

Reinstating the humane in human services



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Condeluci's *Beyond Difference* argues for the necessity of reintroducing the humane factor within the field of human services. Condeluci states, "human is the operative word in... 'human service'. The implication is that the services rendered will be...sensitive to the nuances of people in general and will endeavor to accept diversity" (1996, p. liiii). Condeluci's argument is based upon an emotive account of humanity.

Humanity, in this sense, refers to the "point of common spirituality" which Thomas Moore refers to as the "quality or dimension of experiencing life and ourselves...with depth, value, relatedness, heart and personal substance" (Condeluci, 1996, p. xx). Such an account of humanity presupposes that it is the spiritual aspect of existence that serves as the unifying framework that enables man to experience empathy towards his fellowmen. Spirituality thereby serves as the focal point from which similarity and interdependence is achieved.

Such an appeal towards the necessity of reintroducing the spiritual within the aforementioned field stems from the preponderance of systems that build around the medical or expert model of reality. Condeluci states that adherence to such models leads to the "mechanization of organizations". Mechanization occurs as a result of the creation of rigid frameworks that "shape character through the assignment of responsibility, (while at the same time) demanding accountability, and providing standards" that leads to the creation of fragmented individuals (Condeluci, 1996, p. xiii).

Fragmentation results from the necessity to account for experiences within specific boundaries. Such a fragmentation leads to the overt emphasis on

differences. Condeluci states that adherence to the spiritual aspect of existence enables the personal and cultural exploitation of difference. The possibility of such is determined by enabling the individual to transcend boundaries in order to participate within a larger framework that “ asserts that people with different roots can coexist...and learn to think against the background of a hybridized society” (qtd in Condeluci, 1996, p. lii).

As I reckon, Condeluci’s prescribed methodology for countering the mechanized society fails to consider that a mechanistic society results from the creation of specific patterns of existence that leads to the creation of conceptual frameworks from which one perceives reality. Such patterns of existence are ontologically related as far as they relate to the same experiences. Differences, however, stem from the epistemological ascriptions attached to these experiences within specific conceptual schemes. If such is the case, differences may thereby be specified into two groups.

There are those differences that may be considered as constitutive of all forms of existence. Examples of such differences are those, which are genetically predetermined for an individual. On the other hand, there are differences, which are socially constructed. Examples of such differences are evident in the specifications of hierarchies based upon these genetic differences. Examples of these are evident in the hierarchies determined by sex, gender, and class. Condeluci’s notion of difference fails to consider that there are certain forms of differences that stem from the naturalization of the socially constructed.

However, despite of such a failure to present a clear conception of difference, Condoluci was able to account for the necessity of introducing the emotive aspect of existence in the assessment of human situations. The importance of such is evident, if one considers that despite the differences of the conceptual frameworks which individual's use in understanding experiences, a primordial element exists that allows us to understand the elements that govern each individual's experiences. Such elements are highlighted by Condoluci by specifying the need for reinstating the humane [emotive] aspect in the consideration of human affairs.