



Teaching Gender in Social Work

Teaching with Gender. European Women's Studies
in International and Interdisciplinary Classrooms.

A book series by ATHENA

Edited by Vesna Leskošek

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© Alice Salomon Archive der ASFH Berlin. *Welfare Archives of the Private Charity Organisation Society in Berlin: Students studying the files, Archiv für Wohlfahrtspflege, Zentrale für private Fürsorge, n.d., source: Wronsky, S[idonie]: "Alice Salomon. Erinnerungsbuch im Auftrage einer Reihe von Mitarbeitern und Freunden," 1929.*

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Introduction

Vesna Leskošek

The book is a volume in a series of books on teaching gender that was initiated by the Athena3¹ and coordinated by the project lead, the University of Utrecht. One of the working groups in the Athena3 is a working group on Women, Feminism and the History of Social Work. Its contribution to the series is the present volume on gender and the history of social work. The need for a book on teaching gender in social work arises from the fact that social work education often fails to incorporate gender as an analytical category, even though most of the people that use social work services are women, a majority of social workers are women, and women have had throughout history a significant role in the establishment of social work as a profession. Thus, social work education cannot neglect an issue of gender. Nevertheless, women are not sufficiently present in the collective memory of the profession. A superficial yet general conclusion is that they are omitted from history because they did not contribute to it, or at least not sufficiently to be recorded in historical memory.

Social work as a profession started to emerge early in the twentieth century, when femininity was constructed in a way that supported the public/private division. This applied, in particular, to a woman's body and her appearance, as well as the roles that she was supposed to play both in private and in public. Religious institutions constructed her morality, sexuality and motherhood, which in turn determined her social opportunities and, consequently, her existence. Social work played a role in these processes in various ways, depending on the prevailing beliefs about women and femininity. The profession itself has various ideological origins. Some suggest that it is a continuation of the philanthropic and charitable traditions associated with the activities of various Churches; others seek its roots in social movements, particularly in the labour movement and the women's movement. Social work is connected with various welfare regimes and exists in a variety of social and cultural environments.² From the very beginning, many of its activities have been connected with services targeted at women, treating them within the framework of the prevailing gender ideologies.

¹ Advanced Thematic Network in European Women's Studies, funded by the EU Socrates programme.

² Walter Lorenz, *Social Work in a Changing Europe* (London, New York: Routledge, 1994).

Contemporary research shows that the role of women in establishing social work was greater than was believed in the past, when only provider and user roles were attributed to them.³ Alice Salomon was a founder of the first social work school in Germany. It is evident from her writings that perceptions of social work as a mere continuation of the charitable activities of the Churches are untrue and neglect the significant contribution of women. She described social work in the following terms:⁴

- Helping people in need
- Diminishing the differences between the rich and the poor
- Aiming to ensure that the goals of social work should be collective and not individualistic
- Protecting working women
- Enabling women to be both educated and employed
- Influencing social policy
- Advocating for social justice

Recent works on Alice Salomon⁵ and especially the Alice Salomon Archive⁶ emphasise her influence on the development of social work. There is also a claim that she was not given sufficient attention, mainly because she was a woman and a Jewish intellectual and as such was not included into the history of social work.

Jane Adams also played an important role in the establishment of social work.⁷ She dedicated her life to the poor and other people in need. She advocated for those who were oppressed and she campaigned against social injustices. Elements of social work as a profession that can be identified in her notes are as follows:

³ Sabine Hering and Berteke Waaldijk, *Guardians of the Poor, Custodians of the Public. History of Social Work in Eastern Europe* (Opladen: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2006). Sabine Hering and Berteke Waaldijk, *History of Social Work in Europe 1900–1960: Female Pioneers and their Influence on the Development of International Social Organisations* (Opladen: Leske and Budrich, 2003). Kurt Schilde and Dagmar Schulte, eds., *Need and Care: Glimpses into the Beginnings of Eastern Europe's Professional Welfare* (Opladen: Barbara Budrich Publishers, 2005).

⁴ Angela Vode, "Alice Salomon". *Women's World* 11, (1932): 309–312.

⁵ Carola Kuhlman, "Alice Salomon (Germany), President 1928/29–1946". *Social Work & Society*, vol. 6, no. 1 (2008). <http://www.socwork.net/2008/1/supplement/kuhlmann> (accessed January 7, 2009).

⁶ Alice Salomon Archive web page that offers a good collection of writings and information on Alice Salomon: <http://www.alice-salomon-archiv.de/english/start.html> (accessed January 7, 2009).

⁷ Angela Vode, "Jane Adams". *Women's World* 11, (1930): 321–324.

- Working with the poor and people in need
- Offering shelter and housing to children and single mothers
- Developing childcare
- Offering education to migrants and women
- Enabling voluntary work, especially by students
- Offering advocacy for the poor when their rights were violated
- Claiming that charity alone is not enough for the resolution of social problems, because it is private and individualistic. Social work should be a collective action involving both local and national authorities
- Campaigning against social injustices (and against the effects of capitalism)
- Raising public awareness of social problems and social inequalities
- Developing social rights and a system of social benefits (in case of unemployment, illness etc.)
- Influencing social policy (also by researching the everyday life of people in need)

Alice Salomon and Jane Adams described social work as political, because it was directed towards social change. Offering help either in kind or in money was no longer seen as an act of good will or morality by people with resources; instead, it was defined as the right of those lacking in resources in recognition of the social inequalities. As a result, collective action was aimed at the development of the state's responsibility to care for people that could not provide for themselves or for their families. Collective action against social injustice and inequalities was also an important function of the women's movement.

The history of social work is of growing interest to researchers in social work. This reflects social change at global and local levels. The effects of corporate globalisation are increased social inequality and poverty. At the same time there is a crisis of the welfare state that was developed as a concept after the Second World War but has its roots in the labour and women's movements of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

For social work it is important to understand primarily the mechanisms that produce and reproduce social inequalities, and in our case the inequalities between the genders. The discourse on women is still trapped in a binary understanding of the differences between nature and culture, body and mind,

private and public, civil and political, emotional and rational, and so forth, where the first binary pole is said to belong to women and the other to men. This matrix of thought is sustained by disconnecting the past, knowledge of which could assist us in transcending such binary thinking.

The aim of the book is to focus on the teaching of gender and social work in social work education. It will examine the methods and approaches used in the teaching of gender and history, demonstrating the use of teaching material that includes gender. Further, it will focus on important issues that facilitate an understanding of gender, inequalities and injustices and help us to rethink the role of women in the establishment of the social work profession. The book is divided into three parts. Articles in the first part relate to the teaching process. They include methods, tools and new approaches to teaching. They also reflect on the teaching process and its implications for students' understanding of gender. Articles in the second part show how the past can be used to explain the present. They refer to various historical developments with an impact on women and their position and role in social work. They also explore how gender in social work is constructed. An article comprising the third part of the book is teaching material itself; it presents a photo album from the Alice Salomon Archive in Berlin and tells the story of the beginnings of social work in Germany.

The first part of the book is entitled "Reflections on Teaching and New Approaches". *Caroline Skehill* outlines the way in which gender and social work has been taught in an integrative fashion. While referring to some of the major theories of feminism and gender perspectives, the primary aim of the article is to comment on the process and method of teaching gender and social work. *Mirja Satka* and *Johanna Moilanen* explore a case of gender division in Finnish public administration, which can be traced back to the nineteenth century and still exists almost unchanged. While the women directly involved in providing services placed a primary value on care and concern for human well-being, the social welfare administration run by men prioritised economics. The result is today's welfare bureaucracy, in which control is exerted by men through a demand for economy and efficiency. *Elena Iaskaia Smirnova* and *Pavel Romanov* develop and adopt a method of using visual sources in social work education. Visual sources can be used to deconstruct the manner in which social problems have been defined throughout history and to demonstrate how such ideologies continue to influence social work practices. Visual sources are

especially valuable when seeking to explore the lives, roles and social positions of groups that have been excluded from written history, including women.

The second part is entitled “Teaching with History: Using the Past to Reflect the Present”. *Vesna Leskošek* focuses on two concepts in social work education: gender and history. She explores what happened to women’s bodies in history and what is the impact on the current status of women. Women were exposed to several kinds of violence, including trading, trafficking, forced marriages and mass murders. These are important issues in social work education. *Darja Zaviršek* claims that the interconnectedness and interdependency of the social construction of gendered behaviour in the mental health context, are still underrepresented in social work teaching. This applies to medical diagnoses of hysteria. This phenomenon shows how an ambivalence towards paternalism and the autonomy of women in terms of knowledge, social policy and welfare, continues to dominate mainstream teaching within the social sciences. The article by *Kristina Popova* analyses the importance of home visit practices as a key method in biopolitics in Bulgaria as well as their development by female charity and professional organisations over a period of 25 years. Women of various social and educational backgrounds took part in these activities spanning class and region. *Jurate Gudliauskaite Godvade* focuses on a concept of human reproduction that is described as socially constructed and politically contested. Two different approaches to human reproduction population control and reproductive health are discussed. Issues of reproductive justice covered in this article include forced sterilization and the use of assisted reproductive technologies, which are also relevant to social work.

The third part consists of teaching material. *Adriane Feustel* presents a photo album of one of the oldest schools for social work, now known as the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences. The photo album is presented as a source for research and training on the history of social work and education. The collection of photographs is explored in terms of the represented objects themselves and their depiction. Some of the photographs are commented upon and interpreted in detail, for a better understanding of the manifold issues involved.

The book addresses several broad concepts and fields: social work, history and women’s studies. It will be of use to social workers, historians, sociologists, those interested in gender studies, as well as health professionals with an interest in issues of mental health, human reproduction or early health prevention strategies.

PART I – REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING AND NEW APPROACHES

An Integrative Approach to Teaching Gender and Social Work

Caroline Skehill

Abstract

The article will outline the way in which gender and social work has been taught in an integrative way within a module and across a full qualifying social work programme through the teaching of this author. It seeks to demonstrate the benefits and limitations of such an approach in comparison to the design and delivery of modules specifically designed to teach gender as a separate component as illustrated in other articles in this book. While referring to some of the major theories of feminism and gender perspectives, the primary aim of this article is to comment on the *process* and *method* of teaching gender and social work as opposed to offering a theoretical critical commentary per se. In the discussion, an argument for how gender can be incorporated into broader frameworks of teaching is considered. Examples of research relating to the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom are provided for illustration.

The aim of this article is to describe, analyse and critique a method of teaching gender and social work which is based on an integrative approach. This is underpinned by a broad history of the present perspective, which uses historical perspective to problematise the present. “Integrative Learning” is an approach which encourages students to learn across curriculum and to make connections at various levels between a range of knowledge, values and skills. One of the advantages of integrative learning is that it encourages use of a range of methods of teaching and learning and encourages students to avoid the “silo-effect” that can often happen when subjects are broken up into separate categories. The challenge of such an approach is that it requires creativity on the part of the educator and learner and the outcomes can be more difficult to measure. For this article, I wish to focus on describing the process of applying this to learning about gender and social work for qualifying social work students¹ using Inquiry-Based Learning, which is an approach that encourages self-directed learning and the use of problem-based approaches.² The artic-

¹ See the University of Nottingham’s Centre for Integrative Learning for introductory information and reference resources <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/integrativelearning/>

² See Centre for Inquiry-Based Learning at the University of Sheffield for an introduction and resources: <http://www.shef.ac.uk/cilass/ibl.html>

le is aimed mostly at educators, especially those involved in the delivery of professional social work education and training. In attempting to teach gender in an integrated way across a range of modules, the following methods are used:

- Electronic and web-based sources provided on a dedicated intra-net site
- Live quizzes using an electronic personal response system method to elicit students views and opinions in an anonymous manner
- Personal reflection tools to promote reflexivity; for example, the development of a continuum-based learning tool.
- Case studies for application and reflection, used in large groups and tutorials.

These approaches are used in an integrated manner, whereby a range of resources are provided on a dedicated intra-net site which exists for each module such as statistics on gender equality; research findings relating to gender studies; sample readings that illustrate some of the issues etc. Students are advised to read certain materials before coming to class (for example, papers on gender indicators in Northern Ireland and the UK) in order to prepare them for the interactive learning and engage them in the process of inquiry-based learning whereby, with direction through the provision of resources and web links, they have the basis for pursuing a self-directed learning approach. Three tools are used interchangeably to promote critical learning and understanding: a Personal Response System provided by the university teaching support systems (Turning Point) which enables the design and use of online quizzes with students to test knowledge and understanding about gender issues in society and their relevance to social work; the introduction of case studies which challenge gender stereotyping; and the provision of individual personal reflection tools for students to question and challenge their own stereotyping and assumptions about gender. In the limits of this article, a few samples of these approaches are provided for illustration in the discussion below. This article attempts to reflect an integrated approach by presenting the interplay between use of theory, context and exercises to promote student learning. Only a few samples of content are presented in this article for illustration; the main focus is on exposing the process of teaching gender in an integrated way. While the particular theme of the book is teaching history and gender, the model

discussed here is illustrated as suitable for teaching gender from either a historical or a contemporary perspective.

Exploring Theories and Frameworks for Understanding Gender and Social Work

Gender is a subject which most students will relate to yet it can often be a difficult subject to tackle. An integrated approach to teaching gender allows for the consideration of a range of feminist and gender perspectives in a manner which encourages students to be open-minded, aware of the range of perspectives and to challenge their own assumptions. A history of the present approach implies that students are encouraged to understand present-day perspectives on gender by looking to the historical continuities and discontinuities.

The following commentary provides a brief outline of some of these themes used from the perspective of teaching gender and social work in the United Kingdom and Ireland but should be transferable to reflections across other jurisdictions. As articulated in earlier publications, my approach is to take a history of the present approach which implies starting with a problem in the present and using history to explore this critically.³ This approach is very effective in that it locates the problem in the present and thus seems relevant for students but enables the use of history to problematise this present. For example, one of the ‘questions’ I pose to students in a family policy lecture about the present is:

“Are Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995) right when they say that antagonism between men and women is the ‘central drama of our time?’”⁴

This normally leads initially to a small proportion responding positively, a few negatively but most considering it difficult to commit to one position or the other. Those who argue against this suggest that we have in some way moved passed the gender issue and are now more occupied with race, ethnicity and other forms of discrimination. Those who suggest it remains central argue that despite the achievements made in relation to gender equality, the evidence shows that women are still underrepresented in key arenas of the public sphere such as in government and public service management. Those who are ‘in bet-

³ Caroline Skehill, “Researching the history of social work: Exposition of a history of the present approach”. *European Journal of Social Work* 10 no. 4 (2007): 449–463.

⁴ Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*. (Cambridge: Polity. 2006), 243

ween' reflect the majority view which implies that it is difficult, without some guiding parameters, to respond because of the complexity inherent in such a statement.

Two possible frameworks for taking the debate forward using history are as follows. Firstly, as set out in detail in Skehill,⁵ we can use the breakdown of approaches to history offered by Dean⁶ into progressive, critical and problematisation stories to consider how social work, as a predominantly female profession, has either challenged or reinforced traditional gender assumptions within the broader socio-political context. As set out in Skehill,⁷ using the example of social work in the Republic of Ireland, three arguments are possible.

The first is that women have gradually and successfully occupied space in the public sphere such as in social work from the time of philanthropy in the late nineteenth century through to the present day and that the dominance of women in social work is one key indicator of success in 'occupying' the social space (Progressive Story):

From a reading of the relationship between philanthropy and social work in the early twentieth century, we could construct the story of social workers in Ireland as representing a progressive strategy which struggled and succeeded in occupying the discreet space of family and child care, in particular in the public sphere during a time when Ireland was a mostly patriarchal and conservative country, dominated by a Catholicism. In Ireland, professional social work could be described as one of the first "female professions" where women had the opportunity to engage actively outside of this discourse in the sociopolitical context in an effort to mediate between individual need and social context.⁸

The second argument – the critical story – is that "while occupying certain public spaces, professional social workers operated mostly in the realm of consensus politics and individualism, with little or no engagement with feminist ideologies or practices".⁹ I go on to argue that while there is a strong his-

⁵ Caroline Skehill, "Women and the History of Social Work in the Early to Mid-20th Century in the Republic of Ireland," in *Amid Social Contradictions. Towards a History of Social Work in Europe*, ed. Gisela Hauss and Dagmar Schulte (Opladen: Budrich Publishers, 2009).

⁶ Mitchell Dean, *Critical and Effective Histories: Foucault's Methods and Historical Sociology*, (London: Routledge, 1994)

⁷ Skehill, 2008.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 28.

tory of feminism in Irish politics at certain moments in the past, the relationship between social work and feminism was often ambiguous and distant. The third argument seeks to go a little deeper to capture the contradictions using Dean's idea of 'problematization' to suggest that in order to understand the relationship between social work and gender, we need to take on board the contradictions and complexities of the practice of social work to understand their positioning within the broader context.

Such an approach is useful in encouraging students to think outside of modernist constraints of 'either-or' and to engage in a more nuanced and critical understanding of gender and social work which neither reduces social work to a mere extension of patriarchal social systems nor elevates it to a champion of women and women's issues.

A second framework used to teach the history of gender and social work in the United Kingdom has been to review a range of influential perspectives and to encourage students to reflect on their strengths and limitations. This normally begins with a consideration of the 'first wave' of feminism in the UK associated with the Suffragette Movement and the struggle for the vote for women, which was introduced in 1918. The 'second wave' relates to the influence of feminist thinking and ideas during the 1960s and 1970s on the welfare state and on social work within this. The Beveridge Report of 1942, which set out the template for the British post-war welfare system, is critiqued in terms of its construction of family policy within the context of traditional patriarchal assumptions about the family.

For an introduction to 'second wave' feminist theory and social work, students are introduced to a broad range of authors who address this subject. Take Dominelli,¹⁰ for example, who, in her first chapter *Theorising Feminist social Work practice* reviews the range of perspectives which were influential in social work since the 1960s. While expressing reservation about the categorisation of 'feminist ideas' given that there is significant overlap in the approaches, she recognises the value of identifying the core ideas and principles in helping to develop a critical understanding of this broad and challenging field. Her book also serves as a useful starting point for inquiry-based learning, where students can discover the main authors and sources associated

⁹ Ibid., 27.

¹⁰ Lena Dominelli, *Feminist Social Work Theory and Practice* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2002).

with each perspective in order to appreciate the different traditions within this broad field. We begin with some examples of the following categorisations of feminism for illustration: Radical, Liberal and Marxist-Socialist Feminism. Using a history of the present approach, it is emphasised that these approaches need to be judged in the context of their time.¹¹

In relation to Radical Feminism, the main areas explored are the ideas which promote a radical feminist ideology influenced by a perspective that gender difference is essentially biological; that the removal of the biological reliance of women on men would free women from 'needing' a man; that women-only organisations and services were necessary to combat and challenge the impact of patriarchy; that women's oppression is caused by the control of men over reproduction and through the use of violence and that matriarchal structures were one way to offer an alternative social framework.

Questions that are used to explore the strengths and limits of the approach include:

1. Why was Radical Feminism so important in the 1960s and 1970s?
2. What were the major achievements that came about through radical feminist thinking and action?
3. What is its currency for the present day? What is different about today than 1960/1970?
4. What are the strengths of women-only organisations and can you think of some examples?
5. What are the limitations of women-only organisations in terms of promoting gender equality?
6. What are the implications of excluding men in social work? Is this possible in the present day? Is it desirable? Is it anti-oppressive?
7. Is there a risk that, through radical feminist ideas, the oppressed might go on to become the oppressor (Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*)?
8. Are all men potentially sexist? Are all women definitely not sexist? How does Radical Feminism deal with this?

The main themes for debate surround:

¹¹ See Dominelli, 2002, for an overview of each perspective.

- The changes that have happened over forty years, which gives Radical Feminism less currency and relevance in the present day
- The recognition of the benefit in some circumstances, such as working with women who have experienced violence by men, of women-only organisations, vis-à-vis the need for an inclusive approach in social work across most domains
- The risk of exclusion of men and the implications of this for practical social work
- The basic assumptions about biological difference
- The treatment of gender issues as universal for all women, irrespective of class, culture, ability and so on
- The recognition of the need to understand *both* patriarchal structures and *individual* attitudes and behaviours (sexism) and distinguish between these in understanding gender difference and oppression.

Liberal Feminism is introduced as a less radical and more consensus-oriented approach, which was, arguably, most successfully in achieving changes in legislation and policy in relation to gender.¹² In reviewing the achievements of liberal feminism, students are reminded of the range of equal opportunities legislation currently in place, which they now taken for granted, which emerged as a response to the feminist critiques of lack of opportunity and access.

Questions for students to research and consider include:

1. What were the main differences between liberal and radical feminism?
2. What were the main causes of gender inequality from the liberal perspective?
3. What kinds of opportunities did women not have in the 1960s and 1970s?
4. What were the implications of focusing on opportunity and access over structural and patriarchal divisions?
5. What have been the main achievements of liberal feminism?
What are its limitations?

¹² Although as argued by Dominelli, while not as political as radical feminism, liberal feminism has its roots in the work of the Suffragettes, which did have a strong militant dimension; “Women can be liberal feminists and still be militant!” (Dominelli, 2002: 2).

6. Do you think there was a need to distinguish between the potential for oppression of educated women as opposed to those who did not have this access?
7. What were the implications of focusing on 'women' as a general category without emphasising differences in experiences based on class, culture, ability, etc.?
8. What implications does liberal feminism have for work with men? How are they understood/ included/worked with in social work through this approach?
9. What relevance does the approach have for the present day?

The themes for debate which emerge from such questions include:

1. The varied success of equal opportunities in 'levelling' the playing field in the world of work, especially at higher management and political levels
2. The problem that it treats the interests and needs of 'women' as generic and does not distinguish sufficiently between women from different backgrounds, class positions or cultures
3. The argument that given the nature of social work, to assume that the issues for a professional educated woman are similar to those of a woman from a socially disadvantaged background is problematic given the realities of access and opportunity, which are most available to those with the physical and social resources to avail of them
4. A lack of clarity as to how men are incorporated into the approach from a practice perspective

The Marxist-Socialist Feminist perspective for social work is introduced as an approach which provided the analytical tools to take the liberal feminist thinking further in terms of considering the issues surrounding gender equality, and which takes into account that women with less power – financial or social – are most likely to suffer from the effects of patriarchy and gender inequality.

Questions for students to research and consider include:

1. What are the main differences between Marxist Socialist Feminism and Radical Feminism? Are there similarities?

3. How is anti-discrimination and anti-oppressive practice possible through this method?
4. How does this approach problematise men and masculinity?
5. What emphasis is placed on biological difference vis-à-vis arguments about social construction?
6. To what extent are gender relations socially constructed?
7. Is there space in present day social work for this approach? What are the limitations?

Themes for debate which emerge from this include:

- A recognition of the value of breaking down gender into lines of class in particular
- Along with the other two main perspectives, it has tended to be most relevant for problematising a Western democratic context and less so for understanding issues for women from ethnic minorities in the United Kingdom or for understanding feminism within different governance and social structures.
- It puts gender above other forms of discrimination which need equal attention: for example, discrimination against women *and* men on the grounds of race, disability, religion, and so on.
- It does not provide sufficient guidance concerning how to engage men via this approach in social work.

Moving on to the introduction of broader international perspectives opens up space for understanding gender from a cultural perspective in particular. This is done via discussions of Black Feminism along the same lines as above, as well as emphasising an understanding of ‘the family’ from an international perspective. For example, students learn to reflect critically on readings such as the special edition of the journal *International Sociology and Social Policy* on ‘Kinship and Family in International Context’ as an illustration of how family life and gender relations are constructed within their own social and political context.¹³ Findings from recent histories of social work in Eastern Europe

¹³ *International Sociology and Social Policy*: Special Edition “Kinship and Family in International Context” 5, no. 3 (2005).

provide another way in which to broaden students' thinking about the complex way in which gender relations are constructed in society and encourage them to engage in a critical debate that avoids generalisations and ethnocentrism.¹⁴

An integrative approach, within the history of the present framework, involves the introduction of broad theories concerning modernity and post-modernity as the next step in providing students with the critical frameworks to problematise the core approaches to feminism referred to above. As Dominelli argues, such approaches encourage a "more sophisticated understanding of women's position".¹⁵ Through deconstructing discourses and promoting a more nuanced understanding of gender by means of analyses of power, these approaches challenge generalised thinking.

Questions for students to engage with include:

1. What contribution can post-modernist ideas make to understanding gender?
2. Identify the range of ideas that come under the broad banner of 'post-modern' feminism?
3. Which authors are most relevant to social work? Why?
4. How do post-modern feminist ideas challenge earlier feminist perspectives?
5. What are the risks of post-modern feminist thinking in terms of the theorisation of patriarchy?
6. What are the strengths of the approach in terms of theorisation of patriarchy?
7. How can post-modern perspectives provide a more critical understanding of 'women', 'men', 'gender' through deconstruction of discourse?
8. How can post-modern feminist perspectives inform social work practice?
9. What are the potentials for engaging men through post-modern feminism? What are the limits?

¹⁴ Kurt Schilde and Dagmar Schulte, eds., *Need and Care – Glimpses into the Beginnings of Eastern Europe's Professional Welfare* (Opladen: Budrick, 2005); Sabine Hering and Berteke Waaldijk, eds., *Guardians of the poor – Custodians of the Public: Welfare History in Eastern Europe 1900-1960* (Opladen: Budrick, 2006)

¹⁵ Dominelli, 2002: 32.

Themes which emerge from this debate include:

- The value of an approach which is less generalised and has more capacity to take into account diversity and difference within the broad concept of 'gender'
- The value of an emphasis on the fluidity of identity and multi-layered analysis of gender
- The risk that the political goal of feminism gets lost within such debates
- The limitation that continues to exist in 'feminist' approaches in terms of how men and masculinity are incorporated into the debate
- The question of how one applies this approach in practice

Anti-sexist perspectives are then introduced from two dimensions: under the theme of 'feminist social work' and under the theme of 'anti-sexist social work'. One challenging discussion that emerges from this analysis is the question of how we reconcile the evidence that while gender inequality is still evident in the public sphere with women being underrepresented especially at higher levels of management and government, in social work it is also necessary to reflect critically on how gender stereotyping and sexist thinking affects how interventions with the family occur, especially in terms of such themes as: how men are perceived as 'carers' or 'parents'; gendered responses in child welfare and protection work; the impact of increased gender equality on young males, and so on.

To explore this dilemma, an interactive quiz focused on the question of 'How much have we achieved gender equality in a) the workplace and b) the home' is used. Questions are raised about such contemporary issues as: pay gaps between men and women; the number of women in public service management; the proportion of women in government positions; and the gender breakdown in universities and on particular courses. Statistics from official data sources are used to highlight that on the one hand, significant achievements have been made in relation to gender equality while at the same time, inequalities continue to be prevalent. This opens up the possibility of debates as to why, for example, the majority of part-time workers are women and how, despite equal opportunities legislation, women continue to be underrepresented in key positions of power in society. Social work itself is an interesting case study

wherein the majority of students and practitioners are female yet still a much greater proportion of men find themselves in management and in university lecturing positions. The reasons for this are explored: the lack of appropriate child care support for women in work; the personal challenges of balancing family and work experienced by women and a consideration of how this may differ from men using different theories on socialisation and social structure vis-à-vis understandings of gender at a more individual level. Cultural norms relating to women and family life are critically explored, as well as theories on power and gender.

The focus is then turned to issues relating to the family and the home. Questions are raised about caring responsibilities and the predominance of women as carers in UK society. However, one exception to this relates to caring for spouses, where men are equally likely to care for their spouse as vice versa. This leads to debates about why this is the case, including arguments that when men care, it will be mostly for their partners as opposed to other members of the family. Students are asked questions about issues which explore differences between the role of women and men within the home in terms of the role of fathers vis-à-vis mothers in the home. Contradictions in policy in relation to fathers are also highlighted whereby on the one hand, a father of a child is eligible for child support irrespective of his relationship with the mother and child whereas that same father, if unmarried, must claim his rights to parental responsibility rather than being automatically granted this. Statistics relating to custody outcomes and participation rates in parenting support groups and classes are used to open up thinking about how men are perceived in relation to their role in the family vis-à-vis the shifting position of women within the public sphere/workplace over the past forty years in the United Kingdom. This is a challenging and sensitive area whereby the need to think about gender more broadly to incorporate fathers and fatherhood is highlighted while not losing sight of the origins and nature of patriarchy and gender inequality. Instead, the need to apply a power analysis to relations within the home, as well as outside of it, is emphasised as imperative for social work, which is mostly focused on work with families and is thus immersed in debates and dilemmas about gender roles, relationships and responsibilities, especially in relation to child care and child welfare.

Because of the applied and interpersonal nature of social work, it is imperative that students do not merely analyse the broader social, structural,

cultural and institutional factors that affect gender relations and inequality, but also reflect on their own gender perspectives and stereotyping.

Using a power analysis, students are encouraged to recognise that it is at the individual and interpersonal level where they have most power to either reinforce or challenge gender stereotyping and norms and that once a critical awareness is achieved at this level, they have greater potential to engage critically with the broader complex forces in the organisations where they work and in society more generally. A continuum-based learning tool, for example, is used to encourage debate among students in either small tutorial groups or as a guide for their own personal and professional workbooks, which they are required to maintain as part of their own learning resource throughout their generic degree.

Case studies are also used to build on this critical thinking by presenting students with scenarios where they must make judgements about whether practice could be described as sexist or prejudicial from a gender perspective. As in the case of the first framework offered earlier, moving on to a consideration of anti-sexist approaches opens up the possibility to move beyond progressive or critical perspectives towards a problematisation approach. Such case studies can be used to reflect on how attitudes and responses have changed over time; what, for instance, would be the difference between a response in the twenty-first century and one in 1970? And what are the conditions of these differences? The following are a few examples that create debate among students via tutorials or the use of the Interactive Personal Response System, which allows students to express their views anonymously, and thus, arguably, more freely:

Case Study One: IS JANE SEXIST?

Jane, a trainee social worker, enjoys working with families. From her experience, she knows that children are best looked after by their mothers, because this is a natural instinct for them. Even though fathers can care well also, ideally Jane feels it is best if a mother can do it. Jane understands that if someone is a lone parent, they may have no choice except for to work but believes that where there are two parents, it is their responsibility to ensure that someone remains at home and, unless there are unusual circumstances, this should normally be the mother. All evidence Jane can see tells her that children who have a mother at home are better off than those left to child minders because the mother wants more money or a career. She would never discriminate against fathers or

mothers, but she definitely believes that those who say either parent can care equally well – especially for children under four – are just being ‘politically correct’ and her experience tells her otherwise.

Case Study Two: FATHERS AND THE FAMILY

Joe is a lone parent, struggling to care for his three children, aged two to five. He has been told that the only support available through family support is access to a parenting class. Joe was keen to go but on the first day, he felt very intimidated by being the only adult male there. He believed the female leader reinforced this by making a point that a man was present and by apologising for her focus on issues such as managing difficult children while running the household. Joe found this quite offensive as he is a full-time father himself. He wants to continue to receive the support but feels excluded. You are his social worker, how will you respond?

Case Study Three: WHO CARES?

Jenni has completed a carer’s assessment with Mrs Rogers. She found the interview very difficult because Mrs Rogers has insisted that she does not want to continue caring for her twenty-five year old son Peter with learning and physical disabilities. She is requesting full residential care with weekend respite because his disabilities are severe and he is very difficult to manage physically and behaviourally. Mr Rogers was not involved in the meeting as he works full time. In any case, given that Mrs Rogers only works part-time, Jenni has assessed her as the main carer. She is not sure if the service can be provided by the Trust or not. Even if it can be though, she disagrees with Mrs Rogers’ request as she feels she is shirking from her responsibilities for caring for her child. She speaks to her supervisor on return to talk about her anger that Mrs Rogers can consider putting her only child into residential care. She feels that with some adjustments to her life, she could continue to manage him living at home while attending a day centre. How would you respond as the supervisor?

Case Study Four: GENDER SOCIALISATION

Frank does not know what to do. He prides himself on being open-minded and anti-oppressive. He has just been to see a foster family where John has been recently placed. John is eight years old. He is in care because of neglect and has never had a strong male role model. He is very introverted and gets teased

about being shy. Frank is shocked to find that the foster parents are allowing him to play with their daughters' dolls and toys. They say they did not encourage it but that John always chooses these toys and they do not see a problem with it. He offered to bring more appropriate toys for John. He also advised that for socialisation, they should be encouraging him to play football and integrate more with the boys in the neighbourhood. The foster parents challenged him as being sexist. Frank does not think he is sexist; he is just afraid that John will be teased in school if the other boys find out and may grow up to be confused about his gender identity and role. He feels really unsure about what, if anything, he should do. What would you advise?

A range of further case studies are used with students which draw out issues relating to gender assumptions in the context of core areas such as different cultural practices within families from different ethnic origins; mixed ethnic origin; in relation to child abuse and gender, disability and so on. Through such case studies, students are challenged to engage honestly with the issues and also to think beyond the theoretical stance of what 'should' be done to engaging with the practice reality, which is often influenced by the workers' own perceptions and dilemmas about gender roles and relations, either overtly or subtly.

Problematising Gender Perspectives and Social Work: Introducing Anti-discriminatory and Empowerment Perspectives

The discussion to date has focused on how gender is introduced in an integrated manner on a social work course. An essential feature of this approach for this author is that in addition to providing gender specific inputs, especially at the early stages of a degree, it is essential that the theme is integrated more widely into the curriculum for a number of reasons:

- a) in view of the importance of students having opportunities to move from a generalised to a more specific and nuanced understanding and critical awareness of gender;
- b) to recognise that for social work that is underpinned by a commitment to anti-oppressive practice, gender is only one of a number of critical themes and must be considered within broader theoretical frameworks outside of the gender perspectives referred to thus far;

- c) from a history of the present perspective, it can be argued that in the present-day context of human rights and equality legislation, all forms of discrimination should be treated as equally important for social work practice and theory.

Using a range of frameworks, students are encouraged to reflect on how gender issues can be taken into account alongside issues of disability, race, religion etc. Anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice has been a core feature of social work in the United Kingdom for the past three decades in particular.¹⁶ Given that human rights and equality legislation emphasises the range of grounds on which discrimination can occur, the question of whether gender should be elevated above other forms of discrimination as opposed to considered alongside a range of other equally important factors, forms the basis of the next layer of theoretical debate. From an integrative point of view, an anti-discriminatory approach does not deny or prevent gender discrimination being addressed, but it does imply that it should not gain any more precedence than other forms. Indeed, it is further argued that it is not so much the form of oppression or discrimination but rather its impact that is of import. Case studies are used to explore whether, for example, an Indian woman living in a socially deprived area of a sectarian town in Belfast is more at risk of discrimination on the basis of her gender, her race or her religion. The challenge for students is to manage the duality that on the one hand, one must be ever aware of the risk of discrimination on the basis of identity – be it gender, race or ability – while on the other hand realising the risks of assuming that oppression can be attributed to just one part of a person's identity. Bringing in theories on identity, individualisation and critical social policy to supplement teaching on anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice, students are encouraged to find a comfort in the less certain but arguably more realistic context that the nature, form and experience of discrimination are influenced at so many different levels; and impact on individuals and groups in such diverse ways, that any generalised thinking – including an over-emphasis on gender to the detriment of other aspects of identity and experience – can potentially be discriminatory. Such a framework encourages, in particular, a consideration of gender from

¹⁶ Nigel Thompson, *Anti-Discriminatory Practice* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Siobhan E. Laird, *Anti-Oppressive Social Work: A Guide for Developing Cultural Competence* (London: Sage, 2008).

an explicit perspective of cultural competence.¹⁷ By bringing in a critique at a range of levels – structural, institutional, cultural, interpersonal and personal/individual – students are able to reflect on the range of domains where gender inequality can be reinforced or challenged within a broader context.

Such anti-discriminatory frameworks need to be supplemented with perspectives on empowerment, social justice and human rights. An alternative means of looking critically at gender and related issues, one used by this author, is to consider it in terms of Foucault's explanations of power with an emphasis on the diversity and complexity of power relations. Through this perspective, the argument is developed that a sophisticated understanding of the exercise and effects of power can have a powerful effect on critical learning about both gender and a range of other forms of potential discrimination.¹⁸

Finally, gender discussions are embedded within a range of lectures to draw out issues in different fields of practice including disability and sexuality; family policy; the history of social work and philanthropy; child welfare and gendered responses; women and sexual abuse; domestic violence; caring patterns amongst older women and men; and the nature of professions in terms of gender representation, as students progress through their learning.

Conclusion

So let us return to the question posed at the beginning: Is antagonism between men and women the major issue of the day? Through an integrated approach, students become more sophisticated in their response to this issue. Most of them conclude that it is important to recognise the major changes that have occurred in gender equality while not losing sight of the need for an ongoing critique of sexist attitudes and patriarchal structures; many are forced to go away and reflect on their own attitudes and beliefs on the basis of the 'facts' presented through the tools described above, especially in relation to how one reconciles the contradictions that are inherent in our construction of gender and gender relations at every level of society both in the 'public' and 'private' spheres, these in themselves having been deconstructed. And many recognise that while gender issues remain a core feature, the generic nature and requirements of anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive social work require that this is dealt with

¹⁷ Laird, 2008.

¹⁸ James D. Faubion, ed., Michel Foucault: Power (London: Penguin, 2000).

alongside, and not above or below, other potential forms of discrimination and oppressive. As the understanding of power becomes more sophisticated, so also do the debates. One may conclude that it is too simplistic to say that this is the major issue of the day, given all of the other challenges that are faced by service users and carers. Still, we cannot lose sight of the contribution that feminist and gender-related theories have made and continue to make. The need for us to have courage and confidence in engaging deeply with the issues in order to be able to grapple with the ongoing contradictions and challenges illustrated in this discussion and familiar to readers is thus emphasised.

Dealing with gender in an integrated manner allows for it to imbue teaching across a range of areas, but this can also mean that sufficient attention may not be paid to the particularities alongside the other integrated themes. Using such approaches as those set out above (within modules and/or lectures on family policy, anti-discriminatory practice, power and empowerment, and child care and welfare) should ensure that sufficient attention is paid to the dilemmas of gender relations and stereotyping within the broader context of preparing to become a generic social worker. As noted at the beginning, this article does not seek to show that such an approach is necessarily better than a more specialist form of teaching; rather it illustrates how, within a generic programme, gender can be maintained as a core area of consideration within the broader context of social work education and training.

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The Roots of the Social Work Profession as a Resource in the Dialogical Teaching of Gender

Mirja Satka and Johanna Moilanen

Abstract

This article addresses gender issues in social work, including gender order, gendered divisions at work and gender-specific local or national practices in social work as historically and culturally reproduced phenomena. Our aim is to provide teachers with several dialogical ideas for making history ‘come alive’ and to enlighten future professional actors about the deeply gendered cultural meanings of the profession. We present some pedagogical means in a discussion of how to address the issue of gender in teaching by using historical narratives that have been written from a gender-conscious perspective as a resource. We put particular emphasis on the formation of gender-specific divisions of tasks in social work practice. A case study from Finland is presented as an example of how feminist historical scholarship can present opportunities for the innovative teaching of gender. The case study is followed by an illustrative example of how to apply drama education in teaching gender in a culturally and emotionally sensitive way. In addition, we suggest some other alternatives for teaching based on various kinds of historical documents and scholarly materials.

Introduction

Contemporary social issues are highly complex, globally interrelated, and dynamic. Social workers have contradictory roles when dealing with them: they have to act as instruments of government (the social control function) and as advocates of people oppressed by the policies of government and other authorities (the social change function). Under the present circumstances social workers must be able to draw upon many sources of information and different knowledge traditions. Accomplishing this requires them to break out of the truths of objectifying knowledge and the traditional meta-narratives of the profession. For this purpose, our substantial experience in teaching social work courses has led us to develop innovative techniques and methods for teaching, instead of merely offering lectures on the principles of helping people or holding seminar discussions on gender issues and social problems.

Why is the Problematisation of Gender in History Important in Social Work?

Every year a predominantly female and relatively homogenous group of young adults start their studies hoping to become qualified ‘helpers’ for other people who have faced problems in their lives. There are many important issues (such as is the identity of the other and of ourselves) which we would like to encourage teachers of social work to problematise in the course of social work studies, because our understanding of the world around us depends on where we are positioned within it. Initially, students tend to take for granted such matters as the present gender-based division of labour in the field of social care, and this easily leads them to reproduce the existing ways of working and of relating to each other in their professional communities. Problematisation is important, if we wish to open up new avenues of understanding, such as possible innovative alternatives and space for reflexive social work practices in future.

Gender is undoubtedly among the most important issues, not least because the female worldview and women’s views on the family, childhood, mothering and fathering tend to become self-evident in the interactions between students and their teachers and peers. Without critical reflection on gender in everyday practices, social workers are likely to encourage the reproduction of traditional gender-specific family roles in circumstances in which the constant questioning of them would be more appropriate. This has led us to make the following conclusion: it is not enough to question the present gendered practices of social work as such, but rather we need to extend the investigation to some of the origins of the profession. It is important to acknowledge the particular gender order that existed when the earliest forms of the then new profession arose. Second, knowledge about how gender relations in general and the gendered practices of the profession in particular became established over time is a key aspect of the cultural heritage of the profession.

To enhance students’ understanding, teachers should, in addition to presenting the historical facts, highlight the most common invisible meanings of gender at the personal-experiential level. Bearing this in mind, in the second part of this article, we show how to apply drama education when exploring some of the historically constructed meanings of gender in social work. Questioning why certain practices of knowledge generation and representation are privileged and examining their relationship to the dominant ideas, may broaden our understanding of how such gender-related ideas arise and are sustained.

Our aim is to make history and the deeply gendered cultural meanings of the profession up-to-date and thus relevant for the actors who will seek to address the concerns of people in all stages of life.

How to Teach Gender Issues?

Our teaching philosophy begins with an acknowledgement that communication is basically a relational activity and that transformative change in learning situations presumes the engagement of students in an authentic dialogue. Dialogue is the means to generate the conceptual shifts that characterize transformation.¹ Openness and reciprocity are necessary elements of a good dialogue in any teaching process. According to Ruth Grossman Dean,² a good transformative discussion includes a diversity of voices; it encourages the participation of those who speak from direct experience. It is personal and relational, containing a back-and-forth between experience and reflection; thus, it is a personal anecdote and a general theory – with neither taking over. It is likely to occur in an atmosphere of trust, in which people engage as equals, listen effectively, and develop their understanding through feedback and reflection.

Our purpose in this article is to introduce some methods to teachers by discussing how historical narratives of social work written from a gender perspective can be used as a resource to problematise gender in social work teaching. In the following, particular emphasis is laid on the formation of a gender-specific division of tasks in the field of social welfare, especially in social work. Rather than explain in detail why gender divisions have become what they are, we focus on how this happened, using historical documents as evidence. Influences from abroad have always been an important source of ideas for developing national social policies and social work. Even so, such influences have always been modified by national characteristics and culture. Concerning gender division, the rule in Western countries applies also in Finland: women tend to take responsibility in the field of reproductive practices, while men have a stronger hold of administration.

¹ See Stanley Witkin, "Toward a Transformative Social Work", in *Social Work Dialogues. Transforming the Canon in Inquiry, Practice, and Education*, ed. Stanley L. Witkin and Dennis Saleebey, 1–21. (Alexandria: Council on Social Work Education Press, 2007); Adrienne Chambon, "Art Works: Between Social Critique and Active Reenchantment", in Witkin, Saleebey, 2007: 203–226.

² Ruth Grossman Dean, "Good talk: The Art of Transforming Conversations", in Witkin, Saleebey 2007: 5–54.

The underlying connections between the origin of gender division in welfare professions and the ideologies of patriarchy,³ capitalism, bureaucratisation, and professionalisation have been noted by various scholars. The most radical change, influencing the formation of gender division in general, was perhaps the division that came about when production moved out of the home. This led to a division in life between work based on wages and work done in the privacy of one's home. This was an important sequel to the breakthrough of the capitalist mode of production in Western countries; the story in the Socialist countries was in some ways different.⁴

When, in the first case, the separate spheres of the “personal” and “production” became established, the expertise of the two sexes was split in two. Women were tied to the family, dedicating their lives to the production of future generations. The family was established as the centre of private life. This state of affairs was then combined with the existing ideology of patriarchy; it became the rule to exclude women from the increasing public duties by appealing to their duties at home. In the field of health care, for instance, the professionals – male doctors – became the skilled healers, thereby seizing control of what had been considered a women's field of expertise.⁵

In the following, we examine a case study from Finland, which serves as an example of the resources historical scholarship offers to the innovative teaching of gender. After presenting this Finnish case study, we show how to drama education can assist us in teaching gender in a culturally and emotionally sensitive way. In addition, we shall discuss some other alternatives for teaching based on various kinds of historical documents as well as scholarly materials. Similar historical case analyses of social care and social work on the origins of gender (order) in most European countries are likely to be available.⁶ Research in national historical archives is another way of obtaining relevant material

³ By patriarchy we mean a historically formed complex set of relations within and by which men tend to dominate women and children. We wish to stress that this differs from an understanding of patriarchy as a form of male-dominated family and kinship system.

⁴ Sabine Hering and Berteke Waaldijk, *Guardians of the Poor – Custodians of the Public. Welfare History in Eastern Europe 1900–1960*. (Opladen & Farmington Hills: Barbara Budrich, 2006); Sabine Hering and Berteke Waaldijk, ed. *History of Social Work in Europe (1900–1960). Female Pioneers and their Influence on the Development of International Social Organizations*. (Opladen: Leske & Barbara Budrich, 2003).

⁵ See, for example, Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English, *For Her Own Good. 750 years of the Experts' Advice to Women*. (New York: Anchor Books, 1978).

⁶ Hering, Waaldijk, 2006; Hering, Waaldijk, 2003; Gisela Hauss and Dagmar Schulte, ed. *Amid Social Contradictions. Towards a History of Social Work in Europe*. (Opladen: Barbara Budrich, 2009).

for teaching gender from a historical perspective. Although our case study is Finnish, the following narrative may also prove useful in other countries, since in most Western nations social work was begun under the circumstances of male patriarchy and early capitalism.

The Origins of Task Division by Gender in Social Services: Why Do Men Make Decisions and Women Deliver Services?⁷

The Dawn: Philanthropy and the Poor Law

The beginning of Finnish social work lies in the nineteenth century and is firmly connected with the social changes in society and the consequences of the capitalist mode of production. Indicative of the new social order was the appearance of group of workers who earned their living through paid employment. There was also an increase in the wealth gap between landowners and their dependants in the countryside. However, even more important from our point of view was the change that occurred in the family. The family economy was replaced by the household, which meant structural and functional changes in the family as an institution. The patriarchal gender relations of the family economy, previously based on shared agrarian work by men and women, were slowly transformed into a relationship of emotions governed by family morals. A woman's duty was no longer to be a companion at work; instead, she was expected to do the housework and take care of the children and her husband. Women became the soul of the home, which enhanced their relative status and importance in the family. It should be noted that this change initially affected only a few upper- and middle-class families.

This new state of affairs served the interests of capitalism, which needed new skills unknown in traditional society. These skills had much to do with the new way of life and its moral codes. Proper reproductive behaviour, with the centrality of the family as the realm controlled by women, was essential. This explains why the position of women became strategically important to the newly formed organization of society.

⁷ This is a slightly edited version of the following article published in English by Satka, Mirja, "Origins of Task Division by Gender. Why do Men decide and Women deliver Personal Services in Finnish Social Welfare." *Hallinnon tutkimus* 7 (1988): 282-289. In English the name of the journal is *Administrative Studies*. The original documentary sources, in Finnish or in Swedish, and references in literature are available in this article.

Women had a socially important task. Moreover, the change in their position in relation to the other sex excluded them from the expanding public sphere, thereby making them conscious of their different status in relation to men. As in many other countries, this offered a basis for the birth and expansion of the bourgeois women's movement, which aimed to achieve equality in terms of education and legal status. The new social situation offered a twofold challenge to upper-class women: to educate themselves in the skills of "house-keeping" and to instruct women of the lower classes. The second task entailed gaining a narrow foothold in the public sphere. For this reason it was regarded as an important goal by women activists.

Many ideas for new activities among women were uncritically adopted from more industrialized countries and then applied to the Finnish rural poor by educated upper-class women and by some well-educated males. In this connection it is worth noting that Finland was very late in its industrial breakthrough: even in 1940, 64 percent of the economically active population earned their living from agriculture; the corresponding figure for England was around 6 percent. Although the object of philanthropy in Finland was very different from that in English or German urban slums, the fear of the lower classes felt by the elite groups was projected on the Finnish poor. Education of the ignorant masses, in practice lower-class women and their children, became the ideological goal of local groups of women activists throughout the country from the middle of the nineteenth century. It was presented as an extension of women's duties at home by male advocates as well as by Finnish women activists and their foreign counterparts.

The following two examples are typical of the activities of contemporary nineteenth-century Finnish women's clubs. In Helsinki a women's association "*Fruentimmersföreningen i Helsingfors*" defined its task to be visiting poor people's homes and telling them to be God-fearing, industrious and well-behaved. A principal function of the visits was to advocate Christianity in the bringing up of children in poor homes. In Tampere, a philanthropically oriented women's association founded a school for poor girls and then a workshop for children.

A philanthropic boom arose in the 1880s in consequence of the Poor Law of 1879, which reflected the liberalization of the economy and private life and excluded able-bodied poor from "assistance" given by the local administration. It soon became clear that the whole field of philanthropy and charity was out of control. While the previous social order had been based on patriarchal

loyalty and duty, the new one required a self-supporting family household in which the central function was human and moral reproduction. Charity in the sense of giving alms was almost criminalised in the case of the able-bodied poor. It was seen as a threat to the moral rule of supporting oneself. From 1888 onwards, the national administrative reorganisation of social welfare was carried out with a heavy hand by the inspector of the Poor Law. He supervised the actions of local administrations in the execution of the Poor Law as well as private philanthropy.

In terms of gender division this was the State's first step towards bringing under male control activities that women had practiced for decades. Philanthropy associations were to serve as complementary executors of government policy but under no circumstances were they allowed to work against the principles of the Poor Law. This was a consequence of the new policy, whose main idea was to socialise citizens to the new social order with the threat of the poor house.⁸ This strengthened the efforts of families to support themselves, but in some cases the family was unable to subsist on its own. The policy was to disperse the family among poor houses and other people's homes.

The work done on a voluntary basis gave a particular expertise to women, and they became informed about poor people's circumstances from the upper class's point of view. With reference to this expertise, a parliamentary proposal was made in the late 1880s: women should be given the right to be elected as members of the local Poor Law Committees – with equal rights regardless of their personal marital status. This was a historic breakthrough, because previously women had only been allowed to act as members of school boards if they had been involved in educational activities on a voluntary basis. Only unmarried and widowed women had been granted limited civil rights since 1873. Even they were still legally under male guardianship.

The proposal was exceptional, as it also gave this right to married women, whose only duty was understood to be the home and family and who were totally under the control of their husbands. Advocates of the proposal argued that it would benefit the whole of society. The expertise women had acquired in philanthropic associations and their skills in housework and in

⁸The idea of poor houses was made a state policy after the inspector of the Poor Law made an excursion to several more industrialised European countries in 1886 and learnt about the advantages of the institution. He considered the poor house system extremely useful, because it was the cheapest way for the state to diminish the number of poor relief applicants and had special moral advantages for the working morals of the lower classes.

the household economy were greatly valued by the male advocates. However, in the end, the legislation (1889) only allowed unmarried women aged over twenty-four as well as divorced or widowed women to be elected to the Poor Law committees.

In spite of these limitations women activists considered their duties in the social field an important opportunity to strengthen women's positions in the public sphere. Nevertheless, in their arguments they tended to stress that only women had the skills to socialize the future generation and to instruct mothers and supervise the poor houses. Both sides regarded the role of women in the Poor Law committees as that of helping men in decision making because, as the women argued, "women have a special sense of charity". Again, men were credited by women with the ability to organize and make decisions. Poor house policy offered another opportunity for women in the public sphere. According to the inspector of the Poor Law, it was soon discovered that women were more effective managers of poor houses. In his view, this was because the task required the skills of housekeeping and caring. He started a campaign to involve more women in the management of poor houses, hoping that this would save the policy that he had advocated as a means of solving the question of poverty.

The National Association of Women and Zacharis Topelius, a well-known and respected novelist, were also advocates of the women's issue in poor relief. In 1892, Topelius wrote an appeal to women concerning their duties in poor relief. The appeal was based on the proposals of the Poor Law inspector, who subsequently described this as a decisive turn in women's participation in poor relief. Topelius's challenge reflected the changing emphasis of the poor relief policy, from strict external control to internal self-control through pedagogic means. In practice this meant that poor relief could no longer survive without female skills. The poor house was constructed by him as an extended family in need of a mother. According to Topelius, it was among poor house residents that working women found the desperation that fulfilled their need to give love and affection. This was the most important aspect of their reward, explaining why they should not look down on the low salary for this socially important task.

The Feminisation of Poor Relief

At the turn of the twentieth century a new idea for relief policy was introduced from Germany, namely the Elberfeld system.⁹ Under the original system, a town was divided into districts in which voluntary visitors took care of three or four poor families. The system was based on the following principles: individualisation of relief, decentralisation of decision making in delivering help, and intensive personal relationships. Individualisation meant that the cause of a social problem was mainly seen as individual by nature. Because of this it was believed that individual treatment and control would be the assistance that was needed. The inspector of the Poor Law wrote the following about a visitor's duty under Finnish conditions: "A visitor must help the poor as an educator does and seek reasons for economic shortcomings as a doctor diagnoses in order to heal people. Then the visitor will recognise that the concern and the good advice are more effective than money in cash."

Several male advocates of the new system thought that women should take care of voluntary visiting, because its object was the home, the traditional sphere of women. It seems that they had adopted some of the arguments that the women's movement had made at the start of their philanthropic activities several decades earlier. Now both groups argued that women had the suitable character and experience for visiting and instructing lower-class mothers. This policy was reflected in practice. In Tampere, for example, 80-90 percent of visitors were women.

What caused the change towards the feminisation and familisation of poor relief practices? There is no possibility here of examining the change that took place in poor people's everyday lives, but it could be described as the crumbling of the patriarchal order in the organisation of family life. Upper-class contemporaries defined it as the problem of a diminishing fear of God in lower-class homes. Children were no longer working in factories, and idle children on the streets were considered a "social problem". When these concerns were combined with the ideals of the Enlightenment, which underlay the pedagogically and individually oriented early forms of social work, the result was, in an atmosphere of growing nationalism, a policy whose principal aim was to

⁹ This system was first put into practice in Oulu (1895) and later on in Kuopio, Tampere and other places. However, its principles had an effect on the whole organisation of poor relief all over the country in the 1910s: personal relationships as well as visiting the homes of the poor became the "method" of poor relief volunteers.

civilise the lower classes. The civilising of lower-class family life became government policy. It found its expression in an emphasis on preventive poor relief¹⁰ and public schools, and in the appearance of day care institutions as well as the earliest forms of preventive health care. Day care centres for children were considered the best model for the new policy.

Children were understood to be the main area of concern. The slogan was: “To save the children of today is to save the society of tomorrow.” However, this policy was fully implemented only after the Civil War when the major concern was an acute crisis in the care of children of the working-class “reds” and their proper moral instruction as members of society. The rapid increase in the number of orphanages after the 1918 Civil War and the expansion of public and private child care meant in practice the feminization¹¹ of poor relief with respect to the total number of paid workers. This was not the case in administration. The new policy also produced a breakthrough in child counselling clinics, supported by the Mannerheim League for Child Welfare. At such clinics, women whose families were members of the Finnish professional elite and who had been trained at professional schools of social work in the United States, practiced the skills of a social case worker as an assisting member of the social psychiatric team. The object of this activity was the “problem child”.

To explain why feminisation took place in the 1910s, we need to examine the purpose of poor relief and its societal context. In most documents the economic aspects of poor relief are what define it. The local Poor Law committees continued to express interest in the economic advantages of various alternatives to poor relief for the local economy. However, the inspector of the Poor Law influenced these committees by requiring that their activities should become effective means of the social control of reproduction among the lower classes. This explains why individualisation and care of families became the focus of government policies. And for these purposes women’s work was most appropriate. Only women were considered capable of producing the magic relationship of individualisation, and only women were regarded as being able to guide mothers, children and morally questionable women as visitors or as orphanage managers. It was considered to be an extended role of the housewife

¹⁰ This was approximately the period when the term Poor Law (*vaivaishoito*) disappeared and the field was renamed officially poor relief (*köyhäinhoito*).

¹¹ Feminisation meant in practice that totally new careers, including caring and advising, were opened up to women. Meanwhile, positions that men had achieved were by no means feminised.

and mother. Even the ever well-informed inspector of the Poor Law admitted that he felt uncertain about instructing on issues that belonged in the women's sphere, including child care and the care of adults with disabilities. He wrote: "I was convinced that this was for women." As child care blossomed, so the new nation received its first female poor relief counsellor (1918). Her task was to offer assistance on women's issues to the other counsellors, who were men.

One reason for this consensus was that female labour was available for free. Voluntary visiting in poor people's homes represented an excellent opportunity to bring women's voluntary work under state (that is, male) control and also to increase the volume of their work. In addition, the new system formed an easily controllable bridge from private charity to poor relief. For many reasons, this was important to the efforts of the state.

Why Was Administration Not For Women?

So far we have discussed the formation of gender division from the point of view of women's work and reproductive functions in the context of the municipal economy. The simultaneous development of the membership of the local Poor Relief committees, to which women had recently gained admission, was not feminisation. There were complaints that women members of the committees failed to attend committee meetings or that they were not even willing to accept these posts. Also, when they were present they only caused additional expenses for poor relief because they made suggestions for offering assistance without full consideration of the consequences. Men construed that the women in the committees were too eager to speak up for the poor, which made reasonable decision making impossible. For instance, men claimed that women did not meet the requirements of organized decision making.

To make the social control of the lower classes more effective, one of the three male counsellors stressed the importance of women becoming members of the committees. He suggested that women should be instructed on the principles of the Poor Law and other poor relief regulations. Further, he argued that their duties in the committee should be properly defined: "If we want to make poor relief an enlightening institution for ordinary people we cannot neglect the efforts of women (. . .) Proper poor relief requires the judicial mind of men and the heart of women."

From 1880, the most prosperous towns began to engage administrators for office work associated with the poor relief services, which had been male dominated. The first paid female visitors of the poor appeared in the 1910s. In the 1930s the juridical basis of modern social welfare was founded; salaried positions became available for the first time throughout the country. The figures show that the main features of gender division arose in the initial stages of Finnish social welfare. The local bureaucratic organisation of social welfare placed men at the top, because the principal task was to execute new laws, an area in which “masculine qualifications were necessary”.. In the late 1930s, the gender division of welfare workers was as follows (Table 1):

Table 1. Gender division at municipal social welfare offices, 1938.

Position	Male		Female	
	%	N	%	N
Director	98.5	(472)	1.5	(25)
Social worker	25	(110)	75	(326)
Office worker	15	(46)	85	(261)

As an example of what it meant for men to have the power to decide which tasks were performed by whom, it should be mentioned that in positions of non-institutional care the formal education of men was lower than that of women in spite of men's relatively higher status. The boom of therapeutic social work among families from the 1940s onwards sealed the gender divisions. In addition, it resulted in a new type of male dominance, as professionals, including medical doctors, acquired influence over social work.

Concluding Remarks

The formation of gender division in Finnish social work was connected with many ongoing social processes, not least with the policies of the state towards the nuclear family of wage labour. In the initial stages, during the period of poor house policies when there was no positive support for the family, women were quite free to govern their activities by themselves, if they agreed with the official policy. When the state began to undertake supportive and educative intervention in the everyday lives of families, for which it required female skills and labour, it was necessary to bring the reproductive work of women of various classes under control. This control was exercised at two levels, placing lower-class family life under the control of upper- and middle-class women and ensuring that the women's work was done in a controlled way that fulfilled the hidden purposes of the policy.

The control of women's work proceeded in three stages: at first it concerned only the criteria of almsgiving. The second step was the Elberfeldian visiting, which included a visitor's duty to report the conditions of the poor – partly in writing – to the Poor Law committee of men responsible for decision making. The third step was the social welfare bureaucracy, where the top level belonged to men but the grass-roots work required good hearted females. This illustrates how social policy tended, from the outset, to favour women's work and to maintain the existing gender order.

As soon as the "paradigm" of social work arose in the societal context of early capitalism, a pressing issue was the ability of the actors to harmonise the principles of economy and emotion. This found expression, for example, in the management of the poor house and in decisions in Poor Law Committees concerning the financial support offered to homes. The issue was particularly acute in grass-roots work, and so the impact on women was different. At the

historical moment when women first stepped into the public domain of the local administration of poor relief, they had serious difficulties in seeing human suffering as an economic issue. They were reluctant to view problem through the lens of patriarchy and capitalism. For them it was not something that could be solved by administration or reorganisation, based on the rules of the existing economic order. This factor explains, in addition to all the common prejudices of patriarchy, why women were not suitable as policy makers but were in demand as social case workers controlled by their male colleagues.

On the other hand, one could argue that the problem of reconciling the principles of economy and emotion in social work was solved in two different ways by the two sexes. Those who had the power to make decisions withdrew to administration, because the problem could be more conveniently handled there. The solution women had to develop in order to survive with their “well-developed sense of charity” was the ideology and narrative that we now refer to as social work.

Process Drama in Teaching Gender and Social Work History – An Example of Best Practices in Teaching

Teaching the history of social work aspires to promote understanding of the relationship between the past and the present, mediating socio-historical knowledge and the formation of “historical consciousness”. Drama education can be successfully utilised in teaching the history of social work, and in many other areas. The basic idea is that education and learning with drama is always conducted in groups. Collaboration and a sharing of the expertise of students and of the teacher should improve the social, communicative and group work skills of students; and it is an opportunity to employ the dialogical teaching method. In addition, it serves as a practical example of the application of drama as a method in social work practice.

Drama provides means for examining the actions of individuals, groups and communities (even whole societies) in certain historical situations or at particular moments. Drama education is based on experiential learning and the capacity of individuals to empathise and identify with different characters or situations. At the same time, the means provided by drama and role-playing, for example, can promote students’ reflection on their own personality and life history, clarifying their self-image, values and attitudes, and strengthening

their ability to empathise. All this will further their professional development. Drama enables students to see certain themes and situations from the perspective of ‘the other’; acting out different roles and positions encourages students to identify with the “other” and to gain an understanding of various perspectives on human life.¹²

In the following, we shall examine some aspects of process drama¹³ as a method that can be applied in the teaching of gender and social work history. We shall present examples and ideas for conducting process drama and drama education in general. The ideas and instructions presented here are linked with the earlier part of this article that provides intellectual insights into the formation of gender divisions in Finnish social work. The case example is supposed to function as reference material and as a stimulus. In our view, before the actual teaching session, students should read it or other factual or research-based reference material..

Process drama means participatory theatre with no audience. It does not follow a manuscript, but the plot and the events are developed during the working session. The emphasis is on the process of exploring different topics through drama conventions (or techniques). The teacher usually plans the structure, the proceeding, and the episodes of a process drama. The fictive and imagined world, settings and roles in which learning is realised, are constructed in collaboration with students.

Process drama is improvisational in nature, but it does have a certain structure. It consists of episodes or phases, which are interrelated. There is no external audience, but the group of learners are an audience to themselves. The aim is to create imagined worlds that enable participants to learn in a specified context.¹⁴ These worlds are created by using different conventions or working methods. The conventions “are an agreed way of structuring a dramatic encounter, through the use of space, action and time, to create meaning”.¹⁵

¹² See Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton, *Drama for Learning: Dorothy Heathcote’s Mantle of the Expert Approach to Education*. (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1995); , Jonothan Neelands. *Structuring Drama Work: A Handbook of Available Forms in Theatre and Drama*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

¹³ Drama in education (DIE) can also be used as a synonym for process drama, see Jouni Piekari, ed. *DRAMA – A Way to Social Inclusion. Practical Process Descriptions for Drama Workers*. (University of Turku, Centre for Extension Studies, 2005). Available online: www.tkk.utu.fi/extkk/dramaway/docs/1_Drama_a_way-book.pdf

¹⁴ Cecily O’Neill, *Drama Worlds. A Framework for Process Drama*. (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 1995).

¹⁵ Allan Owens and Keith Barber, *Drama Works*. (Carlisle: Caryl, 1997); see also Jonothan Neelands. *Structuring Drama Work: A Handbook of Available Forms in Theatre and Drama*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

The aim is to alternate between the fictive and the real world and, by means of reflection, to find new meanings and resonance around the theme under examination. Distancing promotes critical reflection during and after the working session.¹⁶

The following general phases have been defined in a drama process, but they are not obligatory;¹⁷

1. The first phase: the start (orientation and warming up, animating participants);
2. The second phase: an introduction to the theme under examination (learning about the background);
3. The third phase: exploring the conflict and intensifying it (the main problem related to the theme is explored and intensified);
4. The fourth phase: deepening (empathising with and inquiring into the background and different perspectives of the theme under examination);
5. The fifth phase: closing a plot level (the narrative level of the theme is closed in order to move on to a more general and abstract level);
6. The sixth phase: abstracting (processing the theme at a symbolic and /or artistic level);
7. The seventh phase: reflection and feedback (processing feelings, thoughts and new ideas).

Although process drama does not require a manuscript, it usually needs pretexts or some other stimulus (photographs or films, for instance), which help people to focus on the topic and provide a particular point of departure for the working session. The main function of the pretext is to stimulate and offer a framework for the whole working process. The pretext can be, for example, a short story written by the teacher or by students, or a text copied from existing

¹⁶ Barbara Bowell and Brian S. Heap, *Planning Process Drama*. (London: David Fulton, 2001), and Hannu Heikkinen and Tuija Leena Viirret, *Draamakasvatuksen teillä: tutkimus TIE (Theatre-In-Education) -projektista*. (Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän yliopisto, 2003) and O'Neill, 1995.

¹⁷ Pirjo Kanerva and Viivi Viranko, *Aplodeja etsijöille. Näkökulmia draamaan sekä taidekasvatuksena että opetusmenetelmänä*. (Helsinki: Laatusana, Äidinkielen opettajain liitto, 1997), 144-5.

fictive or non-fictive materials, including (auto)biographical texts, real stories, scraps, novels and short stories, fairytales, or play scripts. The teacher, who is responsible for navigating the process, should decide whether to adhere strictly to the pretext or use it mainly as a stimulus at the outset.

Jonathan Neelands¹⁸ divides the drama conventions (or working methods) into four categories. The first is the **context-building action**, which means finding and making contexts (time, place and people), symbols and themes for the work. Some examples are *role-on-the-wall*, *collective drawing*, and *the use of diaries and letters or other fictive or non-fictive material, journals and magazines* and *still images*. The second convention is **narrative action**, which introduces or develops a plot and allows learners to test out their assumptions and speculations about the narrative through dramatic involvement. Some examples are *mantle of the expert*, *meetings*, *hot-seating* and *teacher-in-role*.

The third convention is **poetic action**, which refers to conventions that are helpful in bringing a fresh perspective to work in opening up an alternative channel of communication that functions at the level of symbolic interpretation, and in increasing emotional involvement. Some examples are *small group play-making (improvisation)*, *forum-theatre*, *rituals*, *ceremony*, *mimed activity* and *caption-making*. The final convention is **reflective action**; this consists of reviewing and reflecting meanings and issues that have arisen during the process and commenting on actions experienced collectively. Some examples are *marking the moment*, *moment of truth* and *voices in the head*.

An Example of a Process Drama Examining Gender in Social Work History

After reading the selected writing on gender and becoming conscious of historical research, the teacher can begin to create a fictive or real story about a female pioneer social worker. In our case, the story could relate to an upper-class philanthropic activist, a poor house manager at the end of the nineteenth century or a young female social worker in a male-dominated social welfare organization in the 1930s (just to give a few examples). As an inspiration it

¹⁸ Neelands, 1990.

is worthwhile utilising (auto)biographical texts, photographs and pictures, research reports, novels or short stories, and existing films and videos.¹⁹ The story (the pretext) functions as a starting point to a process that the teacher activates together with the students. When inventing the story, the teacher should remember that drama always needs tension. This means being aware of the need to create tensions; otherwise challenging episodes, even chaos, might follow.²⁰

The role of the teacher in a drama process is to operate as initiator and facilitator; to guide the whole learning process and to construct the settings, including the provision of appropriate materials and objects that will inspire students (pretexts, documents, archival materials and symbols). Planning a process drama is time-consuming, more so than planning lecture-orientated teaching. After each period or scene, there should be an opportunity to discuss what has been experienced. The process must be evaluated with the students; this is the only means of getting a drama to work and of developing it. In the course of the evaluation, the discussion about gender may well turn to the present day, examining what has been achieved in learning about gender.

An example of a process drama: *“Anna, a female pioneer in social work (in the 1930s)”*

- **Target group:** Social work students
 - **Size of the group:** 15–20 persons
 - **Theme:** Gender in social work, history of social work
 - **Possible thematic questions:** What **does** gender mean in social work? How has gender become a factor in social work? What are the historical meaning and processes of gender in social work?
 - **Material:** Various materials of female pioneers (fictive or non-fictive) of social work, including pictures, photographs, scraps, chapters of books, articles, statistics and archival material.
- One should also consider whether materials, symbols or objects are needed in staging and defining the space.

¹⁹ Tips for searching stimuli for conducting drama, for example, Rob Hardy, “Doing Good and Winning Love: Social Work and Fictional Autobiographies by Charles Dickens and John Stroud.” *British Journal of Social Work* 35, no. 2, (2005): 207–220, and Colin C. Irvine, ed. *Teaching the Novel Across the Curriculum: A Handbook for Educators*. (Westport: Greenwood Press, 2008), and Jenifer Jasinski Schneider et al., ed., *Process Drama and Multiple Literacies. Addressing Social, Cultural, and Ethical Issues* (Portsmouth: Heinemann, 2006).

²⁰ *Bowell, Heap 2001.*

- **Orientatation, warming up**

Episode 1

Discussion in small groups: Starting with questions concerning the present day: In small groups, students should discuss one of the following: “Today, we live in a gender-equal world in social work” OR “Today, we do not live in a gender-equal world in social work”.

Episode 2

Still images: Based on the discussion and in the same small groups, students should create still images that represent their opinions in the discussion. The images are then presented, giving rise to thoughts and new questions.

- **An introduction to the theme**

Episode 3

Drama contract (always needed): Create the contract together with the group. The working principles are discussed and agreed upon, it is necessary to explore what the group regards as essential and important in the working process. Creating and sustaining a safe and inclusive atmosphere is essential throughout the working process.

A short introduction to process drama (if the working method is unknown to students)

Episode 4

Reading of historical material related to the female pioneers of social work, in small groups: biographical material, articles, photographs and research.

Episode 5

Mantle of the expert. Working in the same small groups, students become reporters, whose task is to reconstruct a short profile of the social work pioneer (based on the material provided). Profiles should be presented as a poster or a feature story.

Media reports: The teacher holds a press conference, where posters or stories are presented to participants.

- **Exploring the conflict and intensifying it**

Episode 6

Small-group play-making (improvisation): One of the created profiles is chosen, which means that the main character is now invented. We use the name “Anna” for her.

Working in small groups, students are asked to create short improvisational

scenes about the everyday life of Anna. Groups are expected to create scenes that somehow illustrate what it meant to be a female social worker at the time. The group then considers the tensions or conflicts (including gender position) that may have arisen in Anna's life as a female pioneer of social work.

Episode 7

The story goes on: The teacher says that Anna has now moved to a new town where she is working as the first female social worker in the town.

Defining space and staging: The teacher asks students to imagine the kind of town under examination and its location. What kind of people live there and what do they do? What is the physical environment like? The students may stage the town as they like (special staging is not a main issue, but the teacher may provide some symbols). What more is needed, in their opinion?

Taking a role: The students are asked to create roles that they wish to act out (including personality, identity, status, and family affairs.). They place themselves on the stage and must become their role characters for a moment. Then the teacher intervenes and asks members of the group to tell each other who they are and state their viewpoints on women as social workers.

Episode 8

The story goes on: The teacher now reveals that the townspeople have divided into two groups: those who do not wish to have a female social worker (Anna) in town and those who do.

Students are asked to create two groups: 1) a group of townspeople who support having Anna as a female social worker in town, and 2) a group of townspeople who oppose this. The groups should consider the arguments and counter-arguments and discuss the matter together.

- **Deepening the theme, and various perspectives and backgrounds**

Episode 9

The story goes on: The teacher says that the two groups in question hold a meeting in the town's marketplace. There is gossiping about Anna.

Meeting: The groups are asked to defend their respective positions in a short improvisational scene, whereby the two groups encounter each other in the marketplace.

Episode 10

Teacher-in-role: The teacher now takes on the role of male mayor of the town (or some other authoritative figure), who has the authority to decide whether female social workers are allowed to work in the town.

Conscience alley /teacher-in-role: The groups are asked to form an alley, with the two opposing groups facing each other. The teacher, as the mayor, walks through the alley. Both groups try to persuade the mayor to concur with their position. The mayor makes the decision: female social workers should not be allowed to work in the town.

Episode 11

Hot seating /teacher-in-role: The teacher (or someone else, if that is justified and occurs naturally) settles down in the role of mayor, taking a seat in front of the group. The group, now as itself, may interview the mayor. The purpose of this is to clarify the motives and the concepts of the male mayor.

- **Closing the plot level**

Episode 12

The story goes on: The teacher reveals that Anna and the mayor meet in the street. Anna is about to meet some clients. The mayor is about to meet the supervisory board of social workers, with the purpose of having Anna suspended.

Two groups, two people: The scene in which Anna and the mayor meet is created. Two people are chosen to play them, while the others divide into two groups, one group supporting Anna and the other supporting the mayor. The two groups are asked to present their thoughts and opinions about Anna and the mayor.

Episode 13

Small-group play-making (improvisation): Students are divided into smaller groups and asked to imagine how the story will end and what will happen to Anna. Then they create short scenes that illustrate life in the town in ten years' time. After the scenes have been presented, the imagined alternatives are discussed.

- **Abstracting**

Episode 14

Emotional statues: Students are asked to form small groups and to empathise with Anna's position and consider how she feels. The small groups select a certain episode or moment and then create emotional statues representing Anna's feelings during the episode or at the particular moment. After the performance, the students' statues, thoughts and feelings are shared.

- **Reflection and feedback**

Episode 15

Group discussion: Students should return to the questions with which the session began: “Today, we live in a gender-equal world in social work” OR “Today, we do not live in a gender-equal world in social work”. Have opinions changed or are they still the same?

Episode 16

Still images: Students are asked to discuss as a group how each student sees the future of women in social work. After the discussion, the students create, in small groups, a series of still images (perhaps three images), which illustrate their conceptions of “women in social work in the near future”.

Group discussion: A discussion about the images and about historical trends in the local history of gender in social work. Where are we now, where have we come from, and where are we going to in future?

Episode 17

Marking the moment: Members of the group choose a moment that was particularly meaningful or important to them and to which they attach their most important learning experiences. The session ends after a shared discussion of these meaningful moments/experiences and a short evaluation.

Other teaching tips and assignments for students:

1. Ask your students to analyse the ‘gender order’ of social work on the basis of historical social work research in your country. You may also use national statistics as a means of gaining an overall picture. Ask students to analyse in small groups what research tells them about gender roles in the social work (or social welfare) profession. How would they describe the historical developments of recent decades? Can they identify specific ‘key moments’ that have been crucial from the gender perspective?
2. Ask your students to examine the selected material you have provided (copies of articles, stories and pictures from old magazines). Instruct them to analyse, in small groups, the impression given by the material concerning “women in social work” and “men in social work”. What kind of differences or congruencies do they find?

3. Ask your students to visit a local museum or an exhibition on the history of social welfare or social history. Instruct them to analyse their experiences in small groups, examining gender or gender-specific practices and the means by which women and men were made visible in the exhibition. Ask them to report on their analyses and hold a common seminar where the reports and experiences can be linked with the history of gender in social work.

Teaching sources for teachers:

Appropriate historical materials:

- Archival sources
- Old social work textbooks
- Old professional magazines
- Narratives and (auto)biographical texts of pioneers of social work
- Interviews of senior social workers
- Committee reports, statistics and laws
- Published research works
- Pictures and photographs (from archives, museums or old magazines)
- Films and videos
- Literature and fiction (novels and short stories).

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Visual Sources in Teaching History and Gender in Social Work

Elena Iarskaia-Smirnova and Pavel Romanov

Abstract

Visual sources play a growing role in historical studies and in teaching as they offer new routes to understanding the past. The ways to construct and define social problems as well as approaches to solving them have varied in different periods of history. It is important to challenge the ideological base of concepts that are often taken for granted and to learn how to consider images as a means to conceive the world and as an important form of social knowledge. What are the differences between the roles of men and women in care work? How have these distinctions been represented in the sources and for which purposes? Photographs and episodes from films, posters and cartoons that depict various images of men and women acting in the roles of parents, tutors, social care workers and nurses, can be used not just as illustrations or representations but also as important elements of a studied context – as important as official documents or personal narratives. The aim of this article is to contribute to social work training by providing an overview of experiences, theories and methodologies on the visual, by collecting and building knowledge based on visual material and demonstrating its relevance to the study of human behaviour, social networks and welfare policies.

The visual has always been a fundamental means of perceiving the environment around us. We live in a visual culture, and the visual is becoming a key element in any kind of activity in our everyday lives, at work and leisure, in science, politics and business, and in public and private spaces. All this, however, does not automatically increase the visibility of many social problems, injustice and disparities. Thus, for social work professionals, it has become essential to understand the dynamics of images of self and identity, emotions and thinking associated with visualizing private and public spaces, social change and social policies, and to be able to interpret them effectively. It is especially important for the teachers or instructors of social work training programs to introduce students to the conventions, contexts and uses of the visual in professional practice. Visual methods can be used for different purposes: to capture a moment, to collect, preserve and even analyse data, to present the product, to share and discuss findings with others and to promote change in both the personal and social spheres.

New technologies, including image digitization and computer-based multimedia, are now extensively used in education. They can be employed in the study of social images and when exploring various kinds of visual sources and the methods of using them in the teaching and practice of social work— which according to Bart Miles¹ continues to rely on the technology of the 1960s. A similar concern is noted by Jen Marchbank² with regard to Women’s Studies, which became reluctant to use Information and Communication Technologies in teaching, owing to its sophisticated critical perspective on the relationship between technology and gender as well as a particular pedagogic focus that values both recognition of the ‘personal’ and critical reflective thinking in learning communities.

It is therefore important to teach students recording techniques and electronic media in a way that encourages critical reflective thinking and examines ethical considerations.³ This can be achieved by applying group work techniques and participatory approaches to research and practice as components of social work training. In fact, the technological capacity to digitalize images and deliver videos on the web enhances the accessibility, reflexivity and flexibility of social work teaching strategies.⁴

There are various traditions of working with visual sources, both art and documentary. Images are often treated as documents that contain and reflect the facts. An image can be used to illustrate one’s ideas. From photographs and video to maps and drawings, a wide range of visual materials can add life to the lesson, making the lecture more vivid and attractive. Visual sources are used in sociology and anthropology to encourage informants to narrate experiences. This method is also useful in social work practice and education. Photo reminiscence is used in occupational therapy as an animation method, for example, when working with survivors of strokes and in geriatric wards.

¹ Bart W. Miles, “Moving Out of the Dark Ages: An Argument for the Use of Digital Video in social Work Research,” *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 24, no. 2, (2006): 181–196.

² Jen Marchbank, “Strange Bedfellows. Feminist Pedagogy and Information Technology,” *Challenges and Negotiations for Women in Higher Education*, ed. Pamela Cotterill, Sue Jackson, and Gayle Letherby (Springer Netherlands, 2007): 94.

³ Luc Pauwels, “Taking and Using Ethical Issues of Photographs for Research Purposes,” *Visual Communication Quarterly* 15, October–December, (2008): 1–16.

⁴ Caroline Rosenthal Gelman and Carol Tosone, “Making It Real: Enhancing Curriculum Delivery Through the Use of Student-Generated Training Videos,” *Journal of Technology in Human Services* 24, no. 1, (2006): 37– 52

In addition to this, the interpretation of visual sources helps to develop imaginative and creative thinking, offering new insights into the past and illuminating the complexity of social issues in contemporary reality. But this does not mean that visual methods must be used on their own. Visual methods and the use of traditional data (personal narratives and archival sources) may well complement each other. Indeed, different types of knowledge can be experienced and represented in textual, visual and other sensual ways.⁵

Representation Analysis

Following Marcus Banks,⁶ we shall adopt a dual perspective on visual media, which includes two dimensions of analysis: content and context. On the one hand, visual data are concerned with the content of any visual representation: what is the ‘meaning’ of this particular design motif on an art object? Who is the person in the photograph? On the other hand, they are concerned with the context of any visual representation: who produced the art object, and for whom? Why was this photograph taken of this particular person, and then kept by that particular person? This idea is shared by Judy Weiser, Founder and Director of the PhotoTherapy Centre in Vancouver: “Ordinary personal snapshots serve as ‘mirrors with memory’ reflecting what and who has mattered most in people’s lives. Therefore, what any snapshot is *about* emotionally is far more important than what its surface shows visually -- its value always having more to do with what the image *means* inside peoples minds and hearts, that what their eyes see.”⁷

Visual methods provide means to understand the practices of representations as cultural texts, to develop interpretations of meanings in the socio-cultural context and to decode images of social relations and individual experience. What are the dominant images of disability, ethnic minorities or single parenthood, and how can an understanding of the dominant images

⁵ Sarah Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography Images, Media and Representation in Research* (London: Sage Publications, 2001).

⁶ Marcus Banks, *Visual Methods in Social Research* (London: Sage, 2001).

⁷ Judy Weiser, *PhotoTherapy Techniques -- Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums*, 2nd Edition (Vancouver: PhotoTherapy Centre Press, 1999), available at <http://www.phototherapy-centre.com/bookvid.htm>.

along with the ideas of inclusion help us to look for images that suggest change? What published and unpublished images of social work and social workers do we have and where are they located? What photographs of early welfare workers are available in archives? Do we know of any movies featuring a social worker who separates a child and a parent? What kinds of images of men and women exist in the public imagination? How did those images change over the years in the history of a country or of welfare policies?

It is important to note that all visual representations are both produced and consumed in a social context.⁸ Here we can draw on the study of Soviet political posters by Victoria Bonnell,⁹ who treats propaganda images as part of a visual discourse on power in Soviet Russia and shows how it changed through 1917–1953. Her account traces the way people ‘read’ propaganda art – relying on their habits of interpreting folk, religious, commercial, political and other visual languages under the regime’s effort to create the ‘new Soviet men and women’.

Some tips for using visual sources as teaching tools:

- *Critical analysis of films* concerned with issues of gender, race and social problems, including the professional identity of a social worker. The choice of film and focal issue is made by an instructor.
- *Interpreting images* of changing social issues in archival photos or posters of different historical periods, whereby the goal is to discuss the social history of welfare, inequality, social problems, gender and social work.
- A course instructor may succeed in finding materials for these classes in local archives and in local contexts, enabling a tour into the social history of a region or country and an examination of the ideological successes and challenges of welfare policies and social work practice. Social changes will be seen through the lens of photographers of different eras, while family, gender and childhood will be revealed as ideological constructs.

⁸ Banks, 2001.

⁹ Victoria E. Bonnell, *Iconography of Power: Soviet Political Posters Under Lenin and Stalin* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

We have used these ideas in classes on social work history and on social work theory and practice and research methods. All types of students found it a very valuable experience, which reveals the constructed nature of social problems and the ideology that has always been embedded in social policy and social work. Photos representing various activities of orphans in institutions are viewed in our study¹⁰ as messages in the wider ideological and cultural context of the 1930–1940s, echoing professional media discourse created around the principles and values of Soviet upbringing and presented in chronicles and children’s cinematography. We examine and discuss with students the pictures from the orphanages’ albums, which manifest such principles as social hygiene, collectivity, ‘cultureness’, and labour participation, all of which are cornerstones of the concept of institutional upbringing (Figure 1).

The political-ideological context influencing the selection of materials, defines the limits of individual freedoms and the subjectivity of the figures, which tend to be represented in a social rather than individual dimension. Some visual units of analysis that we have considered as texts, are subjected to deconstruction, in order to show the interconnectedness between consumption and production in the practice of photography. Welfare policy is considered a contextual background for the understanding of ideology and specific social practices of care and control, embedded in the images themselves and in their own histories of creation and use.



Figure 1. Photo from the album of a children’s orphanage in 1947. This image portrays social hygiene and collectivity as elements of socialist upbringing – the children are depicted as self-sufficient, disciplined, clean and happy.

¹⁰ Pavel Romanov and Elena Iarskaia-Smirnova, “Landscapes of memory: reading photo albums” in *Visual Anthropology: new visions of social reality*, ed. E. Iarskaia-Smirnova, P. Romanov and V. Krutkin (Saratov: Nauchnaia kniga, 2007): 146-168 (in Russian).

Media and popular discourse analysis is an important tool when examining social policy and visual culture. Anna Szorenyi,¹¹ in her study of the photographic representation of refugees in 'coffee-table books', considers the practice of framing and thus inflecting the meanings of the images. Szorenyi argues that while some individual images offer productive readings that challenge stereotypes of refugees, the format of the collections and the accompanying written text work to produce spectacle rather than empathy, because they implicitly propagate a world view divided along imperialist lines, in which the audience is expected to occupy the position of privileged viewing agent while refugees are positioned as viewed objects.

As M. Banks suggests, "When studying visual representations that have been created by others, the dual strands of content and context are fairly easy to investigate in tandem".¹² This is very important to remember especially when the visual representations are produced by the investigator.¹³ A good example of presenting their own visual project is given by Gwen Ellis and Mike Garland,¹⁴ who are social work practitioners in New Zealand. They explore the joys and pitfalls of venturing into video production as a medium for creating a teaching and learning resource for social work, while providing practical tips and insights and demystifying the tasks and terminology associated with video production. A video teaching resource was created to present family work skills from a range of cultural perspectives. The core themes in this reflection upon the process and results of the project work are the following: pre-filming; filming; post-production; and marketing. In particular, they reflect upon the value of collaboration between educators and practitioners in meeting identified needs. Visual representations produced by students are important tools for engaging each member of the group in the process of creative and critical reflection.

¹¹ Anna Szorenyi, "The images speak for themselves? Reading refugee coffee-table books," *Visual studies* 21, no. 1, (April 2006): 24-41.

¹² Marcus Banks, "Visual research methods," *Social Research Update*, no. 11 (Winter 1995) available at <http://sru.soc.surrey.ac.uk/SRU11/SRU11.html>.

¹³ See also Banks, 2001.

¹⁴ Gwen Ellis and Mike Garland, "The making of 'Home Improvements' - tools for working with families in Aotearoa/ New Zealand". Reflections on creating a video resource for teaching purposes," *Social Work Education* 19, no. 4, (2000): 403-408.

Visualisation of concepts:

- Students make drawings in small groups, depicting concepts like “Social Work as a Profession”. Critical reflection then follows. Some of the drawings may be used in a discussion of social work models, ethics and other issues.
- Students make photographs individually or in pairs, each required to make a symbolic representation of a concept (inequality, loneliness, identity, power, choice, dignity, etc.)
- It is useful to collect a portfolio of such images and to discuss them with other groups. This can serve as the first step when introducing visual participatory methods in teaching social work.

We use this technique every year in different courses (see Figure 2 and 3). It is especially effective when we split the students into several small buzz-groups and tell them to discuss certain theoretical or practical questions and ask them to draw an image that contains the results of their discussion. The students value this approach, as it helps them think both creatively and logically.



Figure 2. This picture was drawn by a group of social work students in Saratov, Russia. It is a great metaphor for social work in the context of global inequality and it helps critically deconstruct the effects of social work as a means of categorising people as clients.



Figure 3. Social work students in Saratov present the results of their group work on drawing the concepts

Participatory Techniques: What Can Students, Clients and Social Workers Do with Visual Methods?

Using the ideas put forward by Spence and Solomon¹⁵ in *What can a woman do with a camera? as a starting point and following Claudia Mitchell*,¹⁶ we can pose the following questions: “What can a social worker or a social work student do with a camera?” and “What can a social work client do with a camera?”

How can we, literally, see the world through the eyes of students, social workers and service users? Perhaps an effective method is to focus on the everyday photographs of ordinary people. How can putting a camera in the hands of a child or a person with a disability or an employee of a local community centre help us to both deconstruct and understand social problems and social inequality? How may it modify and develop the approach to helping people?

What do streets and their homes look like through the eyes of children? What do images of gender-based violence look like through the eyes of battered women? What happens when we ask immigrants to take pictures of places and people which are important or threatening to them? How can social work

¹⁵ Jo Spence and Joan Solomon, ed., *What Can a Woman do with a Camera?* (London: Scarlet Press, 1995).

¹⁶ Claudia Mitchell and Jacqueline Reid-Walsh, *Researching Children’s Popular Culture: The Cultural Spaces of Childhood* (London: Routledge Taylor & Francis, 2002); Claudia Mitchell, Naydene DeLange, Relebohile Moletsane, Jean Stuart, and Thabisile Buthelezi “Giving a face to HIV and AIDS: on the uses of photo-voice by teachers and community health care workers working with youth in rural South Africa,” *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2, no 3, (2005): 257–270.

students express their expectations or understanding of cases they are faced with? What do photographs and drawings lead people to speak about?

Although it is not always easy to distinguish between them, we can try to imagine a continuum of participatory techniques ranging from research-oriented techniques to those that are linked with social reform or therapy.

Visual methods in participatory research

Visual sociologists and anthropologists have used variations on these methods, especially when studying the experiences of children. By putting aside adult assumptions about children and taking seriously children's use of the camera, researchers can gain insights into a child's perspective.¹⁷ Phil Mizen,¹⁸ in his description of a qualitative research project exploring the work of children in England and Wales, argued that research employing photo-diary techniques can enhance our knowledge and understanding of children's working lives. Marjorie Faulstich Orellana examined photos made by children as a part of a three-year, ethnographic study of childhood in various communities in California. In the study, the children's photographs — and what they say about these and other images — illuminate distinctions between the urban spaces meaningful to children themselves. These images and commentaries reveal some of the ways in which children's urban experiences are shaped by social class, gender, ethnicity, immigration and racialisation. They also confirm the importance of social relationships for the meanings that children attach to the urban landscapes in which they live.

The applied perspective is shared by researchers in education and health studies who stress the usefulness of visual methods in assessing physical activity and dietary intake, particularly among minority women with unique challenges related to gender, ethnicity and social context.²⁰ The authors argue that measures that are not culturally relevant or sensitive to the experiences, traditions or beliefs of ethnically diverse women might result in data that are

¹⁷ Erica Cavin, "In search of the viewfinder: A study of a child's perspective," *Visual Studies*, 9, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 27–41.

¹⁸ Phil Mizen, "A little 'light work'? Children's images of their labour," *Visual Studies*, 20, no. 2, (2005): 12–139.

¹⁹ Marjorie Faulstich Orellana, "Space and Place in an Urban Landscape: Learning from Children's Views of Their Social Worlds," *Visual Studies*, 14, no. 1, (1999): 73–89.

²⁰ Colleen Keller, Julie Fleury, Adriana Perez, Barbara Ainsworth, and Linda Vaughan, "Using Visual Methods to Uncover Context," *Qualitative Health Research* 18, no. 3, (2008): 428–436.

unreliable, or which cannot be interpreted. Thus, the visual data facilitate the gender sensitive process of refining measures of health in diverse ethnic groups.

Few researchers have focused exclusively on men's health or illness experiences. John Oliffe and Joan Bottorff²¹ discuss the benefits of using photo elicitation among prostate cancer survivors in a large ethnographic study. Specifically, participants were asked to imagine that they were being paid to mount a photographic exhibition that would show prostate cancer from their unique perspective. The researchers subsequently discussed the photographs with the participants during individual interviews using photo elicitation techniques.

Mapping is another visual technique used in social work and health research. It is also employed in practical work and can be applicable in training.

Some initial ideas:

- Mapping of various social services of a district or a town is one possible group assignment; it may take several days to complete. Such a map can be drawn using a city map and information from local social services and non-governmental organisations.
- Another idea would be to draw cognitive maps of social-geographical spaces (maps of leisure space, family space, favourite paths, etc.). Students would compile the maps in class, gaining insights into cognitive mapping. Students would also interview each other about the maps.
- Mapping was applied in an exploratory study of receipt of psycho-social services within the health and mental health sectors among a small sample (N = 56) of pregnant and parenting teens.²² Utilising conceptual frameworks of barriers to service and potential spatial accessibility, this study demonstrated how mapping could contribute to analysing such issues as access to care. Geographic Information System (GIS) maps depicted the variation in census tract proximity to services, with those youths in greatest need typically residing in tracts isolated from service providers.

²¹ John L. Oliffe and Joan L. Bottorff, "Further Than the Eye Can See? Photo Elicitation and Research with Men," *Qualitative Health Research*, 17, no. 6, (2007): 850–858.

²² Meekyung Han and Susan Stone, "Access to Psycho-Social Services Among Pregnant and Parenting Teens: Generating Questions Using Youth Reports and GIS Mapping Techniques," *Child Youth Care Forum* 36, (2007): 213–224.

We have used the mapping technique in classes on social work practice to discuss issues of access to various kinds of services among people with disabilities and other social groups. The technique was more effective when we asked the students to make photographs of accessible or inaccessible environments and attach these to the map.

Animation is another visual technique that may be used both in classes and in practical social work. It can be done in several ways, using toys, paper dolls with replaceable parts imitating movement and different emotions (eyes, mouth and legs), and cartoons.²³ A simple method is animation using toys.

Some initial ideas:

- This is group work that can be done simultaneously in two small groups with around 5-6 people in each. Assign a topic for animation, which could be, for instance, “The future of social work”. You will need a collection of small toys and two video cameras with a frame record function. The cameras can be used to make still frame animation. The toys and other objects are moved to slightly different positions after each shot; they appear to be moving in the film. Instruct the participants on how to use the video cameras. The groups should then start discussing the scenario, selecting three of four toys as the characters and establishing a background for the shooting. They should run through the whole script, prepare necessary titles by writing or printing them on a sheet of paper and then start the film. In this case assembling is not needed; the product will usually be a very short animation film, which can be shown right at the end of the class.

²³ See instructions for producing animated cartoons, for example here: <http://www.cartoonster.com>; <http://www.instructables.com/id/Easy%2c-Cheap%2c-Animated-Cartoon-in-10-Minutes/>



Figure 4. Shooting an animation film in Saratov, Russia

In our classes on Creative Subjects in Social Work we use this technique every year and our students find it very inspiring (Figure 4). Some of our students are taking classes in International Technology or Advertising, which makes them skilful enough to create more elaborate animations. Short professional animation films aimed at changing social attitudes have been used effectively in a project by Leonard Cheshire Disability, which campaigns to change the way people think about, and respond to, disability.²⁴

We can also refer here to participatory visual methods used in medical anthropology and other disciplines: for example, studies of patients that inform physicians using visual narratives²⁵ and the use of visual methods in HIV/AIDS activism in southern Africa.²⁶

²⁴ See Leonard Cheshire Disability <http://www.creaturediscomforts.org/>

²⁵ Richard Chalfen and Michael Rich, "Combining the Applied, the Visual and the Medical: Patients Teaching Physicians with Visual Narratives," in *Visual Interventions*, ed. Sarah Pink (Oxford – New York: Berghahn, 2007), 53–70.

²⁶ Susan Levine, "Steps for the Future: HIV / AIDS, Media Activism and Applied Visual Anthropology in Southern Africa," *Visual Interventions*, ed. Sarah Pink (Oxford: Berghahn, 2007): 71–90; Claudia Mitchell, Naydene De-Lange, Relebohile Moletsane, Jean Stuart, and Thabisile Buthelezi, "Giving a face to HIV and AIDS: on the uses of photo-voice by teachers and community health care workers working with youth in rural South Africa," *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 2, no. 3, (2005): 257–270.

Some authors employ visual participatory methods in a feminist approach that leads from women's photography and interviews to a community education and action component. For example, Lisa Frohman²⁷ from Illinois-Chicago describes the Framing Safety Project that she developed in order to do collaborative, community action/education research with battered women about the meaning of safety in their lives. The project was built on the use of participant-generated photographs and photo-elicitation interviews as methods for exploring with Mexican and South Asian immigrant women, in support group settings, the meanings of violence in their lives and their approaches to creating safer spaces.

Ana Martinez Perez²⁸ conducted a project within the framework of applied and visual anthropology and in a way that reflected the social worker's objectives. She calls it an alternative form of social work practice through "participation in marginalized urban areas and producing the documentary to raise awareness and promote empathy amongst the wider population which has no contact with this social reality".²⁹ "The documentary script represents the analytical and interventional objects and consisted of a series of blocks: the introduction outlines the causes of exclusion – why it exists, macro/micro, institutional and personal reasons; the second part addresses the audience directly through individual characters from marginalised areas: from those who have work and are 'normalised', those who are in the process, to those who have extreme difficulties; the third part proposes possible alternatives to exclusion".³⁰

²⁷ Lisa Frohmann, "The Framing Safety Project. Photographs and Narratives by Battered Women," *Violence Against Women*, 11, no. 11, (2005): 1396–1419

²⁸ Ana Martinez Perez, "The Rhythm of Our Dreams: A Proposal for an Applied Visual Anthropology," *Visual Interventions*, Sarah Pink, ed. (Oxford, New York: Berghahn, 2007): 227–246

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 231.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 235–236.

Visual intervention: research for social change

Recently there has been growing interest in action participatory research projects that include photography or film techniques.³¹

A bright example of visual participatory action research is provided in the work of Claudia Mitchell from South Africa,³² which is based on the idea of “photo voice” in educational participatory research.³³

As Mitchell suggests, visual studies – the use of photography, drawings, video documentary, visual mapping and so on – opens up the possibility for accessible viewing spaces. An exhibition resulting from a participatory visual project would work in a petrol station or community centre, and in so doing invite any viewer to comment, to imagine and to “access” a mode of inquiry.³⁴

An **example** is a study in Swaziland of sexual violence in and around schools. Seventh-grade students in a rural school, “armed” with cameras, took pictures of what they saw as being “safe” and “unsafe” spaces. Their teachers, when they saw the exhibition, were surprised at how frequently toilets appeared. They commented that they had not thought about the ways in which the apparent isolation of the toilets actually made them dangerous for girls. When this same exhibition was shown to UNICEF workers, they too were surprised but began to explore ways of incorporating into their work on the physical environment of the school, attention to sexual violence, an area that had previously only be part of the Child Protection Unit. New alliances were formed. The visual in these instances serves as both a “voicing” technique and a means of change the space.

In a project in the Free State, students were asked to “draw gender violence”. A video documentary, *Unwanted Images: Addressing Gender-based Violence in the New South Africa*,³⁵ was produced. It has been used with many audiences to raise awareness about the extent of school-based violence from a students’ point of view.

³¹ See for instance: Lykes, 2001, Wang, 1999, see also International Visual Methodology for Social Change Project at http://www.ivmproject.ca/resource_bibliography.php.

³² Claudia Mitchell, “Visual Studies and Democratic Spaces: Textual Evidence and Educational Research. Opening of Photography Exhibition,” *The Role of Education in a Decade of Democracy Conference* (Johannesburg, May 13-14, 2004): www.ivmproject.ca/images/photo_voice/KZN.pdf

³³ Caroline C. Wang and Yanique A. Redwood-Jones, “Photovoice Ethics,” *Health Education and Behavior* (Volume 28, Issue 5, 2001): 560-572; M. Brinton Lykes, *Creative Arts and Photography in Participatory Action Research in Guatemala*, *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*, eds. Peter Reason and Hilary Bradbury (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2001): 363–371.

³⁴ Mitchell, 2004.

³⁵ Source: *ibid.*

Social work educators may develop their own videos depicting their own and their students' unique experiences, using an interdisciplinary, collaborative and problem-based approach. Caroline R. Gelman and Carol Tosone³⁶ analyse the creation of a student-centred, reality-based training video undertaken by students and faculty. There are several key and innovative aspects to this video. It was a collaborative effort between faculty and students of two schools: social work students play themselves and students and affiliates of the school of the arts played clients and were responsible for all technical aspects of the video. The script was based on real social work student process recordings, while client-worker interactions were followed by a supervisory session, underscoring the importance of feedback for learning. The video is described in their article, "Why Am I Here? Engaging the Reluctant Client". It may be obtained through the CSWE website at www.cswe.org.

Another example of a jointly created teaching aid is the audio-visual project "Learning from the Voices of Experience". The project was undertaken by academic staff, who worked with medical/social work students, service users and carers to create audio visual material suitable for teaching purposes in health, medicine and social work.³⁷ It has been developed by the Institute of Health at Warwick University and funded by the Education Innovation Fund. The aim is to make the voices and experiences of users and carers more central to health and social care teaching.

By representing social work practices in a certain location, teaching aids like the collaborative film present a model for intervention that may also function in other contexts of social exclusion.³⁸ Further potential uses of video teaching resources relating to social work with families are outlined by Ellis and Garland:³⁹

³⁶ Caroline Rosenthal Gelman and Carol Tosone, "Making It Real: Enhancing Curriculum Delivery Through the Use of Student-Generated Training Videos," *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 24, no. 1, (2006): 37-52

³⁷ Gillian Hundt, Loraine Blaxter, Clare Blackburn, Ann Jackson, Claudette Bryanston, and Denise Tanner, "Learning from the Voices of Experience - Increasing the centrality of 'voices of experience' in teaching and learning," Education Innovation Fund - Audio-Visual Project (Warwick, 2008) available at: International Visual Methodology for Social Change Project http://www.ivmproject.ca/resource_bibliography.php

³⁸ Ana Martinez Perez, "The Rhythm of Our Dreams: A Proposal for an Applied Visual Anthropology," *Visual Interventions*, Sarah Pink, ed. (Oxford - New York: Berghahn, 2007): 234.

³⁹ Gwen Ellis and Mike Garland, "The making of 'Home Improvements' - tools for working with families in Aotearoa/ New Zealand". Reflections on creating a video resource for teaching purposes," *Social Work Education*, 19, no. 4, (2000): 403-408.

- learning and teaching about family work skills and techniques;
- preparing social work students for fieldwork placements in agencies that work with families;
- providing a basis for discussion in supervision;
- developing staff in the form of a refresher course or where a practitioner is new to family work or changing his or her role in an organisation;
- showing potentially anxious families what to expect in family counselling; and
- offering a means of understanding the powerful influence of family dynamics when working with family sub-systems and/or individuals.

Audiences evidently differ in terms of how they capture the content and in their ability to criticise what they have seen. Some do so from an elementary level, focusing mostly on content and the narrative story of the family, while others add to this an ability to critique the process and skills demonstrated, based on their own models of practice. Ellis and Garland⁴⁰ describe working with the teaching material, thereby giving us some tips on the teaching process:

This lesson was conducted with final year students. An instructor has shown the material twice. On the first showing, students were asked to critique the video. Some responded to this task by saying what was wrong with the demonstrated practice, while others were able to identify and name skills, but to varying degrees without an informed basis for the critique. On the second showing, students were asked to consider how implementing a different model of practice would change the questions asked and skills utilised. This promoted engagement with the video material on a different and deeper level. It also enabled these final year students, who were consolidating their own model of practice, to extend their understanding of systemic and narrative approaches to family work if these are their preferred approaches, or to compare and contrast these approaches with another model, for example a cognitive-behavioural approach.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

Visual methods for social reforms: documentary photography

The tradition of making systematic observations of social problems, particularly poverty, is rooted in the history of social work. Some of the results of work by Jane Addams and her colleagues at Hull House describing the living conditions of poor migrants in Chicago were put into graphic form.⁴¹ The collection of materials on Hull House, the first settlement house in the United States, contains detailed documents on the life and work of social workers and their clients, including photographs.⁴² A British philanthropist Charles Booth conducted a sixteen-month project in which he made maps about poverty in nineteenth-century London and conducted a survey of life and labour in London (1886–1903).⁴³

An important visual turn of analysis of social problems, aimed at promoting social change through the articulation of public concern, occurred when professional photographers and photojournalists engaged themselves in documenting social issues. Photography's capacity to provide unique sources of evidence in the social field is well known. The following are some of the leading figures in the history of social photography.

The American photographer Jacob Riis (1849–1914) is an important figure in the history of social welfare and social work. Riis was born in Denmark in 1849. His family was poor and he emigrated to America at the age of 21. He spent many years desperately trying to evade poverty. In 1877, he took a position as a reporter for the *New York Tribune*. Instead of photographing the beautiful landmarks and historical buildings of New York City, he chose to make honest photography, producing astonishing and profound images of life in the immigrant ghettos. He became a very public figure in the United States. A friend of Theodore Roosevelt, Riis was able to make a significant contribution to social work. He was responsible, directly or indirectly, for changes in the tenement housing of New York.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Agnes Sinclair Holbrook, "Map Notes and Comments," Hull-House Maps and Papers: A Presentation of Nationalities and Wages in a Congested District of Chicago, Together with Comments and Essays on Problems Growing Out of the Social Conditions (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1895): 3–23, available at: Urban experience in Chicago: Hull-house and its neighborhoods <http://www.uic.edu/jaddams/hull/urbanexp>

⁴² See Urban experience in Chicago: Hull-house and its neighborhoods: <http://www.uic.edu/jaddams/hull/urbanexp/>

⁴³ See Charles Booth Online Archive <http://booth.lse.ac.uk/>

⁴⁴ Jennifer R. Graham, "Jacob Riis. The Photographer as a Social Reformer," Suite (101.com Aug 19, 2008): http://historicalbiographies.suite101.com/article.cfm/jacob_riis

In the early twentieth century, photography began to play a significant role in the work of intellectuals and social reformers in the United States, where technology has been a significant social factor. We should note an initiative by Paul Kellogg, who published the journal *Survey Graphic* from 1921. This illustrated periodical published articles on important social issues; visual representations, according to Kellogg, were to engage the attention of a wide audience and to make professional information suitable for public consumption. He was very much inspired by the following idea: “The keynote of the thing (. . .) is interpretation and we are going to employ photographs, etchings, drawings and text of a sort which we hope will get a new hearing for the big human concerns which lie underneath all this technical discussion of social problems.”⁴⁵

A photographer who debuted in this journal was Lewis Hine (1874–1940). Hine studied sociology at the University of Chicago. For several years he taught sociology at the Ethical Culture School in New York City, where he encouraged students to use photography in research. He worked for *The Survey* in 1906–1908, where he specialised on documenting the lives of industrial workers; he gradually switched from teaching to photojournalism. Over the next decade, Hine worked closely with organisations lobbying for social reforms; he was particularly involved in efforts by the National Child Labor Committee to end child labour in American industry. His photographs of working kids are famous throughout the world. He also took part in documenting the work of Hull House in Chicago.

Until its final issue in 1952, *Survey Graphic* was a pioneer in debates on the acute social issues of American society. In the 1930s, a great visual contribution to efforts to document the Great Depression was made by the photojournalism of Dorothea Lange, Walker Evans and Russell Lee, who portrayed the living conditions of poor farmers during the economic crisis. In the 1940s, in addition to its extensive coverage of the war, *Survey Graphic* made the issue of race visible in two highly regarded special issues: “Color: The Unfinished Business of Democracy” (1942) and “Segregation: Color Pattern From the Past — Our Struggle to Wipe it Out” (1947).⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Kellogg, cited in: Cara Finnegan Social Welfare and Visual Politics: The Story of Survey Graphic, available at <http://newdeal.feri.org/sg/essay01.htm>

⁴⁶ Ibid.

One of the few women among the famous documentary photographers was Dorothea Lange (1895–1965). She became a very influential photo-journalist after her series on the tragic consequences of the Great Depression. She photographed the poor, displaced farming families and migrant workers. Although she suffered from polio and was partially immobilised, Dorothea Lange left a successful portrait studio in San Francisco in order to work for the Farm Security Administration. Her task was to document social upheaval and to record quiet suffering with a compassionate eye. She said that people trusted her because she did not appear “whole and secure” in the face of their poverty and insecurity (Abbey)*. She later reflected upon the philosophy of her work: “I had to get my camera to register things that were more important than how poor they were — their pride, their strength, their spirit.”⁴⁷

The task of photojournalists – which differs from that of social workers and therapists – is mainly to inform, interpret and report on social issues, rather than to help directly. Documentary photography can bring attention to underreported social issues, reveal human rights violations and exploitation, and inspire understanding and compassion with their images, thereby opening paths to change and reform. A contemporary initiative, the Documentary Photography Project, receives support from the Soros Foundation. Through its exhibitions, workshops, grants and public programs, the project explores how photography can shape public perception and effect social change. A major part of the Documentary Photography Project is the Moving Walls exhibition series. Launched in 1998, the exhibition series has provided an artistic interpretation of such obstacles as political oppression, economic instability and racism, as well as the struggles of people to tear such barriers down. The thematic collections include:

- **Moving Walls 10** at <http://www.soros.org/initiatives/photography/movingwalls/10>
- **The Fire Within.** John Ranard’s images of injection drug users in Russia and Ukraine, many of whom are teenagers, give attention to the burgeoning HIV epidemic in the region.

* Susannah Abbey, Artist Hero: Dorothea Lange, available at: <http://www.myhero.com>

⁴⁷ Ibid.

- A Procession of Them. Eugene Richards shows us the cruelty and mistreatment that people with intellectual, psychological or developmental disabilities suffer in public psychiatric institutions.
- **Dads.** Stephen Shames counters the stereotype of low-income fathers as deadbeat dads. Enrolled in parenting programs that provide them with job skills and self-esteem, the men in his photographs play an active role in their children's lives.
- **Moving Walls 12** at <http://www.soros.org/initiatives/photography/movingwalls/12>
- **Sharing Secrets: Children's Portraits Exposing Stigma.** Donna DeCesare's portraits document the lives of Central American and Colombian children living with AIDS, surviving as sex workers or struggling with the scars of war. They carry a burden of fear and stigma that leaves them seeking a safe environment in which they can share their secrets.
- **Survivors: Domestic Violence in South Africa.** Using powerful attention to detail, Jodi Bieber's triptychs are a grim portrayal of the scenes, weapons, and faces of domestic abuse. But beyond the testimonies of South African women who survived years of beatings by their partners, the pictures tell of a culture of violence against women — one that persists in South Africa and across the world.

Photographers clearly face ethical pitfalls when documenting stories about communities or individuals who have been through traumatic experiences. In studio photography, a particular challenge is taking family photos of special children. Children with disabilities and their families often face prejudice and hostility in society. A non-profit organisation Special Kids Photography of America⁴⁸ strengthens these families' self-esteem through training professional photographers in the art of photographing children with special needs and severe disabilities, including autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy and many other conditions.

⁴⁸ www.special-kids-photography.com

We were inspired by this idea and recently arranged for such a photo session at the Saratov Rehab Centre for children with disabilities (Figure 5). It was a real challenge both for the parents and children, as well as for us, a photographer, staff and students who volunteer in our project. One boy who recently underwent facial surgery was shy but soon became engaged playing an Indian chief, and other children and parents were inspired and relaxed as they posed for the photographer. All participants received gifts – beautiful portraits of themselves.



Figure 5. An image from a photo session with special kids at Saratov Rehab Centre (Photographer Alexei Leontiev)

By displaying beautiful portraits of children with special needs and disabilities in public places, we let the world know that they are just like other children – precious and perfect.

Visual techniques in therapy

In child psychology children's drawings are widely used for diagnosing and treating trauma. The use of images in social work –photographs, drawings or video –is important in order to facilitate discussion and for re-framing techniques.

Ephrat Huss and Julie Cwikel⁴⁹ demonstrate how marginalised Bedouin single mothers define pain through depictions of their bodies and their embodied experiences. The potential of drawing as an indirect but deeply communicative symbolic vehicle, which can be used to express the women's pain and struggle as marginalized and impoverished women, was demonstrated in the themes that emerged from a content analysis of the women's art and their verbal comments. A central theme was the identification of pain derived from painful life circumstances rather than due to inherent sickness or weakness. Other themes included the body as a site for cultural transition, power negotiations with men, intellectual development and the struggles of motherhood.

In the 1970s, several phototherapy⁵⁰ approaches were experimented with. Three women are prominent figures in this field. Judy Weiser is a famous psychologist, art therapist, consultant and trainer in Canada. Her PhotoTherapy techniques⁵¹ use personal snapshots and family photos (and interactions among these) as non-verbal tools to assist therapeutic communication and personal healing, to help clients bridge into feelings and memories in ways that words alone cannot. In PhotoTherapy-based counselling sessions, photos are taken, viewed, posed for, actively reconstructed or “sculpted”, worked with in memory or imagination, or even explored through interacting with photographs taken by others. This work is about “photography as symbolic communication”, rather than “photography as art”. Using these techniques requires no prior familiarity or experience with cameras or photographic art and is extremely “user-friendly” for the client.⁵²

⁴⁹ Ephrat Huss and Julie Cwikel, “Embodied drawings as expressions of distress among impoverished single Bedouin mothers Arch,” *Women's Mental Health*, 11, (2008): 137–147.

⁵⁰ Not to be confused with phototherapy as a medical treatment.

⁵¹ Judy Weiser, *PhotoTherapy Techniques: Exploring the Secrets of Personal Snapshots and Family Albums*, 2nd Edition. (Vancouver: PhotoTherapy Centre Press, 1999).

⁵² See www.phototherapy-centre.com

Jo Spence (1934 – 1992) was a British photographer who began documentary work in the early 1970s, motivated by her political concerns as a socialist and feminist. “A Picture of Health?” was an exhibition in which Jo Spence responds to her disease and treatment through photography, channelling her research and feelings about breast cancer and orthodox medicine into an exhibition. The representation of the body, particularly the female form in sickness and health, was of special concern to Jo, as both a patient and a feminist. In the words of Jo Spence, phototherapy is:

using photography to heal ourselves. Phototherapy should be seen within the broader framework of psychoanalysis and its application to the photography of family life, but should always take account of the possibility of ACTIVE CHANGE. We drew upon techniques learned together from co-counselling, psychodrama, and a technique called ‘reframing’. We have found ways of having a dialogue with ourselves about the conflicts and constraints of marriage, or of health, education, aging, class economics and oppression for us as women, and working ‘against the grain’ around dominant definitions of sexuality and love. The whole technique depends upon expecting photographs to help us to ask questions, rather than supplying answers. Using this framework for photography it is possible to transform our imaginary view of the world, whilst working towards trying to change it socially and economically.⁵³

Rosy Martin is a British artist, photographer, writer, lecturer, workshop leader and therapist, and a colleague of Jo Spence since 1983. As a phototherapist she works to extend the range of potential meanings that lie within notions of domestic photography and to explore the relationships between photography, memory, identities and unconscious processes. Themes which she has explored in exhibitions and articles include: gender, sexuality, ageing, class, desire, memory, location, urbanism, shame, family dynamics, power/powerlessness, health and disease, bereavement, grief, loss and reparation.⁵⁴

⁵³ Jo Spence, available at Sparerib No. 163 February 1986, available at hosted.aware.easynet.co.uk/jospence/jotext2.htm

⁵⁴ See Rosy Martin, “Phototherapy: The School Photograph (Happy Days Are Here Again),” *Photography/ politics: Two*, ed. Patricia Holland, Jo Spence and Simon Watney (London: Comedia Photography Workshop, 1986): 40-42.

The Five Techniques of Photo Therapy by Judy Weiser

Each of the five techniques is directly related to the various relationships possible between person and camera (or person and photograph) although in practice, these categories often naturally overlap:

- 1) Photos which have been taken or created *by* the client (whether actually using a camera to make the picture, or “taking” (appropriating) other people’s images through gathering “found” photos from magazines, postcards, Internet images, digital manipulation, and so forth),
- 2) Photos which have been taken *of* the client by other people (whether posed on purpose or taken spontaneously while the person was unaware of being photographed -- but where people other than the client have made all the decisions about timing, content, location, and so forth),
- 3) Self-portraits, which means any kind of photos that clients have made of *themselves*, either literally or metaphorically (but where in all cases they themselves had total control and power over *all* aspects of the image’s creation),
- 4) Family album and other photo-biographical collections (whether of birth family or family of choice; whether formally kept in albums or more “loosely” combined into narratives by placement on walls or refrigerator doors, inside wallets or desktop frames, into computer screens or family websites, and so forth -- which were put together for the purpose of documenting the personal narrative of the client’s life and the background from which they developed. Such albums have a “life” apart from, and far beyond, the individual images which comprise them; and, finally...
- 5) “Photo-projectives” technique, which is based on the fact that the meaning of any photo is primarily created by its viewer *during* their process of viewing it (or taking or even just planning it). What is the story behind each of these pictures below? Why was it taken? What thoughts, feelings, or memories come to mind in response to seeing it? What might its voice say or ask if it could speak? What message, secret, or information might it hold? What does it remind you of in your own life?

The most effective application of these techniques will occur when they are creatively combined -- because they comprise an integrally interconnected system that is far more useful as a holistic system, than in any linear summation of its parts.⁵⁵

There are important distinctions between these approaches: "Photo-Therapy is used by therapists in their work helping others, while Therapeutic Photography is done by individuals *by and for themselves* in non-therapy settings for the purpose of their own personal growth and insight, creative artistic statement, as an agent of personal/political/social change or community-strengthening -- or even more broadly when using the camera for the purpose of qualitative research or as part of organized community-based research projects (such as "PhotoVoice"). These practices are not opposites -- they are different ways of using emotional information that has been unconsciously embedded in people's personal snapshots."⁵⁶

Conclusion

The reading of visual data as cultural texts enhances students' understanding of such issues as social order, gender roles and inequalities. Pictorial constructs of normality and social problems are characteristic of certain historical periods; visual evidence may illuminate social issues of the past as well as contemporary society. The interpretation of visual texts may serve to highlight peculiarities in social relations and individual experience and offers a new understanding of the visual within a culture and a society. We have outlined the historical and interpretive frameworks of such methods as photography and video. We have also provided maps that can be used in social work training and research and in the practice of intervention and lobbying for social reform. In developing the visual component of social work training, we cross the fields of cultural studies, anthropology, communication and media studies, film, art, design, psychology, sociology and education. The application of visual methods in social work teaching combines practical and technical elements as well as reflexive and theoretically-driven aspects. Participatory visual methodology serves to amplify the voices of silenced groups, while offering opportunities for community education and social action.

⁵⁵ Source: Weiser, 1999 available at <http://www.phototherapy-centre.com>

⁵⁶ *ibid.*

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PART II – TEACHING WITH HISTORY: USING THE PAST TO REFLECT THE PRESENT

Teaching on the Body and Violence Against Women

Vesna Leskošek

Abstract

The article focuses on two important concepts in social work education, gender and history. More precisely it explores what happened to women's bodies in history and what are the impacts on the current status of women. Women's bodies were exposed to different kinds of violence, including trading, trafficking, forced marriages and mass murders. Their sexuality was controlled and punished inside and outside heterosexual marriage. It is important to explore these practices from a historical perspective and to reflect upon the present status of women by examining their past experiences, because history is a part of memory and thus of the mentalities and social processes of current times. The question is how the unconscious, the desire and the identity of women have been affected by punishment, forced and violent deaths, reification by way of selling and buying, slavery and the related forced sexuality. The answers certainly do not seem clear. In order to discover them, one should pursue and examine the theory and policy of the body, the related discourse and the consequences for the everyday lives of women. The case study relates to Slovenian history, but similar historical evidence can be found throughout Europe. There are also some teaching tips and instructions in the article; they show how history can be used in education.

It is important for social work education to incorporate the historical dimension of the social processes and human mentalities that frame people's lives. When teaching social work, there is a need for reawakening the memory of certain social facts and events that have contributed to the establishment of women's social roles and positions in society. Women have diverse roles in social work. They are educators, researchers, service providers and service users, although the first two categories are often ignored. Joan Wallach Scott¹ claims that overlooking the female share in human history helps to sustain the belief that sexual differences are of natural origin, which in time affects

¹ Joan Scott Wallach, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

knowledge of sexual differences and the relationship between men and women. Such knowledge is not absolute but relative and it is created within various epistemological frameworks, which vary according to time and place. It refers to ideas, institutions, structures, everyday practices, rituals and traditions, which together create social relationships. Michelle Perrot² connects this with identity practices, which mould the lives of people at the present time. Due to a lack of their own history and their omission from the past, women must identify themselves with prescriptions regarding their identity rather than with who they really are. In this sense, history is identity, as it offers much data and evidence concerning people's real lives, capabilities, abilities and powers. To deny the significance of women's public actions is to deny their image reflected in their action. The consequences of this are not just that women have to look repeatedly for their own social position; they go much deeper. They imply the establishment of a false impression of time, with events being described as if they never happened, which establishes a hierarchy of events and actors.

This all means that teaching the female past can only be done within an inclusive educational framework, which relates not only to women but also to all groups that society has excluded from history with a view to maintaining the desired images of them.³

In the article we focus on various forms and manifestations of violence against women in history. These cases have been taken from Slovenian history, but similar descriptions can be found elsewhere.⁴ We shall offer some tips and case studies that can be used in classes addressing women's bodies or violence.

Women's Bodies and Bodily Practices

The social identity of women has long been conditional upon the cultural perception of their bodies. That is why the body has featured prominently in the feminist debate throughout the Second Wave of Feminism, whilst individual arguments about the body can also be found in texts written during the First

² Michelle Perrot, ed., *Writing Women's History* (Oxford, Cambridge: Blackwell, 1984).

³ Andrea Petö and Berteke Walldijk, *Teaching with Memories: European Women's History in International and Interdisciplinary Classrooms* (Galway: Women's Studies Centre, 2006).

⁴ To name just a few of them: Five volumes of the book *A History of Women*, edited by Georges Duby, Michelle Perrot (Cambridge: The Belknap Press, 1992). Leila J. Rupp, *Worlds of Women: The Making of an International Women's Movement* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997).

Wave of Feminism. Reclaiming the power to control and manage one's body is a theme that features prominently within both women's activist groups and feminist theory. The history of women is a story about their bodies, for they have long been regarded as nothing more than mere bodies.⁵ Women must begin to speak about their bodies themselves, thereby changing longstanding beliefs. They can do so with the help of sexual difference theories, which are aimed at deconstructing or "undermining the idea of the 'natural' cornerstones of socially encoded differences, the system of values and representations".⁶

It is important to determine how the body is affected by social relations, processes and institutions, as physicality derives from social phenomena. Foucault's analysis of discipline, punishment, insanity and sexuality reveals that power is inherent in the discourses that construct human embodiment. Foucault described his work as constituting a history of bodies, central to which is a mapping of the body and the effects of power upon it. His theory of knowledge suggests that the body is constructed through various discourses; it ceases to exist beyond the discursive, disappearing as a material phenomenon.⁷ Human physicality can never be fully defined, as the body is constantly deferred behind a grip of previously existing meanings which have been imposed by various discursive practices. The relationship between the mind and the body determines the manner in which the body is contained within modern disciplinary systems, with the mind consequently taking over as the location for discursive power.

Braidotti distinguishes between the gender discourse and the sexual difference discourse. Gender theoreticians focus predominantly on how gender is influenced by cultural and social processes, whilst the sexual difference discourse involves the unconscious or the desire and identification. Historically, the relation between the genders has been dominated by power relations. These have determined the social position of the genders throughout time, with women experiencing the impact of such disqualifications in their physical existence. Regardless of whether one believes in a pre-social body which is free of any meaning and available for the recognition of its true nature, or rather maintains that such essentialist approaches can only form part of the prevailing discourses about women, the basic convictions about sexual difference or the

⁵ Catherine Fouquet, "The Unavoidable Detour: Must a History of Women Begin with the History of Their Bodies?" in *Writing Women's History*, ed. Michelle Perott (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), 51–61.

⁶ Rosi Braidotti, "Koncept spolne razlike" (Concept of sexual difference). *Delta* vol. 4, no. 2-3, (1998), 59–71.

⁷ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: the Birth of the Prison* (New York: Random House, 1975).

construction of femininity and masculinity remain similar. They are defined by power relations, which legitimise inequalities by declaring the established criteria of masculinity as universal and those of femininity as both partial and simply inferior. To deconstruct these differences, to follow the discourse through history and to reflect upon the meanings and differences in everyday life, means to contribute to an overall response which is capable of eroding the power of such universalism. However, this is only possible by intervening in history, during which the differences were created. What is involved here is simply a struggle or, to put it more accurately, a right to interpretation, which is only possible by sustaining historical memory.

Bodily Practices in Slovenian History

The public debate about a woman's nature and her position in both private and public spheres in Slovenia stretches back to the 1830s, that is, to the time before the Spring of Nations. At the time a small number of Slovenian female intellectuals were acquiring and maintaining knowledge behind the walls of monasteries or castles. Their efforts were often associated with the knowledge mediated by church institutions, but they were not limited to this.⁸ The discourse about women's nature goes back several centuries, its development roughly corresponding with developments in the Catholic Church. When studying historical sources, one notices that such debates intensified each time women entered the public sphere. On such occasions, they were often accompanied by some form of cruel punishment, the aim of which was mainly to intimidate and discipline.

Generally speaking, women's bodies were exposed to various forms of physical violence and torture throughout history. Domestic violence was part of normality, and a certain amount of it was regarded as a matter of course and even beneficial for both woman and children.⁹ Instead of addressing the problem of the violence itself, survival strategies were aimed largely at searching for the ways of avoiding it. Moreover, the ability to inflict physical punishment was considered as part of masculinity. If a man did not beat his wife and children, he was considered to be a wretch and a weakling.¹⁰

⁸ Lenard Leonard, *Slovenska žena v dobi narodnega preporoda*. (Slovene Women in Times of National Revival) (Maribor: Družba sv. Cirila in Metoda, 1922).

⁹ Alenka Puhar, *Prvotno besedilo življenja*. (Primary Text of Life) (Zagreb: Globus, 1982), 156.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

Toleration of domestic violence was, among other things, also a consequence of the message delivered by public punishments. Public punishments imposed on women were even stricter than those undergone by men, as the violation of the law was considered even less proper for women than for men. Non-compliance with the rules of womanhood was an act far graver than the violation itself.

Throughout history, many attempts have been made to construct femininity. Women were chained to their homes by various rituals, customs and traditions, proverbs and other messages which, amongst other channels, were mainly handed down from mother to daughter and acted as unwritten laws which must be complied with. If one turns to less recent history, one will find two early Slavic customs which symbolically relate to submission. These are the death of the wife along with the death of her husband and hair-cutting for boys.¹¹ Both actions have a ritual character and represent codified, recurring acts involving both a symbolic meaning and an actual function. There is nothing known about how these rituals functioned, what they meant and what their consequences or effects were, as their meaning is explained neither in ethnological nor in anthropological studies, therefore one can only speculate about such questions. This is particularly true of the *wife's ritual death*. In various cultures, such burials were associated with the husband's possessions which, at the time of his death, were placed in his tomb. The same was also true of Slavic burials that were linked to the patriarchal order. The patriarchal order devalues woman in mental and spiritual and physical terms. It claims that a woman is intellectually and emotionally inferior, physically weaker and, therefore, fully dependent. The only function determining her value is her reproductive capability, which becomes the real object of possession. Possession of a womb and, at the same time, prohibition of sexual intercourse with other men ensured the clear identity of the children who, at the time of transition to individual economy, had already assumed the role of successors. In this context, woman means nothing more than a means of reproduction. Her womb is only a "flower pot"¹² into which a man's seed is planted, with the latter being the sole agent of making a child. This flower pot or vessel is buried together with

¹¹ Lenard Leonard, *Slovenska žena v dobi narodnega preporoda*. (Slovene Women in Times of National Revival) (Maribor: Družba sv. Cirila in Metoda, 1922). Sergej Vilfan, *Pravna zgodovina Slovencev*. (The Legal History of Slovenes) (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 1961). Meta Sluga, ed. *Zgodovina Slovencev*. (The History of Slovenes) (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva Založba, 1979).

¹² Barbara Katz Rothman, *Recreating Motherhood. Ideology and Technology in a Patriarchal Society*. (London: W.W. Norton&Company, 1989).

the other personal possessions in a joint grave, thereby preventing it from being available to anybody else. Rothman¹³ concludes that today a similar process of alienation of the womb is a result of modern medical technologies. Medicine establishes a direct connection with the embryo, observing and examining it and either facilitating its creation or not.

Hair-cutting was a pagan initiation ritual for boys. At a certain age, a boy's hair was ritually cut. By undergoing this ritual, a boy was accepted as a full family member, as a future independent person. In case of girls who, in their youth, were under guardianship of parents and, after having been married, under the power of her husband, no ritual hair-cutting was performed.¹⁴ Accordingly, girls were never accepted as full family members and were therefore not regarded as independent. Hair was a significant element of personal identity, representing a constituent part of both masculinity and femininity. It symbolised the independence and freedom of men on the one hand, and the dependence and lack of freedom of women, on the other. At the same time, the hair implied a tie with home and honour for women, and distance from home and increased freedom of movement for men. After Christianisation, long hair was considered to be shameful for men. As regards women, long hair arranged in braids and fastened tightly to the scalp symbolises sexual abstinence. Throughout history and until the present day, hair in general is used as a means of expressing personal identity and various ideologies. In theoretical terms, it is of extreme importance for general theories of the body and of symbolism.¹⁵

Instructions for group discussion in the class

1. Use a Synnott article "Shame and Glory: A Sociology of Hair" – students should read it in advance. Divide the class in small groups and give them instruction for discussion (20 minutes) in which they should focus on:
 - The meaning of the length of hair – is there still a resistance towards women's short hair or men's long hair; what is the reaction to women that shave their hair;
 - Hair colour – are there any beliefs still present concerning red-haired women or men, what is the current image of blond hair among women, are there any parallels to the blond hair of men;

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Lenard, 1922.

¹⁵ Anthony Synnott, "Shame and Glory: A Sociology of Hair". *The British Journal of Sociology*, no. 38 (1987): 381–413.

- Can they share stories from their ancestors about hair
 - Do they think that hair has any kind of impact on their social position, their choices and opportunities, are there any constraints attached to the hair image.
2. Use national historical, anthropological and ethnographical sources to explore what were the rituals and ceremonies that affected women in such way to discipline and subordinate them to the social order. Then choose some cases of violence against women that have recently been reported in the media. Discuss in class whether those events can be interpreted with the use of past rituals and ceremonies.

Women as a Useful and Profitable Object of Trafficking

Slovenian women have been subjected to trafficking throughout history. Until the twelfth century, a special *trade* in slaves thrived in the Slovenian territory. In connection with this trade, Slovenes were often mentioned as buyers, intermediaries or slaves. Data dating back to the third century exists about slaves from the area surrounding Ig. In the ninth century, the main goods that were traded were wax, salt, horses, foodstuffs and slaves. Bavarians and Slovenians enjoyed a significant advantage in trading along the Danube River, as they were exempted from customs and ferry duties. In Venice, the trade in slaves prospered as late as the fourteenth century, with the objects of trade being Croats and Slovenes, who had either been carried off by the Venetian pirates or bought from other sources. There were relatively more women among them than men. It was the German emperor Ludwig the Pious who decreed that Slovenian slaves were exempt from customs duties. As regards the trading articles intended for export from Slovenia, Slovenian girls are mentioned most often, as they were considered to be hard-working. It was easier for men to avoid slavery, as they were able to go “to the army as hired men, to provide carrying and freight-forwarding services or they could join various groups of outlaws, whilst women were destined to suffering as slaves”.¹⁶

Bride buying was one of the Slavic rites. Reports about trafficking in young women suitable for marriage can be found up to the beginning of the

¹⁶ Lenard, 1922:34.

twentieth century. Bride buying was a sort of contractual marriage. The contract was not entered into by the groom and the bride themselves, but by the representatives of their families or clans. A fairly high price for the bride was paid by the groom's family to the bride's family.¹⁷ As regards dependent gentry, brides and grooms for their children were selected by the lord who, apart from that, often enjoyed the *right to the first night*.¹⁸

Data about marriages entered into on the basis of economic or other benefits can be found as late as the early twentieth century. They were often arranged between a young girl and an elderly man, who was frequently a well-off widower with many children. There is also data about suicides committed by girls as a result of forced marriages. Thus, Eva Barbara, daughter of Andrej Galski, ate a couple of poisonous spiders and died, after Schnitzenpaum from Ig Castle had taken her away, despite her protests, and had locked her up behind the castle walls.¹⁹

Persecutions and Mass Deaths Caused to Women by the Catholic Church

The time of *Counter-Reformation* was very dangerous for women in Slovenia. The Reformation was strongly supported by women with high expectations, which followed their disappointment with the immoral and greedy Catholic Church's craving for power.²⁰ Thus, entire women's monasteries joined Lutheranism. Apart from the new Church's modesty and its promotion of education for all, women were attracted to the Reformed Church by the opportunities that it created for their activities. The Counter-Reformation movement, which emerged in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, was therefore aimed, to a considerable extent, at persecuting women. At that time, many noble families were exiled, including all those that refused to give up the ideas of the Reformation. Many women persevered in their support for the new religion, thereby causing problems for Reformation Commissions. That is why Bishop Tomaž Hren issued "even stricter decrees against women than against men. He had them sent off to towers (prisons), locking them up for longer periods than men, and only gave them water and bread to eat".²¹

¹⁷ Vilfan, 1961: 250–254.

¹⁸ The right of the first night was granted to the medieval lords and it meant that they could first have sex with the bride.

¹⁹ Minka Govekar. Slovenska žena. (Slovene Woman) (Ljubljana: Splošno Žensko društvo, 1926).

²⁰ Ibid., 21.

²¹ Ibid., 34.

When speaking of mass deaths in Slovenia, one must certainly mention the deaths of those women who were convicted of *witchcraft*. Their persecution coincides with the disintegration of the church organisation in the fourteenth century and the second half of the fifteenth century. At that point, the persecution of witches was publicly supported by the Pope. Persecution of witches and wizards was formalised through the Papal Bull *Summi desiderantes*, which was issued by Pope Innocent VIII in 1484.²² The first wave of witch persecution, which was linked to the heresies of the fourteenth century, did not affect Slovenia. The first witch trials in Slovenia date to the first half of the fifteenth century. Between 1425 and 1717, there were 400 witch trials. Lenard suggests that “a belief in witches gained ground in the countries which were under German cultural influence at the end of the Middle Ages. A punishment of being burnt at the stake was imposed on them by the national authorities. They were tortured until they confessed. The notion of a witch in medieval Slovenia was rather broad, involving ordinary criminals, no-goods and other lowlifes, as well as various wretches, the mentally poor and people who were convicted of this crime as a result of human mistake or malice.”²³ Women were stretched out, prodded with needles, poured over with different types of boiling liquid, wound up, cut, whipped and burnt alive. Looking at the pictures, one can also recognise a certain degree of sexual perversion in the said acts, which can sometimes even be observed in church frescoes. While hangmen who are drunk or otherwise drugged are either putting various objects into women’s genitals, anus or mouth, or cutting and pinching their breasts, grown-up men are following these activities from a close vicinity, with the torture devices positioned in a manner that facilitated a good view.

Franja Mihelic²⁴ claims that all social classes believed in witches, including the poor, the rich and intellectuals. It therefore comes as no surprise to find “that superstitious women in Slovenia learned various charms, spells, incantations and sorceries, which they used for healing people and animals, evoking spirits, exorcising, freeing the obsessed, raising treasures, and causing hail and fires. Such women were called prophetesses or even goddesses. People respected them highly and were also very afraid of them: all calamities, disasters and misfortunes were attributed to them, sometimes even inhumane revenge was inflicted upon them, as they were supposedly witches. Malice, envy, jealousy and hatred often brought them to the stake.”

²² Vilfan, 1961: 266.

²³ Lenard, 1922: 42.

²⁴ Govekar, 1926: 29–30.

Case study

Use both sections as case studies and try to apply them to your own situation. Trading, trafficking and witch-hunt were (some of them still are) widespread practices and can be found in almost every country, although in various forms. It is important to be aware of the fact that these practices are associated with countries in the East and in the South. A list of guiding questions can be used:

- Do you have any information on trading with people from your own country in times of the slave trade or do you think that slaves were always foreigners?
- Do any links exist between trading slaves and trafficking with women – what are they?
- Can the right to the “first night” be connected with Rothamn’s theses on a woman’s womb as a “flower pot”? What would be the arguments?
- What were the characteristics of a witch, and more specifically of her “nature”? Are those characteristics still perceived in public as deviant, dangerous or pathological? Are they treated as illnesses and how they are treated?
- What are the impacts of trading, trafficking and mass murders on women today, if any?

Mothers with Illegitimate Children and Those that Committed Infanticides

The destiny of *child-murderers and mothers with illegitimate children* was as dreadful as that of the persecuted witches. As a rule, capital punishment was intended for them. By way of example, a girl from Ljubljana called Urška was decapitated at Friškovec near Ljubljana as a result of this “vice”. In compliance with the old regulations applicable in Ljubljana, a mother who had murdered her child was buried alive and then a wooden pole was run through her body by an executioner. Lenard²⁵ claims that mothers with illegitimate children must be seen as being the victims of the unhealthy social circumstances prevailing at that time. Thus, marriage was prohibited for property-less persons, but poor

²⁵ 1922: 429.

girls were exposed in many ways to waylaying men from higher classes, on whom they were often existentially dependent. Apart from that, there was no law obliging men to care for their children. Proving fatherhood also frequently caused problems. Vilfan²⁶ attempts to explain the unbearable position of mothers with illegitimate children on the basis of their position in the Church. The more the Church pressed for the inseparability of monogamous marriage, the more unbearable was the position of illegitimate children. As premarital intercourse was considered immoral, mothers with illegitimate children were subject to humiliating punishments: they were closed up in an ossuary or had to stand beside the cross at the main church entrance. Children in particular had to bear the consequences, and they were often given most unusual names by the priests. The related obstacles were also evident in the performance of professions and in education. Of particular significance was the inability to inherit from the father.

Implications and Consequences

In compliance with the old Slavic customs, a woman has to die along with her husband, as she is his property. She has no value in her own right, but has the ability to bear children, which is a specific characteristic of a woman's body. The property therefore has a certain value, provided that it relates to the womb within the woman's body. But the trouble with such property is that it is contained in an evasive body and is, accordingly, physically unattainable. It is a property which cannot be separated and isolated. If this property is to be enjoyed, the body must be isolated. Moreover, the body must be brought under control, otherwise it will tend to control itself. The successful enjoyment of property is crucially dependent on the isolation and control of the bodies containing the property, in our case the bodies of women. The body was controlled by using an extremely cruel system of physical punishment, often causing death. The mind was controlled by constructing femininity and a woman's sexuality. The agents of control were varied and their role was often assumed by the women themselves.

²⁶ 1961: 415.

Until as late as the nineteenth century, women were subject to forced or violent deaths which, to a greater or lesser degree, were gender-based. Regardless of how the killing of women as a result of the deaths of their husbands was actually performed in the old Slavic societies, the fact remains that those deaths were forced. One can only speculate about the implications of ending one's life against one's will were for the consciousness of those women. In any case, this was a disciplinary mechanism which contributed to maintaining or extending the life of the man, as the length of the woman's life depended on the length of the man's life. However, such executions of women were not only characteristic of the Slavic peoples. This custom can be associated with any civilisation where it was customary to put the property of the deceased in his tomb so that it might be available to him in the world beyond this one. As already mentioned above, the aim of executing a woman in this world was to prevent her from being available to anybody else. Ownership of the reproductive abilities of women is thus transformed into control over them, despite the fact that the custom itself has long died out. According to Lenard,²⁷ certain customs survived the process of Christianisation in the Slovenian territory in a different, more acceptable form. Thus, the patriarchal belief in the potency of man's seed and woman as a "flower pot",²⁸ which is reflected in the control of reproductive abilities, also provides the basis for the Christian attitude towards sexuality and women.

In this context, one can also interpret the persecution of witches and mothers with illegitimate children. Witches were persecuted for being regarded as healers who also performed abortions, and mothers with illegitimate children for maintaining an autonomous position without a partner, for remaining independent, even if only on a symbolic level. The price that witches and mothers with illegitimate children had to pay for their autonomous position was mainly their lives or, alternately, their lives became extremely unbearable. Their autonomous position allowed both groups of women to be active in the

²⁷ 1922: 3–13.

²⁸ Rothman suggests that the patriarchal concept regards children as the property of the father, as they arise from his seed which passes through a woman's body. The woman is merely a mediator in that line. The same concept also assumes that the characteristics are transferred from the father to the son, who originates from the seed which is seen as the sole agent of making a child. This concept also facilitates an interpretation of rape as a war strategy. It can be seen as planting an alien seed, a certain kind of womb contamination, where the owner's seed is no longer protected against someone else's characteristics. In this context, war rapes can be regarded as conveying a certain message and devaluing men, whilst women only act as a tool for defeating the enemy. By raping a woman one defeats one's enemy, as one renders the purity of his offspring impossible. (Rothman, 1989).

public sphere. Those belonging to the first group were performing their occupation, whilst the others were forced to apply for any job which helped them survive. A move into the public sphere also implied a break with the ritual orders, whose significance in the historical memory of that time was undoubtedly strong. The ritual hair-cutting clearly placed women in the position of being dependent persons chained to their homes. Another move into the public sphere – support extended to the reformist endeavours and a clear revolt against the Catholic Church – was again followed by severe punishment. The three phenomena, the persecution of witches, mothers with illegitimate children and supporters of the Reformation, were related to the women's activities outside their homes. It was precisely this move that was followed by the most severe punishment. Punishment harsher than that inflicted on men was necessary as a result of the fact that the punishment did not only relate to the violation itself, but to non-compliance with the fundamental postulates relating to the relations between the genders. Cruel punishments were designed to break a woman's will and to prevent any subsequent thoughts about her autonomous position.

Therefore, the destiny of Slovenian women did not differ in any way from the destiny of women in other parts of Europe. The finding that women were not considered as anything more than moving wombs and were simply inferior, which is the result of recent research into women's past, is fully applicable to Slovenian history. Such an erosion of substance, reification or suppression was manifested most dramatically in the trafficking of women as slaves or brides. The difference between the two is insignificant. In both cases, the consequences for the women were the same. They were owned by a person who they did not choose for themselves. The only difference might possibly be in the living conditions of the two groups. However, no conclusion can be made simply on the basis of the different statuses. To put it simply, a woman's body was available. Such availability must have produced the most severe consequences for a woman's sexuality.

Within this context, one should agree with Rosi Braidotti, who claims that any debate about the true originality or pre-sociality is futile: any originality will become evasive as soon as one starts talking about it and, apart from that, debates about it somehow imply a consent to the established difference which in itself is not necessarily original. Despite that, one must not overlook the effects exerted by the events described in the lives of women. The facts about the social construction of gender must therefore be supplemented by the

debates about sexual difference, which is manifested precisely through identity, desire and the unconscious. If one is interested in how history is reflected in memory, then the questions posed must relate to how the unconscious, desire and identity have been affected by punishment, forced and violent deaths, reification by way of selling and buying, slavery and the related forced sexuality, which might even be referred to as permanent rape. The answers certainly do not seem clear. In order to discover them, one should pursue and examine the theory and policy of the body, the related discourse and the consequences for the everyday lives of women.

Film screening

Watch and discuss a film by Peter Mullen “Magdalene Sisters”. The film presents the method by which some 30,000 girls were so regimented and brainwashed that they were driven to madness or hardened in their hatred toward their captors. It happened in the institution named the Magdalene Asylum, run by the Catholic Church in Ireland. It was meant for so-called “fallen women and girls” that actually experienced rape or simply had pre-marital sex and became pregnant. The film is a very good example of ideologies that are focussed upon in this article. Students should write an essay and reflect on the film.

Conclusion

Today, the above issues are still relevant, although they are not manifested in the same way as they were in past centuries. Thus, as a result of violence, women are retreating to women’s shelters, their partners are threatening them, bullying them, following them, preventing them from having contacts, considering them to be their property and as such always available to them. In recent decades, reports about the violent deaths of women who had summoned up enough courage to leave their partners have been increasingly present in Slovenian newspapers. Women are being murdered with various weapons and in different ways, some of them in the presence of their children. Women are subjected to trafficking and forced prostitution; they have the status of goods being sold, smuggled and disposed of once they become useless. As regards single mothers, it is still difficult for them to survive in traditional environments, although they are no longer publicly prosecuted.

Many services and professions are concerned with women, social work being among them. Feminist social work²⁹ has contributed significantly to our understanding of how social inequalities can be reproduced, which is of central importance to social work. Gender inequalities reveal that sexual difference is determined by power relations, in accordance with which women are simply considered to be inferior. In this sense, knowledge about the relations between the genders informs our knowledge about how social inequality is reproduced. An awareness of power and authority has influenced social work in a manner that enables it to realise its professional potential in the process of regulating people's lives on both collective and individual levels. An understanding of the relation between the genders and the patriarchal structure of society has contributed to an awareness about the relations between professionals and users. The power is on the side of the professionals and is manifested in the fact that users are often deprived of the opportunity for self-representation. As people with problems they also lack the competence to make decisions about themselves, which is thus assigned to the professionals. The knowledge of professionals is privileged, whilst that of users is disregarded.

Awareness of such relations has led to a radical criticism of institutions and to a demand for the participation of users in the process of setting up social services. Women who were victims of violence themselves have started creating their own services (women's shelters, advice centres) and establishing new women's spaces which have also become places of safety. They have advocated for establishing community services and pointed to the areas neglected by traditional social work: domestic violence, sexual abuse, rape, etc. Community social work has therefore become a new response to human distress, which is capable of bringing professionals »from the offices to the field« – into the community, which is where the problems emerge. The manner in which a problem is embedded within a certain set of relations has become more important than the problem itself. Individual treatment no longer sufficed for the solving of the problem, and the new situation has called for social action which, instead of just focusing on people with problems, should also be aimed towards the changing of the system.

As regards the relations between professionals and users, it was revealed that it is the existing relations of power and the understanding of human distress

²⁹ Lena Dominelli, *Feminist Social Work Theory and Practice*. (Houndmills: Palgrave, 2002).

that ultimately make such distress problematic. As the employed professionals are the ones presiding over the knowledge, the people in trouble often find that their own power is completely lost once they enter the system providing help. By using this privileged discourse, social workers themselves consolidate this relationship. They often support it by categorising and labelling, both of which contribute to the process of depriving a person of the ability to represent him/herself. It sometimes happens that people accept such relationships as they feel inferior, or ignorant and incompetent. They often feel responsible for their situation despite the fact that they have no control over it. Hence the transfer of the problems from the individual to the social level. Increasingly services are emerging which are aimed at consolidating power, such as shelters, self-help groups, advocacy services and the like. Today's social work has adopted such principles, and has started to integrate them as the most prominent elements in its doctrine.

These changes have also been partly encouraged by another concept, which is being developed by Selma Sevenhuijsen,³⁰ namely the concept of the ethics of care, or a new culture of care. The author refers to it as a political concept, suggesting that care in the Western cultures is unjustifiably attributed to one gender only, women, and is thereby diminished and reduced to being a private matter. Care is thus supposed to belong to the home and not to the public sphere. The author claims that care is present in all aspects of everyday life and is particularly significant because it involves values such as solidarity, recognition of others, mutual dependency, and collectivity. It is precisely these values that should provide a basis for policy in general and, in particular, partial governmental policies aimed at ensuring equal opportunities for all. This concept also changes the relations between the genders, which must be based on the values of solidarity and mutual dependency in both private and public spheres.

When one speaks about social inequality (this insight arises from the understanding of dominant relations between the genders), one realises its consequences, which are mainly manifested in discrimination and social exclusion. Various groups of people are being discriminated against. Apart from women, one must mention the poor, people with disabilities, members

³⁰ Selma Sevenhuijsen, *Citizenship and the Ethics of Care: Feminist Considerations on Justice, Morality and Politics*. (London: Routledge, 1998).

of various nations or ethnic groups, the elderly, minorities, homosexuals, etc. As some of these groups are subject to multiple discriminations, their social exclusion is sometimes critical. Those discriminated against can often be found within social work practices. The reasons for this are varied, and range from the maintenance of social values, attitudes, the line between right and wrong or the normal and the pathological, to personal beliefs, prejudices or stereotypes felt by social workers, which they are unable to keep separate from the work they perform. The new movements have also voiced a request for non-discriminatory practices, arguing that social workers must be aware of their own prejudices and discriminatory attitudes. Such a request can only be met if an awareness is developed about the reasons for discrimination and its consequences.

Social work must therefore no longer be based on the prevailing hierarchical relationships between professionals and the users, which presumes that professionals are the knowledge-holders and that clients are the problem-holders. A redefinition must be applied to the current discourse that is based on traditional dichotomous thinking – i.e. the thinking that all things are divided into two opposing halves which, despite sometimes making up the whole, mainly remain in opposition. All situations must be regarded as individual and examined as such. Generalisations, overhasty estimates, categorizations and collectivist interpretations of personal problems must be excluded from the practice. Each problem must be perceived in precisely such a manner as it is presented by an individual person. In order to effect the change, social work will have to find new vocabulary designed to remove the discriminatory meanings which have become part of the language of the professionals. Social changes will have to be induced in a more active manner through an acceptance of the role of public advocacy. This will also facilitate a move into the political sphere.

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Teaching Gender Through Diagnosis in Social Work

Darja Zaviršek

Abstract

The interconnectedness and interdependency of the social construction of gendered behaviour in the mental health context, the gendered expression of emotional distress and different processes of ascribing medical diagnosis to women and men, are still underrepresented in social work teaching. A possible reason for this is the lack of a multidisciplinary historical and gender-specific approach and a specific focus on women in teaching social work.

This type of teaching requires a multidisciplinary historical and gender-specific approach to mental health as a whole and a specific focus on women, whereby the following issues are examined:

- the social construction of women's sexuality and sexual politics in Europe in pre-modernity and modernity;
- the social history of public care institutions and asylums;
- the social construction of psychiatric diagnosis and mental health treatments in various historical periods and political contexts;
- the social history of medicine and an analysis of bio-politics in modernity;
- the history of violence in the private sphere and of institutional violence.

One medical diagnosis that blatantly shows the interdependence of the aforementioned perspectives and the interdependency between bio-politics and gender, is hysteria. Even though the critical analysis of the development of psychiatric diagnosis and asylums has rarely included gendered analysis, it is widely known that the diagnosis of hysteria (*"hystera"*– the womb) formed part of a highly gendered medical discourse. The phenomenon of female hysteria shows the extent to which social norms and ethics have influenced the seemingly "neutral" medical discourse, and that an ambivalence towards paternalism and the autonomy of women, which is present in social policy and welfare, continue to dominate mainstream teaching in the field of social science education.

Hysteria has always been a social phenomenon in which multiple social discourses touch each other, cross its surface and rejoin in a new picture. Although Central and Eastern Europe is still today marked by a lack of historical research on gender, health, psychiatry and social work, some researchers have nonetheless looked at the phenomenon of hysteria.¹

Teaching gender through the diagnosis of hysteria helps students to understand that every single encounter between a social worker and a user or client is not gender neutral but incorporates dimensions of traditional gender inequality. The helper regardless of her/his gender assumes, at a symbolic level, the role of the male agent, who has been historically constructed as active and objective. In contrast, clients or users, regardless of their gender, have been deemed passive and instrumentalised. Historically, women have been regarded by both men and women as more vulnerable, dependent, incapable of making autonomous decisions and prone to illness and madness. Gender awareness therefore always demands that we also give attention to women's narratives when they are in the position of being service users, since their knowledge is not only subjective but reflexive and competent.

The interconnectedness of gender and mental health diagnosis shows that women's mental health distress often reflects their multiple and conflicting responsibilities, which they carry out on a daily basis (paid work, unpaid work and caring for others). Women receive ambivalent messages, being seen as dependent and weak even when they are the main carers and breadwinners. This may cause anxiety and mental health distress. Teaching gender through diagnosis must promote an understanding of the social construction and use of diagnosis, since mental health diagnoses have direct consequences for women in terms of their life experiences, their multiple burdens and the conflicting messages directed towards them.

Historical Overview

There is no doubt that hysteria, known from ancient times, became one of the most popular medical diagnoses in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.² Hysteria, regarded initially as an illness of the womb influencing

¹ Sandor Vari, 'The case study of Ilma a famous hysteric at the turn of the century' (unpubl. paper presented at the CEU Gender Perspectives Series, Budapest, 1997); Darja Zaviršek, 'A Historical Overview of Women's Hysteria in Slovenia'. *The European Journal of Women's Studies* 7, no.2, (2000).

² Ellen Bassuk, 'The Rest Cure: Repetition or Resolution of Victorian Women's Conflict?' in *The Female Body in Western Culture*, ed. Susan Rubin Suleiman (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1986); Ussher, Jane, *Women's Madness. Misogyny or Mental Illness* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991).

other organs³ and later as an illness of the body and of “reason”,⁴ slowly became associated with damage to the female brain.⁵ Nevertheless, the idea that it is the womb which causes brain damage never completely disappeared. In the seventeenth century Edward Jordan developed the theory of vapours rising from the womb to the head and causing damage to a woman’s memory, imagination and intelligence. Well-known physicians in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, including Cullen, Sydenham and Pinel, already used the word “neurosis”. For Pinel, hysteria was a “genital neurosis of women”.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a strange mixture of theories floated around within medical and public discourses. Hysteria was a topic of discussion both in Europe’s major cities and at the European margins, including a small rural part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, today’s Slovenia. In the Slovenian part of the Habsburg Monarchy, physicians, educators and even priests referred to hysteria as the “woman’s illness”.⁶ In an article by Anton Skubic, a priest, one finds a most interesting description of a hysterical fit: “Hysteria has its base in the head, in the cerebrum (*Grosshirn*), from where it spreads first to one organ and then to another. First it attacks this nerve and then the other; the entire body with all its organs may fall victim to this disease.”⁷

His description is a mixture of the ancient Greek understanding of hysteria and the more modern one that was gaining ground in neurology, a new branch of medicine. The hysteria that spreads to organs around the body seems to be a leftover from a bygone era, reflecting the Platonic understanding of the disease found in *Timaeus*. According to Plato, all disease arises from defects, imbalance or changes in the natural combination of the four elements of which a body consists: earth, fire, water and air. For Plato one of the “disorders of the soul” is madness,⁸ under which he also classifies hysteria, the illness of the womb which moves within the body and brings other organs into disorder.

³ Plato, Hippocrates and Galen.

⁴ Paracelsus.

⁵ Regina Schaps, *Hysterie und Weiblichkeit* (Frankfurt am Main, New York: Campus, 1982); Susan Suleiman Rubin, ed., *The Female Body in Western Culture* (Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press, 1986); Christina von Braun, *Nicht Ich*. (Munich: Neue Kritik, 1988).

⁶ Darja Zavirsek, “Women, Mental Health and the State.”, in *Feminism in Central and Eastern Europe* ed. Pavla Buchotva, Romana Uhlrikova, Lada Kusa, Pavla Vesela, and Arthur Redding (Brno: Medusa, 1997), 23-46.

⁷ Anton Skubic, “Hysteria and Spiritual Pastorage”. *Ecclesiastic Newsletter of Ljubljana* 13, no. 3. (1909).

⁸ Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, *The Collected Dialogues of Plato* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

Like so many other writers, he suggested procreation, sexuality and marriage as successful treatments for hysteria: “The animal within them [that is, within the uterus], is desirous of procreating children, and when it remains unfruitful long beyond its proper time, gets discontented and angry, and wandering in every direction through the body, closes up the passages of the breath, and, by obstructing respiration, drives them to extremity, causing all varieties of disease, until at length the desire and love of the man and the woman, bringing them together and as it were plucking the fruit from the tree, sows in the womb, as in a field, animals unseen by reason of their smallness and without form.”⁹

Almost 30 years after Skubic’s description of hysteria in the 1930s, a Slovenian physician named Arko published an article entitled “Hysteria” in a non-medical journal. His description of a hysterical fit closely resembled Charcot’s descriptions of *grande hysterie*, Charcot’s term for the hysterical attacks suffered by his patients in the large psychiatric hospital of Salpêtrière.¹⁰ Arko described a major hysterical fit as follows:

Prior to a fit there are hallucinations of sight or hearing, vomiting, trembling, dizziness, patients feel as if something was coming up their gullet; finally they become unconscious, although not completely. This stage is followed by a phase of spasms, just as with epilepsy. A patient falls on the floor, the entire body seized with cramps. This leads to clown-like gestures. Patients form a bridge, that is, they touch the floor with only their head and feet, with the rest of the body curved upwards. Then there are different poses such as ecstasy, fury, infatuation, etc., followed by a stage of delirium manifested in screaming, preaching and later on singing and crying; finally the patients calm down again.¹¹

There was also another, less serious type of hysterical attack, which Charcot called *hystérie mineure*, which included Arko’s list of marginal hysterical symptoms: blinking, snorting, yawning, hiccupping, sneezing, stuttering and muteness.

⁹ Ibid., 1210

¹⁰ Von Braun, 1988.

¹¹ V. Arko, “Hysteria,” *The Collectiver* 19, no. 10. (1935).

Instructions for a case study

Although the major characteristics of the history of “madness” and the nineteenth-century history of asylums and institutions is well documented, there has been little research on women who were labelled as “mad” and their experiences in the asylums.

1. Do your own research in a local context, documenting the local social histories of public care institutions and asylums, through which you may trace the gendered dimensions of mental health treatments.
2. Collect women’s stories and case studies of women regarded as “mad” who survived or died in institutions in your local context, with a view to enhancing comparative knowledge on the social history of hysteria and other mental illnesses that have traditionally been labelled as “female”.
3. Discuss which women’s experiences have not been made known to or taken into consideration by social workers and other professionals. Why have they failed to internalise a gender perspective as they work with women with mental health problems and long-term experiences of psychiatric institutions.

Hysteria in the European Periphery

The medical discourse on hysteria began in Slovenia in 1877.¹² In that year an article entitled “On Nervousness”, written by the physician Edvard Savnik, was published in *Slovene Nation*, an important national journal. The author ascertained that “nervousness” had become much more frequent due to immorality, simple-mindedness and the superficiality of “today’s world”. Furthermore, he believed that from the medical perspective, the number of “sensory points” in the body was of crucial importance in the development of nervous diseases. The different number of sensory points in women and men’s bodies was the crucial reason for the female predisposition to nervousness. Since the female body had less weight and volume than a male body, and a larger number of

¹² Edvard Savnik, “On Nervousness,” *Slovene Nation* 1, no. 196, 197, 198, 199, 201 (1877).

sensory points in relation to other organs and to the entire volume of the body, “the normal sensory life of a woman is more quickly disturbed, and the effect of such a disturbance is more intense and the result more permanent”. Such nervousness was not only a threat to a woman herself but also to nations “in which the woman has more influence than she was given by nature, and where she dominates over man”.¹³

The author cites North America as the most unfortunate example of such a place, and contrasts it with the “happy oriental family/harem life”, where the nervousness of women does not exist at all. In America and in similar countries, in contrast, “the bodily system of women is completely pathological, that is, in poor health”. In these countries one could also observe “the decay of moral life, the lack of virtue”.¹⁴

In the second part of his article, the writer attempts to address other dangerous elements which might threaten women’s health, and offers a number of examples to clarify his arguments. Many women sin, fail to look after their bodily health, undertake work which is not appropriate to their sex and consequently fall into a nervous state. Since the female imagination is easier to excite and their sensory points are more easily irritated, the most important cause of female nervousness is “the women’s way of life”.¹⁵

Savnik stressed that a woman “must remain within the family, in the sphere of activities determined by nature and her constitution”. It is especially dangerous for her to become a breadwinner. The latter can best be observed in North America. Even worse, the American woman is “extremely emancipated, participates actively in public life, fighting in political party discussions, which is exciting enough to the sensory points of men, let alone to those of such fragile creatures as women”. Furthermore, if a woman acquires the “bad habits of civilisation”, such as drinking alcohol, or “fighting for bread”, she does not only become nervous, “she is in a great danger of becoming insane”. He warns again: “The little habit becomes a bad habit, which turns into a disease that harms 13 percent of the sensory points, brain and mind”.¹⁶

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid..

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

In addition, Savnik draws attention to women's reproductive function. For him women have another feature that often causes nervousness, which is their "task given by nature". Women have to perform their natural mission of miraculous creation but are at the same time inclined not only to nervousness but also to other mental illnesses. This is the real concern of the writer, who eventually addresses all women with a moral message: "In this short reflection I have tried to draw the attention of the fair sex to several cases who appear to have a calm surface, mostly showing their pleasant sides and humble faces, and seeming to be extremely innocent, but who are at the slightest contradiction able to show their other bad sides, as signs of threatening nervousness."¹⁷ This moral warning was addressed to women themselves, since, as Savnik believed, their emotional and unstable nature seduces them into so many dangerous traps that they must, like small children, be protected from themselves.

The moral message was the same everywhere. Hysteria or insanity is immanent in women, who because of their biological differences get ill more often than men. Being different meant being different from men, whose behaviour was constructed as the norm. Much older ideas of sexual difference now became connected with women's immorality, due to dependency on substances like alcohol and drugs, work in the sphere of public life, or sexuality. From the end of the nineteenth century the discourse on women shifted between two extremes, the adoration of women and their procreative mission, and admonitions about their cunning nature, diminished intelligence and frequent inclination to infidelity. The writers started to use their medical authority to 'cultivate' women, since only a cultivated woman could be a proper mother and educator for her children.

After World War I hysteria was more often listed as a mental disease among other forms of insanity. It also became the one which women could bring with them into a marriage. In 1926 the magazine *Health* (Zdravje) published an article entitled "Find Yourself a Healthy Bride" by a doctor called Andrej Arnsek.¹⁸ In it he first draws the reader's attention to the fact that a healthy mother is of utmost importance to the health of children and the happiness of a family. He therefore finds it important to acquaint (male) readers with the risks of marrying unhealthy young women, and lists the external

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Andrej Arnsek, 'Find Yourself a Healthy Bride,' *Health* 9, no.1. (1926a)

symptoms that a man must recognise to avoid an unfortunate bride. Arnsek claims that the character and the human soul are best reflected in the eyes, face and the body. Pathology and illness can therefore be recognised on the surface of women's faces. He stresses that "strongly developed, bony cheeks, in particular the lower jaw, in relation to the skull, indicate a lack in a woman's spiritual life."¹⁹ He also gives some more obvious examples: "Red rimmed eyes, with frequent inflammation and hypersensitivity to light indicate scrofula, a chronic inflammation thought to cause trachoma or the 'Egyptian disease', which can lead to blindness if not cured; short-sightedness, farsightedness, innate curved mouth, distorted gait, curved writing (now to the left, now to the right and now upright) shows a distorted, inconsistent, cunning, capricious mind and a character full of inner contradictions."²⁰

Teaching questions

Several western researchers have shown how hysteria was socially constructed and used as an instrument for the subjugation of women. Not much is known about these issues from the perspective of the Central and Eastern European countries and beyond. Today gender-specific behaviour continues to affect diagnosis but in different ways. Even today, some mental health diagnoses are prevalent among girls and women and some among boys and men.

1. What are the prevalent mental health diagnoses for girls and women and for boys and men in your local context? How may one explain their gendered dimensions?

Diagnosis as Part of Gender Politics

For most of Central Europe the final decades of the nineteenth century were marked by major social changes related to industrialisation and urban modernisation in the region.²¹ Such huge shifts necessitated a major re-examination of women's economic, social and symbolic status in these changing societies. From the end of the eighteenth century a political demand of workers' unions

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ See Susan Zimmermann, "Frauenbestrebungen und Frauenbewegung in Ungarn," in Szerep es alkotás, ed. Beata Nagy and Margit Sardi. (Budapest: Csokonai Kiado, 1997), 171–204.

in Europe was a “family wage”, providing enough pay to feed dependent and economically unprotected members of the household. The introduction of the new family wage policy required a scientific deconstruction of the gender division of labour. In the nineteenth century it was no longer enough to prove the inferiority of women according to religious beliefs. It was necessary to use scientific proof not only to establish gender difference but also to naturalise gender inequality. In the new gender order, hysteria became visible proof of an inherent female pathology, demonstrated in their bodies, their organs and their psyche. Ljudmila Jordanova²² pointed out that the division which was established on the basis of bodily differences during the nineteenth century was the division between the masculinisation of the muscles and the feminisation of the nerves.

In Slovenia, as in other parts of Europe, hysteria became a symptom of the new femininity, which women were supposed exhibit. In the nineteenth century, it was also a moral message for all women who aspired – at least in their dreams – to become similar to women from the wealthy families of the upper classes. The diagnosis of hysteria was most clearly associated with women from wealthy households. Women from lower-class backgrounds were on the one hand encouraged to internalise the family values of the new bourgeois society, but at the same time warned of the dangers of becoming ‘deranged’ and polluted by the sickness of the weak feminine life-style of upper-class women. They were identified either in terms of extreme fragility and passivity, or in terms of their ‘masculine’ wishes, if they were actively involved in public concerns. The real discipline of the new gender order was not, at least in public, carried out by force, but under the eye of medical authorities, who developed an image of “proper femininity” through the invention of “women’s diseases”, among which hysteria was paramount. The medical gaze looked from the surface of the woman’s body to the inside of her psyche, and through this, into the inner life of the family and directly to the child.

Therefore, it is of a crucial importance that social work students understand that one of the main reasons for the pathologisation of women through diagnosis, was the new economic restructuring of western societies. Pathologisation of women in that context was a process within which the socially constructed characteristics of a person/group were constructed and perceived

²² Ljudmila Jordanova, *Sexual Visions. Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the 18th and 20th Centuries.* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989).

as natural, inborn marks of a person or a group and which specificities were described in medical terms. These helped to construct a person/group as being prone to specific bodily and mental illnesses. The individualised characteristics were seen as causing economic and social vulnerability or marginalisation of a female person or women as a homogenised social group. The broad use of the diagnosis had a moral message for women from all social strata and was linked with the new control of female sexuality and hygienic movements, which both influenced social work teaching and practice. The place of origin for diagnosing was the medical-psychiatric system, which influenced social work in many countries including some socialist countries like Yugoslavia, where a continuous professionalisation of social work took place from 1952.²³

Instructions for the group discussion

Gender politics and health is marked by economic inequalities. Today, new forms of gender inequalities are appearing.

1. Discuss the new forms of gender inequalities which women face today, like for instance organ harvesting in poor communities. For this purpose, see especially the work of Nancy Scheper-Hughes. Cf. Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Loic Wacquant (2004), *Commodifying Bodies*, Routledge.
2. Discuss the issues of women with disabilities and paid work in today's societies. Do women with disabilities have the same opportunities as their male counterparts? Relate the concept of "working poor" to women with disabilities.

Understanding Public Care Institutions

The importance of public care institutions lay not so much in their philanthropic vision of society, but rather in their normative vision of that same society. They were created not so much to cure the sick as to produce an image of an insane person from whom "normal" individuals could distinguish themselves. These large institutions were, for some people, refuges and safe spaces for a relatively short period. For others they were places of punishment and control over their lives.

²³ Darja Zaviršek, "You will teach them some, socialism will do the rest! The history of social work education 1945-1960", in *Need and Care. Glimpses into the Beginnings of Eastern Europe's Professional Welfare*, eds. Kurt Schilde and Dagmar Schulte (Opladen: Barbara Budrich, 2005); Darja Zaviršek, "The political construction of social work history in socialism", in *Weibliche und männliche Entwürfe des Sozialen: Wohlfahrtsgeschichte im Spiegel der Genderforschung*, ed. Elke Kruse and Evelyn Tegeler (Opladen & Farmington Hills: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2007), 195-204;

Many documents report a high number of women sent to rural asylums across Europe from the middle of the nineteenth century.²⁴ Around this time there arose a popular new fashion of building large hospitals in the countryside with a lot of daylight and fresh air. By the end of the nineteenth century there were some asylums where the majority of inmates were women, locked into the overcrowded and rigorously separated spaces of the women's wards.²⁵ Those who came to the asylums for the poor were, for the most part, the unemployed, widows and unmarried women, for whom psychiatric hospitalisation was the only way to get food and a place to sleep. According to Foucault, this was a consequence of the new capitalist labour practices, which required a division between those people who were "economically useful" and could fully reproduce the ideology of reason, and those who were defined as economically 'unuseful' and had become problematic for the new moral order.²⁶ It is thus no wonder that the first houses of confinement were built in industrial centres at times when high unemployment became a threat to a large number of people.²⁷ While some asylums were opened in order to give work to those suffering from the economic recession, very soon they became places where people were sent for correction and punishment. If times of recession were difficult for men, this was even more the case for women, who were less likely to be able to find jobs to provide for themselves. Many of these women ended up in large rural asylums, but a significant number stayed at home, subjected to the various medical treatments prescribed for hysteria.

Those who were admitted to hospitals as psychiatric patients most often stayed because of their poverty and lack of employment. In England, for instance, the new National Insurance Act of 1911 did not cover dependent wives, daughters or domestic servants.²⁸ Women who were not employed full-time but dependent on the wages of their husbands did not have any economic security when their husbands died, if they were abandoned, or if they wanted to leave them. The mental patients in psychiatric hospitals were there-

²⁴ Sherill Cohen, *The Evolution of Women's Asylums Since 1500* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Joan Busfield, *Men, Women and Madness. Understanding Gender and Mental Disorder* (London : Macmillan, 1996); Dianna Gittins, *Madness in Its Place* (London: Routledge, 1998).

²⁵ Gittins, 1998

²⁶ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality* (London: Penguin Books, 1978).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 52.

²⁸ Gittins, 1998: 25.

fore overwhelmingly women over sixty-five years of age who did not have any financial protection or state pension.²⁹

As mentioned earlier, there were a significant number of women who were locked in large asylums, but there were an even larger number who stayed under the domestic control of the medical eye, and carried the images of mad women of the nineteenth century. These women, together with some men in large asylums, were exhibited to a wide public. Foucault reported that as late as 1815 London's Bethlehem Hospital (Bedlam) exhibited lunatics for a penny to local spectators every Sunday.³⁰ Only a few years later Jean Marie Charchot exhibited young women who were labelled as hysterics every Thursday in front of a distinguished Parisian public.³¹ The black and white photograph of him and a young woman who he was hypnotising can still be seen today in Vienna, in the museum of his great pupil Sigmund Freud.

Teaching questions

1. *Document cases of violence in the public realm, especially in public care institutions; examine the gender specificities, common patterns, professional responses to institutional violence and public responses to institutional violence.*
2. *Collect visual material of persons, places and areas connected with mental health history; examine the history of institutions and psychiatric treatments.*

Diagnosis, Violence and Sexual Politics

As pointed out by Sander Gilman, “fin-de-siecle medicine madness was marked not only on the face but also on the genitalia”.³² Each country invented its health police to discover, control and punish particularly women prostitutes, who were the “embodiment of the degenerate and diseased female genitalia in the nineteenth century”.³³ The Slovene discourse on social medicine was strongly influenced by the Italian psychiatrist Cesare Lombroso, who invented

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilisation. A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York: Random House, 1988), 68.

³¹ See von Braun 1988.

³² Sander L. Gilman, “Sigmund Freud and the Sexologists: A Second Reading,” in *Sexual Knowledge, Sexual Science*, ed. Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1994), 326.

³³ Ibid.

a “health police” in Lombardy at the end of the nineteenth century. In his anthropological survey of the human physiognomy of prostitutes, ill persons and lunatics, he tried to find scientific proof to link poverty, illness, prostitution and madness with social pathology. His work greatly influenced the well-known Slovene anthropologist, Bozo Skerlj, who founded the Department of Anthropology at the Institute of Hygiene in Ljubljana in 1929. Lombroso tried to stop an infectious disease called Lombardian leprosy (pellagra), which was spreading among poor farmers in the area. Some people from the region also called it ‘the illness of poverty’ (*male della miseria*). Lombroso established a network of medical inspectors who surveyed the living and working conditions of the rural population. He eventually denied any connection between pellagra and poverty, but claimed that pellagra was an illness of toxic-infectious origin. In order to prevent an epidemic he set up a health police whose job it was to divide healthy from unhealthy individuals. First they separated children from infected families and sent them to institutions, and later they also segregated adults in lunatic asylums.

In Slovenia similar health police practices emerged after 1915, when numerous articles raised the issue of venereal disease, which was seen, as one medical doctor claimed, not so much as a medical matter, but “first and foremost a moral issue”.³⁴ Derganc therefore suggested a segregational practice which was gradually adopted all over Europe: “Promiscuous people are either patients or criminals and as such should respectively, be put in a mental hospital or prison.”³⁵ In the medical world at the turn of the century, the criminality of women was linked with their sexuality. It was thus no wonder that the most important debates on health as a moral concern were the studies of prostitutes and the eugenics debates. Both were strongly influenced by the anthropologist Bozo Skerlj, who in the 1920s began with studies of “inferior children” and prostitutes. In his scientific manner Skerlj completed social–anthropological research on the genealogies of thirty prostitutes, their social environments and their physical characteristics.³⁶ He linked the personal characteristics of prostitutes with his research on the “moral destruction” spread by women who deal with sexual matters. He tried to establish a distinction between prostitutes

³⁴ Franc Derganc, *Sexual Danger* (Ljubljana: Catholic Press, 1916).

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

³⁶ Skerlj determined this in anthropological surveys between 1929 and 1932.

that came from the lower social classes and entered prostitution because of their “moral weakness”, and those women who came into prostitution from a better social background because of their psychopathy.³⁷ Since Skerlj clearly did not recognise that for some women sex work was the only available – and, paradoxically, encouraged – paid occupation, he still connected prostitution with either moral or mental illness. The mention of female psychopathy is obviously an allusion to *psychopatia sexualis*, a psychiatric diagnosis which marked all “perverse pleasures of adults” at that time.³⁸

This word was invented by the well-known Austrian psychiatrist, university lecturer and asylum director Richard von Krafft-Ebing, who wrote his book *Psychopatia Sexualis* in 1886, and whose interest had hitherto been predominantly focused on forensic psychiatry.³⁹ *Psychopatia Sexualis* became the first medical classification of sexual disorders. The importance of Krafft-Ebing’s work, as has been pointed out by Renate Hauser, was predominantly due to the shift towards psychology it caused within the field of sexual sciences: “Sex had moved from the physical body into the ‘soul’ and was no longer located in the genitals, but rather in the brain.”⁴⁰

In both *Psychopatia Sexualis* and his later work Krafft-Ebing used a clear gender division when describing various sexual behaviours: the subordination of women was for him a physiological phenomenon due to their procreative function and manifest in their voluntary submissiveness within sexuality. A woman is more dependent and a man more autonomous but also more ruled by his sexuality. This clearly meant that though prostitution was a problem, it was not discussed as one of men’s morality but as a problem of the morality of women. Since sexuality was not seen only as a bodily function serving the purposes of procreation, but also as a psychological fact, the science of sexuality moved closer towards psychiatry and to the idea of curing sexual disorders. Within this framework it is easier to understand Skerlj’s distinction between prostitution as moral weakness and psychopathy. Since the former is widespread among lower-class women it can be cured by moral order and health

³⁷ Bozo Skerlj, “Eugenic and other evils,” *Our Time* 25, no.3. (1930a); “The evil of prostitution,” *Our Time* 25, no.5. (1930b); “Is prostitution necessary?” *Our Time* 25, no.8. (1930c); “The white plague is here too,” *Our Time* 25, no.17. (1930d).

³⁸ Including promiscuity, homosexuality, nymphomania, masochism, sadism and fetishism.

³⁹ Renate Hauser, “Krafft-Ebing’s psychological understanding of sexual behaviour,” in *Sexual Knowledge, Sexual Science*, ed. Roy Porter and Mikulas Teich, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 210-227.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 215.

control, while the latter can be cured as a psychiatric illness or mental disorder. Lower-class women could be punished by sending them to houses of correction, while upper-class women could be controlled as patients at home under the guard of family members and doctors.

The criminalization of prostitution and its entwining with the medical and eugenic discourse have to be understood as a part of the European ideology of faulty genes current at the beginning of the twentieth century.⁴¹ Since both mental illness and prostitution as a form of “mental degeneration” were seen to be a result of brain disease caused by “faulty genes”, there had to be an effective policy to prevent such people from biological reproduction. They should not be allowed to reproduce themselves since their life was defined as “devoid of meaning”.⁴²

The church saw sexuality as the most dangerous symptom of hysteria. Skubic stressed that very often “premature sexual desire” could cause hysteria. He continued to give instructions:

A hysterical person can often be recognised very quickly. Nervous restlessness causes a pronounced bizarreness in her behaviour. The paleness is due to lack of blood. If such a woman happens to exert power over her relatives - as is the case with housewives - then she will be the centre around which everything has to turn. Her impatient character makes her tyrannise the vicinity; the attention and fears of which are retained by her nervous complaints and convulsions. Her unstable will is law, and if she is not obeyed the most diverse nervous symptoms are manifested; she laughs or cries, is seized with convulsion - all just to attract attention. But there are also other persons who hide their disease in a sophisticated manner. They are as white as a sheet and have very fragile figures, they are patient and kind, but at the moment of any bodily transformation, in particular before the menstrual period, the disease erupts. In general, doctors say that hysterical manifestations are most powerful and most frequent at the time of the menstrual period; hence the old-fashioned conviction that hysteria is only some sort of a venereal disease.⁴³

⁴¹ David Pilgrim and Anne Rogers, *A Sociology of Mental Health and Illness* (Buckingham: Open Univ. Press, 1996)

⁴² Gittins, 1998: 19.

⁴³ Skubic, 1909.

Skubic not only wanted to give instructions on how to recognise a hysterical woman who is trying to attract the attention of doctors, relatives and priests, he also wanted to educate priests on how to protect themselves in such cases. His major argument was trust: a young priest should not trust a woman, since a hysterical woman often deludes priests with stories about fantasies she has had. He continues that such fabrications usually include a great deal of malice, mischief and wickedness, which can completely destroy an honest priest. Most threatening to a clerical career are those women who couple their wickedness with a strong sexual desire: "One single innocent word, one single cheerful smile and such a woman starts thinking of venerea, and in her diseased malice is capable of slandering the priest, yes, she is even capable of swearing that he wanted to ravish her!"⁴⁴

Teaching questions

Social work students need a lot of knowledge on how to speak about sexuality, as learning about sexuality strengthens a person's awareness about her or his body and bodily identity. Speaking about sexuality includes learning how to make sexuality safe and pleasant and how to prevent sexual harassment and abuse. Speaking about sexuality opens the space for people to talk about difficult stories connected with sexuality, events they are ashamed of and traumatic surviving of sexual abuse.

1. Do all types of sexuality have equal importance when discussing sexuality (heterosexual, same-sex, intersexuality, transsexuality)?
2. What kind of pathology discourse (medical, social work, educational) is connected today with diverse sexual behaviour?
3. How is sexuality linked with ethnicity?
4. Discuss issues of sex work and the social rights, marginalisation and mental health issues of sex workers.

Conclusion

Women had no narratives of their own, since their lives were examined and perceived within the dichotomous framework of dependency versus autonomy. In a world of binaries it was men who were seen as autonomous in action and

⁴⁴ Ibid.

narration. Women's stories were pierced, wounded by the stories of others: medical professionals, lawyers, priests and new philanthropists including social workers. During the times of their silence some of them internalised a moral knowledge of themselves and others tried to resist their positioning within the frame of dependency. Even psychoanalysis, which was, as Foucault pointed out, "established in opposition to a certain kind of psychiatry, the psychiatry of degeneracy, eugenics and heredity",⁴⁵ appropriated women's narratives while giving them the opportunity to talk. The beginnings of psychoanalysis are marked by an ambiguity that is never solved: while discovering the "talking cure", it freezes the stories of women in the ice-blocks of envy and castration. Women's stories remained wounded stories.

Therefore, it is important in cognitive terms that social work students internalise the historical and gender perspective as they deal with mental health and that they understand that women and men express their everyday distress in gender-specific ways. They also need to understand that social work and medical professionals often interpret service-users' stories and non-verbal behaviour within a traditional gender matrix, which ascribes a certain "emotional world" to men and another one to "women".⁴⁶ In addition, social work students should understand that these are the major reasons why many professionals continue to speak about "female" and "male" diagnosis and that, statistically, many more women than men are diagnosed as depressed and more women than men are dependent on legal drugs, especially antidepressants. They need to understand that while hysteria as a diagnosis disappeared, "depression" has become, in the last fifty years, the typical diagnosis and gendered response of professionals towards women's emotional pain. Further, it has also become a gendered response of women towards everyday distress. Teaching gender through diagnosis shows that differences in diagnosis and help-seeking behaviour should not be accepted as biological facts, which are innate and get transmitted through the "archetypes that lie in every man and woman", as a Slovenian psychiatrist recently claimed. They also do not represent an objective truth of medical science, but are socially produced and historically transmitted and therefore need to be constantly reflected upon.

⁴⁵ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge. Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977* (London: Pantheon, 1980), 60.

⁴⁶ Phyllis Chesler, *Women and Madness* (New York: Palgrave, Macmillan 2005).

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From Visiting Ladies Towards Municipality Female Social Advisors: Women in Home Visiting Practice in Bulgaria (1915 – 1939)

Kristina Popova

Abstract

The aim of the article is to analyse the importance of home visit practices as a key method of biopolitics in Bulgaria as well as their development by various female charity and professional activities over a period of twenty-five years. In 1910 the first female preparation course for voluntary social work (Samaritan women) was organized in Bulgaria. They introduced home visit practice during World War I. The home visit practice was also developed by various female professional and charity activities: visiting nurses (after 1926), female teachers – advisors in the villages (after 1927), students in the Women's Social High School (founded in 1932, based on the model of the Female Social Academy in Berlin) and municipality female professional social workers (after 1934). Women of diverse social and educational backgrounds took part in these activities, crossing class and spatial borders. All these women made the home visit in Bulgaria a common practice where power and trust were negotiated. The development of a new profession of home advisors will be used as a case study in the teaching process. A set of questions that can be used as didactic material is offered to reflect on the ways women were constructed in the early stage of social work activities in Bulgaria.

The aim of the article is to use the historical case study to emphasize how the new profession of social advisors involved women as carers and nurses, thereby strengthening the public perception of women, and how the new profession assisted in emancipating women from domestic isolation. It is important for social work education to acknowledge the multidimensionality of historical developments and their various impacts on the position of women. Historical case studies are therefore an effective tool in social work teaching. The article can itself be a case study for social work teaching, and an additional set of questions facilitating students' participation in the class will be offered.

Crossing Borders

In a summer day of 1939, 314 poor Sofia citizens signed a collective petition to the city mayor. In the petition they insisted that the former municipality social advisor for their residential district, Maria Karakanovska, be retained in their residential district and not replaced by another female social advisor.¹ A delegation of thirty people came to the municipality to meet the head of the municipality social services department. Some months later, in November 1939, more than 500 “extremely poor Sofia citizens” of the peripheral residential district of Lozenetz in the Sofia municipality signed a collective petition once again. The petition was signed by female and male citizens. They explained that the municipality social advisor Maria Karakanovska had been working in their residential district for five years. According to the petition:

(...) she fulfilled her service in the most responsible way. She worked in our residential district from the early morning until the late evening in cold, mud and snow, wishing to know us better and to understand our sufferings and needs. She cared like a mother for everybody. Many times she was there until midnight, caring for someone who was ill. She gave from her own insufficient funds five or ten lewa to poor families so they could buy their bread. She loves our children and gives a mother’s care to them because she is also a mother of small children and a nurse. She is a poor woman like us and she lives with our sufferings and needs.²

The people who signed the petition did not want a new municipality social advisor for their residential district. According to their letter “(...) she has hurt many poor families with her upsetting behaviour (...)”.³

In the second petition in November 1939, which was signed after the beginning of the war, the authors added that in uncertain war times “(...) we should not need to worry about what happens to our families (...)”.⁴

This case of these poor Sofia citizens and their petitions to the Sofia municipality regarding the work of female social advisors indicates the importance of the field of social services in the 1930s. This field was an important part of

¹ State Archive – Sofia, F.1k, op.4, a.e.1106, l. 160-170.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

the modernization process and included various activities, skills and techniques of social regulation.⁵ Those techniques included the setting of norms and categories of poverty, the introduction of the card-indexes on poor families, and various social assistance means and methods like home visits and case work. They created new relationships of power and trust between the authorities and the clients. As the texts of the poor citizens' petitions demonstrate, they sought a relationship of mutual respect and trust as part of quality social care. They stressed also "the mother's care" of the good female social advisor, given to poor families. Under the rules of the Sofia municipality social service, all social advisors were women. Female social advisors, when visiting the homes of poor families, were expected to spend time with them and to act like one of them, like a sister or mother.

Questions that can be used to explore gender-specific agency-client relationships in the development of social work:

1. What did poor citizens in Sofia expect from a "good social advisor", according to the petition?
 - a. professional knowledge
 - b. a respectful relationship
 - c. educational skills
 - d. mother-like behaviour
 - e. a similar class background to that of the poor citizens
 - f. the same educational background
2. What difficulties had to be overcome by female social workers on home visits in the suburbs of Sofia at the time?
3. What skills of a social worker mentioned in the petition refer to the social maternity role of women at the time, according to the following definition of social (organized, spiritual) maternity: "Promoting the maternity role of women (caritative, educational and nursing) in society; the caritative, educational and loving potential of women which they seek to practice in an organized way for social welfare. Social maternity becomes a part of the definition of women and especially of their social role."⁶

⁵ Michel Foucault, *Tijabva da zashtitavame obshtestvoto*, (Sofia, LIK, 2003).

⁶ Christoph Sachße (1986), *Muetterlichket als Beruf. Sozialarbeit, Sozialreform und Frauenbewegung 1871-1929*. Frankfurt am Main.

In his article about early home visiting practice in Victorian England, Stephen Webb wrote that such aspects of social work as midwifery were dominated by women. This fact facilitated their access to people's homes and legitimized it.⁷ In this way the relationship between visiting women and their clients was created as an informal connection of power and trust.⁸ Stephen Webb showed the significance of the home visit and of this relationship in both voluntary and professional social work, as well as the important role of women in these activities. Home visit practice created new social and spatial relationships. Researching the beginnings of social work in Hungary, the Hungarian authors Borbala Juhasz, Dorottya Szikra and Eszter Varsa pointed out in their article "Tram to the outskirts" that the first generations of visiting women began to traverse social and spatial borders. It was not easy for those women to establish new forms of communication with "these strangers", the women of poorer classes.⁹

The practice of home visits was established in Victorian England in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Upper middle-class women created the COS society in 1870. Growing up in the secure world of their Victorian homes and coming to homes in London's East End, their own living and moral standards were confronted with mass poverty. Their domestic standards – cosiness, order and hygiene – were challenged. In order to assist poor families and gain access to the homes of the poor homes by establishing friendly relationships with the people, prescriptions for home visits were elaborated. The instructions regulated communication and the tone of speech, in order to facilitate the activities of charity social support and education.¹⁰

The aim of this article is to present home visit practice in Bulgaria from its advent in 1914-1915 until 1939, showing its importance in social work in Bulgaria and how social regulation was conducted by means of a network of female activities. The aim is to present the main activities undertaken by women of diverse social and educational backgrounds in the first two genera-

⁷ Stephen A. Webb, *The comfort of strangers: social work, modernity and late Victorian England – Part I* European Journal of Social Work, Vol. 10, Number 1, March 2007: 39-55 Part II, June 2007: 193-209

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Borbala Juhasz, Dorottya Szikra and Eszter Varsa, "Tram to the Outskirts: Female Social Workers Crossing Borders in Interwar Hungary", in *Weibliche und maennliche Entwuerfe des Sozialen. Wohlfahrtsgeschichte im Spiegel der Genderforschung*, ed. Elke Kruse and Evelyn Tegeler. (Opladen/Farmington Hills: Verlag Barbara Budrich, 2007), 101-108.

¹⁰ Stephen Webb, the same article.

tions. These were the generations that created this field of work: voluntary and professional social work. They were Samaritan women, visiting nurses, female teachers, advisors and municipality social advisors. Those twenty-five years in Bulgaria were also a time of radical changes in the place of women in the public realm. By connecting the public and private realm, home visiting practice contributed to these changes. The pre-war period during which poor female and male Sofia citizens wrote their petition to the municipality was a time of intense political and social activity by women in Bulgaria. Women received voting rights in municipal elections in 1937 and voting rights in parliamentary elections in 1938. They were encouraged by the activities of the Bulgarian Women's Union and women's periodicals like "Women's Voice". Woman's newspapers became actors in the social and political life of the country, making the voice of women heard.

Questions that can be used in class:

1. Why did home visit practice became so important for upper-class women active in the COS society in Victorian England?
2. What were the conditions in working-class homes in the nineteenth century?
3. How did upper-class women see working-class homes?
4. What rules did they develop?
5. How did these rules reflect the power relationship?
6. How did they establish relationships of trust?

The First Visiting Women “(...) in rain, wind and snow (...)”.

The Samaritan Women (“Samarjanka” Society)

The “Samarjanka” charity was founded in 1910 by Queen Eleonora, with the support of the Bulgarian Red Cross. Initially, 400 women from Sofia were involved. According to the charity's statute, the aim was to promote an awareness of the need to assist others, to spread knowledge of first aid and to prepare voluntary staff – women, who would care for the sick and wounded in time of war or peace. In subsequent months, in other towns in Bulgaria (Plovdiv, Tirnovo and Rousse), local “Samarjanka” societies were also founded. The various branches started preparation courses for women seeking to do voluntary (mainly sanitary) work. Their activities became very important especially

during the Balkan wars (1912 – 1913) and World War I (1915 – 1918). Between 1912 and 1918 more than a thousand women were trained. Most of them were young women of middle- or upper-class backgrounds: housewives, teachers and students.

In 1914 Queen Eleonora invited two American nurses (from the American Red Cross) to Bulgaria, who were given the task of modernising nurse education in Bulgaria. At the start of the war they went to the town of Plovdiv, where they began home visits, in collaboration with members of the local “Samarjanka” society. Poor families and sick people in the town and in the villages close to Plovdiv were visited. A former “Samarjanka” society president by the name of Harizanova remembered: “At that time the Samarjanka society focussed its activities on the poor families of wounded soldiers, there was an urgent need for such nurses. Immediately after their arrival in Plovdiv and at the first meeting with members of the society, they impressed everybody by their strong organisational spirit. Quiet and modest in their nursing cloths, they went in rain, wind and snow, from home to home, accompanied by one or two members of the board of the “Samarjanka” Society and the local priest in outlying residential districts of Plovdiv.”¹¹ The same author, Harizanova, also published an article on the occasion of the death of Helen Scott Hey (one of the two American nurses), in which she wrote that “(...) For a period of one and half years, we and the two Americans went untiringly in the outskirts among poor or wounded soldier families, and in the evenings when we needed to relax, the two nurses worked on the city map and lists of the sick (...)”.¹²

In this way the “Samarjanka” women started regular home visiting practice. They also began to document their visits and to describe the family situations, to collect data about poor families during the war and to report on what their own activities. They were able to adopt the methods of home visits, including interviewing clients and documenting cases.

These methods were established in both voluntary and professional social work after the war in Bulgaria. After the war many women coming from these “Samarjanka” societies continued to work among the poor. They continued to visit the outskirts and to give advice to poor families or

¹¹ Sofia state archive, F. 360 (Archive the Nurse school in Sofia), op.1 , A.e 51, l.7-10.

¹² Mir newspaper, N 9730, December 15, 1932.

to bring sick people to hospitals or other institutions. Some of the women, former “Samarjanka” members, organised other welfare organisations for poor children and women or to counter tuberculoses, thereby continuing their home visits. Almost every charity organisation had a former “Samarjanka” woman. Thus, the “Samarjanka” women took the first steps towards establishing a space for regular home visit practice in Bulgarian social work.

Questions for students:

1. What was most impressive about the work of the American nurses from the perspective of members of the “Samarjanka” society?
 - a. their ability to work with the Plovdiv city maps
 - b. the outlook of the nurses
 - c. their educational activity
 - d. their self-confidence
 - e. their selfless dedication

“We See Only Days Full of Work and We Forget that Tomorrow is Sunday...”¹³: The Visiting Nurses

After the end of the World War I, in a situation of mass poverty with thousands of refugees as well as epidemics and high infant mortality, several international organisations assisted the Bulgarian authorities and charities in creating networks for social support. Supported by the International Child Protection Union and the Save the Children Fund, an organisation for child protection was established in Bulgaria in 1925. In Sofia, the first child health consulting unit was established, in which the first Bulgarian visiting nurse, who had trained in London, began her work. In 1926 some new child health units were opened in the outlying residential districts of Sofia, where infant mortality rates were very high. In this way visiting nurses began systematic home visits. They instructed mothers on modern hygiene and the norms of childrearing and child nutrition, and they supported them by giving them children’s clothes and other hygienic materials. In 1926 the first course for visiting nurses in Sofia was organised.

¹³ Sofia State archive, F. 360 (Archive the Nurse school in Sofia), op.1, a.e.62, l.46-49.

In the same year the head of the course, Bojana Christova, who was the first visiting nurse in Bulgaria, elaborated some rules concerning how to proceed in home visits, which could be used as a **case study** for students. Her advice, which regulated clothing, speech and behaviour on home visits, was based on her own experience:¹⁴

Personality, tone of speech and proper instruction are all preconditions for the success of a visiting nurse.

Have a smart outlook. A nurse dressed in a uniform will have more authority over mothers, more so than if she is dressed in colourful clothing withearrings, rings and suchlike ...

Be honest in what you are saying. Indifference will not attract the mother's attention. Be careful and tactful in your activities and logical in your speech.

It is important to select the material you will speak about, and to plan your activity.

The time for speaking depends on the necessity.

Do not leave until you have been in the visited home for at least fifteen minutes. Even in the most tidy home, you will find something to say.

The good nurse adjusts to the situation and gives advice that can be implemented.

Do not forget that every individual has to be treated separately.

Be interested in the personal life of the mother. Do not forget to ask questions about others members of the family. Be a friend to the mother but do not allow her to speak about other mothers.

Speaking with her, do not criticise the woman next door. Do not give occasion to speak about her.

Do show your empathy to a mother but also educate her to bear her destiny without protest.

Let her problems be expressed. Do search for the reasons, calm her and encourage her.

Do not promise financial help if you know that we are unable to give it.

Your kind behaviour is able to remove any transgression and to inspire in the mothers hope and belief in you.

Be careful and conciliatory, but also demanding.

¹⁴ See Bojana Christova, "Saveti kum sestrite posetitelki" (Advice to visiting nurses), *Sestra*, (V.2, 1926): 28

As we can see, the aim of Bojana Christova was to instruct visiting nurses on how to create a space of trust and security with the mothers, while preserving their authority as powerful professional women who were different from “ordinary” women even in terms of their outfits. Emotional communication was regulated. Female emotional closeness, empathy and friendship were required, but so too were professionalism, distance and control.

This balance was a precondition for successful home visiting practice. The first generation of visiting nurses came from the middle and lower-middle class, which was especially affected in the post-war crisis years. The personal documents of nurses concerning their personal and family situation, indicate that they found it difficult to take care of their families alongside their professional work. It was important to encourage them, in their professional status as women responsible for the health and welfare of young mothers and babies.

The case study includes such questions as:

1. Analyse the recommendations of Bojana Chrostova to the visiting nurses in Bulgaria.
2. Why did the home visits of visiting nurses need to have rules?
3. What were the similarities to the recommendations for home visiting practices in Victorian England?
4. How did visiting nurses establish their authority in the course of home visits?
5. How did they establish relationships of trust with the visited mothers and women?

Female Teachers – Advisors: Penetrating Homes in Villages

In the second half of the 1920s, many child health units were opened in urban areas. Their biopolitical measures – to reduce infant mortality and “help people to live”¹⁵ – made them important social institutions for the urban poor. In comparison to the urban space, the lack of health units and other health and social institutions in rural areas was obvious. How could homes in villages be visited if there were an insufficient number of doctors and nurses? Who could be the agent who was close to the young mothers and able to visit homes and talk to

¹⁵ Michel Foucault, *Trjabva da zashtitavame obshtestvoto* (We have to defend society), (Sofia: LIK, 2003).

the families? Who would visit regularly homes in rural areas and research the family situation? Who was prepared to undertake such work in villages?

In 1927 the Child Protection Union in Bulgaria began a year's course for female teachers, preparing them to work as volunteers, especially in the villages. Usually the participants in these courses were young female teachers from local village schools. During the course the female teachers covered various disciplines – school hygiene, the symptoms and treatment of tuberculosis, the symptoms of malaria, infant mortality, eugenics, children's rights, the anatomy and physiology of the female body, child tooth care, sport and tourism. A textbook especially for them was produced.¹⁶

The courses were meant to pass on elementary medical knowledge. The female teachers visited child hospitals and other child institutions in order to become acquainted with existing practices and hygiene standards. More than a thousand teachers were trained over the next ten years.¹⁷

In the villages the female teachers' advisors were supposed to visit homes and collect data about the living conditions of families and children; to spread hygiene and health knowledge among young girls, mothers and children; to organise hygiene soup kitchens for school children; and to decrease the influence of the old untrained midwives who tended to defend traditional practices of child rearing. Annual reports for all these activities were required by the central body of the Child Protection Union, some of which were published in its newspaper. The teachers visited families in order to observe living conditions, hygiene and nutrition. They asked pupils about their breakfast habits and instructed young mothers and girls. They had also to shave the hair of children to prevent the spread of typhus. In many villages they cooked for the children in soup kitchens.

The vice-president of the Bulgarian Child Protection Union, Konstanza Ljapcheva, recommended that female teachers and advisors develop a strong will, self-discipline, personal order and cleanliness, as well as a planned schedule of work to be done in the poorest villages. Only in this way, would a female teacher and advisor be able to gain the trust of villagers, to fulfil her tasks of teaching children and mothers and of opening soup kitchens for poor children.

¹⁶ Penka Georgieva – Petkova and Todor Zubov, *Rakovodstvo za uchitelki-savetnichki* (Guidebook for female teachers and advisors), (Sofia, 1933).

¹⁷ There were 5712 elementary schools in the villages of Bulgaria in the 1930s. See Konstanza Ljapcheva, "Zakrila na selskoto dete v Balgaria" (Protection of the peasant child in Bulgaria), *Nasheto dete*, (1942): 9-10.

In the 1930s female teachers and advisers managed to build a broad network for observing child health in the home, to spread modern standards of child rearing among mothers in the villages, and to enforce social control over the rural population. In their reports they told how they gained access to family homes, how they managed to communicate with mothers and how fathers were sceptical at the beginning but then tended to accept advice. Using the standards they had received instruction about, the female teachers and advisers presented in their reports images of rural homes in poverty, the lack of modern order and hygiene and their efforts to instruct mothers.

Through the work in the villages of female teachers and advisers, undertaken in tandem with the work of the visiting nurses and “Samarjanka” volunteers in urban areas, home visit practice had been generally established in Bulgaria by the late 1920s as a female activity of professional visiting nurses and trained volunteers. They elaborated and established rules and practices of communication to the poor population in town peripheries and distant villages and traced the way for visiting practices as a key method of professional social work in the 1930s.

Questions for students:

1. Why did the Bulgarian Child Protection Union need to prepare women separately for home visits in the villages?
2. Why were female teachers chosen?
3. What were their main duties as female teachers and advisers? What personal qualities did they have to develop?
4. What were the most important social problems in rural areas in the Balkans at that time?
5. What did female teachers and advisers manage to do for the situation of children and mothers in the villages?

The Social High School for Women of the Bulgarian Women’s Union

In 1932, the Bulgarian Women’s Union opened a female preparatory course for social work, which became in the following year a Social High School for women. It was based on the model of Alice Salomon’s Women’s Social Academy in Berlin. Bulgarian jurist Rayna Petkova was sent by the Women’s Union in 1929 to Berlin in order to study at the academy and then implant

her knowledge in Bulgaria. Returning in 1932, she gave lectures about social work methods in Germany. She translated texts by Alice Salomon and other German authors and published some articles about professional social work. At the newly opened Social High School for women in Sofia, she became a lecturer on social work methods. She underlined the importance of personal contact with the needy and the need to collect data, create relationships of trust and support during home visits.¹⁸

Rayna Petkova wrote that the social worker must have some professional skills. The social worker had to be capable of observing the social situation; she must have the courage to take decisions, hygienic, juridical and ethical knowledge, and knowledge of the legislation and institutional base for social work. She had to possess also the skills to speak well, to be kind, to have a warm and responsive heart, to know the psychological characteristics of people in authority and others.¹⁹

According to the curricula at the Social High School for Women, the students regularly visited poor homes on the outskirts of Sofia in order to observe them and to study how to report on the social situation of families. Women graduates of the school were prepared for social work practice; they knew that it was important to the people and that they could improve their lives and change society. One of them wrote:

“(...) Armed with the necessary knowledge acquired after two years of hard work, the alumni of the Social High School for Women proceed to the implementation of their skills under extremely severe external conditions but with a burning internal flame for real social work.

The theory time is all over now. The thought in the mind is clear – to heal the pains of society, to educate and re-educate friends and relatives – certainly a hard but noble task. There is no place for delicacy, for sentimental sighs, no, the harsh law of life is all around. When taking her duties in hand a social worker faces the daily round of those nearby who are living in grief and misery and who are only sometimes lit up with small delights. They want, seek, struggle, fall in desperation, yield... It is the social worker's duty to help those people, to make their lives less painful and not as dark. She

¹⁸ Rayna Petkova, “Metodi na obshestvenoto podpomagane v Germanija – predi idvaneto na Hitler” (Methods of social assistance in Germany – before Hitler took power), in *Medikopedagogicheskoto spisanie*, V.2, 1935, 4-5.

¹⁹ Rayna Petkova, *Socialnata rabota v Germanija* (Social work in Germany), (Sofia, 1933).

must save them from getting enraged and losing faith, she must infuse faith into their souls, bring them to a new life, better and more humane. Undoubtedly it is a hard task but the strength of mind for its implementation is solid. The mind is armed with knowledge, the determination to stop human suffering is unshakable, the awareness of occupational and personal duty is above all (...)"²⁰

The Social High School for Women contributed greatly to the establishment of the methods of social work. In ten years, about 500 students were trained. Many of them started to work in social institutions or in municipality social services. They created personal contacts with many women by means of regular home visits. Some of these visits and contacts were used also by political or women's organisation activists to spread political ideology among the visited women housewives or workers.²¹

1. The student's assessment of home visits can be used to compare past ideologies with the use of present theories and concepts about what can be done, with questions like:
2. What motivated Social High School graduates to work, according to the description above?
3. What was new in the behaviour of a trained social worker in comparison to the visiting nurses or female volunteers?
4. What had a female professional social worker to change according to the description?
5. Which words in the text present the "power over life" (Michel Foucault) of a female social worker at that time?
6. What was different from the "social maternity" ideology?

The Municipality Female Social Advisors: The Power to Help or to Deprive?

In 1934, municipality social services in Bulgaria were reorganized. Female municipality social workers – social advisors – replaced, in Sofia, the former commissions which included municipality council members and priests. The first eight female social advisors led by a senior female social advisor were

²⁰ Ana Mancheva, "From the practical educational work of the social high schools for women". Medikopedagogičesko spisanie (1942).

²¹ See Vera Nacheva, Vremeto e v nas, spomeni I razmisli (The time is into us, memoirs and thoughts), p. 67 – 68.

hired in the municipality in the same year. Some years later their number were doubled. According to municipality regulations, each female social advisor was responsible for a part of the city.

The female social advisor became a key figure in the social assistance system. She had to visit regularly the families in her residential district, to collect and establish data about poor families. She added the data to index cards concerning poor families. She also assisted poor people who needed help to fill in the forms for various kinds of social support (social institutions, financial support etc.). She proposed a decision for each case notified to the head of the department. According to the Sofia municipality regulations, she had to fulfil her work with “empathy, devotion and love”.²² The female social advisor had a professional uniform and a free tram card to use during her visits.²³ In 1941, a new position was introduced in the hierarchy of the social service office: a senior female social advisor, or instructor. This change was explained in terms of the great importance of the work.²⁴ The senior social advisor (instructor) had to have at least five years’ work experience. The social advisor’s occupation came to be accepted as a post for life.

The first municipality social advisors were visiting nurses; later on, Sofia municipality hired graduates of the Social High School for Women. The female social advisors were also involved in the social support work of district councils, which coordinated the social assistance activities of the state, municipality and private charity organisations. The council included representatives of state authorities, the municipality and private charity organisations, in order in order to ensure the fair distribution of social support among the urban poor.²⁵

As the case of the poor citizens’ petition in Sofia in 1939 shows, poor families tended to accept the authority of the female social advisors, but their mutual communication remained a sensitive field and trust had to be negotiated constantly. Home visits were an important place for this negotiation, where people needed respect and recognition.

²² Municipality rules for the social assistance department, 1939.

²³ Municipality rules for the social assistance department, 1939.

²⁴ State Archive – Sofia, Fond N 1k, opis 4, a.e.1088, l.108.

²⁵ *Pravilnik za nachina na rabota pri obshestvenoto podpomagane v Bulgaria* (Rules governing social assistance in Bulgaria), Central State Archive, F. 588, op.1, a.e.90, l.1-5.

Questions for students:

1. What was the position of a female social adviser in the municipality social service?
2. What were her duties, powers and competences?
3. What expectations were placed on her, according to the municipality regulations?

Conclusion

In the period 1915 – 1939 women created a large space for various activities of social support, which became legitimate places for speaking about social problems. In the 1930s the activities of female volunteers and professionals existed in tandem. Samaritan women, visiting nurses, teacher/advisors, municipality social advisors, students of the social high school made the home visit a common practice where power and trust were negotiated. Women of diverse social and educational backgrounds took part in these activities, crossing class and spatial borders.

As female work, it was based on the social maternity ideology, demanding from professional and voluntary social workers a devotion to their work, empathy and specific communication skills. For the home visit to be accepted by people in their homes, the voluntary and professional social workers needed the authority and backing of their institutions. To ensure that their advice be heard, they needed also to be different in their outlook, manner of speaking and behaviour from women in both upper and lower classes.

Home visit practice changed the topography of social regulation in urban and rural spaces in Bulgaria. In the 1930s, female social worker and volunteers were accepted as key figures of modern social work and biopolitics, changing the public image of women in Bulgaria.

The power “over life” – biopolitics, appeared after the eighteenth century in western Europe as a new power to sustain or retard the optimisation of the life of the population. It made possible a modern “administration of life”, which concerned such social problems as health, sanitation, the birth rate, longevity and race.²⁶ It needed new social techniques and rationales, ones that differed from the disciplinary tools. The “administration of life” needed regula-

²⁶ Mitchell Dean, *Governmentality, Power and Rule in Modern Society* (London, Open University Press, 1999), 99.

tive social technologies. These were developed in health policy, social hygiene, welfare and social work, in municipal services, in educational, health and social institutions. The social technologies needed also trained persons who were able to spread and establish them among the population norms and practices. Family work, case work, home visits and other methods were developed initially in charity organisations and then by trained professionals. International exchange, meetings and conferences made possible the intensive spread of these methods and practices. In the 1920s, major international congresses and meetings took place: the International Congresses for Child Protection, the first international conference on social work and others, all of which established important international networks.

In the Balkan region and particularly in Bulgaria, biopolitical measures were initiated in the early twentieth century and were intensified after World War I. It was an important aspect of the modernisation process, whereby the region wished catch up with the advanced countries. As part of this modernisation process, health policy, social hygiene, welfare and social work became key practices of the “power over life” in the 1930s. By means of international contacts, the methods and practices of modern social work were adopted in Bulgaria and other Balkan countries. It was a long process of establishing new norms, institutions and procedures, which fundamentally changed Balkan societies.

In the field of biopolitics, women played a very important role in different ways. They were the subjects of biopolitical measures concerning natal policies and services and combating infant mortality. On the other hand, women were also key agents in biopolitics, as visiting nurses and charity and professional social workers. They were the people who encountered poverty and were able to enter people’s homes and negotiate social support. The organised women’s movement contributed to the development of social work education and encouraged women to join this profession.

The role of women as agents of biopolitics could be seen as an element in a new patriarchal gender order in which men took the power positions. An evaluation of the real place of women in biopolitics would require detailed research, with the evidence being the documentation left by institutions and by social workers themselves.

We conclude with a final set of questions for students:

1. What was the place of women in the techniques of “power over life”?
2. Compile a list of the expected personal qualities of women engaged in voluntary and professional social work during the era. Which qualities received particular emphasis?
3. How were women of diverse social backgrounds trained to overcome difficulties and to work under difficult circumstances?
4. How did home visits become a common practice?
5. How did these practices change the place of women in society in the period 1910 – 1940?
6. What was the role of the women’s organisations?
7. What was the role of international communication among women in the establishment of these practices and an educational and professional ethos?

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Human Reproduction Issues in Social Work

Jurate Gudliauskaite-Godvade

Abstract

In this article the concept of human reproduction is presented as socially constructed and politically contested. Two different approaches to human reproduction population control and reproductive health are discussed. Much of the discussion employs a gender lens. Although social work is not the principal professional interest group in matters of human reproduction, this article advocates for social work interest in the promotion of reproductive health through core ethical principles to which social workers subscribe. The issues concerning reproductive justice covered in this article include forced sterilisation and the use of assisted reproductive technologies (ART).

The goal of this article is to provide teachers of social work with some ideas on teaching human reproduction issues to social work students. Despite the fact that social work is not the principal professional interest group in matters of human reproduction, Lena Dominelli¹ remarks that traditionally social workers held key roles in working with children and families, where questions about fertility, pregnancy, childbirth, childlessness and family networks have been discussed in the context of social problems that they seek to address. Eric Blyth² notes that most reported social work activity in human reproduction has focused on HIV/AIDS, infertility and assisted conception, adolescent and teen pregnancy, “high risk” pregnancy, and sex selection. Eric Blyth³ points out that the general notion that social workers frequently act as “the conscience of the community” according to the International Federation of Social Workers, is the case which can be made for social work to be concerned about reproductive health – and, more specifically, to advocate for social work interest in the promotion of reproductive health through core ethical principles to which social workers subscribe as elucidated in the Ethics of Social Work, Statement of Principles approved by the International Federation of Social Workers and

¹ Lena Dominelli, “Glasses-in’: problematising women’s reproductive rights under the new reproductive technologies,” in *Critical practice in social work*, eds. Robert Adams, Lena Dominelli and Malcolm Payne, 72-80. (London: Palgrave, 2002).

² Eric Blyth, “Inequalities in reproductive health: what is the challenge for social work and how can it respond?” *Journal of Social Work* 8 (2008): 213–232.

³ *Ibid.*

International Association of Schools of Social Work in 2004. Solidarity and joint action can be adapted by the social work community at both national and international levels through collaboration with other groups and organisations to promote reproductive health “and to make freedom of reproductive choice a reality rather than a rhetorical illusion”.⁴

Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Human Reproduction

Human reproduction is a large concept. It covers social practices, experiences and structures that affect how individuals, communities and populations reproduce. There are a variety of ways to approach the topic. A prevailing biomedical approach to human reproduction often obscures its socially constructed and politically contested nature. To see human reproduction as a socially constructed concept means to examine how its boundaries are socially constructed in such a way so as to become real for social actors.

Faye Ginsberg and Rayna Rapp⁵ defined human reproduction as “events throughout the human and especially female life-cycle related to ideas and practices surrounding fertility, birth and childcare, including the ways in which these figure into understandings of social as cultural renewal”. Reproductive events are critical at both the local and the global levels for the various groups of actors involved in the processes and outcomes of reproduction: the state, nation, community, household and individual. Reproductive strategies, interests and decisions are the sites of contestation and negotiation within these levels between men and women, different groups of women, states and individuals, nations and states. Within each group or category, there are also differential interests influenced by the type of market economy, the form of government, class or occupational position, religious beliefs, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and so forth.

There are a variety of ways in which individual women, either singly or collectively, act in ways to “control” their reproductive situations. Fertility control can be viewed as a constant process of ongoing decision making and fateful events in individual and collective lives, that always exists within specific political, economic, social and cultural contexts. Angus McLaren⁶ points out

⁴ Ibid., 225.

⁵ Faye Ginsberg and Rayna Rapp, “The politics of reproduction.” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 20, (1991): 311–343.

⁶ Angus MacLaren, *A history of contraception from Antiquity to the present day* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).

that reproductive decisions are of greater significance to women than to men. That does not mean that men individually or collectively representing the community or the state are not interested in or not affected by fertility decisions and policies. Rather it stresses that women's bodies are the key sites of human reproduction, subject to serious health risks and ideological directives, and so that women have a greater stake in how reproductive decisions are negotiated and executed.

Anouka van Eerdewijk⁷ points out that population control and reproductive health are two different approaches to human reproduction. Population control policies are formulated in relationship to demographic problems. During the late 1950s, the international community was concerned about the rapidly increasing population, and the importance of fertility control measures to control population growth, and particularly in developing countries. In the mid-1980s reproductive issues became articulated within the discourse of self-determination and individual rights, rather than focusing solely on population control and demographics.⁸ Feminists argue that the way the population control perspective defines the problem and the solution makes women fertility "factors" instead of actors. Moreover the biomedical and top-down demographic approach pays little attention to the social relations of power affecting human reproduction. This leads to the promotion of mainly technical interventions over which women have little control. Advocates of the reproductive health perspective argue that it is not demographic objectives but women's health and bodily autonomy that should be the concern. Because human reproduction is closely linked to sexuality, reproductive health also requires sexual health. Reproductive rights claim women's rights to make decisions concerning reproduction and encompass the right to the highest attainable standard of sexual and reproductive health; the freedom to decide when, if, with whom and how to express one's sexuality; as well as the freedom to decide on the number, timing, spacing of one's children; the right to regulate one's fertility safely and effectively; the right to understand and enjoy one's sexuality and the right to make these decisions free of discrimination, coercion and violence.⁹

⁷ Anouka Van Eerdewijk, "How sexual and reproductive rights can divide and unite." *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 8, no. 4, (2001): 421–439.

⁸ UN, 2003, cited in Baker Maureen. "Restructuring reproduction: international and national pressures". *Journal of Sociology* 44, (2008): 65–81.

⁹ Appelman and Reyoso, 1994; Dixon-Muller, 1993a, cited in Anouka Van Eerdewijk, "How sexual and reproductive rights can divide and unite." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 8, no. 4, (2001): 421–439.

Heather Widdows¹⁰ emphasises that it is not easy to define reproductive rights – they are absent from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and at a European level there is no consensus on what reproductive rights are and who is responsible for providing such rights. Even so, everybody agrees on the importance of reproductive health. Heather Widdows¹¹ notices that five of the fundamental issues in reproductive rights in the contemporary context are abortion, adoption, birth rate, teenage pregnancy and the rights of minority. She argues that it is important to note that women’s reproductive rights are linked to other rights – political, social and economic rights. But reproductive rights are central to any concept of women’s rights. For example, women’s rights to economic stability depend upon whether a woman can postpone childbirth (if she wishes) until she is established in a career or stable relationship (rights to reproductive autonomy) as well as upon social situations and institutions (such as the state provision of childcare and social assumptions about the role of women).

Personal Desires and National Goals Related to Human Reproduction

Fertility control is of great interest to both nation states and individuals, but their goals are not always the same. Nations have been interested in both limiting and increasing population size at different points in their histories. Fertility control issues at the state level are mediated by nationalist interests and contested by individual citizens. States, both on the local and national levels have great interest in their population characteristics. For both pragmatic and ideological reasons, a country’s population is a critical resource concerning its quantity, quality and vitality. In many countries, explicit policies are implemented when the population is determined by those having power to be too large or too small, or in some other way, a “problem”. The introduction of state natalist policies often have unintended consequences and/or differential effects on the various groups the policies are supposed to affect. Natalism or pro-birth is a belief that promotes human reproduction; it may comprise pro-natalist policies, that is, national efforts to increase population, or anti-natalist policies, that is, national efforts to decrease population, usually by reducing the birth

¹⁰ Heather Widdows, “Introduction”, in *Women’s reproductive rights (Women’s rights in Europe)*, eds. Heather Widdows, Itziar Alkorta Idiakez and Aitziber Emaldi Ciri3n, (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 1-16.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

rate. Natalist policies may be introduced overtly as in the case of China (the one-child policy) or Romania (a series of coercive measures to achieve higher fertility, with severe restrictions on access to abortion and economic sanctions on childless persons), or covertly, as in the case of the United States (a pro-natalist policy).

Birth rates have been declining since the nineteenth century, and are influenced by industrialisation, urbanisation and the development of the welfare state.¹² Juliet C. W. Mitchell¹³ remarks that in the late nineteenth century Western societies experienced simultaneously a sharp decline in fertility and the rise of feminism, which as well as its dominant struggle for the vote, stressed the urgency of effective birth control. She argues there are many interrelated and different causes and that there exists a relationship between declining fertility and the intensification of demands for the equal rights of women. Declining fertility is related to improvements in contraception and access to legal abortion.¹⁴ Today's demographic transition, the social position of women and feminist political movements are intimately connected. More competitive labour markets, low-wage work, rising housing costs, child-care dilemmas, and concerns about gender equity and marriage instability are discouraging some people to have any children or encouraging others to limit their family size. These economic and social pressures shape people's choices concerning their reproduction issues. Delayed and reduced fertility may be beneficial to women's employment and self-development but still may be perceived as a looming crisis for some nations.¹⁵

Violation of Reproduction Rights

Reproductive justice means the right to have a child as well as the right not to have a child. Nidhi Trehan and Isabel Crowhurst¹⁶ remark that historically, concerning reproductive rights, women's bodies are critically contested sites of

¹² Beaujot, 2000, cited in Maureen Baker, "Restructuring reproduction: international and national pressures". *Journal of Sociology* 44, (2008): 65–81.

¹³ Juliet C. Mitchell. "Procreative mothers (sexual difference) and child free sisters (gender): feminism and fertility." *European Journal of Women's Studies* 11, (2004): 415–426.

¹⁴ Baker, 2008.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Nidhi Trehan and Isabel Crowhurst, "Minority groups and reproductive rights," in *Women's reproductive rights: Women's rights in Europe*, ed. Heather Widdows, Itziar Alkorta Idiakez and Aitziber Emaldi Ciri6n (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 111–116.

governance and regulation by the state and other societal bodies. They note that though reproductive issues affect most women to some degree, the right to exercise reproductive choice is determined to a large extent by class and ethnicity. Women with low income often depend on the government concerning their reproduction issues. And women from various ethnic minorities can be disadvantaged in exercising their choices concerning reproduction because of cultural constraints or because of prejudice from the side of those authorities who may govern their bodies, for example policymakers, medical practitioners and social workers.¹⁷ There are, for example, issues of medical practice, including the forced sterilisation of women. Forced sterilisation is the process of permanently ending someone's ability to reproduce without his or her consent. Historically sterilisation, mainly the sterilisation of women, was used long before the laws of sterilisation were passed in many countries, primarily on a medical indication, from the mid-nineteenth century when safe sterilisation techniques were introduced.¹⁸ In the twentieth century sterilisation became a tool of social policy and sometimes of oppressive regimes. Nowadays it is used against national or international minorities like Roma people. In the 1920s and 1930s, sterilisation laws were passed in many states of the United States, in Switzerland, in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway, Estonia, Iceland, Mexico (Vera Cruz), Cuba, former Czechoslovakia, former Yugoslavia, Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary and Turkey.¹⁹ Throughout the years, sterilisation has been denounced for having been performed illegally or unethically: for example, the Swedish case – a bill of sterilisation was enacted in 1934 and expanded in 1941; both bills were concerned with the “feeble-minded” and “asocial” members of society.²⁰ The parliamentary debate concerning sterilisation laws in Sweden began in 1922; the public discourse concerned racial hygiene, seeking to enhance what was referred to as the quality of the Swedish population. Three groups were prohibited from marrying under the Swedish laws: the mentally deficient, the mentally ill and epileptics. In 1933-1934, the eugenic argumentation was replaced by a primarily social one, though it was clearly linked with hereditary genetics.²¹ The central claim from the social perspective

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Lene Koch, “Eugenic sterilization in Scandinavia.” *The European Legacy* 11, no. 3, (2006): 299–309.

¹⁹ Nikolas Rose, “The politics of life itself.” *Theory, Culture & Society* 18, no. 6, 2001: 1–30.

²⁰ Alaberto Spektorowski and Elisabet Mizrahi. “Eugenics and the welfare state in Sweden: the politics of social margins and the idea of a productive society.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 39, (2004) 333–352.

²¹ Ibid.

was that a child, due to one or both parents' "inferiority", would grow up in an unfavourable environment and would not receive the care and upbringing necessary to develop into a full member of society. It was regarded better not to be born and this was considered a humanitarian approach. The expanded law of 1941 regulated voluntary sterilisation and was characterised by the extension of eugenics indicators to include "antisocial" elements. If the prerequisites for eugenic or social sterilisation were present, the operation could be performed without the patient's consent, if he or she was considered incapable of exercising his or her legal rights. In Sweden the ideas that had fostered eugenics were discarded in the late 1960s, but the policy of sterilisation and its implementation were first officially criticised in 1967. Involuntary sterilisation in Sweden was prohibited only in 1975. Nidhi Trehan and Isabel Crowhurst²² noted that Sweden's sterilisation policies led to the sterilisation of over 63,000 citizens, the majority of whom were women (over 95%). The majority of those sterilised were classified as "inferior", and the grounds for sterilisation included "unmistakable Gypsy features, psychopathy and a vagabond life."²³ Up until the late 1990s no acknowledgment, apology or compensation was offered to the victims of sterilisation abuse. In 1997, reports exposing these practices began to appear. And in 1999 compensation for the victims of forced sterilisation was approved by the Swedish Parliament.

In 2002, the International Criminal Court recognised forced sterilisation as a crime against humanity if the action is part of a widespread or systematic practice.²⁴ Lene Koch²⁵ warns, however, that even though "people are no longer sterilised for eugenic reasons, mentally retarded individuals are prevented from having children by a large array of other than surgical methods." This means, she notes, that the goals of "eugenic" sterilisation are still sought and attained, although by other means. There are now a multitude of professional guidelines dedicated to help distinguish between forced and voluntary sterilisation, wrongful and non-existent access to sterilisation procedures, and so forth. They are usually based on a list of indicators and the use of checks and balances, which should be straightforward to use and respect. Nevertheless, violations

²² Nidhi Trehan and Isabel Crowhurst, 2006.

²³ Glasse, 1998, cited in Trehan and Crowhurst, 2006.

²⁴ Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998.

²⁵ Lene Koch, 2006: 308

are still taking place: for example, the case of the reproduction rights violation of Roma women in Slovakia. In late 2002, a research project conducted by the Centre for Reproductive Rights (New York) in collaboration with the Centre for Civil and Human Rights, or Poradna, a Slovak human rights organisation, and Ina Zoon, an expert consultant on minority rights issues, uncovered widespread violations of Roma women's human rights, specifically reproductive rights, in eastern Slovakia. The violations included the following: coerced and forced sterilisation, misinformation on reproductive health matters, racially discriminatory access to health-care resources and treatment, physical and verbal abuse by medical providers and the denial of access to medical records.²⁶

Social workers should show their willingness to confront the embedded racism and elitism that bar low-income and minority women from exercising their reproductive rights. There should be more awareness of the ways minority women and white women can differ in their definition of reproductive justice.

Social Aspects of Assisted Reproductive Technologies

It is crucial to incorporate into social work education discussions on the impact of assisted reproductive technologies (ART) on conceptions of motherhood and parenthood. Women and men need to be involved in the advocacy groups that best represent their positions in these debates because with knowledge women and men can be empowered to act consciously concerning the motherhood and parenthood that they deem most appropriate.

Lena Dominelli²⁷ points out that social work expertise must be accessible to women and men undergoing fertility treatments or engaging in surrogacy arrangements. Stacy A. Hammons²⁸ remarks that reproductive assistance has a long history: for example, surrogacy has been used for centuries. The use of ART became more common after 1978 when the first baby was born as a result of in vitro fertilisation. Later on, there was an explosion of research and clinical practice in the area of ART. These technologies include practices in which some part of conception occurs outside the woman's body (the production

²⁶ CRR/Poradna, 2003: 13

²⁷ Dominelli, 2002.

²⁸ Stacy A. Hammons, "Assisted reproductive technologies: changing conceptions of motherhood?" *Affilia* 23, (2008) 270–280.

and retrieval of egg or sperm, fertilisation). This includes in vitro fertilisation (IVF), gamete (gametes are reproductive cells — eggs and sperm) intra-fallopian transfer (GIFT), donor insemination and surrogacy.

Stacy A. Hammons²⁹ argues that ART have fragmented motherhood into social, gestational and genetic parts, giving rise to arguments as to which, if any, of these various aspects of motherhood primacy should be given.³⁰ Lori B. Andrews³¹ remarks that ART make it possible for a child to have up to five parents – a sperm donor, egg donor, surrogate who carries the pregnancy and the couple who raise the child. The identity of the legal mother may be an issue when ART are used. By separating the biological from the social, ART have the potential to challenge the typical conception of motherhood, that is, one based on biology, by de-emphasising genetic ties and elevating the importance of social ones.³² The societal response to ART use is mixed. Some feminists have, for example, been in favour of such a shift.³³ Others have argued in favour of biological bonds between children and mother.³⁴ Still others have warned that ART may lessen the woman's control over reproductive functions because ART further medicalises the process of conception, pregnancy and birth.

Stacy A. Hammons³⁵ argues that practitioners must be aware of judicial opinion in cases involving ART and women must be made aware of the legal risks if they choose to participate in assisted reproduction. For example, intended mothers need to be aware of their tenuous legal rights if they use a traditional surrogate who then contests the surrogacy agreement. The term traditional surrogate is used to refer to a woman who is impregnated with the sperm of a man who is not an intimate partner and who is the genetic mother of the child she carries; the gestational surrogate is used to refer to a woman who has no genetic connection to the child she gives birth to. Stacy A. Hammons³⁶ stresses this knowledge is critical if social work puts emphasis on the empowerment and self-determination of clients. Research has documented the emotional and

²⁹ . Ibid.

³⁰ Shapiro et al, 2001, cited in Hammons, 2008.

³¹ Lori B. Andrews, "How is technology changing the meaning of motherhood for Western women." in Widdows et al. 2006, 124–139.

³² Andrews, 1989 in Hammons 2008.

³³ Firestone, 1971; Oakley, 1974; Ruddick, 1982 cited in Hammons 2008.

³⁴ Rapping, 1990 cited in Hammons, 2008.

³⁵ Hammons, 2008.

³⁶ Ibid.

social issues involved in family formation via ART as well as the psychological effects of participating in such technologies.³⁷ Social work must meet those issues and examine the impact that personal decisions have on broader society.

Lori B. Andrews³⁸ notes that technology has dramatically changed social options and social roles for Western women. The advent of contraception allowed women to control the timing of their pregnancies and liberated them to pursue education and a career before motherhood. ART gives opportunities to have babies in older age and even newer genetic technologies promise women choices over the types of children they bear. Lori B. Andrews³⁹ lists the risks to Western women in the use of ART as the following:

Inappropriate experimentation on women (the history of ART has been a history of unethical experimentation on women, because women are led to believe that the experimental technology is well established, even when only a few births have occurred based on these technologies).

Viewing women merely as vessels to produce healthy babies, or in the future, embryos or foetuses for stem therapies (there appears to be a growing social interest in subjecting a woman's pregnancy to public control; Attorney Carol Beth Barnett⁴⁰ remarks that a pregnant woman's life and her lifestyle and medical options become subject to public control and scrutiny, and a pregnant woman's right to bodily integrity and autonomy receives minimal respect: for example, in the United States there are laws being debated to prevent certain women from being mothers at all).

Commodifying reproduction by commercialisation (for example, in the United States, the ART industry has an annual revenue of \$4 billion; according to Assisted Reproductive Technology Surveillance in the United States (2005) a total of 134,260 ART procedures were reported in 2005 and these procedures resulted in 38,910 live-birth deliveries and 52,041 infants).

Changing societal norms to devalue differences among people and discriminate against people based on their gene types (more and more prenatal techniques are available, which may heighten social expectations that women should use them; Saxton⁴¹ states that "it is ironic... that just when disabled

³⁷ J.C. Ciccarelli and Beckman, 2005; Golombok, Cook, Bish and Murray, 1995; Park, 2004, Ragone, 1994; Shapiro et al., 2001, cited in Hammons, 2008.

³⁸ Andrews, 2006.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Carol Beth Barnett 1993, cited in Andrews, 2006.

⁴¹ Saxton 1995, cited in Andrews, 2006: 143.

citizens have achieved so much, the new reproductive and genetic technologies are promising to eliminate their kind – people with Down Syndrome, spina bifida, muscular dystrophy, sickle cell anemia and hundred of other conditions”; and some couples have a desire to use technologies to predetermine a baby’s sex and some researchers warn about the effect on society concerning that desire, for example in India, China, Bangladesh and Taiwan many couples abort when they learn the foetus is a girl – in one study of 8000 abortions in India, 7999 were female foetuses, and this is a clear sign of “gyne”cide.⁴²

It is necessary to encourage discussions in social work education concerning the manner in which ART may be both liberating and oppressive. For example, medical personnel reinscribe “normative” family and marital statuses by not accepting single or lesbian women as candidates for the procedure, but only married heterosexual couples. Although infertility may be experienced by women of minority and poorer women at higher rates than white middle-class women, it is the latter group that has access to infertility treatments by virtue of their insurance benefits or personal income. Surrogacy, especially, can be criticised as a way for men to retain a biological connection to their child, while paying for the reproductive services of a woman who is typically of lower class status and often of a minority background.

Teaching Human Reproduction

Topics on human reproduction issues can be integrated into teaching and learning about human rights, social work ethics, child and family social work, and gender in social work within the social work curriculum. Learning and teaching about human reproduction issues may sensitise social work students to, and raise their awareness of, the socio-cultural aspects of reproductive health in contemporary society. The following classroom activities and accompanying case examples should facilitate student interaction with the subject matter.

Classroom Activity One: Ask students in the classroom to write down their free associations and some key words about human reproduction, reproductive justice, women’s reproductive rights, forced sterilisation and assisted reproductive technologies. Suggest that they discuss their findings in small groups of 2-3 persons.

⁴² Jones, 1992, cited in Andrews, 2006.

Classroom Activity Two: Create a picture in students' minds of the issues surrounding human reproduction as a socially constructed concept. Organise classroom discussions in groups of 3-4 persons with questions that help to reveal a concept of human reproduction as socially constructed and linked with socio-cultural practices. For example: consider an idea to have a baby. Where does this idea come from? Whose opinions are taken into account? Who is considering having a baby? Who evaluates the characteristics of the woman who is having a baby? Did she want the baby? Did she plan to have the baby at a certain time in her life? What are the options if she cannot conceive naturally? What are the options if she does not want to keep the baby? Should she be married? Should she be of a certain age? Employed? Supported by a man? Supported by the government? How does society go about communicating these notions to individuals? How do individuals contest or accept ideas concerning having the baby from their friends, family, the media, the politicians, schools, religion, and so forth. The answers to these questions may well be complex ones. Moreover, historically, these questions may have taken a different form and the answers may have differed. People from other cultures might also ask different questions concerning human reproduction and come up with different social arrangements accordingly.

Case Study One: Gender Ideologies in Human Reproduction

Milgran and Mika have six children. Milgran is 27 years old and her husband Mika is 35 years old. They both are unemployed and recently moved into a social apartment, because their previous flat was too expensive for the family to maintain. A local social worker has been visiting the family once a week in order to help Milgran manage the family's budget, take proper care of the children and keep the apartment tidy. Mika has just been asked to visit the unemployment office where she will obtain unemployment benefit and assistance in finding a job. Milgran is nine months pregnant with the couple's seventh child. During the counselling at a child welfare agency, Milgran was informed about sterilisation as a family planning measure. She was asked to consider being sterilised after the birth of her seventh child. In your opinion, might this be a violation of her reproductive rights? And what is the significance of the focus on women's behaviour and attitudes with little attention being given to men's behaviour and attitudes?

Case Study Two: Cultural Differences in Reproduction Strategies

Liz is a 29-year-old French woman and she is married to a Chinese man named Kai, who is 44 years old. They met five years ago in China when Liz was on a business trip. A few months later she returned to China on holiday, and Liz and Kai decided to marry. After their marriage they moved to France, where they have been living for three years. This year Liz became pregnant with their first child. In the course of prenatal care Liz found out that she is going to have girl. Liz is afraid to tell her husband Kai, because she has heard from Kai many times that their first child must definitely be a boy. Liz is afraid that he will be very dissatisfied when he finds out that the child is going to be a girl and that he might ask for an abortion, even an illegal one. In what way would you, as a social worker, encourage Liz to manage this situation?

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PART III – TEACHING MATERIAL

A Photo Album About Women’s History of Social Work: The Significance of Visual Sources in Social History Research and Education*

Adriane Feustel

Abstract

The subject of the article is a photo album of the oldest school for social work in Germany and one of the oldest in the world, now the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences. The photo album is presented as a source for research and training on the history of social work and education. The collection of photographs is explored in general with regard to the represented objects as well as to the way the objects are shown. An overview is given of the different aspects which are represented: the staff of women pioneers and prominent social reformers, students of different decades, the social life of the school and social projects in which the students were trained practically. Some of the photographs are commented upon and interpreted in detail for a better understanding of the manifold issues involved. The focus of interpretation lies on the message of the photographs, the view of the social pioneers, as well as their portrayal and the portrayal of students and especially clients. Finally, there is a reflection on the specific point of view shared by the photographer and the social worker, which should help students to become acquainted with the history of social work in a broad cognitive sense and in an emotional way.

An extraordinary document of the Alice Salomon Archives of the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences in Berlin will be presented below. The document is a photo album, but it is not the standard album normally found in a school’s archives containing photographs of everyday life at the school. It is much more than that, because it not only contains pictures of the oldest school for social work in Germany and one of the oldest in the world – the Social

* Edited version of a lecture, held at the European Social Sciences History Conference, Amsterdam 2006.

Women's School (Soziale Frauenschule)¹ – but it also presents images of social work practice. Such images are very rare, and so the album would be important for this reason alone. But even this does not explain the album's special value and its special attraction.

This can be said: The photo album tells the history of social work or, more precisely, of social women's work in its beginnings around 1900 when the modern social work profession was born as a profession for women. One must say that the profession was created and developed by women in association with the women's movement. That is to say, it developed in the context of each woman's own emancipation and of women's emancipation in general, which was an international development.

It is not only the fact of telling this exciting history that makes the album an interesting and stimulating source. It is the album's special way of communicating this history that makes it such a precious source for research and education. I will try to give an impression of both aspects.

The rather large album (it measures 40 cm by 30 cm) does not impress by its physical appearance. It is of simple design, being covered only by coloured paper. It contains just eighteen sheets with forty pictures all together. Some of them are professional photos but mostly they are snapshots. The sizes of the photos vary. The earliest photos were taken before 1900, the last ones around 1929.

¹ The forerunner of the Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences was the Soziale Frauenschule – Social Women's School – with two-year training courses for social work. It was founded by Alice Salomon in 1908. The Alice Salomon University celebrated its 100th anniversary in October 2008. Predecessors of the Soziale Frauenschule were the one-year training courses for social work which started in Berlin in 1899. Almost at the same time, in 1898, the Summer School of Philanthropy started in New York, the later New York School of Social Work (since 1941: Columbia University School of Social Work.) and in 1899 the first school in the Netherlands, School voor Maatschappelijk Werk, (today Domein Maatschappij en Recht / School of Social Work and Law at the Hogeschool van Amsterdam, University of Applied Sciences). Cf. Alice Salomon, *Education for Social Work: A Sociological Interpretation Based on an International Survey* (Zürich: Verlag für Recht und Gesellschaft, 1937), 191-193, 238-239, with reference to the history of the Alice Salomon School see Adriane Feustel and Gerd Koch, ed., *100 Jahre Soziales Lehren und Lernen: Von der Sozialen Frauenschule zur Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin* (Berlin: Schibri-Verlag, 2008) [with an Introduction in English].

The album consists of two parts, the first part shows the school for social work, the second one shows projects of social work practice. The two parts are of equal length. Perhaps this was intended to show the balance between theoretical and practical education. The album was a donation to Alice Salomon.²

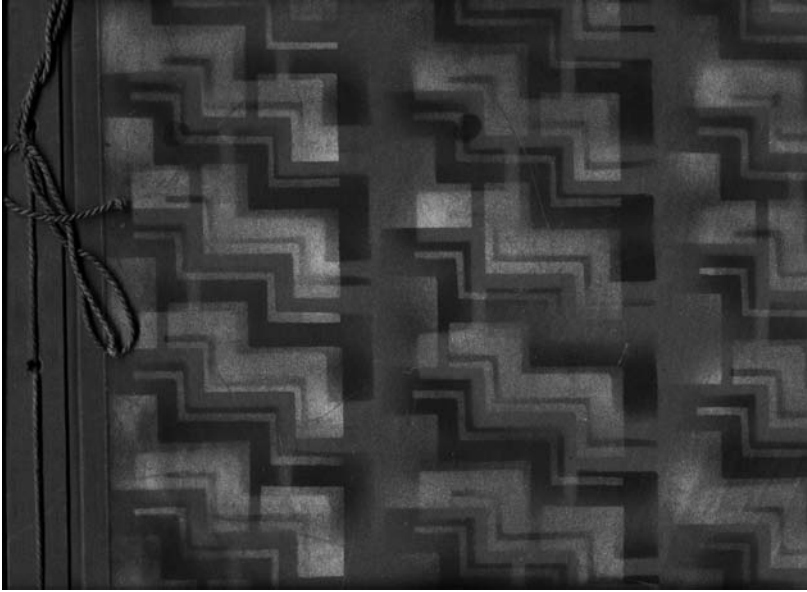


Figure 1. Photo album of Alice Salomon, 1929, Cover.

² Alice Salomon (1872–1948) born into an assimilated Jewish family in Berlin, became a founder of social work as a modern profession in theory, practice and education in Germany and a prominent leader of the women's movement in Germany and internationally. She founded various institutions and organisations in the field of social work education, which are existing still today, and she left about 550 works of theory. In 1933 she lost her position and work in Germany and was expelled from Germany by the Nazis in 1937. She emigrated to the United States and lived in New York. After being forgotten for a long time her person and her work have been rediscovered from 1981 on.

Character is Destiny. The Autobiography of Alice Salomon, ed. Andrew Lees (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2004); Alice Salomon, *Lebenserinnerungen: Jugendjahre – Sozialreform – Frauenbewegung – Exil*, ed. Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin (Frankfurt a.M.: Verlag Brandes & Apsel, 2008) [First unabridged edition of Alice Salomon's autobiography "Character is Destiny"]. With reference to her work see the annotated 3 vols. edition of selected writings: Alice Salomon, *Frauenemanzipation und soziale Verantwortung: Ausgewählte Schriften in drei Bänden*, ed. Adriane Feustel (Neuwied: Luchterhand Verlag, 1997-2004); Kathrin Kish Sklar, Anja Schüler and Susan Strasser ed., *Social Justice Feminists in the United States and Germany: A Dialogue in Documents 1885-1933* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); *Die Schriften Alice Salomons: Bibliographie 1896-2004*, ed. Adriane Feustel (Berlin: Alice Salomon Fachhochschule, 2004); *Die Schriften Alice Salomons: Online-Bibliografie* (<http://www.alice-salomon-archiv.de/angebote/bibliografie.html>), (December 2008); *Bibliography: All English written texts by Alice Salomon* (<http://www.alice-salomon-archiv.de/english/online-services.html>), (December 2008); Carola Kuhlmann, *Alice Salomon und der Beginn sozialer Berufsausbildung* (Stuttgart: ibidem Verlag, 2007); Anja Schüler, *Frauenbewegung und soziale Reform: Jane Addams und Alice Salomon im transatlantischen Dialog 1889-1933* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2004).

The presentation of the photo album in this article should serve as an example, encouraging teachers to look for corresponding sources in their own countries. A further important reason for presenting the photo album is that common questions and principles dominated the development of social work and social work education in the various countries. The photo album, presented and commented upon below, can be used in class work, not only to illustrate historical narratives and developments, but also to open them up to questions and to create a connection to the observer and her history, to her own experience and her own – often semi-conscious – inner pictures. For this purpose, some “key pictures” can be viewed together in class. These images can be interpreted and analysed, as demonstrated in an example at the end of this article. But we can also analyse the album as a whole, looking at its structure and layout, the choice and order of its themes and pictures, and the relationships between the individual parts. Depending on students’ field of study and where they are in the course, all this can be presented by the lecturer as an introduction or worked through in the form of case studies by the students themselves. Case studies lend themselves to use with the album as a whole, with one of the two parts, or with individual pages or individual topics. It seems important to me that in this process, sufficient space is given for spontaneous impressions and associations. In this way there can be a discussion of personal responses and of aspect that may unsettle or even disgust the observer.

I shall begin by **presenting the album** as a whole, page by page, with only a few comments offering a basic impression. The first image shows the cover of the album with its discreetly coloured paper.³

On the opening page you find a dedication to Alice Salomon on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of social work training in Germany. This refers to the one-year training courses of the *Mädchen- und Frauengruppen für soziale Hilfsarbeit* (Girls’ and Women’s Groups for Social Service Work), which began in Berlin in 1899. The album was made by Siddy Wronsky – another pioneer of social work in Germany – together with colleagues and friends of Alice Salomon (figure 2). (All figures: see below on the pages between the first and the second part of this article.)

³ All photographs reproduced in this article are held by Alice Salomon Archiv, Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin.

On the following page we see a photo of the founder of the one-year training courses and of the *Soziale Frauenschule* (Social Women's School) (figure 3). Alice Salomon in 1899 at the age of 27. It is a professional photo made by the well-known studio Elvira (figure 4).⁴

The next page shows a single portrait of Frieda Duensing (1864–1921) without any comment. She was also a pioneer; having received the first German doctorate in law, she became the founder of youth welfare and a lecturer of law at the *Soziale Frauenschule* (figure 5).

Next comes a page with photos of several teachers of the school (figure 6): Alice Salomon herself as a teacher (figure 7), Albert Levy (1862–1922), the director of the *Zentrale für private Fürsorge*, the German charity organisation society (figure 8), Margarete Treuge (1876–1962) and Lily Droescher (1874–1944), two teachers of the theory of social education and civics (figure 9). Then you see Margarete Berent (1887–1965), the first female lawyer in Berlin (figure 10), Charlotte Dietrich (1887–1976), lecturer in psychology and education, successor of Alice Salomon as head of the school from 1925 (figure 11), Bruno Harms (1890–1976), a socially engaged physician (figure 12), and finally Siddy Wronsky (1883–1948), who managed the Welfare Archives and played an important role in Jewish welfare organisations (figure 13). She published some books together with Alice Salomon. Of course, this is not a complete list of all teachers of the school.⁵

The next page is headed „*Das Schulhaus*“, the school building (figure 14). It shows pictures of the conference room, the secretary's office and the studio of Alice Salomon (figure 15, figure 16, figure 17). A drawing of the conference room, not included in the album, gives an impression of its earliest furnishing (figure 18). In that room the International Committee of Schools of Social Work (today: International Association of Schools of Social Work) was founded in 1929 and many social reformers from abroad were welcomed, from Japan, the United States, Poland, Belgium, France, Great Britain, and so forth. Today it accommodates the Alice Salomon Archives – to remind people of Alice Salomon and her work at this historical location and to inspire and support research.

⁴ The Hof-Atelier Elvira was founded by Anita Augspurg (1857-1943) und Sophia Goudstikker (1865-1924) in 1887 in Munich. The studio for photography was the first business venture of women in Germany. Its founders were prominent leaders of the radical women's movement. Cf. Hof-Atelier Elvira (München: Münchner Stadtmuseum, 1986).

⁵ Cf. Adriane Feustel, „Die Soziale Frauenschule (1908-1945)“, in Feustel and Koch, 100 Jahre Soziales Lehren und Lernen, 29-103, (33-36, 61-63).

In the middle of the page we see a photo depicting students in the rooftop garden, one of the first in the city of Berlin (figure 19). This illustrates the character of the school as does the class of students in front of the school who are wearing their so called *Reformkleidung*, that is, the modern clothing favoured before World War I instead of the restrictive clothes of the Wilhelminian area (figure 20). Finally you can see the façade of the house, built in 1914 (figure 21). Let us keep this picture in mind; the modern architecture differs from the neo-gothic style of the surrounding buildings that was typical of the imperial period. I will come back to this later.

First, however, we proceed with the album: The following pages show another aspect of school life, namely the boarding school, a necessity because it encouraged parents of foreign students to allow their daughters to study in the big city of Berlin (figure 22). The last page referring to school life contains pictures of educational tours and leisure time at a house in the country (figure 23). As you can see these photos were made in the 1920s; the students appear self-confident and modern, as does the architecture (figure 24).⁶

Before looking at the second part of the album I would like to emphasise this modernity, one of self-confidence and pride combined with a kind of modesty. This is the first impression we receive from these pictures of the *Soziale Frauenschule*, later called the Alice Salomon School. The same impression is also suggested by the material form of the album.

⁶ Cf. Despina Stratigakos, *A Women's Berlin: Building the Modern City* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2008), (especially "Chapter V: The Architecture of Social Work," 137-167).

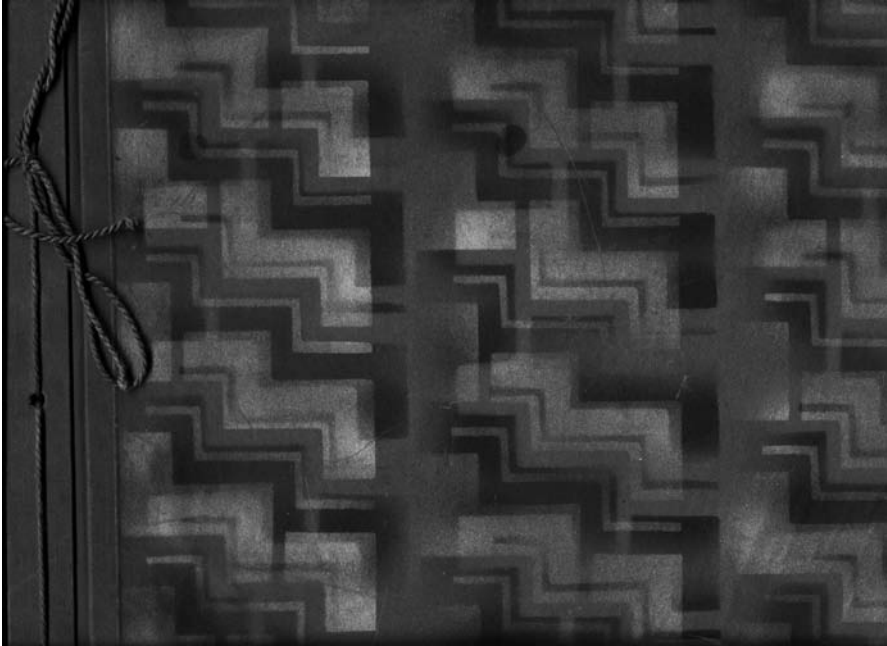


Figure 1. Photo album of Alice Salomon, 1929, Cover.

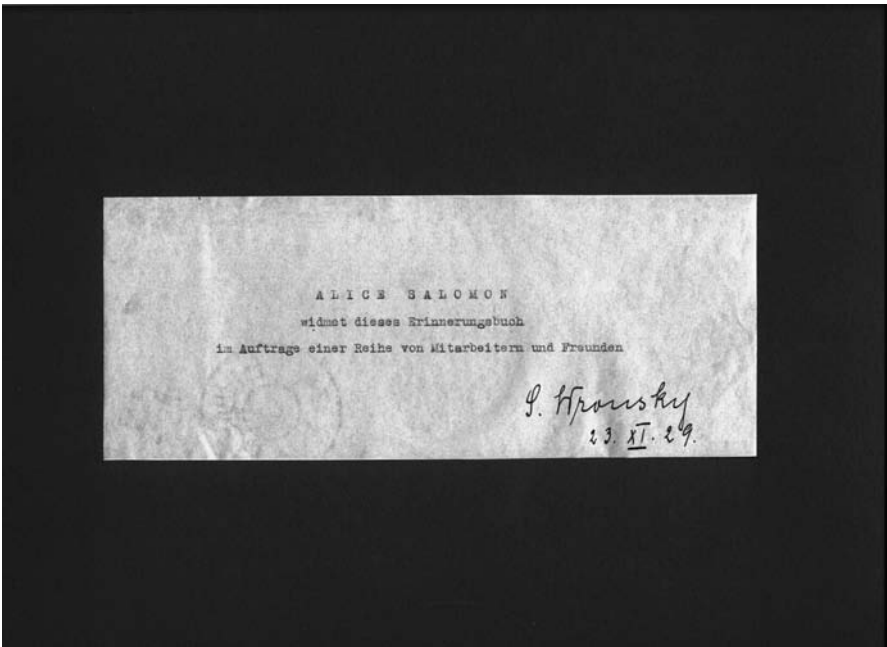


Figure 2. Dedication, photo album, sh 1.



Figure 4. Alice Salomon, 1899, Photograph by Hof-Atelier Elvira.



Figure 6. Lecturers of the Soziale Frauenschule, photo album, sh 4.



Figure 7. Alice Salomon, [c. 1915].



Figure 8. Albert Levy, n.d.



Figure 9. Margarete Treuge and Lili Droscher, n.d.



Figure 10. Margarete Berent, n.d.



Figure 11. Charlotte Dietrich, n.d.



Figure 12. Bruno Harms, n.d.



Figure 13. Siddy [Sidonie] Wronsky, n.d.



Figure 14. The School building, photo album, sh 6.



Figure 15. Conference room.



Figure 16. Secretary's office.



Figure 17. Alice Salomon's Studio.



Figure 18. Conference room, [c. 1915].



Figure 19. Students on the rooftop garden, [c. 1929].



Figure 20. Students in front of the school, [c. 1915].



Figure 21. The Soziale Frauenschule, n.d., built 1914, photo album, sh 6 v.



Figure 24. Three students in the weekend house of the school, c. 1928.



Figure 22. The boarding school, sh 7.



Figure 23. Educational tours and free time, sh 8.

Part 2: Ausbildungsstätten – Institutions for Practical Training



Figure 25.
Das Arbeiterinnenheim –
The female worker's club,
[c. 1900], photo album,
sh 9.

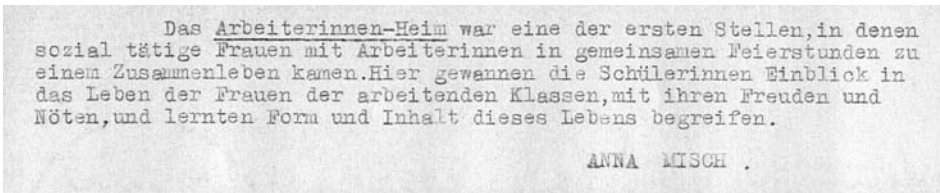


Figure 26. The female worker's club, comment, translation see note 7.

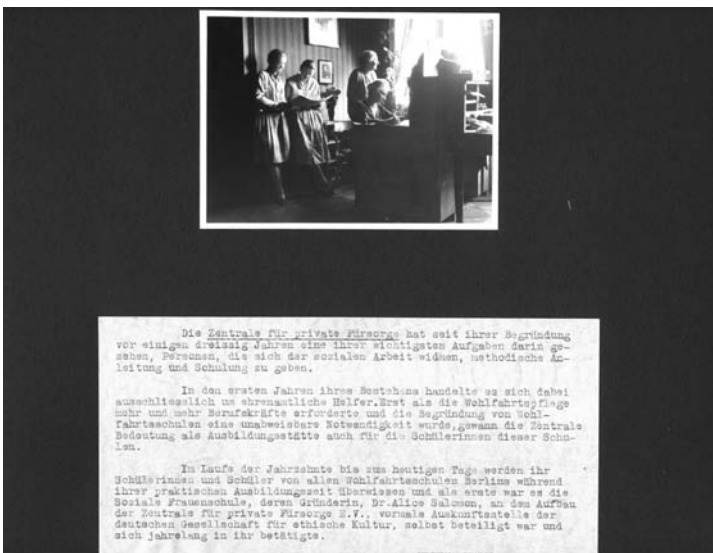


Figure 27.
Die Zentrale für
private Fürsorge –
the Private Charity
Organisation Society, n.d.,
photo album, sh 10.

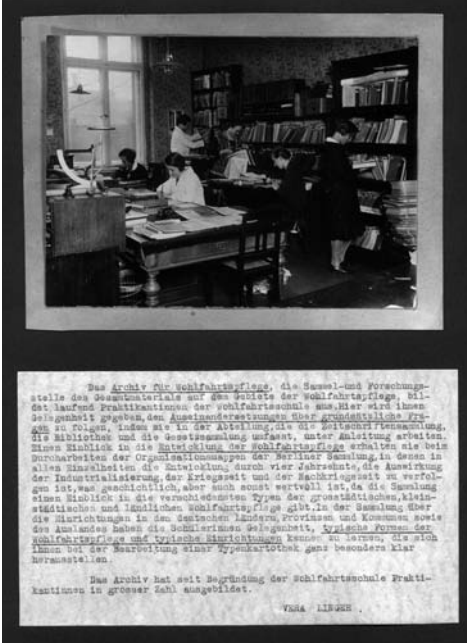


Figure 28. Das Archiv für Wohlfahrtspflege – the Welfare Archives, n.d., photo album, sh 11.



Figure 30. Sonnenhaus, Froebel Kindergarten, n.d., photo album, sh 13.

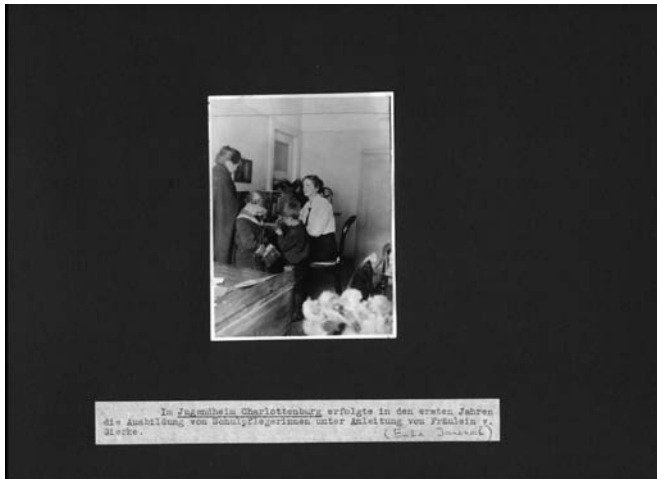


Figure 29. Verein Jugendheim Charlottenburg, headed by Anna von Gierke, n.d., photo album, sh 12.



Figure 31. Die Wohlfahrtsstelle des Landesjugendamtes im Polizeipräsidium Berlin – The Welfare Service of the Central Youth Office of the Berlin Police Headquarters, n.d., photo album, sh 14.

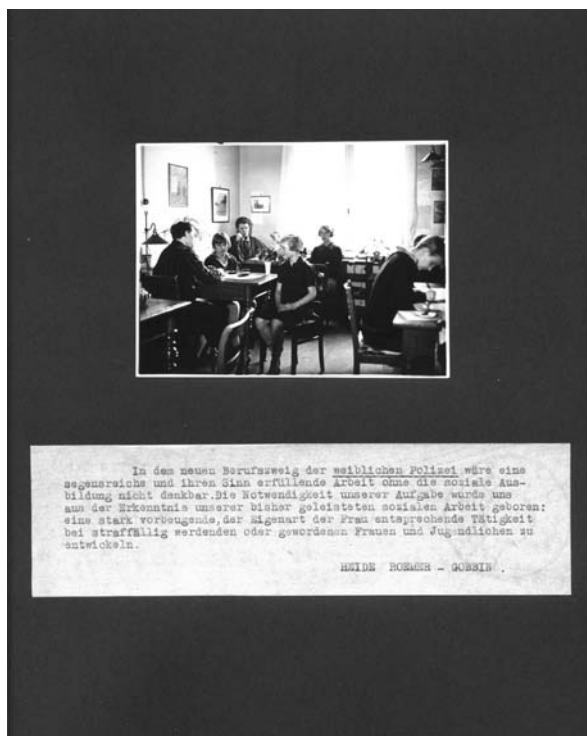


Figure 32. Weibliche Polizei – Female police, n.d., photo album, sh 15.

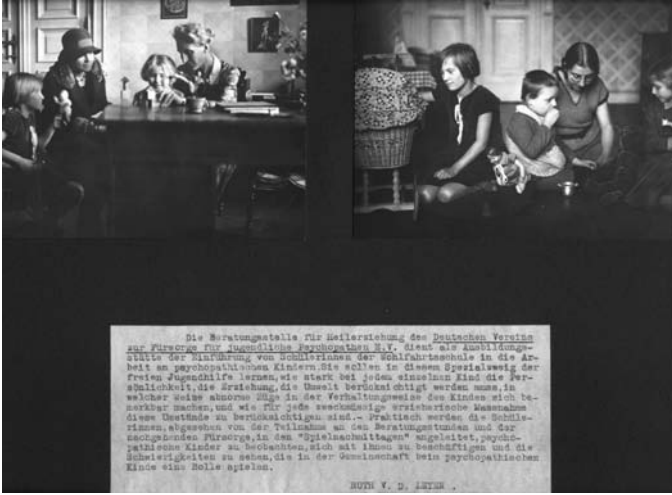


Figure 33. Fürsorge für jugendliche Psychopathen – Service for young psychopaths, n.d., photo album, sh 16.



Figure 34. Soziale Krankenhausfürsorge – Social service in a hospital, started in Berlin 1914/15, n.d., photo album, sh 17.

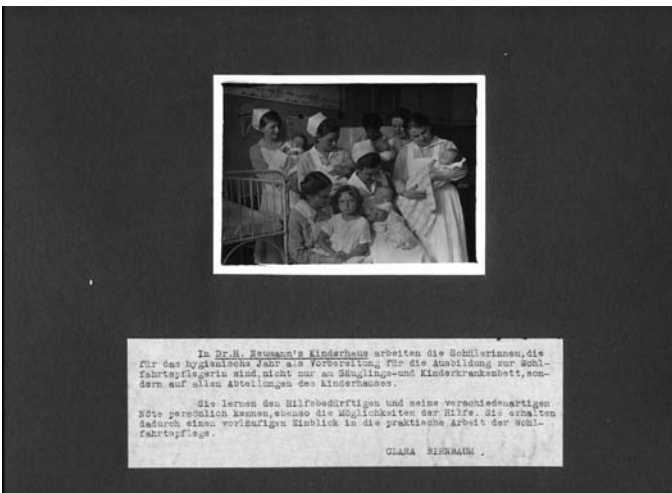


Figure 35. Dr. H. Neumanns Kinderhaus – first hospital for children and babies in Berlin, founded 1896, n.d., photo album, sh 18.

Die Beratungsstelle für Heilerziehung des Deutschen Vereins zur Fürsorge für jugendliche Psychopathen E.V. dient als Ausbildungsstätte der Einführung von Schülerinnen der Wohlfahrtsschule in die Arbeit an psychopathischen Kindern. Sie sollen in diesem Spezialzweig der freien Jugendhilfe lernen, wie stark bei jedem einzelnen Kind die Persönlichkeit, die Erziehung, die Umwelt berücksichtigt werden muss, in welcher Weise abnorme Züge in der Verhaltensweise des Kindes sich bemerkbar machen, und wie für jede zweckmäßige erzieherische Massnahme diese Umstände zu berücksichtigen sind. - Praktisch werden die Schülerinnen, abgesehen von der Teilnahme an den Beratungsstunden und der nachgehenden Fürsorge, in den "Spielnachmittagen" angeleitet, psychopathische Kinder zu beobachten, sich mit ihnen zu beschäftigen und die Schwierigkeiten zu sehen, die in der Gemeinschaft beim psychopathischen Kinde eine Rolle spielen.

RUTH V. D. LEYEN .

Figure 36. Service for mentally handicapped children and young people, comment of Ruth von der Leyen, photo album, sh 16, translation see note 9.

In dem neuen Berufsweig der weiblichen Polizei wäre eine segensreiche und ihren Sinn erfüllende Arbeit ohne die soziale Ausbildung nicht denkbar. Die Notwendigkeit unserer Aufgabe wurde uns aus der Erkenntnis unserer bisher geleisteten sozialen Arbeit geboren: eine stark vorbeugende, der Eigenart der Frau entsprechende Tätigkeit bei straffällig werdenden oder gewordenen Frauen und Jugendlichen zu entwickeln.

HEIDE ROEMER - GOBBIN .

Figure 37. Female Police, comment of Heide Roemer-Gobbin, photo album, sh 15, translation see note 10.

Das Archiv für Wohlfahrtspflege, die Sammel- und Forschungsstelle des Gesamtmaterials auf dem Gebiete der Wohlfahrtspflege, bildet laufend Praktikantinnen der Wohlfahrtsschule aus. Hier wird ihnen Gelegenheit gegeben, den Auseinandersetzungen über grundsätzliche Fragen zu folgen, indem sie in der Abteilung, die die Zeitschriftensammlung, die Bibliothek und die Gesetzsammlung umfasst, unter Anleitung arbeiten. Einen Einblick in die Entwicklung der Wohlfahrtspflege erhalten sie beim Durcharbeiten der Organisationsmappen der Berliner Sammlung, in denen in allen Einzelheiten die Entwicklung durch vier Jahrzehnte, die Auswirkung der Industrialisierung, der Kriegszeit und der Nachkriegszeit zu verfolgen ist, was geschichtlich, aber auch sonst wertvoll ist, da die Sammlung einen Einblick in die verschiedensten Typen der grosstädtischen, kleinstädtischen und ländlichen Wohlfahrtspflege gibt. In der Sammlung über die Einrichtungen in den deutschen Ländern, Provinzen und Kommunen sowie des Auslandes haben die Schülerinnen Gelegenheit, typische Formen der Wohlfahrtspflege und typische Einrichtungen kennen zu lernen, die sich immer bei der Bearbeitung einer Typenkartothek ganz besonders klar herausstellen.

Das Archiv hat seit Begründung der Wohlfahrtsschule Praktikantinnen in grosser Zahl ausgebildet.

VERA LINGER .

Figure 38. The Welfare Archives, comment of Vera Linger, photo album, sh 11, translation see note 11.



Figure 39. Arbeiterinnenheim - Female worker's club, photo album, sh 9.



Figure 40. Service for mentally handicapped children and young people, n.d., photo album, sh 16.



Figure 41. Service for mentally handicapped children and young people, n.d., photo album, sh 16.



Figure 42. Female Police, n.d., photo album, sh 15.

The **second part** of the album is headed *Ausbildungsstätten*. It shows the social work projects and institutions that were used in the practical training of students of the Alice Salomon School. Each of the following ten pages presents one project or institution. At first you see a photo that may well be familiar, as it has been reproduced in various publications (figure 25). It depicts the first club of female workers, founded in Berlin in 1898. In contrast to the first part of the album, the photos of the projects are commented upon and signed (figure 26).⁷ First the pages as a whole will be examined so that you can get an overview. Then one of the photos will be elaborated upon.

On the second page you see a situation in the office of the Private Charity Organisation Society (*Zentrale für private Fürsorge*). It is also a picture from the 1920s, albeit the society had been founded in 1893 under the name *Gesellschaft für Ethische Kultur* (Society for Ethical Culture). It was one of the cradles of social work in Germany.⁸ Its director, until 1920, was Albert Levy, a lecturer at the *Soziale Frauenschule* as we have already seen (figure 27). The next photo also relates to this society and shows young women, perhaps students, studying the files of the Welfare Archives (figure 28). Its longstanding chairwoman was Siddy Wronsky, who was also a teacher at the *Soziale Frauenschule* (see figure 13).

The fourth project, the *Verein Jugendheim Charlottenburg*, a well-known social education and training project, which had been founded in 1896 with Anna von Gierke as its head, organised among other things the first social services in public schools. The association was liquidated by the National Socialists in 1934 (figure 29). The following photo shows the opening of a new Fröbel Kindergarten in a working-class district in the eastern part of Berlin, another institution where students were trained (figure 30).

Next we are shown a rather different type of institution, namely the welfare service of the Central Youth Office of the Berlin Police Headquarters (figure 31). The next photo was also taken of the police, the newly founded female police force (figure 32).

⁷ “The Club of Female Workers was one of the first places where socially active women came together with female workers to celebrate and live together. Here the students could get an insight into the life of women of the working classes, their joys and miseries, and learned to understand the nature of this life. Anna Misch“. S[idonie]Wronsky, „Alice Salomon. Erinnerungsbuch im Auftrage einer Reihe von Mitarbeitern und Freunden,“ (annotated photo album, 1929, Alice Salomon Archiv, Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin): 9

⁸ Adriane Feustel and Heidi Koschwitz, „Die Zwillingsswiege Sozialer Arbeit in Berlin“, *Soziale Arbeit* 57, no.10/11 (2008): 371-382.

The following photos depict three broadly health-related projects. The first represents an advisory service for the education of children and young people with intellectual disabilities, offered by a welfare society for young people with intellectual or psychological disabilities and also founded in the 1920s (figure 33). The next one shows a scene at a social service in a hospital. Based on the U.S. model, this was started in 1913/14 (figure 34). The last one depicts *Dr. Neumann's Kinderhaus*, the earliest hospital for children and infants in Berlin, founded in 1896 (figure 35).

In the following I give a **summary of the second** part of the photo album:

At the beginning there are five photos of the oldest projects of modern professional social work in Germany, these are followed by pictures of newer projects which were founded or established around the time of World War I and in the years of the Weimar Republic, and finally we are shown another early project. Each of these can be characterised as a pioneer project in its field, which means that they were important for the development of social work in two senses: first through their practice and secondly by their training of students for social work. On the other hand – and this is especially interesting for the early years – these projects were influenced and developed by women who were studying social work or had studied it – often at the school of Alice Salomon.

To put it in concrete terms: the founder and chairwoman of the Welfare Society for Young Psychopaths (*Verein zur Fürsorge für jugendliche Psychopathen*) was Ruth Ida von der Leyen (1888–1935). She had attended the *Soziale Frauenschule* in 1912/13, was subsequently trained by Frieda Duensing in youth welfare, and then she herself trained students of the school, also later lecturing at the school. She wrote the text for the album (figure 36).⁹ Heide

⁹ “The consulting centre for remedial education of the German Welfare Society for Young Psychopaths served as a training centre for the introduction of students of the welfare school [i.e. the *Soziale Frauenschule*] to the work with psychopathic children. In this special branch of youth welfare, they should learn: the importance, in the case of every single child, of taking his or her personality, education and the environment into consideration; the manner in which abnormal traits become apparent in a child's behaviour; and how all these aspects are to be taken into consideration for any suitable educational measure. – In practice, the students, apart from their participating in consultation hours and subsequent care, were trained during ‘play afternoons’ to observe psychopathic children, to deal with them and to understand the difficulties to which a psychopathic child is exposed in the community. Ruth Ida v.d. Leyen”. Wronsky, „Alice Salomon“, 16.

Römer-Gobbin, who wrote about the female police (figure 37), was a former student of the school,¹⁰ as was also Vera Linger, who signed the text about the Welfare Archives (*Archiv für Wohlfahrtspflege*) (figure 38).¹¹

The album thus reveals an impressive network of women and institutions, working together to develop modern social work as a profession in various fields with a corresponding need for education. But it reveals even more than this. The character of the album and the photographic pictures, the manner in which objects/subjects are represented, the composition of the album and the presentation of the explanatory texts, all of these tell us something about how social work was understood and interpreted at the outset, not least because of Alice Salomon. This kind of reflection cannot be replaced by putting forward a scientific theory. To illustrate this, I will conclude by contemplating a single picture in greater detail.

The chosen photo, **my example**, depicts the club of young female workers. This club was founded in 1898 by Alice Salomon and some colleagues (figure 39). Looking at the photograph we may ask: what is the effect and message of this photo? Which impression does it produce? How is it made? To answer the last of these questions, it seems to be a professional photo.

The situation looks arranged rather than spontaneous or accidental. It is a composition, and could even be compared to a painting. Each of the young women is appropriately positioned. They are doing various things, playing together, reading, knitting and talking. They are not looking into the camera, but are looking at each other or at what they are doing. It is a plea-

¹⁰ “The new professional branch of female police work could not conceivably function without social education. The need for our task was born out of the knowledge of our social work up to now. It is the need for intensely preventive work that suits the character of women working with female and young offenders. Heide Römer-Gobbin”. Wronsky, „Alice Salomon“, 15.

¹¹ “The Welfare Archives, the collection and research place of all material in the area of public welfare takes care of trainees at the welfare school [i.e. the Soziale Frauenschule]. They are given the opportunity to follow discussions about basic problems while working under supervision in the department that is in charge of the magazine collection, the library and the statute book. They get an insight into the development of public welfare while they are working at the organisation files of the Berlin collection in which the development through four decades can be pursued in detail, the effects of industrialisation, of war time and the post-war period. That is of historic and general value because the collection gives an insight into the many different types of public welfare – major urban, small-town and rural public welfare. Students are given the opportunity to learn about typical forms and institutions of public welfare in the collection about all the institutions in the German states, provinces and local authority districts as well as abroad while they work on the special card files. A great number of students have been trainees in the archives since the establishment of the Social Women’s School. Vera Linger“. Wronsky, „Alice Salomon“, 11.

sant and inviting scene. The young women are well dressed, their hair is well styled. If we did not know better, we might not think that the young women are workers, that they live under miserable conditions, without any privacy at home.¹² This picture says: here is a place where you can be, where you can follow your interests, where you will meet other women who share your interests. The picture gives an impression of comfortableness and security. The picture does not evoke our pity. On the contrary, it demonstrates a sense of pride; it represents a public scene, but also appears intimate and private.

A sense of pride and a close connection between private and public life are characteristics of both the women's movement and social work. And the photograph is a medium giving its objects a public meaning.

Let me explain this in several brief concluding remarks. I said that the picture could even be compared to a painting. It has often been overlooked that paintings help us to share a public or collective view and experience (as do all pieces of art), and they do this through the work of the artist himself. The fascination with photography around 1900 and thereafter was due not least to the fact that photography allowed for a combining of the public character of traditional works of art with the intimate and private view and experience of the photographer and viewer.¹³ But such a connection of two opposite spheres is of a very precarious character. It remains hidden in technology. As everybody knows, it may be misused and needs to be handled in a responsible manner. The album of 1929 is impressive not least because it is an example of such a responsible approach.

It shows the clients of social work in their individuality and their human dignity, and it reflects the problem of social work in demanding recognition of and respect for the ones who are thrust aside by society and acceptance of the marginalised as full members of this society. This is what the viewer of the photos in the album may learn in particular from the images depicting services for young people with intellectual and psychological disabilities and the female police (figure 40, figure 41, figure 42).

¹² The young workers at that time did not have a room, and a lot of them not even a bed, to themselves. A common source of additional income for the worker families was to rent the beds for hours to so-called Schlafburschen. Cf. Alice Salomon, „Klubs und Erholungsheime für jugendliche Arbeiter,“ *Die Jugendfürsorge*, 1, no. 9 (1900): 534-541; repr., Salomon, *Frauenemanzipation und soziale Verantwortung*, vol. 1 (Neuwied: Luchterhand Verlag, 1997): 64-70.

¹³ Cf. Roland Barthes, *Die helle Kammer: Bemerkung zur Photographie* (Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1985); Ernst H. Gombrich, *Die Geschichte der Kunst* (Köln: Phaidon, n.d.); Ernst H. Gombrich, *The Story of Art* (UK: Phaidon Press, 16th ed. 2006).

This may be a starting point for discovering and reflecting upon the world of social work and its history – in following the traces women have left behind. These women experienced their entrance into the field of social work as the discovery of a world that had been unknown and foreign to them, the world of the working class and of the outcasts, of poverty and misery. In addition, they experienced new ways of working and of helping to change the social situation in general as well as new ways of working together. Finally but importantly, they also experienced the bounds of their own female situation mirroring the absence of fundamental social and political rights. I have tried to explain that reflecting on social work cannot simply be replaced by putting forward a scientific theory. One reason for this is the inherent ambivalence of social work, which is so clearly shown and illustrated by the photographs in the album.

Some more pointers for teaching

Finally I would like to give some pointers towards issues and source texts which can supplement and enlarge upon the discussion of the photos and the photo album. I will limit these ideas to the two features that have been at the centre of my presentation and interpretation: the Female Workers' Club and the keyword "modernity" in the characterisation of the middle-class women's project of social work.

Many trails can be followed in further teaching related to the photo album page "*Das Arbeiterinnenheim*" (figures 25 and 39). Some are given here.

The founding of the Female Workers' Club in Berlin just before the turn of the century explicitly picked up on English examples as described by Alice Salomon in several articles, for example, the article "Klubs und Erholungsheime für jugendliche Arbeiter" (Clubs and recreation centres for juvenile workers), of 1900.¹⁴ This likewise includes a pointer towards the significance of international linkage and cooperation in which and through which social work could be substantially developed. This is a thread which

¹⁴ Alice Salomon, „Klubs und Erholungsheime für jugendliche Arbeiter,“ *Die Jugendfürsorge*, 1, no. 9 (1900): 534-541; repr., Salomon, *Frauenemanzipation und soziale Verantwortung*, vol. 1 (Neuwied: Luchterhand Verlag, 1997): 64-70.

is undoubtedly of current significance and which can be followed using many further examples, given among others by Kathrin Kish Sklar, Anja Schüler and Susan Strasser in their documentation *Social Justice Feminists in the United States and Germany: A Dialogue in Documents 1885-1933* (1998) and by Adriane Feustel in her article “The Significance of International Relations and Cooperation in the Works of Alice Salomon” (2006), available at <http://www.uni-kassel.de>.¹⁵

The comment on the photo “*Das Arbeiterinnenheim*” (see note 7) sends us in another direction. It raises awareness of the gulf existing between classes at the turn of the century and of attempts to bridge this gulf. This situation can be envisioned in close connection with the album, for example by reading the memoirs of Alice Salomon, Jane Addams and Beatrice Webb¹⁶ or through accounts of young female workers’ living conditions, as in the depictions of Despina Stratigakos in her study *A Women’s Berlin: Building the Modern City* (2008) and of Andrew Lees in his book *Cities, Sin and Social Reform in Imperial Germany* (2004).¹⁷

Finally, a third thread can be brought to life and made concrete based on the photo and using the above mentioned reading material and source texts. At the time of the founding of the Female Workers’ Club, one of the biggest socio-political debates of the era was taking place. It was a debate that cut across fractions within the women’s movement and the political parties and which was held across national frontiers: the debate on female workers’ protection as set against women’s liberation. This debate comes to life in the arguments at the second International Congress of Women in London in 1899, where Alice

¹⁵ Kathrin Kish Sklar, Anja Schüler and Susan Strasser, ed., *Social Justice Feminists in the United States and Germany: A Dialogue in Documents 1885-1933* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998); Adriane Feustel, “The Significance of International Relations and Cooperation in the Works of Alice Salomon”. Translated by Swantje Siepmann, http://www.uni-kassel.de/frau-bib/publikationen/ariadne_alt_inhalt_49_text_feustel_en.htm (accessed February 22, 2009); Original German version: Adriane Feustel, “Die Bedeutung internationaler Beziehungen und Zusammenarbeit im Werk Alice Salomons.” *Ariadne. Forum für Frauen- und Geschlechtergeschichte*, no. 49 (2006): pp. 24-29.

¹⁶ Jane Addams, *Twenty years at Hull House: with autobiographical notes* (New York: Macmillan 1911. Reprint: Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990). German translation: Jane Addams, *Zwanzig Jahre sozialer Frauenarbeit in Chicago*. Übersetzt von Else Münsterberg, mit einem Geleitwort von Alice Salomon (München: Beck 1913), Beatrice Webb, *My Apprenticeship* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1929), German translation: Beatrice Webb, *Meine Lehrjahre. Eine Autobiographie*, aus dem Englischen von Christa Krüger (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1988).

¹⁷ Stratigakos, 2008; Andrew Lees, *Cities, Sin and Social Reform in Imperial Germany* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002).

Salomon and Beatrice Webb, for example, had opposing viewpoints. These materials are ideal for pro-and-contra discussions in class and give students the opportunity to take an active stance. See the *Transactions of the Industrial and Legislative Section of the International Congress of Women*; Alice Salomon's contribution "Protective Legislation in Germany" is available at <http://www.alice-salomon-archiv.de/angebote/texte.html>.¹⁸ It only remains to point out that discussion of these controversies can be pursued further by including the diverse socio-political concepts of the realisation of social justice that exist in Germany, England and the United States, for example. The three social reformers we have mentioned have produced seminal texts in this area.

In ways similar to those outlined here, the various tracks revealed by my presentation of the photo album can be followed towards the concrete analysis of complex contexts which are relevant to current debate.

As another example of the diversification and consolidation of the political and cultural context in which social (women's) work emerged, I would like to take up the keyword "modernity". This is depicted in an impressive and varied way in the 1929 photo album, through the clothes, the architecture, the types of women seen in the '20s and so on. I refer here to experiences I have had with visits of various seminar groups to the Alice Salomon Archive and in guest lectures given as part of the Bachelor's degree in social work. It has always shown itself worthwhile to put the development of social work not only in the context of the labour and women's movements but also in the context of the patriarchal structures which were then falling apart in all social areas. We should thereby note the frightening as well as the liberating aspects. This is communicated, for example, in the artworks of expressionism, like those of the group of artists known as "*Die Brücke*" ("The Bridge"), or in Max Beckmann's impressive epochal painting of 1912–1913, "*Der Untergang der Titanic*" ("The

¹⁸ Women in Industrial Life. The Transactions of the Industrial and Legislative Section of the International Congress of Women, = The International Council of Women, Report of the Transactions of Second Quinquennial Meeting, Held in London July 1899, ed. Countess of Aberdeen, vol. 6 (London: Fisher Unwin, 1900), Salomon, Alice, „Protective Legislation in Germany.“ In: Women in Industrial Life. The Transactions of the Industrial and Legislative Section of the International Congress of Women, loc. cit., pp. 36-40, available at <http://www.alice-salomon-archiv.de/angebote/texte.html> (accessed February 22, 2009), see also the list of Alice Salomon's English written texts at <http://www.alice-salomon-archiv.de/english/online-services/english-texts.html> (accessed February 22, 2009).

Sinking of the Titanic”). See also the comments on the social dimension of the departures of modern art by Ernst H. Gombrich in his well-known book *The Story of Art*.¹⁹

The analysis of the historical context using visual sources in connection with original documents allows students a more complex insight into historical developments. It opens various avenues and can help to build a personal relationship to historical conflicts and to comprehend them as part of our current times.

¹⁹ Karin von Maur, ed., Max Beckmann: Meisterwerke 1907-1950 (Stuttgart: Hatje, 1994): 72 ff and 63 ff., Ernst H. Gombrich, *Die Geschichte der Kunst* (Köln: Phaidon, n.d.); Ernst H. Gombrich, *The Story of Art* (UK: Phaidon Press, 16th ed. 2006); cf. Adriane Feustel, “Konzepte des Sozialen in Europa nach 1900 – Alice Salomon.” in *Europa und Amerika. Unterschiedliche Vorstellungen des Sozialen? Europe and America: Different Conceptions of the Social?* ed. Adriane Feustel. (Berlin: Alice Salomon Fachhochschule, 2005), pp. 29-37.

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Teaching with Gender

How can educators (teachers, professors, trainers) address issues of gender, women, gender roles, feminism and gender equality? The ATHENA thematic network brings together specialists in women's and gender studies, feminist research, women's rights, gender equality and diversity. In the book series 'Teaching with Gender' the partners in this network have collected articles on a wide range of teaching practices in the field of gender. The books in this series address challenges and possibilities of teaching about women and gender in a wide range of educational contexts. The authors discuss the pedagogical, theoretical and political dimensions of learning and teaching on women and gender. The books in this series Teaching with Gender contain teaching material, reflections on feminist pedagogies and practical discussions about the development of gender-sensitive curricula in specific fields. All books address the crucial aspects of education in Europe today: increasing international mobility, the growing importance of interdisciplinarity and the many practices of life-long learning and training that take place outside the traditional programmes of higher education. These books will be indispensable tools for educators who take seriously the challenge of teaching with gender. (For titles see inside cover.)

Teaching Gender in Social Work

The need for a book on teaching gender in social work arises from the fact that social work education often fails to incorporate gender, even though most of the people that use social work services are women, a majority of social workers are women, and women have had throughout history a significant role in the establishment of social work. The profession of social work started to emerge early in the twentieth century, when femininity was constructed in a way that supported the public/private division. This applied, in particular, to a woman's body and her appearance, to her morality, sexuality and motherhood, which in turn determined her social opportunities. Social work played a role in these processes in various ways, depending on the prevailing beliefs about women and femininity. For social work it is important to understand primarily the mechanisms that produce and reproduce social inequalities, and in our case the inequalities between the genders. Teaching Gender in Social Work contains articles that address these issues.

The books are printed and also published online. Contact Athena@uu.nl or go to www.Athena3.org or www.erg.su.se/genusstudier to find out how to download or to order books from this series.

