

Jelka Zorn

### PEOPLE WITHOUT THE RIGHT TO RIGHTS AND THE ROLE OF SOCIAL WORK

The author draws attention to the social phenomenon of people without documents and rights, an area which often escapes reflection in social work due to the dominance of other sectors, particularly the repressive state apparatus, over social welfare. The normative-legal framework (based on international recommendations and conventions) and the two main institutions (the Asylum Centre and the Foreigners' Centre), as well as the temporary and segregated status of asylum seekers and immigrants without documents, are presented. Community social services are only rarely called for to look for new institutional solutions for non-citizens. This allows social services to largely sustain their internal contradiction that their accessibility is conditioned by the legal status of an individual (citizenship, residence permit, refugee status). The area of migration and asylums needs to be thoroughly reconsidered by social workers who should decide whether they will continue in the role of agents of immigration control and contribute to the deepening of inequality, or promote the principles of the codes of ethics in social work and its global education standards. Despite the prevailing exclusion of immigrants and asylum-seekers, some governmental and non-governmental organisations and activist groups develop the transnational perspective and go beyond internal and external state (and welfare) borders. In describing three models of inclusive (non-selective) social response to non-citizens, the author understands the role of social work in terms of active citizenship as collective (self-)advocacy or social action.

**KEY WORDS:** Foreigners' centre, Asylum Centre, migration, erasure, citizenship, radical social work, immigrants, asylum-seekers, exclusion, racism, borders.

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Federico Farini

### CITIZENSHIP AS A PRACTICE

#### A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF EDUCATIONAL COMMUNICATION AS A VEHICLE FOR YOUNG IMMIGRANTS' SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

In 2004–2006, three projects were designed by the Education Office and the Social Policies and Integration Office of the City Council of Modena aiming at sustaining the social participation of the children of international immigrants (CIIs) and empowering their active citizenship. The interventions were based on the premise that social integration depends on social participation. The projects' basic standpoint was that citizenship is not some sort of cognitive status to be achieved but rather an outcome of the experience of everyday participation in social processes. The activities provided for the CIIs aimed at stimulating their reflection about their everyday experience of participating in the social processes of their host country with the help of adult social workers. The results of all three projects, as materialised in concrete interactions, turned out to be paradoxical: it was possible to observe how social workers systematically violated the CIIs' communication space – that is to say, their opportunities to experience, in the context of social interventions, active and autonomous social participation – as soon as communication brought up meanings which were inconsistent with the interventions' ideological and theoretical premises; this led the CIIs to mistrust their opportunity for autonomous social participation. For a social intervention which can offer the opportunity to experience social participation, a different communication form is needed which would encourage the communicators' self-expression, to build mutual trust, explore common grounds and enable a continuous exchange of views between interlocutors. A rough sketch of the form of communication is presented, which could be much more effective than the educational approach in sustaining the social integration of young immigrants by promoting their autonomous participation. This communication form is called "dialogue". The limits of educational communication suggest that social work with adolescents and young adults would be more effective and the projects more efficient,

if dialogue were to be used as an opportunity to experiment.

**KEY WORDS:** asymmetrical communication, role expectancies, social exclusion, dialogue, empowerment.

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Marino Kačič

### **ABANDONING THE SOCIAL ROLE OF AN INVALID**

#### **THE INVALIDATION OF IDENTITY AND HOW TO AVOID IT**

In all societies people with special needs – the so-called invalids – were once pushed to the bottom of the social ladder. The process of excluding them from society by putting them in special institutions began some 200 years ago. The formation of the special social role of the invalid which was supposed to help people with special needs actually disabled them to lead an independent life and thus kept them even further away from the possibility to join the mainstream. The process of reintegrating people with special needs into society began in the second half of the 20th century. Most of those attempts have not had any significant success; they have been hindered by the social role of the disabled and its by-product, their disabled identity. To bring about real changes, a deeper social change is needed along with a change in the relationships between three key actors – society, helpers, and people with special needs. The model of a three-way process of change proposed in the article shows how the three actors and their relationships should change in order to create the conditions for an independent life of people with special needs.

**KEY WORDS:** identity of the invalid, social change, inclusion, independent life.

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Simona Gerenčer Pegan

### **THE POSITION OF DEAFBLIND INDIVIDUALS IN SLOVENIA**

Individuals who are deafblind suffer from simultaneous hearing and vision impairments to an extent which makes them unable to function independently in their everyday lives, despite their use of aids. Deafblindness is a specific form of disability requiring special treatment, approach and communication. In the legislation of European Union, deafblindness is recognised as a specific form of disability; a declaration concerning deafblind persons has been adopted and organisations established which fight for their rights. Slovenian legislation provides for the needs of deaf persons and for the blind ones, but not for the deafblind persons. Although there are indications that the state has perceived the existence of deafblind individuals, so far no significant motions have been made in the field. As long as deafblindness is not recognised as a special form of disability, people with simultaneous hearing and vision impairments will be unable to obtain the status of deafblind persons, meaning they will be classified either as deaf or as blind individuals, and they will only be eligible to the benefits provided to either deaf or blind individuals. In 2006, the Association of Deafblind Individuals DLAN was founded, raising awareness of the professional and wider public about this problem.

**KEY WORDS:** deficient legislation, deaf, blind, European Union.

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Subhangi M. K. Herath

### **CARE FOR THE ELDERLY IN SRI LANKA**

#### **A GENDER PERSPECTIVE**

Sri Lanka is currently experiencing a sharp escalation in its elderly population which poses a serious challenge to the country's social welfare systems. The elderly population in Sri Lanka, unlike those in many developed countries, does not essentially

survive on old-age pension schemes that make them more economically independent, nor are they provided with adequate welfare schemes. The problem of elderly care in Sri Lanka is not solely related to economic issues. The institution of the family which considered elderly care one of its major responsibilities is no longer capable of fulfilling this obligation to the same level as before due to the change of the family structure, family size and the division of labour between men and women that leaves less time and space for elderly care. The cultural stigma attached to elderly homes labels them charity organisations and prevents many people from seeking the support of such institutions, while also making the elderly feel neglected when institutionalised. No systems have been developed for elderly care that would be acceptable for both the elderly and their family members other than public and private institutions. Even though both men and women are affected by this situation, due to the gender differences prevailing in the country, men and women are disadvantaged in different ways. More men than women have been engaged in pensionable employment, allowing them to receive a reasonable pension after their retirement and to be economically less dependent. However, due to the gender division of labour prevailing in the society, they have been used to a lifestyle which makes them highly dependent in their day-to-day activities on the women in the family, while they are maintaining the powerful and commanding position within the family and in society which makes it more difficult for them to cope with the complexities of old age. However, unless they become physically disabled, women tend to be not only independent but also feature as a major source of support for the family in various ways, and continue to maintain their roles and responsibilities in the household which helps them adjust more easily to life in dependent positions. Hence, in spite of their economic dependency, older women may be seen as less of a burden compared to older men, even if women tend to outlive men in Sri Lanka. Nevertheless, older men, especially after the death of a spouse, become more vulnerable to situations of helplessness, despair, loneliness and loss of power, despite their economic ability. This paper argues that elderly care in Sri Lanka has to

take the changing population characteristics as well as gender and cultural situations into consideration, so as to provide a better living environment for senior citizens in the country who have spent their younger life periods making the country a better place for those who succeed them.

**KEY WORDS:** developing world, men and women, culture.

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#### **MAINSTREAMING ETHNICITY AND GENDER IN MENTAL HEALTH**

The Emilia Project is an EU action research (6th FP) aimed at enhancing the social inclusion of people experiencing serious mental distress at eight demonstration sites across Europe focusing on education and employment opportunities. A key objective of the project is to improve the mainstreaming of gender and ethnicity at these sites since a lack of such mainstreaming adds to the already existing barriers to social inclusion emerging from the stigma attached to mental distress. The article describes the multi-stage strategy for monitoring gender, ethnicity and culture mainstreaming which was applied in the project. Its first phase involved the collection of data through questionnaires reflecting the standpoints of the personnel employed in the participating organisations on issues related to ethnicity and gender in their workplace and their relevance for work in mental health organisations. On the basis of the findings each participating site had to construct its action plan for mainstreaming. The second phase is set to involve a similar research among service users. Most service providers participating in the first phase of research advocated the view that discrimination is caused by society at large, and that they only have little or no influence on reducing it. Yet the reality of the users of mental health services remains that of social discrimination and often abuse and social ignorance of their type of experience. Most of the personnel identified the need for additional training. The priority issues for training included acquiring

knowledge on users' culture/s, translation skills or the use of professional interpreters from foreign languages in communication with users, learning of the skills needed for work with users, victims of domestic violence and sexual abuse, and homophobia.

**KEY WORDS:** mainstreaming audit tools, action plan, training.

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Katja Vadnal

#### **GREEN PROGRAMMES OF SOCIAL CARE AS A COMPONENT OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

The majority of green programmes of social care in Slovenia emerged in the late 1990s, inspired by firm personal beliefs and creative efforts to open up agriculture and social care to new challenges. Most of these programmes involve micro projects, primarily aimed at meeting the users' needs. Although economy is a weakness of the green programmes, the providers are optimistic about their economic prospects for two reasons. First, they will be in a position to make use of the learning and experience curve. Second, the increasingly important new concepts, multifunctional agriculture and community-based social care, stress the economy of aim. These developmental ambitions are supported by the positive effects of the green programmes on their users, particularly in terms of self-esteem and personal responsibility. Although very demanding, the green programmes' professional challenges attract service providers. Taking place outdoors and visible to the public eye, they represent very important promoters of the philosophy of inclusion. To overcome the institutional vacuum in which they are currently operating, a special, harmonised intersectorial development policy that takes the user as a key lever, along with proper governmental support, has to be formulated.

**KEY WORDS:** multifunctional agriculture, people with special needs, inclusion.

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Suzana Bornarova

#### **CASE MANAGEMENT IN GERONTOLOGICAL SOCIAL WORK**

**A RESPONSE TO THE CHANGING CONTEXT OF CARE FOR THE ELDERLY**

With the global growth of the older population, increasing attention is being paid to their functional disabilities and capacity for an independent life in the community. It is the increase in the number of the very oldest, those above the age of 85, which most dramatically demonstrates the need for health and social services that can assist frail older people to continue to remain independent. Public policy-makers are becoming ever more aware of future population shifts and develop a variety of responses to a range of complex and critical issues. Given the range of complex medical, social, economic and legal issues, inherent in the ageing process, case management practice provides a model response that identifies issues, assesses needs, provides links with services and follows up on progress, so that the best possible services can be offered to the older individual. Case management is a practice model that has been used in the helping professions, especially social work, for many years. The current era of the privatisation of social programmes and downsizing of mandated services has expanded the need for care management, while the interaction of needs and services is even more complex. Case management services are needed to address the complexity of needs and the provision of related services. While case managers are used in many settings, they are especially important in gerontology. The article gives an overview of the global demographic trends of ageing as the key factors of change in delivering care to the elderly, and in particular of professional approaches in gerontological social work practice.

The case management model is described as one of the predominant models used in gerontological social work. Based on a theoretical approach, the core case management functions applied to gerontological social work are discussed, as is the range of tasks a case manager may perform during case finding, assessment, service planning, coordination and follow-up.

**KEY WORDS:** case manager, service provision, case management functions, social services, social gerontology.

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Petra Videmšek

#### **EMPOWERMENT AS THE BASIC TOOL OF SOCIAL WORK**

Aiming towards the distribution of power among participants in a process, the concept of empowerment represents the guiding force of the social work profession. The development of the concept within the profession since the 1970s and the difference between the initial attempts and the way the concept is used today are presented. The division of the concept into its collective and individual levels seems to be the main characteristic of this development. Examples are given of collective and individual empowerment from the author's co-operation with focus groups. Summarising referential literature, the author finds that authors are far from agreeing on what empowerment is and when the concept really began to be used, and she stresses that the concept should rather be defined by those for whom it is designed – people with experience. To illustrate her proposal, the author presents definitions of the concept given by people with experience who participated in the focus groups.

**KEY WORDS:** people with experience, support, help, collective empowerment, individual empowerment.

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Maria Anastasiadis

#### **M-POWERMENT: A METHOD TO MAKE EXPERIENCES VISIBLE**

##### **A CASE STUDY OF THE REINTEGRATION OF THE UNEMPLOYED**

In coping with the challenge of getting older in an employment-based society the competencies achieved in one's life are becoming ever more important for improving one's self-esteem and the ability for self-determined decision-making. These aspects of "power" are relevant in the re-integration process of the long-term unemployed aged around 50 and represent a starting point for the method of "empowerment by medial staging". Working with the media can help us create participative settings enabling empowerment processes. The main benefit of linking medial staging with empowerment settings lies in its transformative effects. In the project the presented film documentation and various forms of media production were created with and by the clients. Thus the "clients" gradually became "actors" of their own lives and competencies. In the self-representation phase the target group acquired self-confidence and learned to rely on their own – sometimes hidden – biographical potential. This interdisciplinary method was developed during the Austrian EQUAL "U-Turn" Project and represents the intertwining of participative media production and empowerment as an upcoming method of social work. The concept and the process were accompanied by an action research procedure in order to improve the approach and formulate its final implementation concept to be applied by the practitioners of labour market policy activities. In this article the approach is presented for the first time as a discourse of the integration of theory and practice in social work. Based on a short presentation of the problem of ageing in the employment market and the processes of change in the work culture the theoretical points of reference – "empowerment", "biographical learning" and "medial staging" – are described, followed by rough guidelines for applying

the method used in an example of practical work performed within the project that also describes potential anchor points of the methodical framework for working with other groups. Finally, I would like to present some thoughts on how to transfer this approach to pedagogical practice at universities and colleges of higher education.

**KEY WORDS:** biographical learning, media staging, ageing.

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Tina Rahne, Tatjana Rožič

#### **A PRESENTATION OF EMOTIONAL DYNAMICS AND THE PARALLEL PROCESS IN RELATIONAL FAMILY THERAPY SUPERVISION**

The article presents the research of a relational model of family therapy supervision from two perspectives: the supervisor's interventions based on her own emotions, and the parallel process of the transference of emotional dynamics. The participants in the research included the supervisor, the therapist and his client. Data triangulation (involving three independent observers, the therapist, the supervisor and the three-member research team) confirmed the need for the supervisor to bring to her awareness her own emotional process (e.g. countertransference), in order to be able to identify and assess the emotional process in the supervisee, so that the latter could do the same with the client. With regard to the parallel process, the hypothesis was confirmed that it is essentially the transference of emotional dynamics from one dyad to the other and vice versa. The identification, verbalisation and assessment of the parallel process in one dyad makes way for a change in emotional dynamics in the other dyad, thus allowing for progress in the process of therapy and supervision.

**KEY WORDS:** research, transference, countertransference.

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Andreja Poljanec, Barbara Simonič

#### **PARENTHOOD FOR THE THIRD MILLENNIUM IN LIGHT OF THE THEORY OF ATTACHMENT**

In his theory of attachment, Bowlby argued that humans have an inborn mechanism of seeking contact with, and creating attachment to, adults, and that this is crucial to their survival. Together with Ainsworth, he discovered that the child attaches to his or her guardian, even if that person does not offer safety (unsafe attachment). The system theorists and neuropsychologists add that the child's brain cannot develop without interactions with adults. For the children to develop to their full potentials, they have to grow up with parents who provide them with safety. Responsiveness, attention, flexibility and the absence of punishment are found to be the key characteristics of safe parenting. In such families the children will feel accepted and able to fully develop their self-esteem, self-value, as well as their sensory, emotional and cognitive systems. As adults, they will be able to find safe partnerships and enable their children to safely attach to them. However, as the brain remains adaptable throughout an individual's life, an unsafely attached child, too, can later in life, in a partnership built on trust, empathy and sincerity, alter an unsafe attachment into a safe(r) one and enable his or her children to develop secure attachment.

**KEY WORDS:** non-violent parenthood, responsiveness, flexibility.

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### WHEN THE RELATIONSHIP FAILS

#### COPING WITH THE CONSEQUENCES OF DIVORCE AND THE PROCESS OF MOURNING

Intimate partner relationships symbolise a space in which both individuals can realise their full potential and achieve personal fulfilment, while this can also be a space filled with pain and suffering. When the circumstances become unbearable and the spouses or partners can no longer see a common future, the relationship ends. The ending of a marriage or an extramarital partnership requires the arrangement of many formal and legal matters, as well as coping with new life circumstances and a new social status. The changes and adjustments together with the farewell from the old lifestyle are related to a deep emotional process. Divorce is indeed a loss and requires individuals to adapt to it. Emotionally, this means going through a process which allows the difficult experience of loss to become acceptable. It is a mourning process requiring the individual to face the reality of the loss and its profound feelings. The process of mourning has several phases with each of them being characteristically determined by certain feelings and reactions. Normally, with a divorce individuals experience a wide range of feelings which is typical for the mourning process: from shock, denial, sadness through to anger, rage, guilt, fear and despair. It is important that these feelings are expressed and evaluated so as to allow the individual to integrate their loss into their everyday life; otherwise, their moving on is inhibited which may give rise to dysfunctional symptomatic behaviour. Participation in the psychotherapeutic process offers a possibility to work through these feelings, address the loss and deal with powerful and blocked feelings.

**KEY WORDS:** mourning process, relationships, mourning phases, relational family therapy.

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Suzana Oreški

### MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS OF MENTAL HEALTH AND THEIR EFFECTS ON SOCIAL PRACTICES

In societies that have succeeded in developing community mental health care, the influence of media representations and constructions of mental health on the perceptions of the general public has been the subject of research for decades. The mass media, which play an important role in the co-creation of social reality, cannot be ignored in the discourse on mental health. The media's specific skill lies in their reshaping of events and statements, in their power to reconstruct stories and co-create a new "media reality", which can become a new social construct. What seems worrying for the field of community mental health are the representations of people with mental health problems that encourage discriminatory social practices. At the micro and macro levels, these are manifest in defamatory attitudes towards people with mental health problems and their relatives, and in restrictive policies.

**KEY WORDS:** negative representations, stereotypes, prejudice.

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### THE ROLE OF DOCTORAL STUDIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL WORK AS A PROFESSION

#### THE CROATIAN EXPERIENCE

In Croatia, doctoral studies in social work have been possible since scientific research was introduced into social work academia in 2000 and the first postgraduate studies in social work were introduced

in 2002. During doctoral studies in social work, candidates are trained in independent scientific and research work with a special emphasis on acquiring thorough knowledge of scientific methodology in social sciences, particularly action and evaluation research, the development of prevention and intervention activities, and the integration of the user's perspective in all research phases. Full attention has been paid to the development of sound theoretical concepts and ethical values in social work. Two visible and positive results of the introduction of doctoral studies were achieved in the past, namely a greater number of published scientific works in social work, and growing interest in qualitative methodology. On the other hand, there are two problems: first, the requirement of the Agency for Science and Higher Education of Croatia that doctoral studies should be adapted to people who have explicitly decided to pursue a scientific career, discriminate against social work practitioners; second, conducting quality research calls for

earmarked funding for research projects which are scarce when it comes to the social sciences, and the responsible Ministry of Social Affairs is unable to provide either earmarked funding or systematic support to social research. Outside the universities, specialisation in social work receives more support than doctoral studies.

**KEY WORDS:** studies in Europe, methodology, evaluation, theory, ethics.

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