

A B S T R A C T S

Srečo Dragoš

SOCIAL WORK AND TERMINOLOGY

Sociologist dr. Srečo Dragoš is an assistant lecturer of sociology at University of Ljubljana School of Social Work.

The first part of the paper points out the most frequent terminological complications in which three levels have to be taken into account: the practical one, the hermeneutical one and the conceptual one. They are taken into account when distinguished and not when divided. The first level is important for four reasons: (a) because of the profession's development, (b) because of the current terminological debate, (c) because of the interactional nature of social work and (d) because the profession of social work confronts its »object« in a different way than natural sciences. The second level involves the problem of the so-called double hermeneutics that entails the mediatory function of terms between the expert's and everyday world, whereas on the third level, the relation between a term with its meanings and the context of its use is in focus. A concretisation of this is attempted in the second part in which the adequacy of terms like user, client, patron etc. is questioned. The author argues in favour of the first one.

Zoran Kanduč

NOTES ON THE ALLEGED CRISIS OF THE FAMILY

Dr. Zoran Kanduč is a senior lecturer of criminology at University of Ljubljana Faculty of Law, researcher at the Faculty's Institute of Criminology, member of editorial boards of several journals and a member of Advisory Board of the European Journal of Criminology.

The paper treats several key dimensions of the assumption of the crisis of the (traditional) family. Etiological determinants of the assumption are suggested. The notion of the family as a voluntary form of sociality or cohabitation is scrutinised, as well as the relation between the public and the private that transverses the existing family formats; some important critical reflections of the conventional family and married life are summarised, and the social barriers that prevent the creation of alternative voluntary interpersonal (or merely personal) forms of family life are clarified. Amongst the latter is also the way the crisis of the conventional family is perceived by the concerned individuals and the ideological apparatuses of the state.

Lea Šugman Bohinc

EPISTEMOLOGY OF SOCIAL WORK

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The paper is a combination of lectures, students' reflections on the lectures, and the lecturer's reflections on the students' reflections. In this sense it expresses the endeavour of the author to reflect the learning process in interaction with her students. The paper clarifies basic concepts such as cognitive processes (cognition – observation, drawing distinctions, perception, interpretation, conceptualisation...), epistemology, cybernetics of the first and second order, and hermeneutics, using concepts such as circularity, recursivity, complementarity, context, feedback information, change, conversation, understanding, autonomy, responsibility, ethics, and psychosocial help. A certain agreement upon the understanding of the concepts mentioned serves as a basis for an attempt to link the profession of social work with the science of cybernetics, as

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well as to point out the inevitable shift from the objectivist to the hermeneutical epistemology of social work.

Bogdan Lešnik

EPISTEMOLOGICAL TROUBLE WITH EVERYDAY LIFE

Dr. Bogdan Lešnik is a senior lecturer of psychology, convenor of Anthropology of everyday life programme and lecturer at the ISH (Ljubljana Graduate School of the Humanities), as well as Editor of this journal and of the yearbook International Perspectives in Social Work (Arena).

The paper discusses several problems in (anthropological and sociological) conceptualisation of everyday life. First, mountaineering (Alpine climbing, very popular in Slovenia) is taken as an example of how to analyse acts, on the background of the practice of which they are part, as representations of social relations (thus having a »representational value«), even when they are judged as »foolish«. On this basis, Malinowski's concept of »need« is confronted – not to refute it but to demonstrate that this concept, if its author is critically read, contains the grain of another concept, Freudian »desire«, for Malinowski does not distinguish need from social or cultural demand and places them on the same level. In the next section, the concept of institution is discussed, which in Malinowski is the only legitimate »cultural isolate«. The concept is lacking because Malinowski does not take account of a heterogeneous element (he reduces it to the »institution's activities«), namely practice (in Althusser's conceptualisation), without which it is impossible to think everyday life. The final section analyses the notion of values, one of the basic and a »self-understood« sociological concepts, yet its interpretations, when analysed to any degree of exhaustion, very soon prove to be not only contradictory, but also tautological.