

Historical foundations of the social work

Yves Rastimir Nedeljkovic

The author stresses the need of a historical approach to the study of social work. It would enable us to gain the knowledge of its cultural, moral and logical foundations, which have appeared as spontaneous or organized and institutionalized, i.e. professional, humanistic activities. Without it we will be unable to realize the real context of the social work as well as we will be unable to influence its development. Without this investigation, a scientific founding of humanitarian activities and social work is impossible. Such an analysis has to take into the account various aspects, forms and contents of the rich history of the human sociality and the living practice.

The history of social work, which is based on the humanistic foundations and the action essence of human sociality, can contribute to the theoretical generalization as well as to the improvement of the social work practice and so to taking away the numerous disadvantages which still block it.

The author suggests a periodization of the whole history of the social work and the social activities, which can be a basis for the historical research.

Social work - the impossible task?

Doreen Gibson

The author in her programmatic speech refers to the present world crisis. This as well as changes in the welfare state should be a challenge for the social workers. The author's opinion is that the traditional (casework) approach as well as radical (Marxist) are out of date for their language and the received ideas remain rooted in the previous century. She is pointing to the feminist approach as a landmark for paradigmatic changes. Task of the social worker is given the state redistribution of the sources, to help the oppressed and marginal groups to define their problems and create the infrastructure for the self help activities.

Practice and practice are not the same

Anneli Pohjola

In social work we speak a lot of the dual relation of theory and practice.

We see them as whole different parts of reality. We think there is a gap between these two aspects. However, in teaching social work we must in some way or other integrate them, or if this is not possible to see them in a relation to each other. In some respects we can study theory as a practical phenomenon and also practice as a theoretical phenomenon.

If we see the main task in teaching social work to make questions about reality, not to see reality as given but all time changing and varying according to some societal logic. If we want to understand this logic we must to go deeper from the surface, we must go "behind" those phenomena. Crucial is to question "why" and analyze the various relationships. If students may learn something they should learn to think themselves and analyze society and social work as a part of it. *Analyzing and questioning reality and practice is to make theory about it.* So theory and practice are not different things. Important is to analyze what is learning and what it depends from.

In addition we can't look theory and practice as monoliths. In social work we often speak about *theories as plural*. How can we understand this. At the same time practice is not always practice in the same meaning. I should make a discrimination between *practice* as task-centered orientation and *praxis* as a developing-centered orientation. Making questions about these two, we can go deeper in teaching social work.

Enabling student learning about social work practice

Mark Doel & Steven Shardlow

There is often a conceptual difference between the academic learning of the social work that takes place in the classroom and the practical learning that takes place in the practice placements. The theme of this contribution is how much it is possible to use the classroom concepts in the practice placements, especially how the concept of an essay can be applied to the programing and the evaluation of the practical study, so it is possible to preconceive and operationalize the assets of the practical work, its processes and evaluation. A study of the results of implementations of this program has been done. Both, the reports of students and practice teachers have confirmed that it is an effective mean of relating the theory with practice and vice versa as well as increasing the value of the practical study and equalizing it with its academic counterpart.

Action theory approach to social work practice**Hans Berglind**

The paper introduces an "action theory approach" that is intended to fulfil the following requirements:

- (1) to deal with social problems at the micro as well as the macro level;
- (2) to use a terminology that can be understood by professional helpers as well as by their clients;
- (3) to be action oriented rather than behavioural oriented;

The theoretical approach will benefit from the conceptual analyses made by the Finnish philosopher G. H. Heider and other mainly social psychological theories, were explored.

Finally, the practice implications of this theoretical approach to social work will be illustrated.

The social work and the management of the innovative practices**Manuel - Luis Lopez**

Because of the appearance of all the different new organizations in the field of social work it is important that the social workers have knowledge of the social management. The author describes what are the new tasks allotted to the social workers and what would be an adequate training for them. New conditions demand social workers to be innovative. The characteristics of innovative persons are stated and some examples are shown in order to encourage the creativity of social workers.

Beyond the "isms" - towards a unified theory of social centrality and marginality for social work practice**Andrew Cooper and John Pitts**

In the 1970s British social work education began to grant feminist lecturers and students more space and time for "their" issues. Eventually, under pressure from women, it began the process of incorporating the feminist theory into the curriculum. Some social work courses in Britain in the 1980s witnessed an influx of black students who brought with them, first of all, a demand for more space and time for their "issues" and then, a demand that a "black theoretical perspective" be incorporated into the

curriculum. Meanwhile important ideological, economic and demographic changes in Western Europe, increasingly require social work to *confront the structural disadvantages*, and violations of the rights of children the disabled and the elderly.

Having, to some extent at least, responded to the demand that we confront *sexism* and *racism*, we are now enjoined to confront infantilism, disablism and ageism, as well. Clearly the list of potential "isms" is lengthening and this poses problems for the curriculum.

In this paper we identify themes in the work of Jung, Merton and Foucault which can help us to develop an overarching conceptual framework in which to locate the "isms". We start from a consideration of the nature of *social power*, and in particular the power to describe *social centrality* and *social marginality*. We then move to a consideration of the consequences for the inner life of an individual's Geo-politico-social relationship with the "social centre". We then offer illustrations from practice in which we attempt to utilise the model we are developing as an assessment tool.

Community approach as basic principle of social work

Pavla Rapoša-Tajnik

Community work is based on a holistic approach to social work, thus dealing with each problem from the perspective of individual, the community and society. It contributes towards the achievement of the primary objective of social work (i.e. the enhancing of individuals ability to manage their own problems) by preserving and developing social help and support networks, which have been considerably reduced through the one-sided development of social services. Social welfare systems have led to an increased impotence and passivisation of the individuals, allowing them, as they do, to let institutions take over responsibility for their fate, in an environment that provides little encouragement of self-help. Any type of community action, notwithstanding its objectives and the basic strategy of effecting change, is founded on the individual's closeness to his environment and the mobilization of self-help and support networks within the community. That is consequently true also of social action - i.e. securing benefits for the underprivileged members of a community - as well as when social policy and social development of a community are being planned.

No future? - No past!
(Re)Discovering the roots in social work
Joachim Wieler

The author's assumption is that for understandable reasons we do not have much use of history in social work and less when we talk about international and intercultural dimensions.

In his own search for historical roots in social work he had discovered that in their daily struggles social workers could not even think of recording everything that might be helpful for long-term consideration. Too many fires that need to be extinguished.

How many colleagues are aware of the established international links in social work? They can be traced back more than 100 years and are continued in Europe and world-wide. International bodies such as ICSW, IASW and IFSW have been established since 1928. Peace issues have been a central theme, and an international school of social work has been projected as early as 1928. These examples of early visions and developments need to be reconsidered, differentiated and connected with social work curricula.

The fact that we are not standing at the beginning of a process, may help us to realize that learning from the past is possible. If we do not know our origins, how can we ever know our goals?

Sixty years ago social work seemed to be ahead of the slow international politics, now we seem to be lagging behind when we consider the European developments that we will be faced with in the future.

Systemic teaching of social work
Peter Lissi

The author presents his book with a meaningful title: Systemic Social Work, Practical Handbook on Social Counseling. It is about the system theory of social work for, as the author states, practical theory of the profession which explains the tasks, means and methods of social work. Author is bringing into our field new concepts anchored in the system theory and therefore meaningfully widening the field for new searching in the social work.

Social work between pragmatism and theoretical eclecticism **Miloslav Milosavljevic**

The author presents his historical and critical analysis of the theoretical and methodological foundations of social work in contemporary Yugoslav society. This complex analysis is directed to two theoretical and methodological standpoints; the positivist and functionalist domination over marxism, and to the eclecticism, presenting itself as unproductive dialectical synthesis and as the use of cumulative knowledge from different humanistic sciencies and me-dicine in the theory and methodology of social work.

Theoretical concepts of the social work and their curriculum implications **Joan Fortuny & Teresa Rossel**

The authors stress the difference between the different levels e.g. between the social phenomena that the social work treats and the construction of the theories which explain them; between the professional intervention and applying the methods and explanatory models from other sciences, that are used by social work; and the feedback that constructs new knowledge, which in turn is used to follow and evaluate its effects etc.

For the social work it is important the way it is connected to the other disciplines (have they been transferred to the social work directly or have they been adjusted).

In the authors' view the social work is not a theory per se but a professional praxis, which uses different theories and concepts about the man and the society while using its own knowledge about the specific phenomena in the social field.

The requirements of a theory for psychosocial work **Lisbeth Johnsson**

The term "psychosocial work" has been established in Sweden as a designation of that type of social work where we at the same time try to help people with inner and outer problems. Several qualities are demanded from a theory of psychosocial work, the most important to have room for theoretical formulations for both analysis and action. A meta-model of these qualities of theory is presented in five aspects we regard as essential in such a theory:

- 1) explanation,
- 2) understanding,
- 3) tools' aspect
- 4) imperative aspect, and
- 5) developmental capability.

The first two of these aspects refer to the analytical and the next two to the acting qualities of the theory. The last is the demand that the theory must "live", i.e. it must have the capacity to grow.

It is also discussed which fundamental theories we can rely on when trying to build a theory like this. We propose to use systems theory as that foundation but also to combine it with traits from psychodynamic theory. Such a combination demands that we also expand and modify the systems theory to fit these demands.

Modifying systems theory for the development of social work

Gunnar Bernler

Most of the social work with individuals, families and groups in actualy *psychosocial* work, that is, simultaneously helping people with problems in their inner and outer world. Theories for social work must form a basis for both analysis and action. When building social work theory, systems theory is a possible point of departure.

The author presents two concepts - *logical level* and *isomorphism* - and two postulates, which can enrich the basic theory in an humanizing direction. The first postulate is a suggestion to let systems comprise entities at more than one logical level, for instance things and images of the same things. A very special case is then the systems containing images of themselves, which may be defined as *conscious systems*. The second postulate deals with functional level of systems. It states that this is related to the degree of similarity (isomorphism) between images of different levels or between images and significance of the concept "third order change".

The author assumes, that if we are going to use systems theory as a source of inspiration when building social work theory, it is also necessary to revise, modify and extend it for our purpose.

Dialog - a tool in social work? Bodil Eriksson and Ann Helleday

The authors inspired by their teaching experience set on to explore the different philosophers' views on dialogue. For Socrates the dialogue is the tool for moral questioning of the power, for mutual search of truth and self improvement. For Buber and Levinas dialogue is the way of genuine meeting between I and Thou, the meeting with the otherness. And lastly for Habermas and Freire the dialogue is tool of critical approach to society either as a tool of knowing or as tool changing (Freire).

The question is how much of a dialogue is possible within the framework of social work, it being on one hand means of control and repression and on the other means of providing help for those who need it. While seeing the social work outside the official services more able to create the space for dialogue, since the official social work tends to objectify its clients. The authors apperceive also possibilities in which some organizational changes would yield the same with the official services too.

Scientific conceptualization of social work as a prerequisite for its professionalization Vida Milotević

The theoretical foundation is implicitly present in all serious discussions on social work, while it appears explicitly either as one of the *constitutive elements of the profession*, or as a requirement for efficient practical work.

The conditions necessary for the professionalisation and the basic elements of social work typically contain such components which belong to the "theory", thus permitting an analysis and assessment of a certain condition. The greater part of both elements should be classified in the field of "practice", where they serve as a basis for direct action. However, practice is not independent in its relation to the theory. On the contrary, the relationship between the two is dialectical. A dialectical relationship also exists between the different components of basic elements and the criteria used in assessment of the degree of professionalization of social work.

Crisis may also be a challenge for alternations in social work**Bernard Striuh**

In the past the politics has been whispering to the ear of the profession of the social work how to see and describe the reality. In this way a dangerous illusion was created and the problems remained unnoticed. Social work must "gain the world", and that means, that it has develop to the point where it could offer the society information of those processes, which can threat a normal social reproduction of the family, individuals, solidarity networks and communities. It is important to have clear consciousness that it is impossible to work in a new way while we operate with old symbols, values, images and professional concepts, which are contaminated with the ideals of conflict free socialist society. We can anticipate that the social work will have to confront the consequences of the crisis where they will be the hardest. The concepts of the system theory can enable the social work to give the new definitions of processes of the personal help to the individuals and groups, this always meaning helping the individual to orient in the given social space and to develop new images, forms of behaviour and interaction patterns. The contract with the individual should be the starting point more often than it has been till now in all forms of helping. Results of the help show in the micropolitics of the desire in different attitude to the future. In the conditions of a crisis we are bount to attain more goals, retain the faith in the institutions of the system, mobilise the potentials for change of these institutions and at the same time make possible to discover the new forms of (self) actualization of every man as "the letting be".

**The limits of phenomenology and objectivity on the encounter between
scientism and practice****Anders Bergmark in Lars Oscarsson**

The authors discuss the opposition and "confusion" between different scientific schools or perspectives and between scientific and more clinical oriented discourses which originates from the failure of both to observe and pay regard to the essential difference between phenomenological and more objective data and to make explicit their different analytical limits. For example, in some scientific and/or clinical perspectives individuals' subjective reports of their experiences are mistaken for "objective" facts. In

other cases, some types data are programmatically discarded which lead to a given restriction in the possible understanding of the phenomenon in question.

Of special interest in the practice of and teaching in social work is the situation when more "objective" (scientific) data contradict the subjective experience of practitioners and clients. This since the scientific tradition, with few exceptions, gives priority to objective data; and by some situations may be constituted by a contradiction between the two types of data. When interpreting their historical actions people may not give accurate reports of these actions and their original intentions; or, for an observer, they do not seem to do, what they say they do. This does not mean that individuals' descriptions of their *experiences* are falsified by observation data, but they may become more difficult to interpret.

To understand human practice we often need data of a subjective as well as an objective nature. The theoretical and curriculum challenge is to logically integrate data of different origin within a single theoretical framework and social work practice. If this is not done, our scientific analysis of social practices may only give "half the truth" and practitioners and clients may not recognise as "their" practices.

Specificities of social work science methodology

Milan Martinovic

As theoreticians of social work maintain, its development can be monitored through four phases of *conceptualization*. The past phase which can be followed during the last two decades could be referred to as scientific sources of social work, the basic scientific notions (categories) and *methodological* specificities of this integrative and applied scientific field.

In this paper an attempt is made to discuss and explain relations between theory, practice and methodology of research in the sphere of social work as the basic preconditions for the development of this science and the professional identity of this vocation.

Epistemological foundations of the qualitative approach in social work

Aleksandar Halmi

The paper rests on the postulate, that science of social work implies a fundamentally different type of methodology as other social sciences do, that is, it implies the qualitative approach and action research (as elaborated by Lewin, Moser, Haag, Adam, and others). The science of social work shouldn't be value neutral and shouldn't rest on principles of positivist paradigm if it wants to be appropriate for its research object i.e. for self reflexive human beings and their social practice. The basic principles of action research are discussed: the principles of practical relevance, of discovering the real problem, of participation of researched people in the research process, of holistic approach and applicability of research.

On the specificity of methodology in social work

Blaž Mesec

The author pleads for the view, that social work, being a special profession, is at the same time also a scientific discipline, which integrates the knowledge of other disciplines among themselves and with the data about the practical social work and other ways of help to people in distress. The subject of the discipline is societal praxis of help on societal, interpersonal and individual levels. As a science of practical work the science of social work is a member of the family of praxeological sciences (action sciences) together with educational, organizational, administrative and other sciences of the sort. It is a fundamental and an applied science at the same time as it studies a fundamental social practice and serves practical decision making. A name for the science is proposed, that is *boethics* (from gr. boethea - help). On the level of general methodological approaches, boethics uses similar approaches as other social sciences. But on the level of specific strategies, action research as research monitoring and reflection of professional (and nonprofessional) practice is proposed as the central methodological strategy of boethics.

Social work: communicative treatment as a research method or as a research object

Hans Oostrik

The social work is a practical science which is not only about solving the problems of its clients but also about the professional practice of the social worker. The prime example of this is the way and the method of conducting the conversation. Therefore social work is being termed as a communicative treatment, which is aiming at an analysis of the problem situation and a search for a useful solution. The basic elements of this dialogic communication are the narration and the investigation. In this practical science there are two elements: the investigation into the situation and the application of a rethoric method called narrative rhetoric, whose essential problem is how to listen, so that a partner in the dialogue speaks up and narrates. The narration compared to discussion is closer to reality and has power of the argument. Social worker in practice is an investigator, who gains new insights in a dialogical communication with clients.

Social policy and social security in the conditions of economic crisis: the rise of social expenditures

Nano Rutin

The paper is dealing with the problem of social security in social and economic crisis in Yugoslavia in comparison to some international data, and with special regard to the situation in Republic of Macedonia as one of the least developed regions in the country. With the worsening of the crisis the expenditures for social security have been rising. The explanation for the fact is being sought in ageing of the population, in better coverage of the population, in rising number of persons in need, and in the general rise of costs of social services.

The educational approach in social work and its implication for the social work training

Ewa Marynowicz - Hetka

This contribution contains some general thoughts about social pedagogy as the basic theory of the social work and about the education of the social

workers. The author's point is that the social work is an educational activity. Education is a process of helping to grow and develop, which is to be socially active too, for, a man or a woman is a biological, a social and a cultural being.

Helping the development is a process, which has to be skillfully observed, and so are to be observed the forces of the individual and his/her environment. An educational prophylactics is the dominant factor for changing the social environment.

Students are being encouraged to employ the education approach in the social work while they are still studying. There is a possibility of the differentiation in the professional specialization and in the degree of the educational attainment, but under a condition, that educational approach in social work is being applied. In principle this is an education for generic social workers so that compartmentalization of the areas of the social work is prevented.

The education for the social work demands that theory and the practice are connected. One of the basic principles of the social pedagogy, which in our opinion is the foundation for the education of the future educators, social workers, socio-cultural animators, is a preparation for the research work. It is education with research and the reach with the education. It is therefore a preparation for the action research.

Legal instruction in the training of social workers

Andreja Kavar-Vidmar

The paper deals with four items. Firstly, it argues that social work, due to its interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature, comprises law as one of its disciplines.

Social work is shown primarily as intervention aiming at change. A considerable number of social work interventions is only feasible through the application of law.

Further, the author delineates the character of law and indicates at which points law and social work intersect. Such points can be found in the areas of contents, form and theory. In practice, this is demonstrated as legal counseling, the auxiliary means of intervention, the intervention limit, and the protection of confidential information.

**Paradigmatic foundations of socio-therapeutic
work with families**

Gabi Čačinovič-Vogrincič

The paper is a contribution to the psychological concept of psychodynamics of the family group theory (H. Oppl, 1986), which can be used to determine methods of social work with families.

Social worker needs such a knowledge about the familie involved in order to be able to recognize and nominate processes going on in them, so that the concepts used would provide a point of departure for professional intervention and a base for and the content of dialogue with the family itself.

**The need for a paradigm shift in social work:
study of parenting**

Milli Mass

The paper concludes by specifying a few didactic recommendations for the legal instruction of social workwrs: motivation, objectives, and some of the forms this instruction assumes at the School of Social Work in Ljubljana.

The study of the child abuse is an example of the disadvantages of the positivist paradigm experienced in the practical social work with the parents. In these studies the parents are in the focus of the attention, and at the same time the effects of social conditions and norms are neglected, and so is the child's own influence on his parents. This direction constructs the relationship between the parents and the child so that the person (the child) is artificially separated from the situation (the parents). Also the transactional nature of this relationship is being distorted by the use of the linear model, in which the violent behaviour of the parents is presented as the cause. Use of this model for the explanation of the child abuse provides "scientific" and "professional" context for punitive measures against parents, although it is suppressing the primary concern - child protection: Study of the child abuse does not offer any suggestions for the treatment or prevention.

The author presents a model, which is not based on the positivist paradigm and which explains parenthood by establishing the behaviour. This

form of explanation does not look for the causes of parental behaviour, nor it determines the tendency in the relationship between the parents and child.

Social work and the new culture of social relationships

Marija Ovsenik

The present social work could be treated as a form of social care for the powerless people, which has emerged as a social service and profession inside of the industrial type of social division and organization of production and life.

However, deep and wide changes are in the way today. Because of the elements of the new, informational type of production (informatization, automation, robotization etc.) the intellectual high inovative work is favoured and the manual work classified mainly in to the technological surpluses. The new type of powerty is descending from both groups of the working force. Now, it is assumed that also the very conception of the social work has to be carefully revised and adapted as well to the new conditions of social productions as to the human life. There is a question, how to shape the conception of the social work to be adequate to the needs of the new culture of social relationships.

Social work theory and the social work curriculum: implications for differing levels of social work education

Ruben Schindler

Social work theory must adraess itself to differing levels of social work education. A curricula theory base, its knowledge, skills and values are a function of levels they attempt to address. The focus of this enquiry is to explore social work theory and its relevance to four specific student populations engaged in the study of social work: students in an advanced clinic curriculum in social work; second career and retrainig programs on the undergraduate level and certificate course of study for new Ethiopian immigrants studying social work.

The rational, and organizing principles in the design of these educational programs are explored. The relevance of the theoretical base is noted and the model for a potential curricula continuum is suggested having implications for theory development on both undergraduate and graduate programs in

social work education. The student population studied is numbered at 300.

Theory and practice - a closer fit
Frances Ackerman and Leah Kacen

The authors report on their practical work at the Ben Gurion University in Negev, Beer Sheva, Israel. The aim of the new organization was to make the integration of the theoretical work with practice and give the opportunity for the expression of the multidimensionality of the social work. In the first year there is an apprenticeship model of practice, in the second students begin to work with clients, while in the third year they are organizing their own projects in the communities. This can make the integration possible and provides opportunity for the interchange between the academic and practical work.

Experimental program for social work studies in Mönchengladbach
Gerd Ferdinand Kirchhoff

In 1988 a Model study of social work started at Fachhochschule Niederrhein in Mönchengladbach. Special features of this model are: 3,5 years of study to the diploma of social work, plus 1 year of practical professional introduction, then second exam to state licence in social work. Integrated vocational semester with four days of practice and one day of theoretical work in lecture hall, evaluation seminar of this semester with obligatory participation of practitioners. Basic studies in nine elementary sciences with tests, while grades for diploma are collected during integrated seminars of six to eight hours weekly per term each, taught by team of two or three professors. By this the isolation and the additive function of the elementary sciences in previous social work education is left behind. Diploma thesis in the seventh term. Obligatory courses in self experience and in electronic data processing. The paper looks too in the problems and dimensions of realization of such a program. While it grew on the basis of special local conditions, several general conclusions can be made.

Theory of social work and the children protection work **Maureen Stone**

The author contrasts casework approach and the community work in field of the protection of the children. Community work in this field is in an obvious contradiction between its principles and the policing nature of the problem. She points out that casework means narrowing the perspective of the problem to the personal and the familial and obscuring the social issues of gender, race and class which are important to consider and tailor the practice of the work.

Specific problems of education and training for social group work **Marina Ajdukovic**

The results of an evaluation of a training for group work of two groups of students are reported; one of the groups was led by a social work teacher, and the other by an experienced practitioner. The training was structured with the help of a number of structured exercises distributed across three phases of training. In evaluation a questionnaire with 10 Likert type scales of 7 points was applied after every meeting. The results in the two groups are very similar, on the average more than 3,5 points, and showing an inverse U-curve with its peak in the middle phase of the training. As viewed by participants the teacher-trainer focused more on the process-dynamical aspects of the group development, and practitioner-trainer more on the content aspects. The results as a whole show a favorable attitude of participants toward the training and instigate further use of the approach.

The integration in professional social work of theoretical concepts of socialization differences through supervision

Robert Ploem

The paper is based on the experience of the integrative and supervising work. Greater mobility, technological developments etc. have caused a modern man to find himself in a number of situation where social worker and his client are confronted with the question of changes. It is about the contradiction between the personal (Erickson) and social (interactionists)

identities and their mutual relationships. In such situations social worker needs basic knowledge about gender, class, ethnical and cultural differences, and identity confusion. Positive evaluation of the old norms, values and beliefs is important too.

Self-care and co-care challenge, the role of social workers and the need for education

Dada Maglajlic

Extremely large number of separate self-help (self-care) programs embody an extraordinary variety of types, purposes, structures, and ideological features, tap a variety of motives, and appeal to a vast range of members. To bring scientific order into this domain, through definitions and taxonomies, is a difficult task.

In order to investigate this phenomenon the author has included the project *"Self-care- and co-care for the families with severely disabled member"*. Goal of the project was to introduce, follow-up and comparatively evaluate processes and short term results of the specifically chosen alternative forms (models) of the care for the families with severely handicapped member.

Beside helping the groups and coordinating various activities within the proposed *model*, social worker may be member of self/co-care group, or professional associate of one or more groups/programs of that kind. No matter the status and the role, social worker must have adequate information about various existing programs, as well as knowledge and skills concerning various self/co-care models and methods.