



Toward a Critical Dietetics in the Nordic Countries

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This paper was published in late 2018. I would like to invite the reader to compare the quotes below from this article with the wordings above in *DA # 1.18 Replik 1: Kritisk dietetik - självreflektion, ödmjukhet och dialog*, expressed by the the very same authors only six months earlier. I trust any comments are redundant / Magnus D. Forslin

On knowledge

”...a quote that is now engraved in the entryway of the Humboldt University in Berlin: *‘The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point is to change it’*... We do believe [...] that his [i.e. Karl Marx] principle of a critical philosophy holds as a starting-point for a Critical Dietetics as well. ... Critical Dietetics must [...] practice reflexivity by questioning the fundamental assumptions and standpoints of dietetic and nutritional sciences and practices, illuminating their historicity and exposing how they come to be acknowledged as legitimate knowledge in particular contexts.” (p6)

On activism

”Critical Dietetics is normative in the sense that we (i) recognize and take responsibility for the fact that what we do as researchers and practitioners have social and political consequences, that we (ii) consider action toward social change as a central part of what we do, while we (iii) do not attempt to create a “once and for all” dogma about how to think, what to do, or what to prioritize... Some members of Critical Dietetics might want to be activists, and we would not object to it...” (p7)

On DRF, the Swedish Association of Clinical Dietitians

”Another example of this ongoing Swedish debate is the criticism of the Swedish Association of Clinical Dietitians’ (Dietisternas riksförbund, DRF) annual Christmas campaign. In recent years, DRF have sent Christmas cards to politicians, organizations, and other societal stakeholders. The message is that people should change their dietary habits to decrease cancer risk, and the cards include advice such as “avoid sugar-rich drinks,” “avoid salty food,” and “try to

maintain a healthy weight.” In 2017, six Swedish dietitians criticized this initiative in a debate article, highlighting its judgmental tone and arguing that this kind of activity may hurt people through increasing the stigma of body weight and “bad lifestyles” (Eiben et al. 2017). They also argued that the approach might hurt the dietetic profession as it decreases peoples’ trust in it.” (p.9)