GLOBAL – LOCAL – SOCIAL

Gabi Čačinovič Vogrinčič
THE LANGUAGE OF SOCIAL WORK

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'New words' in the developing language of social work support a paradigmatic shift in practice and substitute or complement traditional concepts. Diagnoses, treatment, assessment, decree are being replaced by discovery, co-creation, co-operation, change, empowerment, as well as working relation, care plan, team work, community, neighbourhood, ecology. Social work is an aim directed project of help, or co-creation of solutions, for complex social problems of individual people. The paradigmatic shifts that took place in social work and its language consist of three important chapters: the projects of help in the framework of social work; the participation of users; interdisciplinary links. The ethic of participation, reaching from unconditional respect for the singularity of a person to the weaving of social networks to community work and political action, is a particularly good foundation for a consistent social work framework.

Keywords: ethic of participation, project, help, interdisciplinary.

Birgit Rommelspacher
SOCIAL WORK AS A HUMAN RIGHTS PROFESSION

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Human rights should become a new ethical frame of reference for social work in the globalised world – numerous professionals and social work associations have put forward this demand in recent years. But has social work not been international since its very beginning? Has not the struggle for social rights been one of the first and main aims of social work? Do human rights really provide new standards or do they rather supply a new rhetoric to legitimate old practice? The discourse on human rights is inclusive as well as exclusive. It supports as well as fights hegemonic structures. Human rights are not just a fixed value system ready to be transferred to different fields of social theory and practice but rather the result and expression of an ongoing struggle for political, cultural and economic power. Social work should join this debate in order to enhance its potential of critical self-reflection and improve its ability to communicate its aims and values in a pluralistic world.

Keywords: internationalism, hegemony, pluralism, contradictions.

AGAINST EXCLUSION

Shulamit Ramon
THE CENTRALITY OF DEINSTITUTIONALISATION TO SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

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Deinstitutionalisation has dominated the 2nd half of the 20th century across the field of disability. Yet the mentality of institutionalisation can, and has been, easily transferred to the smaller establish-

ments for disabled people, which have replaced the large institutions. Thus the issue of proper deinstitutionalisation is still with us, both in Eastern and Western Europe. It is of central importance in terms of social work values, as at its core are the values of respect for people, self-determination, anti-oppressive and anti-stigmatising approach to disabled people, as well as the need/wish to foster their right to equal opportunities. Deinstitutionalisation questions the taken for granted notion that it is the role of social workers first to protect people and to avoid risk at all cost; it favours risk taking. Living in the community is more risky than living in an institution because it confronts the disabled person with the world of those who do not see themselves as disabled, who continue to stigmatise disabled people, as well as with the irrevocable loss due to institutionalisation. Striking the right balance between risk taking (as the only way to break out of the institutionalised mould) and risk avoidance is a demanding task. The assessment for community living of people who have spent their lives in an institution is in itself an art, as is projecting where is the best place for them to live, the type of activities to introduce them to, the encouragement for them to develop intimate relationship and have a sexual life. Learning to rely on their judgement implies another type of risk taking and of accepting their right to fail. This does pose a further dilemma for the social worker. Examples of good practice in which the above has been applied at the levels of conceptual knowledge, practice skills, and research in social work will be provided and analysed in terms of the obstacles and opportunities that this type of work entails. Understanding the social context of deinstitutionalisation as a social innovation, its disadvantages and advantages, is a necessary part of our learning from success and failure.

Keywords: social innovation, role and position of social workers, evidence vs. attitudes, risk taking, social model of disability.

Darja Zaviršek
INTERNAL CONTRADICTIONS OF SOCIAL WORK IN POSTMODERN SOCIETIES

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A critical reflection of social work in postmodern societies is necessary, because global changes do not only take place on economic, political and cultural levels but also on the level of bio-politics and bio-power. One of the crucial internal contradictions of social work in Slovenia is its being grounded merely on universal human rights, without consideration of actual, concrete human rights. 'Professional help' means different things to different subjects; the very 'help' that should connect users to social networks and train them for ordinary, independent life, often excludes them instead. This is also one of the oldest internal ambivalences. As the profession typified help, it has also categorised conflicts and distress, giving people the status of exceptions, and has thus created new exclusions. Social work in Slovenia has only to a certain extent responded to the developing social heterogeneity; problem-oriented, particular social services have only emerged in the last decade. Amongst other concepts significant for postmodern societies the author analyses the processes of deterritorialisation, decentralisation and creation of horizontal links and networks, the principles of immediate transaction and mobility, and the economisation of the processes of help.

Keywords: universalism, particularism, inclusion, human rights.

Tanja Lamovec
IMPACT OF EXCLUSION FROM WORK TO THE QUALITY OF PSYCHIATRY USERS' LIVES

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In Slovenia, the exclusion of psychiatry users is sanctioned in two ways: by early and extensive retiring and by the legislation that only allows minimal work for retired persons. Exclusion has a negative impact upon various aspects of mental functioning; resulting in poverty, it also prevents users from

participation in leisure time activities accessible to most people. The paper describes the process experienced by the majority of users after retirement, which in many cases ends with a wish for paid work. This area has been all but neglected until now. A number of cases is presented that show how users were granted paid work elsewhere, concluded by the author's proposals to solve the problem in Slovenia.

Keywords: mental health, retirement, paid work.

CHALLENGES AND DILEMMAS

Vito Flaker
BASIC AND NECESSARY SKILLS OF SOCIAL WORK

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The paper is based on the work on the Task Catalogue of Centres of Social Work, intended to systematise not only the tasks but also the basic skills needed to perform them, and the basic procedures. By drawing a general map of social work it is possible to extract a cross-section of basic and necessary skills for social work and their relations with theoretical knowledge, methodical principles, social work values, and with social work contexts and tasks. The skills of interviewing, negotiating, enabling access to resources, recording and reporting, organisational skills, professional discipline, avoiding the traps of professionalism, and humour are considered. On the basis of interaction between social work theory, context, tasks and values seven major organising methodical principles have been pinpointed: dialogue, power, probability, proactive stance, reflexivity, the ordinariness of the uncommon and the right to make mistakes. Impressions from the trainings designed to equip social workers with skills to carry out catalogue tasks are reflected, and skill hierarchy is examined in relation to the theory and context, revealing social work as a diffuse, reflexive and pragmatic profession and science based on dialogue.

Keywords: methods, reflexivity, theory and practice.

PARADIGM OF NEW INTERDISCIPLINARITY

Blaž Mesec
MICRO, MEZZO, MACRO: EXPANSION, INTEGRATION AND SPECIFICITY OF SOCIAL WORK

Dr. Blaž Mesec is an associate professor of social work, teaching methodology of research at University of Ljubljana School of Social Work.

Social work has traditionally been understood as a unified work with individuals, groups or communities, with the unification supposedly based on theoretical or methodological principles, which should make possible a specific definition of social work and its differentiation from related disciplines and professions. Those principles have been described and elaborated by Lüssi who conceives social work as work on an individual problem case, i. e., as 'social counselling'. But according to Lüssi even community work is marginal to social work, if not outside its scope altogether. In the last decades social work has extended precisely to these 'peripheral' areas; along community work developed work with organisations, and today we have social work on societal and global levels. At the same time, the gap between so-called clinical social work, which remains in the framework of traditionally conceived social work as social counselling or is even understood as 'psychosocial therapy', and social work on the organisational, societal and global levels, which is grounded on other theoretical sources as well (sociology, organisational science). The boundaries of social work as a special

profession are increasingly extended to the field of non-specific social action and charity, thus blurring the distinction between social work and professions such as social planning, social policy or social pedagogy. Such development seriously challenges the integrity of social work and its specificity and autonomy as science and profession. In the author's view, the unity of social work's three levels has always been rather illusionary (or held true only for social counselling) and it will not be maintained conceptually, on the level of a unified and congruent theory, but by power struggle in academic, administrative and other social structures. That struggle is already taking place, and if social work expands and wins new positions on this basis, it is no longer social work but an arbitrary social action, which has succeeded to pronounce itself 'social work'.

Keywords: theories of social work, science of social work, macro social work.

Alenka Šelih
SOCIAL WORK AND (CRIMINAL) LAW
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The history of social work, in Slovenia just as elsewhere, shows that lawyers have been instrumental to its emergence and development, and that they marked it with their stamp. Social work meets in particular the deprivileged, the excluded, the ousted – a group of people, therefore, who are highly likely to come into conflict with the law. This results in interactions between social work and law, as well as between the actors of both professions. Their interrelations become the more numerous and complex, the more a society is developed and consequently 'jurisprudential'. Social workers need to be acquainted with basic legal regulations on the juridical field that regulates their specific field of work (with families, with victims of family violence and sexual abuse, with underage delinquents, with released convicts, etc.), but they shouldn't be made responsible for decisions in individual cases. When the young profession of social work meets the old and elaborated profession of law, it meets a variety of problems on both theoretical and practical levels and consequently also on the level of individual relations between representatives of the two professions. The relation between social work and criminal law, however, is marked with confliction, because of the contradictory tendencies that meet here (help and state constraint), and it has often been addressed in criminological research projects in Slovenia. Ranged by frequency, the majority of them have dealt with diverse problems of juvenile delinquency, secondly, with problems related to execution of prison sentences, thirdly, with problems related to victims and the development of help for them. The experiences of developed European countries suggest that the relations between social work and criminal law will in the future be established with regard to providing security of the people in their surroundings and in work with the most excluded social groups.

Keywords: excluded social groups, criminology, research.

Jolanta Pivorienė
EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL WORK IN LITHUANIA
Dr. Jolanta Pivoriene is a lecturer at the Social Work Institute of Vytautas Magnus University and Head of Social Integration Research Centre in Vilnius.

Social work in Lithuania began ten years ago. Its development is linked with new ideas about democracy, market economy and human rights. Its roots are a mixture of foreign traditions and native understanding, which derived social work from voluntary work and charity. Social work as a new profession had to overcome many difficulties. It had to gain recognition as a discipline in the university. It had to establish itself as a profession. It had to search for professional identity and create professional standards of competence. Included in its professional identity are political aspects, extremely important in building civil society. Social work cannot be apolitical, first of all because of its social nature. Educational programmes of social work, besides providing knowledge and skill train-

ing, also have to encourage thinking about important aspects of human beings. These include values and ethics as well as citizenship. Social work and social work education have challenged old traditions in Lithuania. They passed through three stages of development: from individualist-reformist to socialist-collectivist to reflexive-therapeutic. As a discipline and as a profession, connecting private, public and political domains of society, social work has a strong impact on building civil society.

Keywords: institutionalisation, academisation, standardisation, harmonisation.

SOCIAL WITHIN GLOBAL

Srečo Dragoš
METAETHIC IN SOCIAL WORK
Dr. Srečo Dragoš lectures sociology at the University of Ljubljana School of Social Work.

Normative and practical ethics are not the same. We use the former when the latter becomes insufficient at solving moral dilemmas. Frequently, however, the dilemmas are of more general nature, so that even the reflection of the problem situation on the normative ethical level does not suffice. In such cases we are on the third, metaethical level. The author presents the distinctions between the three levels of ethical reflection and points to the complexity of morally connoted situations. They may consist of five distinct normative systems and 23 cross-sections between them. It is demonstrated on concrete cases that these are questions of vital importance. A table is proposed with six steps of solving moral dilemmas. To distinguish ethical levels, normative systems and their cross-sections is essential. The more complex the situations that demand moral judgment, the more useful metaethical reflection. Even though such problems are not always wholly soluble, it is important to realise their existence.

Keywords: ethic, morals, philosophy, social work, everyday life.

Gorana Flaker, Paul Stubbs
GLOBALISATION AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SOCIAL
CONFORMITY AND RESISTANCE
Social worker Gorana Flaker is the director of SEECRAN (South East European Child Rights Action Network). Paul Stubbs is a sociologist from Great Britain, working as independent researcher and counsellor in Zagreb.

The paper seeks to address the ways in which globalisation impacts on aspects of social work practice in South Eastern Europe, with particular reference to the role of International NGO's and their relationships with national NGO's and regional networks and coalitions. Defining globalisation in terms of fundamental changes in 'time-space distanciation' so that the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements are rapidly receding, the authors chart the impact on social work of global forces, global connections and global imaginings. The discussion of globalisation suggests the complexity of changes in social, cultural, political and economic relations and, in addition, notes how the effects of globalisation are mediated through regional, national and local forces. Defining social policy and social work in terms of regulation/advice and practice/provision allows the authors to discuss the implications of external advice and practice regimes on South Eastern Europe. In particular, the role of the World Bank, of accession arrangements for the European Union, and the diversity of International NGO's and private consultancy companies are addressed. The dangers of producing parallel social work services, and of an importation of external understandings not always in line with local memories, are also noted. The importance of certain principles governing external interventions in addressed. The paper concludes with two case studies: of INGO intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina and of INGO support for the development of a regional child rights action

network. The paper argues that discussion of cases, combined with a renewed rights-based political commitment, can replace colonialist globalisation with genuine internationalism in social work.

Keywords: colonialism, human rights, local memory.

DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

Elena Pečarič
TRAPS OF PROFESSIONALISATION OF PERSONAL ASSISTANCE

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Personal assistance is crucial for independent lives of the disabled. It may be defined as physical help for the actions that the disabled person could no do her- or himself but are needed for her or his independence and autonomy. On the basis of new legislation a new standardisation of tasks is in preparation, which will formalise the profession. The author participates at the formation of these standards, which will also be the basis of education for personal assistance. Two advantages are expected from such education: the assistant will gain certain skills and a certificate, while the user will be able to select a skilled assistant. However, there are traps inherent in any standardisation and formalisation, such as a decrease of flexibility (different users have dfeerent needs) and an increase of the possibility to transfer outlived and stereotypical practices. Particularly dangerous are medicalisation of the profession and introduction of the caring relationship. Persons who do not come from medical and caring professions and who have not worked in institutions are more suit-able as assistants. They are more open to new experiences, and because they do not possess previous 'knowledge', they better and with more ease comply with the user's demands. They are not burdened with the rules of profession, or with medical diagnosis, or certain 'methods of work'. Part of their basic education has to be carried out with the users. This maintains an individualised approach, which is a crucial element for the quality of their service. The user has a great responsibility, for he or she must train his or her assistant well to get a good assistant. The opinion that certain categories of people cannot become good personal assistants, especially 'risk groups' such as older people, former addicts, physically disabled, single mothers, etc., is a prejudice. The experience has proven that such people, based on their own social position and stigmatisation, are often more susceptible to this kind of work and do not behave as the 'normal' towards the 'different'.

Keywords: independent life, standardisation, education.

NEW EXCLUSIONS AND THE PRACTICES OF INCLUSION

Jelka Zorn
ANTIRACIST PERSPECTIVE IN SOCIAL WORK
HOW TO RECOGNISE RACISM IN EVERYDAY LIFE AND THE CULTURAL COMPETENCE OF SERVICES

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In Slovenia, racism affects persons of non-Slovenian origin regardless of citizenship. It manifests itself as denial or reduction of rights and as oppression. It is reproduced on personal, institutional, and cultural levels. There is no question that our society is multi-cultural, the question is rather, how does social work protect the rights of the members of minority ethnic groups, including those that are not entitled to special laws (such as those about aliens, temporary refuge, asylum). Multiculturalism and tolerance by themselves do not warrant that social services actually defend excluded groups and respond to their needs. The most important themes of antiracist social work are: sensitivity and respect for cultural differences and value systems (which does not include tolerance for family vio-

lence and for neglect of education), understanding of the ways racism (denial of rights and oppression) affects minority communities and persons without citizenship, recognition of everyday racism in the functioning of institutions and on the personal level, defence of excluded groups' rights, and access to social services. Antiracist social work opposes the commonsense distinction and valuation of 'us' against 'them' and consequently opposes the established segregation and assimilation models that allot access to and quality of services with regard to ethnic membership or the civil status of (potential) users.

Keywords: latent racism, access to services, excluded groups.

Tom Schmid
STABILISATION / INTEGRATION

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Our society needs the definition and exclusion of 'deviant behaviour' as the crucial mark of its cohesion. Yet one cannot drop out from society: even the excluded live in society, in niches, in internal detachment, in striking difference, or, not so seldom, in institutions. Exclusion is therefore an exile within society. There are strategies of social policies and social work designed to overcome exclusion, even though it is clear that no society can be conceived without it. Social policy is politically and economically determined, conforming to all sorts of demands, and its methods and instruments are limited. It develops in a field which is full of contradictions and follows various social (actors') interests. The main task of social policy is the stabilisation of a 'normal' course of life with regard to 'safe' risks (old age, need of care) as well as unsafe ones (illness, unemployment, poverty). Fighting poverty is a social policy field, but (at least in developed countries) an insignificant one, and its requests may easily be threatened by neoliberalism within socio-political and social work discourse. The extent to which the notion of indivisible, unified discussion and client directed integration, which accepts the clients' expertise and includes the 'right to be different', may be developed as a general social policy and social work strategy to overcome exclusion remains to be examined.

Keywords: integration, deviant behaviour, social policy, double mandate.