IASW

National Social Work Conference

Dublin

11 May, 2018

Personal troubles, public issues, political action

Short reflection by Senator Colette Kelleher, May 2018

Locating myself

My professional identity

Different roles

…….A Social Work Perspective

Sociological Imagination

"the awareness of the relationship between personal experience and the wider society"

C.W. Mills

Personal troubles....long list & keeps us in work & keeps us awake at night

- 10,000 adult abuse referrals to HSE in 2017

- Suicide rate among Irish Traveller men 7 times general population

- 97% of Travellers are dead by age 65

- In 2016 there were approximately 3,500 incidents of physical abuse again women in the domestic environment.

- 31% of Irish women have experienced psychological violence by a partner

- 65 million refugees worldwide – biggest number since WW2

- Almost 10,000 people homeless, including 3,500 children

Private troubles

Adult Safeguarding, Traveller rights, Health, Domestic Violence, Immigration, Housing

All Public Issues

Public issues….change?

" The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways. The point, however, is to change it".

Karl Marx

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has".

Margaret Mead

Personal troubles, public issues, political action

My working life……social work as professional identity

Finglas

UK

Cork

Political action

Now as Senator……….my work includes

- Adult Safeguarding Bill
- All Party Oireachtas Group on Dementia
- Future Mental Health Committee
- Domestic Violence Bill
- Right to Housing Campaign
- Family Reunification Bill
- Referendum
- More……

Personal troubles, public issues, political action

Social Work is profoundly political………………

Our history & provenance

Our role & remit

What we see and bear witness to

Take a stand?

- We do anyway?

- What issues?

- Right side of history

- Speaking out together

Private troubles, public issues

Does IASW have a political agenda for change?

What does it look like?

If not why not?