



Presentation

Sociocultural community development : commit in which direction?

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Commitment in sociocultural community development refer to activist, professional and democratic issues. Yet, if sociocultural community developers continue to claim to contribute to the simultaneous development of individuals, organizations and society by increasing cognitive capital, strengthening their power to act and their expressiveness and enhancing the potential to change established order, the recent economic and technological transformations sometimes take them away from these ends and question several benefits with regard to the conditions and structures of their commitment.

Analyses

The first article, signed by Marc Carletti, deepens the semantic and linguistic dimensions to confine the signification of professional professional sociocultural community development. In his text entitled *L'expression « animation » dans les discours : sens et catégorisation*, the author considers that the positioning of this field of knowledge and practice is ambiguous because it built itself in complementarity and sometimes in opposition with nearby fields historically better established. Postulating that language is a vector of construction of the representations of the world, he notices that the term itself seems to go out of use in some of the countries in which it was a traditional reference.

Considering that informed democratic citizenship requires that individuals get acquainted with science, Ana Teodoro fear that sociocultural community developers go away gradually from a scientific ideal to open larger space to a consumerist universe. In her article entitled *Science related activities within sociocultural community development interventions can be just entertaining?*, she wonder, from the results of an empirical investigation, on the interpretation to be given to the preference of future sociocultural community developers in Portugal to entertainment activities over a scientific program.

The answer to the social and economic crisis that Spain went through as well as the political disaffection which followed resuscitated the street as informal meeting place where new visions of

society occur. The text of Jaime Minguijón Pablo y David Pac Salas, entitled *El papel del animador sociocultural en la democracia deliberativa*, insists on the work done since then by sociocultural community developers in the intricacy of the institutionalised and the institutionalizing. However, to be credible, this function of mediation has to be embodied by decisive progress from the point of view of the establishment of spaces of dialogue and consent.

Entitled *Finding common ground*, Tony Jeffs's text concentrates on the development of the informal education and its relation with parallel traditions, in particular youth work, learning in a lifelong cycle, informal apprenticeship and social pedagogy. In this perspective, the author leads a discussion about the conflicting relationships between formal and informal education, within the framework of which he considers the recent and contemporary role of the State with regard to the financing and to the development of informal education.

In their article entitled *Inversion du sens, nouveau référentiel ou confusion des objectifs et des moyens dans le champ de l'animation ?*, Magalie Bacou, Christophe Dansac, Patricia Gontier and Cécile Vachée wonder about the direction of recent the modifications relative to the status of sociocultural community developers working in the field of leisure in the current socioeconomic context. In spite of the will of federations' representatives to maintain a distinction between occasionals and professionals, this dynamic is slowed down by national and above all European labor law. Analysis of speeches reveals a normative rhetoric centred on the idea of commitment and general interest which justifies voluntary work.

The text of Luis A. Soravilla and José Manuel Castellano, entitled *Desafíos y puentes entre los ámbitos sociocultural y socioeducativo en el marco del actual contexto socioeconómico y competencial en España*, approaches in a criticize way the inactivity of social educators and sociocultural community developers in front of recent step back of public action towards vulnerable social groups. According to the authors, this sector was more worried about the justifiable demand of labor laws than about factors which could have contributed to the disengagement of the State. Worse, it would have only offered a weak professional answer to the progressive denaturalization of its social function by public administrations, which reduced its autonomy through an excessive institutionalization, in such a way that from now on the population identifies them as project managers or as a bureaucrats.

Sociocultural community development is alternately presented, in the reflection that Marc-André Kouakou proposes in his text entitled *Animation, pensée critique et praxis*, as a praxis and a vector of social change, even as an activist mold for actors of diverse horizons. Critical thought, in the era of the globalization, transformation of social structures and rise of cultural tensions over identities, urges practitioners and researchers, both professionals and amateurs, to wonder about their real contributions in the construction of a better world.

Experiments

Marina De Rossi and Emilia Restiglian evoke, in their article entitled *Sculpting stories project: an action research with sociocultural animators for promoting digital storytelling within socioeducation paths*, the efforts deployed in Italy to develop personal and social empowerment of the children characterized by a sociocultural handicap in residential health care establishments in the delicate context where the system of social welfare plans a decrease of the social protective measures for young people when they reach the majority. The orientation of the research-action realized

rested on the relation between the transformation processes due to the use of methods of sociocultural animation, education as tool of change and construction of identity and the new perspectives offered by technological evolution.

Free section

According to Francis Lebon, management in the field of sociocultural community development and social intervention distinguishes itself widely from that of more hierarchical environments characterized by other personal convictions and other forms of commitment. His article entitled *Être directeur dans l'animation et dans l'intervention sociale* proposes a singular lighting on the realities of these functions in social related jobs based on the data of a national survey on these occupations and a serie of interviews with managers who work in sociocultural community development or more widely in social intervention. After examination, the author admits that supervision keeps a part of mystery, because of the complexity of this multifaceted work.

Models of sociocultural intervention have for characteristics to start from diagnoses with the aim of developing projects, plans and programs to find the most adapted solutions to the difficulties which individuals and the communities meet. Yet, according to Malik Duranty, Claudine Labourg and Nicole Nestorine, in postcolonial situation, marked by informal vernacular and formal ones imported from the metropolis, one can observe within the strategies used in the sociocultural field tensions relative to to institutional conflicts mixing with partisan conflicts and to interprofessional conflicts doubled by interpersonal conflicts. So the authors wonder, in their text entitled *L'animation : quel sens pour les sociétés périphériques* about the signification of sociocultural community development and social intervention in societies in transition.

The next edition of the Review, to appear in spring, 2015, will have for theme « Participation and sociocultural community development: processes and purposes ». The deadline for submitting an article or a report for this number is February 28th, 2015 (see instructions: [www.atps.uqam.ca / auteurs_en.php](http://www.atps.uqam.ca/auteurs_en.php)). We also accept any time texts to appear in the free section.

Enjoy the reading!