SPSW2001
Human Rights, Advocacy and Social Change
Course Outline
Callaghan Campus

Course Coordinator: Alex Beveridge
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Semester: Semester 1 - 2006
Unit Weighting: 10
Teaching Methods: Lecture, Tutorial

Date Issued: Week 1 Semester 1 2006
*Cts information downloaded 30th January 2006
Course Overview

**Brief Course Description**
Explores the influence of the concept of human rights on public policy and community welfare advocacy. The course explores the theoretical arguments for and against the concept of human rights. The course traces the content and impact of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, examining the contemporary human rights agenda of identifying and seeking to rectify violations of human rights in government policies and social practices. The course also explores the interrelationship between human rights, community advocacy and social change. It analyses the effectiveness of community advocacy strategies and how these influence structures, including the legal system. Emphasis is placed on practicalities and skills of being an activist and advocate for social change, allowing students to deal more effectively with agents of social control.

**Contact Hours**
Lecture for 1 Hour per Week for the Full Term
Tutorial for 2 Hours per Week for the Full Term

**Learning Materials/Texts**
The coursework program centres on a **book of readings** which traverses both critical theoretical and practice concerns. The course-pack can be purchased from the student union printery (east campus-near student services). A detailed overview of individual readings is outlined in the following course document.

**Course Objectives**
On successful completion of this course students will be able to demonstrate:

1. An understanding of the different theoretical perspectives used in the study and critique of Human Rights Policy and Practice.

2. A knowledge of the dominant ideologies, and discourses which underpin liberal, Marxist and Radical accounts of Human Rights Policy and Practice.


4. Skills in writing academic essays, reports, tutorial presentations, research, theoretical and methodological skills.

**Course Content**


7. Feminist, Structural and Radical Approaches.

8. Anti-Discriminatory and Anti-Oppressive Perspectives.


(The emphasis in course content may vary somewhat between the Callaghan and Ourimbah campuses)

**Assessment Items**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Projects</th>
<th>Research Project: submitted week 14. 2500 words, worth 60%.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Presentations - Tutorial</td>
<td>1500 words, worth 40%</td>
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**Assumed Knowledge**

At least one of the following:

SPSW1010 or SPSW1020; or other equivalent course at 2000 level from the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

**Callaghan Campus Timetable**

**SPSW2001**

**HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science

Semester 1 - 2006

Lecture: Tuesday 14:00 - 15:00 [W308]

and Seminar: Tuesday 15:00 - 17:00 [W308]

**Plagiarism**

University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another's ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs.

Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty.
For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link -


The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

**Written Assessment Items**

Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.

**Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations**

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised.

Any student:

1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment: or

2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;

must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer on the prescribed form.

Please go to the Policy and the on-line form for further information, particularly for information on the options available to you, at:

**Changing your Enrolment**

The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) are:

For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2006

For semester 2 courses: 31 August 2006

For Trimester 1 courses: 18 February 2006

For Trimester 2 courses: 10 June 2006


Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester and prior to the commencement of the formal exam period. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with the School Office.

To change your enrolment online, please refer to


**Contact Details**

**Faculty Student Service Offices**

The Faculty of Education and Arts

Room: GP1-22 (General Purpose Building)

Phone: 0249 215 314

**The Dean of Students**

Dr Jennifer Archer

Phone: 492 15806

Fax: 492 17151

[resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au)

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit:

Alteration of this Course Outline

No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of the term except in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes to this outline.

Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards

Web Address for Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness.

If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service (Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 49 21 5766, or via email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester.

For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at:
www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability

Online Tutorial Registration:
Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system:
Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/
This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion
forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date. Late assignments will be subject to the penalties described below.

Hard copy submission:

- **Type your assignments**: All work must be typewritten in 11 or 12 point black font. Leave a wide margin for marker’s comments, use 1.5 or double spacing, and include page numbers.
- **Word length**: The word limit of all assessment items should be strictly followed – 10% above or below is acceptable, otherwise penalties may apply.
- **Proof read your work** because spelling, grammatical and referencing mistakes will be penalised.
- **Staple the pages** of your assignment together (do not use pins or paper clips).
- **University coversheet**: All assignments must be submitted with the University coversheet: [www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policy/academic/general/assess_coversheet.pdf)
- **Assignments are to be deposited in the relevant discipline assignment box**:
  - Callaghan students: School of Humanities and Social Science Office, Level 1, McMullin Building, MC127
  - Ourimbah students: Room H01.43
- **Do not fax or email assignments**: Only hard copies of assignments will be considered for assessment. Inability to physically submit a hard copy of an assignment by the deadline due to other commitments or distance from campus is an unacceptable excuse. Assignments mailed to Schools are accepted from the date posted.
- **Keep a copy of all assignments**: All assignments are date-stamped upon receipt. However, it is the student’s responsibility to produce a copy of their work if the assignment goes astray after submission. Students are advised to keep updated back-ups in hard copy and on disk.

Online copy submission to Turnitin

In addition to hard copy submission, students are required to submit an electronic version of the following assignments to Turnitin via the course Blackboard website:

**ASSESSMENT ITEMS INCLUDE:**

- **Assessment Task 1. Tutorial Presentation** and submission of a summary discussion paper (1,500 words).
- **Assessment Task 2. Research Project**: and submission of individual discussion paper approx. 2000
Penalties for Late Assignments
Assignments submitted after the due date, without an approved extension of time will be penalised by the **reduction of 5% of the possible maximum mark** for the assessment item for each day or part day that the item is late. Weekends count as one day in determining the penalty. Assessment items submitted **more than ten days** after the due date will be awarded **zero marks**.

Special Consideration/Extension of Time Applications
Students wishing to apply for **Special Consideration or Extension of Time** should obtain the appropriate form from the **Student HUBS**.

No Assignment Re-submission
Students who have failed an assignment are not permitted to revise and resubmit it in this course. However, students are always welcome to contact their Tutor, Lecturer or Course Coordinator to make a consultation time to receive individual feedback on their assignments.

Remarks
Students can request to have their work re-marked by the Course Coordinator or Discipline Convenor (or their delegate); three outcomes are possible: the same grade, a lower grade, or a higher grade being awarded. Students may also appeal against their final result for a course. Please consult the University policy at:

Return of Assignments
Where possible, assignments will be marked within 3 weeks and returned to students in class. At the end of semester, students can collect assignments from the Student HUBS during office hours.

Preferred Referencing Style
In this course, it is recommended that you use the use the **Harvard in-text referencing system** (similar to the APA system) for referencing sources of information used in assignments. Inadequate or incorrect reference to the work of others may be viewed as plagiarism and result in reduced marks or failure. An in-text citation names the author of the source, gives the date of publication, and for a direct quote includes a page number, in parentheses. At the end of the paper, a list of references provides publication information about the source; the list is alphabetised by authors' last names (or by titles for works without authors). Further information on referencing and general study skills can be obtained from:

Student Representatives
We are very interested in your feedback and suggestions for improvement. Student Representatives are the channel of communication between students and the School Board. Contact details of Student Representatives can be found on the School website.

Student Communication
Students should discuss any course related matters with their Tutor, Lecturer, or Course Coordinator in the first instance and then the relevant Discipline or Program Convenor. If this proves unsatisfactory, they should then contact the Head of School if required. Contact details can be found on the School website.
Essential Online Information for Students
Information on Class and Exam Timetables, Tutorial Online Registration, Learning Support, Campus Maps, Careers information, Counselling, the Health Service and a range of free Student Support Services can be found at:

SPSW2001 Format

SPSW2001 Human Rights, Advocacy and Social Change is organised around a series of seminars, workshops and inquiry-based learning activities.

After an initial seminar series (Weeks 1-11) students will undertake a small project which culminates in a brief presentation to the wider student group.

Program: The coursework program centres on a book of readings which traverses both critical theoretical and practice concerns. The course-pack can be purchased from the student union printery (east campus-near student services).

Summary of Set Readings

Week 1: Introduction to the course: Why community welfare and human service workers should know about human rights
Human rights discourse has developed through historical conditions to the point that today it represents a powerful cultural idiom in social, legal and moral life and a universal discourse of political life. According to the Italian political theorist Norberto Bobbio (1995) we now inhabit ‘the age of rights’. Rights discourses have been constructed and deployed by social movements, organized pressure and interest groups. Welfare users have ‘narrativised their dissatisfactions in the potent language of rights’ (Rose 1996: 52) to a right is to claim a share of power.

Rights statements now feature prominently in Australian government policy across a wide range of sites and jurisdictions. For example, social work educator Elizabeth Reichert argues that human rights may be one of the most significant issues facing social workers in the 21st century and a means by which the profession is defined and understood. This session provides an overview of the course with particular reference to the contested concept and status of human rights in Australian society and culture. The role that community welfare and human services workers and their institutions play in the development and reduction of rights will also be explored.

Reading:

Recommended Reading:


Week 2: Human Rights: What are they and how did they develop? An overview
A sound understanding of contemporary human rights concepts and practice requires a consideration of their historical and theoretical roots and foundations. This seminar traces the history of the development of human rights discourse in the West. It then considers what constitute human rights. This interrogation involves deconstructing the United Nations Declaration of Human rights in order to identify its component parts and the range of rights that it embodies. Changes in the nature and character of human rights discourse in different contexts will be introduced.

Readings:


Recommended Reading:


**Week 3: Human (social) Rights and Human Needs**

This session investigates the contentious issue of human rights and needs. After the Second World War discourses on human rights often include implicit and explicit statements about human need, generally in the form of social rights and welfare rights. For example, Article 25 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights 1948 states:

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself (sic) and of his family, including food...medical care and necessary social services

Some architects of the U.N. Declaration, notably those from European and socialist countries, sought to validate some form of economic and social rights. Clearly they felt that human needs formed an important component of human rights discourse and were equally deserving of being protected and fulfilled as any other component. Later, the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights reaffirmed the importance of economic and social rights. These precepts are currently under threat from neo-liberal governments who do not recognize that both markets and states threaten human rights.

The relationship between human rights and needs is subject to varying interpretations. In Australia, the idea of welfare rights relating to social needs did not gain widespread recognition. National legislation did not treat social needs as justicable rights which the State was bound to promote. The contemporary trend in many parts of the world is to treat these rights as being equal to or superior to civil liberties. A recent example of the capitalist market economy as a human rights issue emerged at the World Economic Forum in Davros. In recognition that the gross inequalities generated by capitalist market economy need to be curbed, various interests sought to obtain debt relief for countries faced with poverty and disease. This move was resisted by Howard and his government. Other scholars and activists, such as the Critical Legal Studies movement, would like to see the language of rights replaced with the language of needs. Other scholars would like to expand the notion of need to include self-identity and self-respect.

**Reading:**


**Recommended Reading:**


**Week 4: Human Rights: Public and Private**

Dividing social and personal life into the public sphere of the political arena and the market place and the private sphere of the family is commonplace in Western thought. This abstract, if not fictive, dichotomy has tended to constitute men and women into different spheres of existence. Free white males exist in the public sphere as legal entities that exercise power and control and enjoy civil and political rights and to an extent define the nature of rights discourse. Women, children and young people are relegated to the private realm; often excluded from human rights and practices: at times justified by appeals to cultural or religious norms. The effect of this public/private divide has not been in the best interests of all of society’s members. Rather than acting as a haven, many women’s, children’s and young people’s rights violations take place in the private sphere of the family.

This session explores the implications of this dichotomy on the way that human rights is thought and practised. It will also analyse domestic violence through the lens of a human rights perspective.

**Reading:**


**Recommended Reading:**


Week 5: Human Rights the ‘women question’ and Feminist Theory and Practice
Reading daily newspapers or watching an evening broadcast of news quickly reveals that people are subjected to a range of harmful and abusive practices within and outside of institutions. Women are especially vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. Today countries, including Australia, are no strangers to coerced sterilization, enforced prostitution, child abuse, and domestic violence. Mass rape and female infanticide continue to be practiced in other jurisdictions.

The vocabulary of rights is commonly mobilized in the struggles of individuals and groups for recognition and to have their interests and desires satisfied. Mobilized in situations characterized by conflict, repression and oppression, human rights discourse is looked upon as an instrument or condition to achieve a positive end.

Yet, many scholars are less sanguine of the transformative power of rights discourse to bring about socio-political change. While some scholars and activists put great faith in the idea of human rights, others do not. Some feminists reject the universal framework of global human rights discourse, challenging it on the ground that it is derived from a masculinist framework. This section examines the growth and development of feminist perspectives and theories of human rights and some of the alternative approaches to righting human wrongs that have been advanced.

Reading:
**Recommended Reading:**


**Week 6: The ‘Other’: Participation in framing and articulating human rights discourse.**
The concept and imagery of human rights has played an ambivalent socio-historical role in terms of testing or sustaining relations of social and economic power. The English philosopher and political reformer, particularly for legal and penal reform and the rights of women, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1852) was critical of the idea of natural rights which he famously described as ‘nonsense on stilts’.

Theorists like Karl Marx (1818-1883) were critical of the idea of rights not least because framing struggles within the socio-political discourse of human rights can produce unwanted effects. Marx viewed rights as little more than a form of mystification which masks oppression. More recently, Michel Foucault saw danger in the its potential for misuse in the hands of ill-disposed governments and authorities. Others argue that rights discourse may be appropriated by powerful interests and used as a technology to govern subjects. Rights that empower those in one social location or strata may disempower those who occupy positions in other strata. For example, property rights buttress the power of landlords and capital to the disadvantage of tenant subjects and the homeless.
Scholars throughout the Asia-Pacific have also raised questions that unsettle universal human rights. They argue that the discourses and models of human rights privilege and promote western modes of thought and value. For example, are framed within western notions of individualism, human rights discourse marginalizes the voices, identities and relationships of those who find aspects of local culture a source of strength. That human rights discourse diminishes the collectivities which they identify with, value and belong. This argument raises important questions of how community welfare and human service workers communicate with those who are culturally different from themselves and the rights discourses they support.

**Essential Reading:**

**Recommended Reading:**


**Week 7: Human rights discussion: Issues raised during the previous six weeks. What is to be done?**

Judith Jarvis, and others, is critical of what she regards as a ‘rights explosion’, an over emphasis on rights to the exclusion of other moral considerations. The final discussion of this bracket focuses on the issues covered the last six weeks that excite or interest or bother students.

The question of what duties and responsibilities community welfare and human service workers have and how they are understood will be addressed. More specially, what role the worker might play to secure, develop and progress the protection for human rights at the global level and citizen’s rights at the local level will be canvassed. Should community welfare and human service workers have a role mediating power in the civil realm of economic relations and the struggles of the poor?

**Readings:**


**Recommended readings:**


### Human Rights Advocacy and Social Change-Practice Stream (Weeks 8-14).

**READINGS UNDERPINNING PRACTICE STREAM.**

**Academic Week (8)**

**(a) Social Work & Social Justice**


**(b) Social Change Strategies to Overcome Injustice and Oppression.**

**Academic Week (9)**

**Anti-discriminatory and Anti-Oppressive Perspectives.**

**Academic Week (10)**

**Social Change Oriented “Radical” Practice.**

**Academic Week (11)**

**Working Within (and Against) the System: Radical Humanism.**

**Empowerment and Advocacy.**

**Academic Weeks (12 & 13)**
Small group research: collaborative inquiry as background preparation for completion of Individual assessment task.

**Background Readings to Collaborative Task Include:**

(a) **Working Within (and against) the System: Radical Humanism.**
Toronto: Oxford University Press.

(b) **Working Outside (and against) the System: Radical Structuralism.**
Toronto: Oxford University Press

(c) **Towards Critical Practice.**

**Additional Readings**

**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)**

Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 3-day Loan Auchmity and Short Loan


Note: The following papers provide additional insights to the seminar series.


Assessment Items

Assessment Task 1, Tutorial Presentation-40% of Total Marks
Assessment in SPSW2001 Weeks 1-11 is structured around a seminar presentation (based on a synthesis of the set reading) and submission of a summary discussion paper (1,500 words *Submission due end of the week of presentation).

Early in the semester students will allocate themselves to small research groups who will be responsible for critically examining one of the set readings. The review of the literature and insights gained from additional reading and analysis will be presented to the larger group.
It is an expectation that the presentation is a lively and engaging process, not merely “reading from prepared notes”. **Students are encouraged to consider ways of constructing small group activities which are linked to the readings** (for example, questions could be generated from the literature and current debates and may be posed to the group for collaborative discussion. Small tasks could be devised to encourage fellow students to reflect on a contemporary human rights concern or issue). This more active approach to learning through an experiential task will hopefully engage other members of the wider audience and encourage greater connection to the material under examination.

**Assessment Task 2. Research Project-60% of Total Marks**

**During Weeks 12 & 13** students in small groups will engage in a **Human Rights Project** which will examine a contemporary Human Rights issue. This task challenges students to explore and develop a plan for social change in a specific area. (Areas of potential interest and contemporary issues will be explored and negotiated in the seminar sessions). Note: Students are encouraged to use the allocated teaching space for group meetings. This also allows for input from the teaching staff when clarification etc are needed.

**After a period of student-directed inquiry** small groups will present their proposed plan for social change/action to the wider group. **This group presentation will be graded as satisfactory/unsatisfactory.** Drawing on individual research and contributions from the team inquiry, each student will submit a detailed review and critical analysis of their social inquiry. (Individual discussion paper approx. 2500 words: submission date Academic Week 14–Thursday June 8th 2006).

**ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:**

**GROUP TASKS**

- Evidence of planning and organization
- Evidence of comprehensive Literature review
- Evidence of critical thinking and knowledge grounded in the literature
- Clarity of structure and purpose
- Relevance of issues raised
- Strength and coherence of argument
- Efforts to engage group, create interest, stimulate thinking and discussion.

**INDIVIDUAL TASKS**

- Clear overview of theoretical perspectives and philosophical arguments
- Discussion and Critique grounded in theoretical debates and contemporary literature
- Evidence of critical reflection and capacity to synthesise material and present a coherent argument with clarity of purpose
- Organization, presentation and structure.
- Relevance of issues raised.
ASSESSMENT SUMMARY:

(Weeks 1-11) Seminar Presentation supported by submission of
Summary Discussion Paper [due one week after presentation] 40%

(Weeks 12-13-14: Plan for Social Change: Group Project & Presentation
.......................................................... Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory grade.

Individual Discussion Paper - due: Academic Week [14] 6/6/06 ..................... 60%


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<th>Grading guide</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>49% or less</td>
<td>Fail (FF) An unacceptable effort, including non-completion. The student has not understood the basic principles of the subject matter and/or has been unable to express their understanding in a comprehensible way. Deficient in terms of answering the question, research, referencing and correct presentation (spelling, grammar etc). May include extensive plagiarism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>50% to 64%</td>
<td>Pass (P) The work demonstrates a reasonable attempt to answer the question, shows some grasp of the basic principles of the subject matter and a basic knowledge of the required readings, is comprehensible, accurate and adequately referenced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>65% to 74%</td>
<td>Credit (C) The work demonstrates a clear understanding of the question, a capacity to integrate research into the discussion, and a critical appreciation of a range of different theoretical perspectives. A deficiency in any of the above may be compensated by evidence of independent thought. The work is coherent and accurate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>75% to 84%</td>
<td>Distinction (D) Evidence of substantial additional reading and/or research, and evidence of the ability to generalise from the theoretical content to develop an argument in an informed and original manner. The work is well organised, clearly expressed and shows a capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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<td>85% upwards</td>
<td>High Distinction (HD) All of the above, plus a thorough understanding of the subject matter based on substantial additional reading and/or research. The work shows a high level of independent thought, presents informed and insightful discussion of the topic, particularly the theoretical issues involved, and demonstrates a well-developed capacity for critical analysis.</td>
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