

SPPA Annual Conference 2023

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**Social pedagogy as a catalyst
for change: transgressing the
status quo in different
national contexts**

UCL, Gordon House, London
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TEACHING TO
TRANSGRESS



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Presentations Abstracts

Presentation 1. Social pedagogy white supremacist capitalist patriarchy

By [Cecile Remy](#), UCL & Open University, England

The aim of my presentation is twofold. The first one is to give some grounding into the work of bell hooks. The second, is to illustrate how bell hooks is relevant to social pedagogy through my interest in how mental images of children living in residential care shape the work of those adults working in children's home.

bell hooks is known for coining the phrase: 'white supremacist capitalist patriarchy', and I explore how issues of race, class and gender manifest in the interpersonal relationships I was part of while carrying out the fieldwork of my PhD. I do this with specific attention to the commonsense ideas of 'needs' and the 'family'.

This example is the basis on which I argue that social pedagogues should situate themselves within hook's matrice of oppression as a preliminary step to transgress some of the status quo the welfare system helps maintaining.

Presentation 2. Transgress what you do in social pedagogy

By [Marianne Træbing Secher](#), VIA and Roskilde Universities, Denmark

Basic for this talk will be the notion of transgression from bell hooks understood as: "[...] a movement against and beyond boundaries" (hooks, 1994, s. 12). I want to explore these boundaries as the limit of my hermeneutic resources as a social pedagogue. In cooperating with people who experience psychoses and who need help centred around their sexuality, I have experienced how it can be hard to move beyond my own thinking, hermeneutics, and understanding of realities. I can then be said to perform epistemic and hermeneutic injustice (The Routledge Handbook of Epistemic Injustice, 2017), in that, I don't move beyond my own or society's boundaries. But even when I act epistemically or hermeneutically just, I can still expose my fellow citizen for contributory injustice (Bailey, 2014; Dotson, 2012). In my presentation, I will therefore show what contributory injustice can look like in social pedagogue.

I will use this as an argument for the possibility of working with anecdotal theory. The anecdotal theory is developed by Jane Gallop (Gallop, 2002), who inspired bell hooks in her writing about the erotic in the classroom as a force for pedagogy that can transform consciousness (hooks, 1994, Kapitel 13). However, I will use the theory from bell hooks in a social pedagogical context, not in a teaching context. I suggest that Jane Gallops eroticized pedagogue and anecdotal theory can be a way to call out the courage and willingness of social pedagogues to transgress their practice.

In Denmark, a social pedagogue should follow the perspective of fellow citizens (VIA University College, 2019), but if this is too frightening, we often give up and stops listening. Anecdotal theory

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can help us to transgress our fear by telling the story in a safe way. Here it will be clear through a personal analysis, and a deconstruction of this, that the anecdote can speak for itself. It has something to say. We can analyse this anecdotal speaking with theory; in this way, the anecdote will create new knowledge. This new knowledge is perhaps able to transgress our hermeneutic resources and our consciousness. It can then make us realize and include the contribution of our fellow citizens.

Presentation 3. “They won’t engage!” Going beyond the status quo with people who don’t engage with the support available in Denmark

By [Lotte Junker Harbo](#) & [Charlotte Vange Løvstad](#), VIA University, Denmark

There is a growing research interest in the phenomenon non-take-up of welfare-benefits, that is in situations, where people eligible for welfare benefits in the field of health and social care, do not receive them for various reasons (Lucas, Bonvin and Humbelin, 2021). The research is mainly quantitative and there is a request for more qualitative research on how people who are so called recipients of social policies perceive situations where non-take-up happens (Lucas, Bonvin and Humbelin, 2021:174). Mallet and Garcia (2021) explore the interaction between social providers/practitioners and people who are eligible for various kinds of social help and suggest that in some communities, the main reason for non-take-up is prejudice from social providers (Mallet and Garcia, 2021: 202).

As Mallet and Garcia, this presentation also looks at this interaction but with a slightly different focus: the question addressed here is what practitioners - such as social pedagogues - do in situations where young people in e.g. drug abuse, criminality or gang membership reject the help, leading to a non-take-up-situation.

Research suggests that in relation to non-take-up situations, social pedagogues describes their own actions in mainly three different perspectives (Harbo & Løvstad, 2024): 1) they zoom in and ‘thicken’ their understandings of the situation and of the young people, 2) they zoom out a bit and relate the non-take-up to the young persons’ behavior or background or 3) they zoom out and explain the situation with categories such as ‘this happens because he is a gang member’. The first perspective seems to produce resonance (Rosa, 2017; 2021) the latter seems to produce alienation (Rosa, 2014).

In the presentation we suggest seeking inspiration in bell hooks’ ideas of engaged pedagogy (hooks, 1994: 233) to transgress the risk of alienation – perspective 3 - and to promote the possibility to experience resonance – perspective 1 - in relation to social pedagogical practice. That is a practice that emphasizes well-being and empowerment for both the young people and for the social pedagogues themselves (hooks, 1994: 237).

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Presentation 4. Widening participation, transgression and engaged pedagogy

By [Sebastian Monteux](#), Abertay University, Scotland

I will explore the potential for Reflective Practice Groups (RPGs) in Higher Education to enable students and academic facilitators to mutually explore multiple perspectives and personal narratives as a way to transgress beyond the confines of dominant social, cultural, and professional boundaries. The concepts of 'Engaged Pedagogy' and 'Bildung' will be explored in order to attempt to bridge bell hooks and Social Pedagogy.

Presentation 5. Diversity-Reflexivity: an approach towards provoking diverse thinking within social work and social pedagogy training

By [Robert Koglek](#), MCI, Innsbruck, Austria

Teaching diversity in social pedagogy and social work training is vital for promoting inclusivity, cultural competence, empathy and effective practice. It supports students in their personal development and equips them to navigate today's interconnected world. Inspired by bell hooks' 'Teaching to Transgress – Education as the Practice of Freedom', this presentation (1) describes diversity-reflexivity, an approach that invites diverse thinking of students and teachers and how this could be implemented in preparation for and delivery of diversity training for future social pedagogues and social workers and (2) explores why it is important to embrace diversity as an aspect in professional reflection. Finally, this presentation introduces further aspects of teaching diversity including the need for lecturers to exercise professional and personal reflection and how the teacher's diversity influences preparation and delivery of diversity training.

Presentation 6. Socioeducation in the Brazilian youth justice system: emancipation and transgression

By [Tatiana Yokoy](#) & [Leonardo Ortegal](#), University of Brasília, Brazil

In Brazil, young offenders are subjected to both non-custodial and custodial sanctions referred to as socio-educational measures; these measures are administered by the Brazilian National System of Socio-educational Services. Recent research data shows that this system primarily serves black male adolescents who come from large families headed by single mothers with low income. In this work, we present our reflections on the concepts of socio-education, transgression, and emancipation within the Brazilian Youth Justice System, drawing insights from the works of Paulo Freire, bell hooks, and Karl Marx, as well as the authors' research conducted at the University of Brasília- Brazil and their professional experiences as social worker and psychologist in Brazilian public policies related to social assistance and education. We showcase various examples of transgressive educational practices for young offenders and present our perspective on socio-education, as a fundamental principle in human relationships which uphold human rights, promote human development, and facilitate emancipation.

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