


professional backgrounds than do social workers or social pedagogues. Managers are usually leaders of the organisations and institutions providing services for children and their families, and they have become responsible for supervising the front line professionals. This might entail an unintended use of the book. I am afraid we can never avoid pitfalls like using the tools and approaches as pre-packaged forms of intervention. We may add a considerable trend in the fields of social work and social pedagogy of frequent job shifts which in turn may entail loss of experienced staff. Multidisciplinary work requires collaboration between more professions (teachers, pedagogues, social workers, health staff, etc.), and the trend mentioned implies a crucial challenge related to professional collaboration. If this continues, it may undermine the promising perspectives of mutual collaboration.

Still, when readers study carefully they will take notice of the basic idea of the book: providing professionals with proven methods in the various fields of child protection and against this backdrop stimulate the professional judgement, leaving the necessary room for action jointly with the users and their families. The penetrating idea is that practice should lead to positive outcomes. This entails a strong professional judgement, abilities to communicate with children and their families and understanding that lasting positive outcomes require a mutual recognition and partnership. The book is relevant for students in education, pedagogy, and social work – both in qualifying and post-qualifying courses.

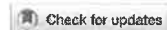
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La fabrique du doctorat en travail social, edited by Stéphane Rullac, Jean-Pierre Tabin and Arnaud Frauenfelder, Rennes, Presses de l'École des Hautes Etudes en Santé Publique, 2018, 165 pp., pb., €25, ISBN: 978-2-8109-0663-5, ISSN: 1281-5845

In 2000 I was invited by this journal to review a book entitled *Doctorats en Travail Social: quelques initiatives européennes*, edited by Françoise Laot (Rennes, Editions de l'École Nationale de la Santé Publique, 2000) (see review by David Anderson, *EJSW* 4:3, 2001, 344-345). It reported a survey by French social workers of approaches to doctoral education for social work in 11 European countries, including two from the former eastern bloc. Despite some initial doubts about the necessity for doctorates, the study group came to view them favourably, and were encouraged when the *Conservatoire national des arts et métiers (CNAM)* in Paris agreed to establish a chair of social work policy and practice. They hoped this would break the current deadlock.

Returning to the same topic 19 years later, it seems that little has changed. In French-speaking Europe there is still institutional opposition to the idea that social work is a proper focus for university education. It continues to be restricted to schools of higher education, and these countries are now out of step with much of the rest of Europe when it comes to providing a route to doctoral qualification in social work. The authors of this new text explore the reasons for the opposition, and review the structures which make such doctorates possible in other countries. The new study is edited by professors from Paris, Lausanne and Geneva, who review the debate from the perspective of those who seek change. The fourteen short chapters represent the outcome of a series of international forums held between 2012 and 2017, concluding at the CNAM in Paris,

which has the status of a university, and seems well placed to break the stranglehold of conservatism, but why does the problem persist?

In France, the traditional structure of higher education places social work in the category of profession, rather than discipline, and locates it in the *Hautes Ecoles Spécialisées*. This does not provide a direct route to doctoral work, because research is the monopoly of universities. However, it is not just conservative francophone academics who raise questions. Committed social workers are often anxious that they may lose the human focus if they are swamped by theory. Conversely, other traditional disciplines, like sociology, do not always welcome the ‘pollution’ of practice concerns.


Social work is a practical process of providing help to people in trouble and of alleviating problems in society. It is not necessary to have an academic background for that: many of the most helpful people are just kind and empathetic, or good at mediation. When that is not enough, however, it is essential to start thinking more deeply – about the individuals, about their personal history, about the groups they belong to, about the world around them, about the economy and their social and political place in it, about the belief systems they encounter, about the meaning of help. It is useful then to draw on academic disciplines, like anthropology, sociology, psychology, physiology, philosophy, economics and others. People who are good at that are not necessarily helpful people, but they may see more clearly what is at stake. The same is true in many other professions, like medicine, teaching, farming, and engineering: the best practitioners are not always the best theorists. The problem is that by separating qualification for the social work profession from universities, there is no natural route to doctoral education and qualification.

Part I of the book includes some basic discussion about the nature of social work, including an account of ‘green social work’ by Lena Dominelli. Part II contains six short historical accounts of attempts to establish doctoral programmes in Quebec, France, Switzerland, Belgium, Lebanon and Italy. The examples chosen are explored with admirable brevity. Part III reviews the relevance of doctoral education to the social work profession. This final Part considers what the move from a profession to a discipline means. Some candidates seek a higher status, or an exit from the profession, but many want a lever to facilitate action. This involves not only knowing, but being able to explain how to do what is necessary. One chapter examines the trend to allow employees to do research while still in post. This sometimes produces conflicts of identity, but embodies the move from an ideology of knowledge to a philosophy of action.

Although the book has clearly been written from the perspective of those who seek change, it recognises the force of other positions. It argues that there is no simple paradigm of a doctorate within Level 3 of the Bologna system. Some are offered within a university department of social work; some accept a social work topic within a department of another discipline; some are offered in conjunction with a second country. There are, therefore, several possible ways out of the impasse. The editors do not propose a specific solution. I hope they can find one before another 20 years have expired!

Reference

Francoise, L. (2000). *Doctorats en Travail Social: quelques initiatives europeennes*. Rennes: Editions de l'Ecole Nationale de la Sante Publique.

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