

A B S T R A C T S

SOCIAL WORK AND THE MEDIA

Dragan Petrovec
MEDIA AND VIOLENCE

Dr. Dragan Petrovec is a scientific counsellor at the Institute of Criminology and a senior lecturer of criminology at the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Law.

The contribution summarises the findings of a research on 'Violence in the Media'. It has two parts. The first is theoretical and discusses the phenomenon in general, as well as responses to it. The second is empirical, providing data on the amount of violence in some public media. The main news of the national television and a commercial one were compared on the same day for the period of two months. The results show that the commercial television differs considerably from the national one, as it contains almost three times more violent contents. But the national broadcaster catches up in some other programmes. Further, the daily with the highest circulation in Slovenia is analysed from the standpoint of the amount of violence, the manner of reporting, and graphic material, taking random 100 issues from the last two years. The analysis of front pages, graphic material and the amount of violence on the whole shows that violence is a highly marketed commodity. Nearly 80 percent of titles evoke bloody stories, which then actually follow. The author does not think that classical censorship could be argued for, because the culture of passing information and the culture of reading are formed in a continuing process. It is characteristic for the present editorial policies to design news to the tastes of their audiences. As a rule, editors decline the role of designers of general culture and only accept the role of those who 'serve the audience'.

Keywords: sensationalism, response to violence, censorship.

Marko Milosavljevič
POWER AND RESPONSIBILITY

MASS MEDIA AND JOURNALISM BETWEEN TOTAL FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBLE FREEDOM

Dr. Marko Milosavljevič is an assistant lecturer of journalism at the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Social Sciences.

All power and all freedom based on social consensus (as opposed to totalitarian power in a non-democratic system) presupposes rights and obligations. The rights of mass media as often clear and determined by the Constitution; the case of the American First Amendment warranting the freedom of the press and of speech is only the most famous one. However, the obligations of the mass media are unclear. The journalistic and editorial policies are often non-transparent and undisclosed. What can the audience and the whole society expect from the media, what can they demand, and what can they actually do? Such questions usually arise with respect to mistaken, misleading, and ethically dubious information and content. The paper deals with the relationship between journalistic and media freedom and responsibilities, between rights and obligations, between regulation and self-regulation, that is, with the mechanisms and procedures designed to ensure clear, public and transparent functioning of the mass media, particularly in relation to 'ordinary people', without access to the media, the weak, the grieving, the minorities, and other specially vulnerable parts of society.

Keywords: freedom of the press, media rights and responsibilities, regulation, ethic.

ABSTRACTS

Mojca Pajnik

HOW THE MEDIA REPORT ABOUT MARGINALISED GROUPS

Mojca Pajnik, M. A., is junior assistant at the Peace Institute (Institute for contemporary social and political studies), Ljubljana.

As one of the ideological apparatuses of the state (Althusser), the media reproduce the state of society. So-called 'public affairs' are given this status by legitimising selected policies and fixing social norms. The media determine the framework of thinking and interpreting, which works also as a means of legitimising prejudices towards and discrimination of members of marginalised groups such as drug users, prostitutes, refugees. The use of critical discourse analysis makes it possible to focus on selected textual segments, to understand them in a wider context, and to carry out denaturalisation and deconstruction of commonly accepted representations. It turns out that when the media report on members of various marginalised groups, they often use the same or at least similar strategies of argumentation. Their objects are often marked as 'problem persons' who first of all differ from the 'normal' majority. The denominations are stereotypical, denying the objects' subjectivity and presenting them as ones whose very difference endangers the majority. Their actions, in extreme cases even their very existence, are presented as a threat to the social order. Journalists in their argumentation establish and maintain the boundary between admissible and inadmissible; they act as arbiters who 'sacrifice' individuals in the name of the protection of the public and the public interest.

Keywords: ideological apparatuses of the state, argumentation, representation.

Janez Mekinc, Marija Ovsenik, Rok Ovsenik

DOUBTS ABOUT THE CHANCES OF FIGHTING RACISM AND XENOPHOBIA ON THE INTERNET ANALYSIS OF THE PROTOCOL OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Janez Mekinc, M. A., is an associate of the General Police Administration, a lecturer at the University of Ljubljana School of Social Work and the School of Tourism, Portorose, and an expert for human rights at the Council of Europe. Dr. Marija Ovsenik is a professor at the University of Ljubljana School of Social Work, the Faculty of Organisational Sciences, Kranj, and the School of Tourism, Portorose. Rok Ovsenik, M. A., is assistant lecturer at the School of Tourism, Portorose.

The continuing dilemma of democratic states is how to draw the boundary between the total freedom of speech on the one hand and the securing of minorities' rights, which could be infringed by that very freedom. The dilemma is met while attempting to criminalise the acts related to the creation of racist and xenophobic web sites. An even greater dilemma arises with the attempt to define individual acts to be criminalised. Equally important is the question whether designing, producing, publishing, supplying or allowing web pages with racist and xenophobic contents can be deemed a criminal act. A comparison with web pages containing child pornography imposes itself. Both are problematic on account of their contents, but a close analysis shows that the limitation of freedom of speech in cases of racism and xenophobia is a far greater problem.

Keywords: freedom of speech, human rights, criminalisation.

MODES OF COMMUNITY WORK

Tomo Dadič

SPORT AS A TOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

Social worker Tomo Dadič is head of the Izola branch of Secure Labour Centre, Koper, and a post-graduate student at the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Sport.

ABSTRACTS

Today, sport is a complex social phenomenon. Not at all immune to weaknesses (commercialisation, doping, scandals), it also contains many advantages. Sport (or kinesiology as the science of sport) has a place in social work, as well as vice versa. Especially in that part of kinesiology for which achievement is not the prime (or not at all) aim. G judo (gan: inclusive, ju: soft, do: path) has been practiced on the Coast since 1994 and has developed into a movement involving four judo clubs in Slovenia and 60 people with special needs. On the basis of the criteria of normalisation the participants of G judo on the Coast have proved that sport (judo) gives persons with special needs opportunities to become more included in everyday environment. It gives them more choices, more influence, and offers more opportunities for personal growth and for establishing more contacts and making friends. The involvement in sport should by no means be regarded as a therapeutic activity, offered by one party and received by another. All participants are equal. This is particularly so in judo which contains a component of equality and respect and rests on strict ethical principles. Sport (judo) offers many opportunities for surpassing the 'self-image of users' imposed by society. It is an excellent means of destigmatisation, integration and normalisation of persons with special needs.

Keywords: kinesiology, judo, destigmatisation, integration, normalisation.

Vera Grebenc

ETHNOGRAPHY OF HEROIN CRISIS

Vera Grebenc is assistant-probationer at the University of Ljubljana School of Social Work.

The heroin crisis as a phenomenon of drug use has an important place in the language of drugs – right next to the speech on pleasure. Whereas in conversations with drug users more or less dramatic narratives are found on the experiences of crises and experiences in crises, the expert literature focuses on medical notions related to the syndrome of abstinence. Everyday ideas of the crisis are caught in stereotypes: the crisis becomes a motive for sudden, uncontrolled actions of the individual 'ready to do anything'. The crisis is understood as a lever for violent behaviour of the people who take drugs. Less is known about how the crisis relates to everyday life of drug users, how the awareness of the crisis influences the organisation of the day of the people from the scene, the practices of enjoyment, and the tactics of controlling one's addiction. On the basis of a qualitative analysis of the parts of interviews and personal narratives that speak about it, the author shaped a map of the heroin crisis. It is analysed in relation to the social context (employment, schooling, leisure time, social networks) and with regard to everyday situations important to the users (purchasing, consumption). The results showed that the crisis does not occupy a central position in the lives of the people who take heroin, yet it is in a special way permanently present – as a possibility, threat or actual experience. To understand the crises two contexts need to be distinguished: the 'regular' crisis is the consequence of the shortage of the drug and is related to the need for solace; or it may be related to the wish to stop, a way of giving up the drug. These are two distinct processes; the people's conduct is different in each case. The possibility of a good outcome of the crisis depends on the social status of the concerned individual and to the present circumstances, whether it is about control over risks related to the practices of drug taking or about maintaining and re-establishing important social roles in the lives of addicts. The preferred course in planning social work interventions is community social work, which provides context-bound acting in everyday environment.

Keywords: addiction, shortage, risk, community social work.

Dušica Grgič, Mirjam Bartol-Polončič, Gordana Čizman

A CASE OF FAMILY WORK FOLLOWING A PROGRAMME OF PSYCHOSOCIAL AID

Dušica Grgič, M. A., Mirjam Bartol-Polončič, a psychologist, and Gordana Čizman, a social worker, are professional workers at the Centre of Social Work Ljubljana Moste Polje.

ABSTRACTS

The professional aid for a family encompasses counselling directed at settling the relations among family members, caring for children, and training the family for its role in everyday life. The service is conducted in three phases. In the phase of preparation, the problem is defined together with the family, an agreement on co-operation is made, and the plan of aid is elaborated. The continuous work with the family marks the phase of execution, in which the progress is evaluated with the family on periodical conferences. In the termination phase the effects of aid are assessed and the decision is made whether to continue or finish. Many pre-printed forms facilitate the carrying out of the programme. The presented case confirms that success is not achieved merely by attaining planned aims; the work is successful when the worker's entry helps the family to better recognise the most suitable solutions. Such work is a challenge engaging the worker not only professionally but also personally and emotionally. The future development of the programme should include permanent education of workers and the assurance of better stability in recruiting persons who are to work with the family at their home.

Keywords: work phases, aid plan, agreement, worker, documentation.