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## **EDITORIAL**

*The Journal of Social Intervention: Theory and Practice* would like to announce a change to its editorial board. Marlies van der Linden will relinquish her position as section editor of the *News in Higher Social Education* column. Marlies has served as a dedicated editor of the column for many years. Fortunately, she will remain a member of the editorial team, so we can continue to call on her experience. To take her place, we give a warm welcome to Toby Witte as the new editor of the *News in Higher Social Education* section. Toby is professor in “Youth at risk and social care” at Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences. In this issue’s column, he will describe the relationship between his field of research (youth at risk) and the way that social professional education help us to understand this topic.

As we have mentioned previously, *The Journal of Social Intervention: Theory and Practice* has lofty ambitions when it comes to publishing influential and internationally relevant articles by scholars from all over the world. We are therefore delighted that, albeit slowly, international scholars are beginning to find their way to our journal and want to use it as a forum for their work.

The use of poetry in social work may not be a topic that is often debated in everyday social work practice and research. Yet social practitioners and social work researchers can learn a great deal from incorporating (elements of) the art of poetry into their daily practice, according to the authors of this issue’s first article, our US colleagues Furman, Enterline, Thompson and

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Shukraft. The authors mention the declining amount of literature in this field. Furthermore, they observe the dominance of a biomedical approach in the practice of social work. However, from their perspective, poetry should be an important theme in social work practice, education and research. In their article they explore the reasons behind this. By exploring the metaphor of the poet/practitioner, the authors conclude that taking a poetic approach to social work, enables practitioners to understand the subjective and lived experiences of the client: in other words, to see through the client's lens. The authors provide us with examples of the use of poetry in therapeutic settings and share the method of the research poem. In doing so, they present the reader with important tools for incorporating poetry into social work. In their concluding section, the authors argue for the incorporation of the use of expressive and creative arts into social work education.

In the second article of this issue, Judith Metz explores the professionalization opportunities for youth workers at their practical work place. She does this by describing Youth Spot, a research and practice centre for youth workers in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. As is the case in other countries, there is a growing debate in the Netherlands on the need for the professionalization of youth work practice and on the appropriate paths to achieving this. Metz argues that traditional professionalization strategies, which focus on the incorporation of experimental knowledge, often fail to match the complex and flexible nature of youth work programmes. Articles in previous issues of this journal have already discussed the need to professionalize from a broader perspective and demonstrate the effectiveness of the social work profession in greater detail (see for instance Potting, Sniekers, Lamers & Reverda, 4/2010 and Van der Zwet, Beneken genaamd Kolmer & Schalk 04/2011). Youth Spot was founded in 2008 to gain insight into alternative professionalization strategies. The centre brings together youth work organizations, educators and researchers in a *partnership approach* to move together towards developing further knowledge and the subsequent incorporation of this knowledge into practice. In the article, Metz explains the theoretical backgrounds, goals and organization of Youth Spot. She also gives us insight into the everyday reality and routine at Youth Spot. The partnership approach is applied in "research workshops" where youth workers, students, teachers and researchers work together on a range of research projects in order to build up a knowledge base. To give the reader some insight into the everyday functioning of these research workshops, Metz provides us with an example of one such project, called the "Dialogue project for young people and homophobia". Evaluations of three years of Youth Spot show that it is possible to bridge the gap between practice and research to work on a scientific knowledge base and at the same time continue effectively with the everyday practice of Youth Spot. Although evaluations of Youth Spot are promising, Metz warns us that the mere generation of knowledge, even when working on the principle of the partnership

approach, is insufficient for the professionalization of youth work. Youth workers and educational programmes alike need to incorporate knowledge into their daily practice and educational programmes. This does not yet happen regularly and consistently, which provides us with a clear objective for further work on and evaluation of Youth Spot in the years to come.

When we discuss integration, it is often the problem of integrating ethnic minorities into (Dutch) society that we refer to. In the third article of this issue, however, Celik & Notten take a different perspective on the integration debate: increasing remigration rates among highly educated Turkish-Dutch citizens. The authors begin by observing that ever more Turkish immigrants in the Netherlands want to return to their country of birth, taking with them the knowledge and skills they have acquired in the Netherlands. In the first part of their article, the authors – on the basis of conversations with highly educated Turkish-Dutch citizens, experts and a literature review – analyse the reasons underlying this development, by elaborating on the so-called *push and pull factors* of remigration. According to the authors, the political and social climate (e.g. social tensions in society, the rise of right-wing parties such as the PVV and the difficulties that these young people have in finding employment) in the Netherlands are examples of push factors. Push factors, however, are not believed to be of overriding importance in the decision to remigrate. In addition to these push factors, pull factors such as the favourable economic climate in Turkey are also thought to make remigration more appealing. In the second part of their article, the authors state that the Dutch government currently fails to take this issue seriously enough. They underline that the Netherlands, with knowledge as its most important export product, should take action to bind these highly educated and talented Turks more closely to the Netherlands. They present us with the idea of brain circulation, in which migrants are stimulated to return temporarily to their country of origin without losing their rights as Dutch citizens, in order to apply the knowledge and skills obtained in the Netherlands in their home country.

In the editorial of issue 4/2011, we explained our policy on the publication of articles by social work students in our student's work section. The fourth and final article of this issue is once again a contribution by a student, Maaïke Kluit. Kluit was a student in the Social Work programme at the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences. Her thesis was one of the articles that was recognized in the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences 2011 Thesis Awards. Kluit reports on the important and much-debated theme of the decline of the classic welfare state and the rise of the participation state and the range of government initiatives that have followed on from this development. She further elaborates on the consequences of these developments for everyday practice and competencies required of the social worker. She does this by reviewing the literature on this topic.

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In the book review section, Frits Meijering discusses “Psychologie van de wetenschap. Creativiteit, serendipiteit, de persoonlijke factor en de sociale context” [The Psychology of Science. Creativity, serendipity, the personal factor and the social context] by Pieter van Strien, and Corrie Verstoep discusses “Een veerkrachtige samenleving. Sociaal werk en duurzame ontwikkeling” [A Resilient Society. Social Work and Sustainable Development] by Jef Peeters (Ed.).

In the News from Higher Social Education column, our new section editor Toby Witte addresses a central theme of his research: talent development of youth at risk. By encouraging youngsters to reach their full potential and tackling the alarming problem of school drop-out, he calls for more cooperation and knowledge exchange between social work practice and vocational education.

Nol Reverda, editor-in-chief

Jitske van der Sanden, managing editor