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EDITORIAL

This first issue of 2022 appears in a new format; we merged the peer-reviewed articles, the book section and the IWO section (Innovation in Social practice and Education) in one publication. We continuously try to improve and renew the journal. We strive to occasionally publish special editions dedicated to an important social theme and we explore possibilities for new sections. With this new format we hope to present you an extended offer in academic research and reflection on social intervention. Due to this new format JSI will be published four times a year instead of seven.

Our last peer-reviewed issue in November 2021 was dedicated to the COVID-19 crisis and the lessons learned by professionals, educators, policy makers and researchers in the social domain. The various contributions presented resilient future perspectives and expressed hope. Only a few months later our world is facing yet another crisis; a war that will have an indisputable, profound and long-term social impact. Not only on the millions of Ukrainian people that flee their country or live in an utmost threatening situation, or on the many Russian civilians who do not support this war nor regime, but also on European values and our social fabric as a whole. Already we face a growing insecurity through inflation which causes immediate (financial) problems mainly for the most vulnerable citizens. Ethical challenges concerning solidarity, justice, freedom and eco-social sustainability will have to be met anew.

EDITORIAL

The first paper of this issue, an encouraging research article about *Hidden voluntary social work: Informal social protection in Belgium and the Netherlands*, presents a way in which current challenges are addressed: millions of refugees from Ukraine are being provided with shelter and assistance by social volunteers. Based on research on multiple practices in Belgium and the Netherlands Mieke Schrooten and Saskia Welschen give us a clear outline of the many informal initiatives that are engaged in social work. These informal actors offer help, care or support to their members and visitors, and fulfil a bridging function to formal welfare organisations. Despite the potential added value of cooperation, it is not easy to build up a sustainable and equal cooperative relationship, nor for the government to effectively support hidden voluntary social work. Schrooten and Welschen conclude that safeguarding the uniqueness of informal players is essential for the sustainable future of the contribution of voluntary social work.

The second peer-reviewed article is an interesting theoretic contribution. In *Empowerment in complex dynamic systems* Debby Collignon and Caroline Ex examine the major role empowerment plays in the daily work of pedagogues as well as in social policies. The authors argue that the concept of empowerment is closely related to the assumptions of positive psychology as it focuses on taking control of one's life and by doing so enhancing wellbeing. The recent paradigm shift in positive psychology where research is going beyond the individual person and looking more deeply at the groups and systems they are living in, led to a new approach: less in terms of causality and more as a narrative. In this narrative, Collignon and Ex explain, the interaction between individuals and the environment is seen as a complex dynamic system.

In the last peer-reviewed article *Magnificent Rubbish: an arts-informed research project as a form of response-able pedagogy* the complex dynamic system is further explored including not only the human but also the more-than-human togetherness. Sara Coemans, Joke Vandenabeele and Karin Hannes accompany us on an adventurous journey along an arts-informed research project conducted in a former industrial area on the outskirts of a Belgian city that is now part of a prestigious urban development project. The co-creative project invited youngsters to rethink their relationship with the changing city area. They walked and engaged with the many skins of the city exploring surfaces, bumps, scrapes, scars, gaps, and graffiti in this neighbourhood. In this article, the authors argue that promoting a human-centred ethics of research could be questioned in the context of a research experiment grounded in a dwelling with things, places, old and new artefacts. It is in the entanglement of all these elements that a new research ethos was found and formed as a response-able pedagogy. (This perspective dovetails nicely with the central theme of the Book section of this issue, see here below).

The IWO (Innovation in Social practice and Education) contribution of this Spring issue concerns a whole different matter. Carinda Jansen illuminates in her clear account *Gezinnen in armoede, hoe is het eigenlijk met de vaders?* the underexposed story of fathers in families experiencing poverty. Most of the research and support is focused on mothers, but how do males cope with situations of stress and poverty, what is the impact on their (mental) health and how do they fulfill their role as a responsible father? These questions are to be addressed in order to develop appropriate ways to support the fathers and through them their families as well.

The first 2022 JSI issue closes with a highly inspiring books contribution (Boekenrubriek) by Erik Jansen en Marcel Spierts. Preceded by a rich editorial the authors discuss in three book reviews sustainability and the climate issue, and specifically the question how these issues relate to the social domain. The first two reviews are based on work of the French sociologist and philosopher Bruno Latour, recently honoured with the *Spinozalens*, an international award for thinkers who deal with ethics and society. In *Het parlement der dingen* (2020) and in *Waar kunnen we landen? Politieke oriëntatie in het Nieuwe Klimaatregime* (2018) Latour makes a case for the rights of the other-than-human entities in this world and connects this with the social issues of inequality and injustice. The third review by Jansen and Spierts is made of two recent reports of the Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau (SCP) *Klimaataanpak: toekomstbepalende keuzes voor onze samenleving. De energietransitie vanuit burgerperspectief* (Kluizenaar & Flore, 2021) and *Barstjes in de lokale gemeenschap. Conflicten over verduurzamingsplannen in de leefomgeving* (Mensink, 2021). The passionate and well-founded story of Jansen and Spierts leads to but one conclusion: issues of sustainability and climate crisis are to be addressed by social work professionals, policy makers and researchers. Whereby social work shouldn't let itself be used as a docile executor of government policy, but should dare to address transformative and existential questions and put them, together with civilians, into concrete practice and actual change.

This positive conclusion brings us back to the beginning of the editorial. The editorial team hopes that you will be inspired by the many contributions in this issue and wishes you wisdom, compassion and courage in these troublesome times.

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