



Book review: Women in Deep Poverty

Czibere, Ibolya. *Women in deep poverty*
Budapest: L'Harmattan Kiadó, 2012, 239 p. ISBN 978-963-26524-4

RITA SZABOOVA

University of Prešov, Slovakia, Faculty of Arts
Institute of Educology and Social Work, Social Work Doctoral Program

In the presented book, Dr Czibere Ibolya explicitly deals with the issue of poverty in general but also with reference to female poverty in particular. On the basis of her research, the author tries to address the issues related to gender differences, as well as the hardships of women who experience their poverty or, more precisely, how they assess their situation compared to that of men. The main theme of the book is approached through a variety of situations in the lives of women who have found themselves facing poverty in the past as well as today. Because of these facts and reasons, the reviewed publication coincides with the current discussions related to many historical and social areas. The described issue is still relevant, especially given the current social development and political situation. The author of the scientific monograph manages to select highly current issues related to social work both in Hungary and Slovakia, as well as in many other countries of the world. The issue of women's poverty appears to play a significant role in our part of the world. To tackle this complex issue, the author formulates a goal that is relatively difficult to reach – to identify and characterise the factors and conditions underlying the development of women's poverty in society. This way, the author makes a valuable contribution to the ongoing systematisation of the existing theory and practice focusing on the theoretical and methodological aspects of the issue, as well to the state of the art in the field. The publication not only accumulates a lot of relevant information, but also meets the goals set at the start of the research.

As a collection of professional findings and observations in the area of sociology and social work, this monograph is comprised of 240 pages that are not only significant for an academic study but are also representative of the uniquely global nature of the issues it focuses on. The publication can serve as a great source of study materials for students of social work as it provides detailed information on issues related to gender studies and poverty. What I really like about this highly scholarly



NYITOTT SZEMMEL – Recenzió

book is that the text is well-organised and reader-friendly which will be appreciated by anyone who have mastered the basics of social work theory.

The book is divided into four major theoretical and empirical parts, concluded with a broadly defined research part. The book has a highly useful organisation of chapters, each of them approaches the issue in question chronologically.

Entitled *The social framework of interpretation of poverty*, the first chapter mainly deals with the culture of poverty, social exclusion, lifecycles and patterns of life lived by the poor. Later on, it provides a scheme for measuring poverty and poverty-related situations in terms of their duration and ways of providing (non-financial) aid.

The next chapter is devoted to women's poverty from a historical perspective. It defines women's lives before the liberation serfdom, expected behavioural patterns of men and women in rural cultures, deteriorating relationships in the family and the disruption of emotional relationships, the life of women in general as well as the life of women working in industry. The second part of this chapter presents changes in the era of socialism and their homogenisation in the lowest segment of the labour market, focusing on the life of women and their working conditions. The third chapter is devoted to the current trends of poverty feminization. The author devotes two chapters to reasons and forms of entry into the consciousness of the political declaration and female poverty in scientific discourse. The author addresses various reasons and forms of entry into awareness of the political declaration and female poverty in scientific discourse. The last chapter focuses on the "hidden" dimensions of poverty among women and evaluates the results of the author's research into this issue.

As evident from the structure of the book, some of the chapters contain theoretical and analytical discussions, while others are historical and summarising by nature. In addition to raising awareness regarding the topic in one way or another, the chapters also present the issues in question as historical as well as contemporary phenomena.

The author of the book also provides a summary of several current social issues that the reader is likely to appreciate. From this point of view, the monograph is a truly valuable contribution, providing new stimuli for further research into the issues in question, as well as new perspectives and findings that can be beneficial to social workers holding various positions. As the book deals with women in particular, the stories often focus on women as mothers. In this case, social workers may choose to work with such a client on an individual basis, applying the method of individual advocacy and case-working. Before the method of individual social work is applied, however, it is necessary to assess the client's situation, which in fact represents the very essence of social workers' interaction with their clients. To make this cooperation successful, social workers have to choose the most



NYITOTT SZEMMEL – Recenzió

appropriate combination of methods based on information they can find in the reviewed monograph. Another positive feature of the monograph I appreciate as a reader is the vast amount of applied knowledge put together from publications by both domestic and foreign authors. This way, the author offers her readers a lot of information that can be found in domestic (Hungarian) and international studies, sharing the best practices in the field. For social workers who deal with women suffering from poverty in the course of their practice, this monograph is thus to be considered an essential source of information.