

Neoliberal Capitalism, Social Reproduction Crisis, Gender Implications and Forms of Resistance: The case of Greece

Maria Pentaraki, Lecturer in Social Work, Queen's University Belfast

m.pentaraki@qub.ac.uk

Neoliberal capitalism and its accompanied austerity measures has had a profound effect on social reproduction throughout Europe. Social reproduction, ie, the process that makes it possible for individuals, families, and society to reproduce itself – is in crisis. The concept of social reproduction utilized in this presentation is framed within the feminist and Marxist tradition. Historically, social reproduction was met through both waged and unwaged work with women playing a predominant role either as waged, predominantly public sector, workers (social workers, teachers, carers, nurses, etc) or as unpaid workers (unpaid carers: mothers, wives, etc.) but now both forms of work are destabilized and undermined. Thus, the crisis in social reproduction. Within this crisis women's unequal position is further undermined but at the same time progressive women and men are organizing to present alternatives forms of social reproduction. This presentation by utilizing the case of Greece will first outline the neoliberal processes that have caused the crisis in social reproduction. Second, it will present the consequences of social reproduction by highlighting the gender implications. Third, it will discuss the reorganization of social reproduction which is taking place outside the logic of capitalist society and is manifested through the creation of solidarity health clinics and pharmacies, communal kitchens, creation of various forms of bartering etc. This presentation will argue that these forms present glimpses of another society, a society based on principles of solidarity and cooperation. A society worth fighting for. And finally the presentation will conclude by discussing at which level can this crisis be resolved and the role of the social work profession.