. She was an active collaborator with national and international colleagues, including researchers in other States, Scotland and Britain, Canada and the United States. Anna was a keen entertainer and a terrific cook, and dozens of criminologists from around Australia and the world have been generously hosted on the back deck overlooking her beloved gully in Dutton Park.

Anna was integral to the development of criminology and social science at Griffith over the past three decades, and leaves as a legacy the scholars she mentored and collaborated with, the colleagues she led and supported, and the generations of students she taught over that time. She was loud, opinionated and forceful, but also deeply compassionate and committed to the success of all those she cared about. This included her colleagues, students, friends, and those who she felt had not received the life advantages she enjoyed. She will be sadly missed.

Provided by Professor Janet Ransley, on behalf of the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice and Griffith Criminology Institute, Griffith University