

# The Welfare New Style Programme in the Netherlands

*revival or deprofessionalisation?*

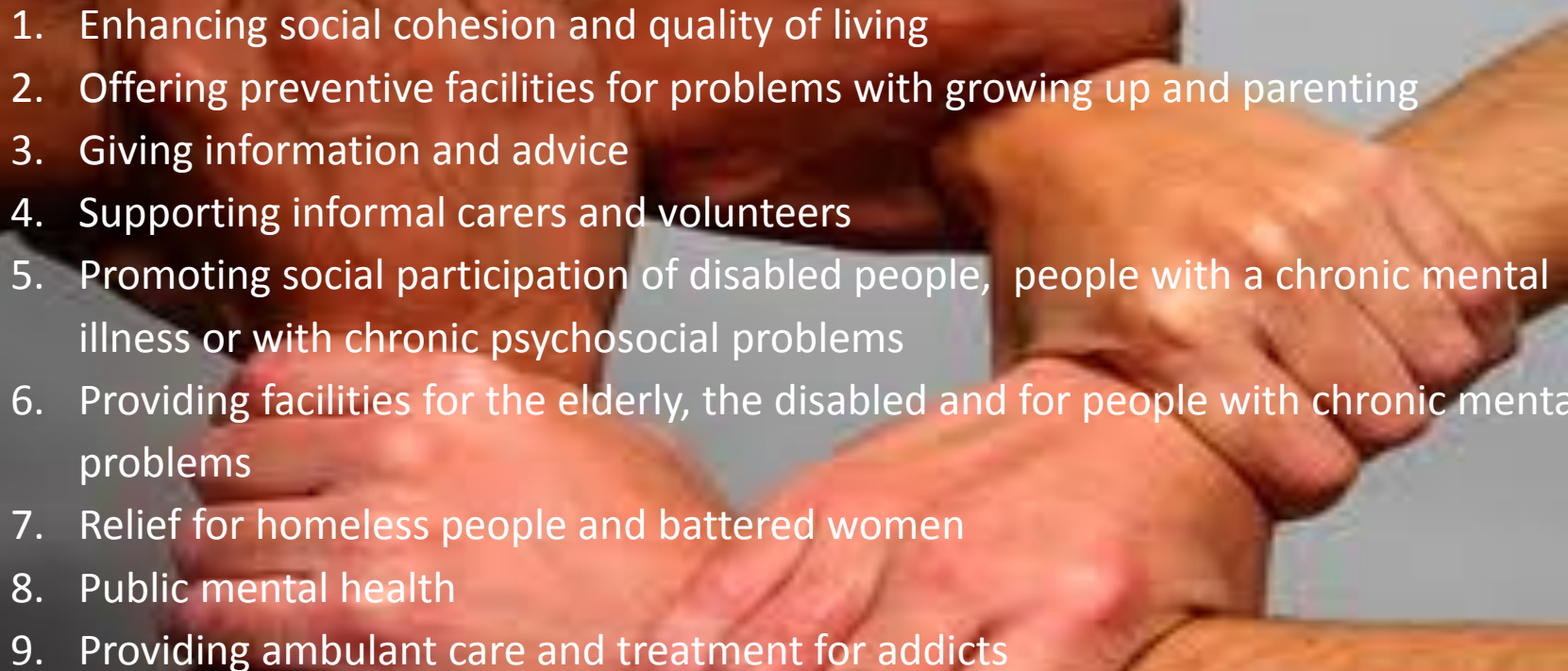
Ben Boksebeld

# The Social Support Act (WMO)

- In effect since 2007
- Replaces several old laws:
  - Welfare Act (Wet op de Arbeidsomstandigheden)
  - Law on Special Medical Costs (AWBZ)
  - Law on Provisions for the Handicapped (WVG)
- Key objective: fostering social cohesion
- Local authorities have to make their own policy ➡ Differences between communities



# Nine performance areas

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1. Enhancing social cohesion and quality of living
  2. Offering preventive facilities for problems with growing up and parenting
  3. Giving information and advice
  4. Supporting informal carers and volunteers
  5. Promoting social participation of disabled people, people with a chronic mental illness or with chronic psychosocial problems
  6. Providing facilities for the elderly, the disabled and for people with chronic mental problems
  7. Relief for homeless people and battered women
  8. Public mental health
  9. Providing ambulant care and treatment for addicts

# A journey into the past



# “Social Work” in the Middle Ages

- “Charity” : no distinction between health care and social work
- A religious duty, aiming at the the salvation of the benefactor’s soul
- Direct relief
- Stable society; cannot and should not be changed
- The poor are part of the community



# Enlightenment

- Strong belief in reason and thinking
- People can change, with guidance from righteous people
- Not just direct relief, but also transforming people into respected members of society
- Poorness as a moral issue





# The industrial revolution

- Urbanisation
- Tremendous poverty and huge social problems
- First social welfare laws (education, child labour, housing)
- Welfare state develops in the 20th century, especially after WW II
- Netherlands:
  - 1947 Old age pension for everyone
  - 1965 Social Security Act warrants a minimum income for everyone



*Octavia Hill with trainee housing managers*

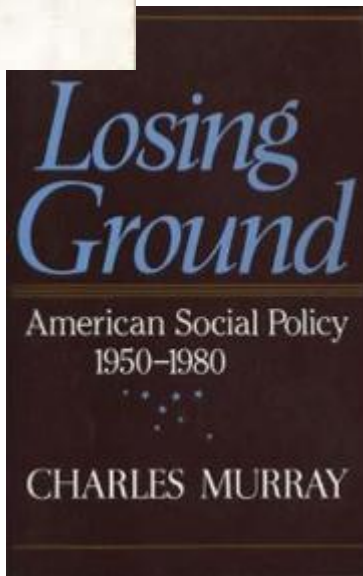
*From:*

[http://www.canonsociaalwerk.eu/int/details.php?cps=2&canon\\_id=84](http://www.canonsociaalwerk.eu/int/details.php?cps=2&canon_id=84)

# The 80's



- Severe criticism on the welfare state and on social work:
  - Social work perpetuates itself
  - High benefits make people rely on the welfare state instead of trying to support themselves
- Introduction of neoliberal principles in welfare
- SW organisations seen as businesses
- Growing managerialism



Sources:

[http://www.canonsociaalwerk.eu/nl/details.php?cps=41&canon\\_id=38](http://www.canonsociaalwerk.eu/nl/details.php?cps=41&canon_id=38)  
[http://www.canonsociaalwerk.eu/int/details.php?cps=21&canon\\_id=51](http://www.canonsociaalwerk.eu/int/details.php?cps=21&canon_id=51)



# Three mechanisms

- Three mechanisms coordinating social work and social services nowadays:

Market/money

State /power

Civil society / solidarity

A downward-pointing triangle with a green-to-blue gradient. The top-left corner is labeled 'Market/money', the top-right corner is labeled 'State /power', and the bottom vertex is labeled 'Civil society / solidarity'.

# Esping-Andersen: Three types of welfare states

- Danish political scientist Esping-Andersen classifies welfare states in light of their position on two issues:
  - Degree of decommodification
  - Type of social stratification and



Picture:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/richardwinchell/477715763/>

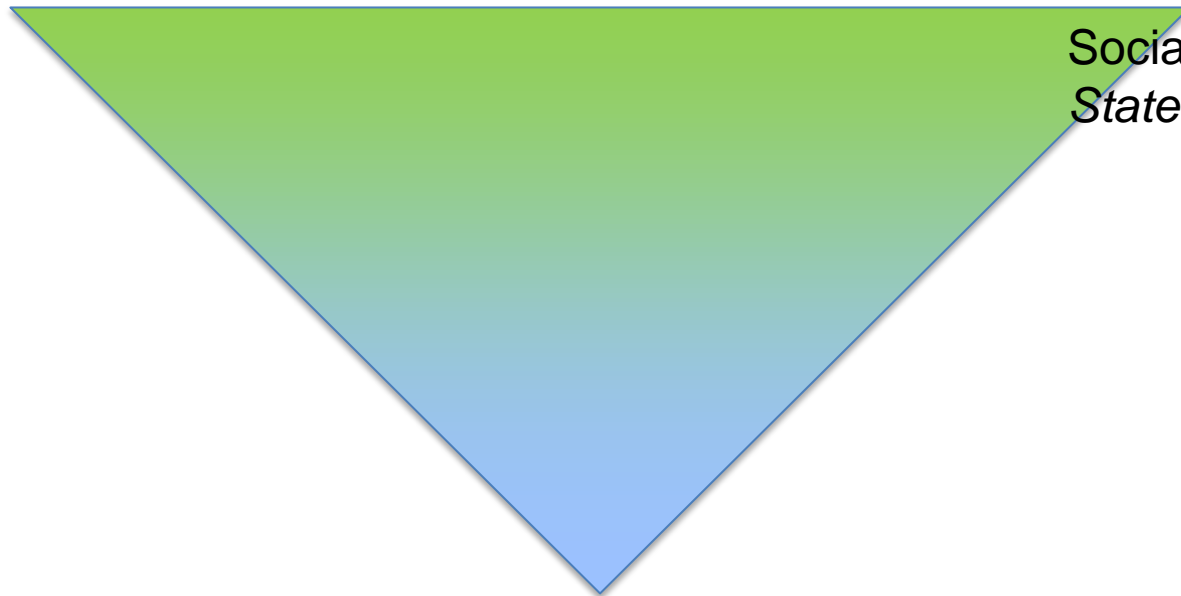
# Esping-Andersen: Three types of welfare states

- Three mechanisms coordinating social work and social services nowadays:

Liberal  
*Market*

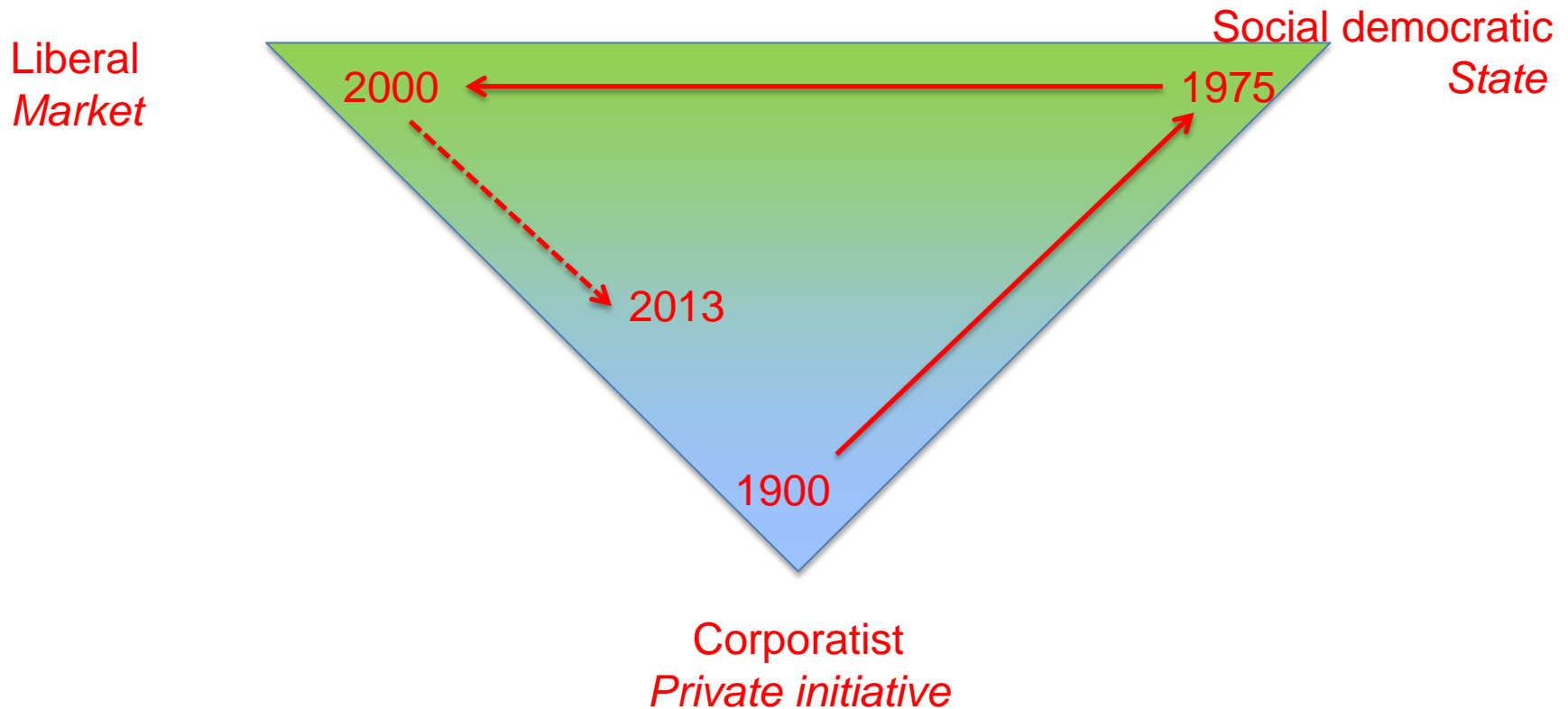
Social democratic  
*State*

Corporatist  
*Private initiative*



# Development of Dutch Welfare State

From private initiative to state to market, back to private initiative



# Impact on social work

- From helping to facilitating
- From individual counseling to community organisation
- Architects of social cohesion and participation
- Empowering citizens
- From specialists to generalists



<http://conservativehome.blogs.com/thetorydiary/2010/03/david-cameron-promises-neighbourhood-army-of-5000-fulltime-community-organisers.html>



# Factors influencing social work in the next decade

1. The introduction of the Social Support Act
2. Decentralisation – including “efficiency cuts” of crucial welfare services:
  1. Youth Care
  2. Long-term health care services, formerly covered by the Law on Special Medical Costs
  3. Social security, including benefits for unemployed and disabled persons
3. Additional cuts as a result of the economic crisis

# Welfare New Style

1. Listening to the need behind the question
2. Strengths-based, i.e. tapping the citizen's strengths
3. Reach out and go for it!
4. Formal and informal care in an optimal balance
5. Well thought balance of collective and individual provisions
6. Working in an integrated, holistic way
7. Committed and result-oriented
8. Based on entrepreneurship and discretionary power for the professional.



Picture:

<http://www.canonsociaalwerk.eu/nl/details.php?cps=46>

# Threats and opportunities

## Pros:

- More discretionary space
- Less bureaucracy (hopefully!)
- Working close to people, in the neighbourhood
- A generalist way of working

## Cons:

- Replacing professionals by volunteers
- Skipping social work altogether
- Loss of specialist knowledge

# Potential flaws in the SSA

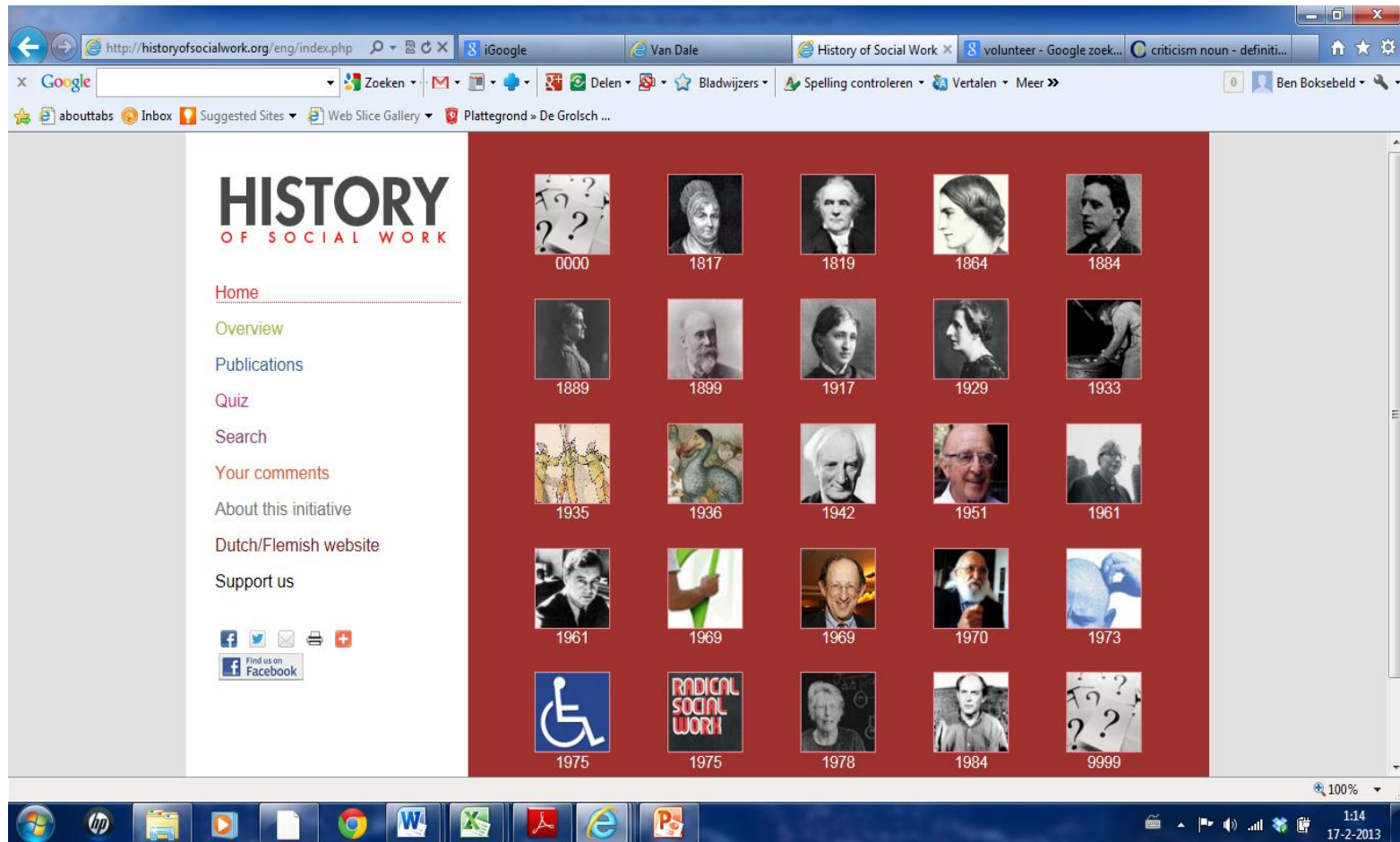
- The idea of the neighbourhood as the place where people find their social support is an illusion
- Many vulnerable people prefer professional care over informal care
- The SSA does not offer local authorities the tools to realise social cohesion
- Volunteerism and informal care are already on a very high level
- More couples with full time jobs, people retiring from work at a later age → less time for volunteering



Picture:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/mtsofan/2702558848/>

# Further reading



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the website <http://historyofsocialwork.org/eng/index.php>. The page features a navigation menu on the left with links to Home, Overview, Publications, Quiz, Search, Your comments, About this initiative, Dutch/Flemish website, and Support us. The main content area is a grid of 25 small images, each representing a different year in the history of social work. The years shown are 0000, 1817, 1819, 1864, 1884, 1889, 1899, 1917, 1929, 1933, 1935, 1936, 1942, 1951, 1961, 1961, 1969, 1969, 1970, 1973, 1975, 1975, 1978, 1984, and 9999. The website is titled "HISTORY OF SOCIAL WORK" and includes social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The browser's address bar shows the URL, and the taskbar at the bottom displays various application icons and the system clock showing 1:14 on 17-2-2013.

<http://historyofsocialwork.org/eng/index.php>