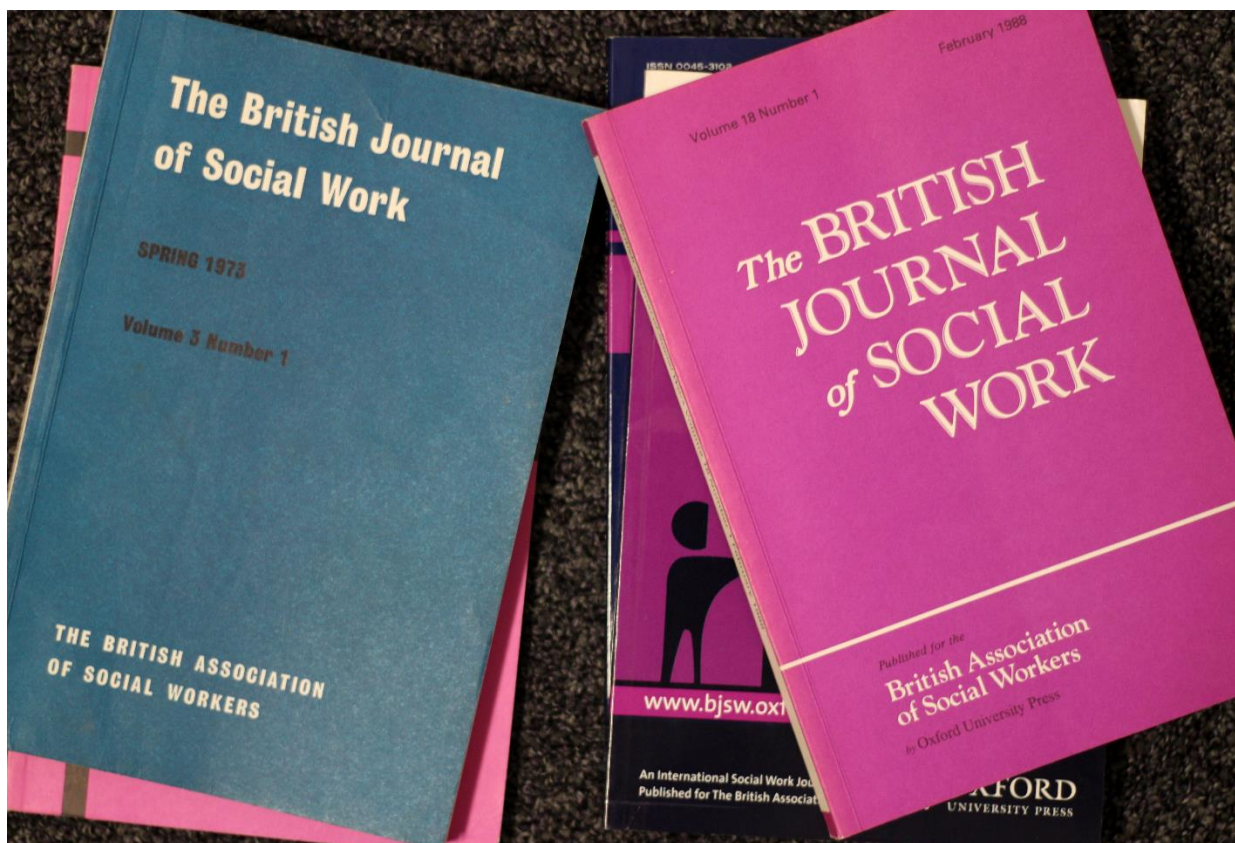


Bulletin of the Social Work History Network

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About the Social Work History Network

The Social Work History Network (SWHN) exists to explore the nature and growth of social work in order to inform contemporary policy and practice. Founded in 2000, it is an informal network of social workers, historians, archivists, researchers, educators, students, and social work policymakers. The Network meets three or four times a year in the United Kingdom to discuss papers given by invited speakers. Meetings are open to all. The *Bulletin of the Social Work History Network* is an e-journal: it is available on the [Network website](#) and via email to those on the mailing list.

**To join the SWHN mailing list or to confirm your attendance at a meeting
please contact: stephen.martineau@kcl.ac.uk**

The Social Work History Network is supported by The British Association of Social Workers (BASW), The Open University, the University of Chester, and the Social Care Workforce Research Unit at King's College London.

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Editorial

Sarah Matthews

Editor, *Bulletin of the Social Work History Network*

Published a few weeks later than anticipated, this edition of the *Bulletin* again delights. I trust it manages to bring some festive cheer and also, as is usual at such times, I am taking the opportunity to review a very successful year for the Network and to thank those who have contributed to this success.

This edition includes a diverse selection of categories of entry but also a common theme, on this occasion the perennial dilemma that pervades the profession of social work; its definition. To begin, Mike Burt's piece describes the Museum of Health and Social Work at the University of Chester. An excellent resource, the museum focuses on the emergence of the roles and tasks of social workers in the United Kingdom. These matters the museum illustrates through interpretation panels. Mike comments that despite the relative wealth of written material and photographs, artefacts are less easy to alight upon or display. How can we define social work using such artefacts? I was interested to note the 42 social work objects picked by social workers to represent their profession as celebrated in the most recent edition of *Professional Social Work (PSW)*. Each is made sense of with a person's description. Interestingly, Mike welcomes suggestions as to the provision of such objects. This suggested collection, as reported in *PSW*, may be one way of doing this.

The next three articles refer to three notable Network events held during 2016. The first, by June Thoburn and Jane Tunstill, recounts the hugely successful Children Act seminar. The article is, to a large extent, self-explanatory. For me, it captures the coming together of hugely



powerful oral resources and especially so as they allow a comparison with current processes concerning policy developments in child care. The role and definition of social work in these processes is again key. If you were not able to attend on the day and have not done so already do please listen to the audio-recording made. A further notable event was held towards the end of the year to celebrate the life of Bob Holman and his influence and was delivered by those who knew him best. Keith Bilton has, in this edition, very helpfully captured the papers that were given on the day, a piece that also provokes thinking as to what social work is or should be. Last of the three, Luke Geoghegan, provides the talk he gave at the seminar to explore the social work influences for Clement Attlee, in particular the role of volunteering and of settlements. Luke argues for the importance of direct social work practice and especially the combination of theory and practice.

The capturing of such theory as applied in practice has been, and remains, the purpose of the *British Journal of Social Work*. Reporting on a case study that was completed by Ian Shaw and colleagues into what they term an example of continuous applied social work scholarship, Ian's article summarises the main findings: the identity of the journal; its practices; its form and content, and its setting in the world beyond the United Kingdom. Of interest to the Network is the journal's importance as a repository, the debates about the discipline of social work, the continuity it has provided, the capacity to incorporate change, tensions in its identity and, that it is British led.

Dave Burnham discusses the impact of the First World War on social work practice and in particular the focus on surveillance of women's behaviour. The impact of this and of those who were required to undertake surveillance challenged social work as it was practised until that time and contributed to the idea which, he argues, has dominated social work for the subsequent fifty years: the shift from poverty towards people's behaviours and circumstances. The debate about such received ideas dovetails well with the book review which draws this issue to a close. The book under review did just this, prompting discussion about what such received ideas are in social work and how they influence and can be challenged, a debate which pertains still.

By way of continuity with my last editorial, I can update you about the archives and encourage you to look at those from this Network that are now available on the website, a work in progress. Do please send any material for gaps you spot. Forthcoming events are also to be

found on the website. I am pleased to indicate there is to be a seminar on discretion in social work and also that the Network is to lead a pre-conference Special Interest Group at the European Conference of Social Work which is taking place in Denmark in April, 2017. I will provide a report for our next edition and also encourage members to consider getting involved as the conference moves to Edinburgh in 2018. Last, my congratulations go to June Thoburn who has been recognised at the recent Social Worker of the Year Awards for her contribution to the profession. Well done June.

Sarah Matthews, Co-ordinator of the SWHN, is a qualified, registered social worker and currently heads the Social Work Degree programme for The Open University in the North West of England and in Yorkshire.

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June Thoburn: Outstanding Contribution to Social Work

SWHN Steering Group member Prof June Thoburn received the award for Outstanding Contribution to Social Work at the Social Worker of the Year Awards 2016. *Community Care* reported:

'June Thoburn has always been a champion for children and families. She started her career as a child care officer in the early 1960s, specialising in preventative child and family social work.

She practised in both England and Canada, before becoming a professor of social work at the University of East Anglia in 1979.

June is internationally renowned for her research on children's social care, which has covered family support and child protection services for children and families in the community, as well as services for children placed away from home.

She has often been called on to provide expert evidence in complex child welfare court cases and is currently a special advisor to Cafcass and chair of Norfolk's Family Justice Board.

The trustees described June as an individual with considerable humility, integrity and wisdom whose expertise and experience have made a major contribution to social work. Her longstanding commitment to ensuring families are supported to care for their children wherever possible, and then promoting the best quality of care when it is necessary for children to live away from home, made her a standout choice for this award.'—*Community Care*, 25 November 2016.

At the Museum of Health and Social Work, University of Chester

Mike Burt

The history of social work in the United Kingdom features in a display of artefacts, interpretation panels, ephemera and documentation in the Museum of Health and Social Work at the University of Chester. Staff and volunteers from the Faculty of Health and Social Care have been involved for a number of years in collecting materials which illustrate the historical development of social work and nursing.

The social work display focuses on the emergence of roles and tasks of social workers and their predecessors. Interpretation panels illustrate stages in this development, pointing to origins in the poor law, support for social reform, the acceleration of activity during and following the two world wars, the formation of a single profession in newly established social service departments in 1971, and the subsequent impact of social policy for the care of children, young

people and adults in the community. A timeline highlights developments in the practice of social work in the context of wider social policy. Changes in social work education and training from the lectures started by the Women's University Settlement, Southwark in 1893 to the present day are featured.

More detailed information to support the interpretation panels comprises written material and photographs, the practice of social work not lending itself to the display of artefacts (any suggestions to address this issue would be welcome). For example, in relation to child protection copies of the *Prevention of Cruelty to, and Protection of Children Act 1889*, the Association of Social Workers pamphlet *Children Neglected or Ill-Treated in their Own Homes* (1953), and Department of Health *Protecting Children: A Guide for Social Workers Undertaking*



A Birmingham flat, 1969 (Part of the current display at the Museum of Health and Social Work, University of Chester)

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a *Comprehensive Assessment* (1988) are displayed. With regard to work with people who were previously referred to as 'mentally disordered' copies of the *Second Report of the Central Association for the Care of the Mentally Defective 1915-1916*, the *Royal Commission on the Law Relating to Mental Illness and Mental Deficiency – Minutes of Evidence* (1954), together with a number of documents concerned with community care in the 1980s are featured. DVD copies of the 1979 Granada ITV series, *The Do-Gooders: Great Expectations* and *100 Years of Hospital Social Work* are available for viewing.



Anne Cummins, *Hospital Almoner*, undated (Part of the current display at the Museum of Health and Social Work, University of Chester)

The Museum is open on the first Wednesday afternoon of each month. However, group visits can be arranged by appointment. For enquiries please contact: m.burt@chester.ac.uk or r.whiteley@chester.ac.uk

A recent acquisition has significantly enhanced opportunities to study the history of social work. Joyce Rimmer MBE, retired senior lecturer at the University of Birmingham (and SWHN member), has donated a large collection of journals and booklets covering the period from the Second World War to the present day. Although none of the journal sets are complete they include some 1940s copies of *Social Work – The British Quarterly*, copies of *Child Care News*, *Social Services Quarterly* and an extended run of the *Probation Journal*. The collection includes numerous booklets, including, for example, annual reports of the Association of Social Workers and A.S.W. News from 1956 to 1968. The University of Chester is most grateful to Joyce Rimmer for her donation and is able to offer access to the archival material by appointment.

Dr Mike Burt is Honorary Senior Lecturer at the Faculty of Health and Social Care, University of Chester. Readers may be interested to know that King's College London also has a social work journal collection.

At the next meeting of the SWHN

Tuesday, 28 February 2017, 1.30pm-4.00pm

Venue: Room G4, New Hunt's House, Guy's Campus, King's College London

Discretion and autonomy. Was there ever a Golden Age?

Speakers: David Howe, Emeritus Professor of Social Work at UEA; and Professor Tony Evans, Royal Holloway, University of London.

The Children Act 1989 event

June Thoburn and Jane Tunstill



June Thoburn (left) and Jane Tunstill report from the SWHN event in June

A full house of over 60 ‘social work historians’ came together on 8 June to celebrate 25 years since the implementation of the Children Act 1989 (the Act) and were treated to a feast of intriguing details and insights into its conception, birth and early years. Having just listened again to the [recording of the proceedings](#), we wilt under the task of trying to summarise so much detail and retrospective wisdom. But here goes.

Wendy Rose, as our Chair Terry Bamford concluded, elegantly provided the scaffolding for what followed. She recounted how, backed by a far-sighted and committed ‘Grade 3’ and Chief Inspector of Social Services (Tom Luce), a team of ‘career’ and professional social worker civil servants, led by the much missed Rupert Hughes and Wendy herself, provided the continuity needed since reform of family law was first called for in the 1984 Select Committee Report (the Short Report). It was thanks to this continuity and spirit of collaboration that care provisions for disabled children, and (an enormous breakthrough) legislation on arrangements for children following parental divorce and separation, were brought into the scope of the Act. She, and the next speaker, Baroness Hale, regretted that an initial aim to include youth offending and adoption within the scope of the legislation had to be dropped, and explained why this had been the case. Wendy particularly highlighted close working relationships with the

Law Commission and the team of parliamentary draftsmen; and with the researchers spearheaded by Jane Rowe and facilitated by Spencer Millham and the team at Dartington Social Research Unit. These had linked together researchers from several universities to produce the three Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) *Messages from Research*, overviews that provided the evidence base for many of the changes that found their way into the legislation.

Baroness Brenda Hale then took up the story. Now Deputy President of The Supreme Court, Brenda was at the time a Law Commissioner, but already a well-known name to many social workers as a distinguished law lecturer and the editor of the standard text on child and family law used during social work training (Clarke Hall and Morrison). She gave us twelve reasons why the Law Commission joined with the Short commissioners and social work and researcher voices to convince politicians that ‘something had to be done’, before succinctly outlining the five main aims of the Act. The unusually wide-ranging Inter-departmental Working Group was set up to make it happen. Interestingly, she said one of the reasons why the Act that eventually emerged has stood the test of time was the fact that the Bill kept being delayed by ‘more important matters.’ When it was finally laid before parliament it had had the benefit of the combined wisdom of those agencies and individuals already mentioned by Wendy Rose, and also the attention of the parliamentary draughtsmen who had been seconded to the Law Commission—‘a brainwave of Rupert Hughes’—(an aside from us, there is a word of advice in this for present lawmakers: most hurry [can lead to] least speed). Baroness Virginia Bottomley then recalled with humour and insight her politician’s role in the implementation of the Act, starting by explaining how an unexpected reshuffle following an

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altercation between Margaret Thatcher and Nigel Lawson led to a summons to Number 10 and a shift (much to her delight) from Environment to the social services part of DHSS. Like other speakers, and unlike many politicians, she was well aware of the issues. Child welfare is part of her history, with family links to the Curtis Committee; she had been a Child Poverty Action Group researcher and then a Juvenile Court Magistrate before becoming an MP. Virginia took over just as the Act became law and had ministerial responsibility for seeing it implemented. She recalled how her 'boss', the Secretary of State, David Mellor, who had steered the Bill through the Commons, encouraged and, on tricky or contested issues, intervened, to support her and the work of the civil servants. She reflected that the Act's implementation had broad cross-party and cross-interest group support in part because the thorny issues had been hammered out over the long gestation period, but also because the Cleveland Report (concluding that some children were removed unnecessarily from parental care) balanced other recent cases of Jasmine Beckford and Kimberley Carlile when action had not been taken quickly enough. The key message of balancing the need to support families in bringing up their children and to be proportionate when any intervention was necessary was one that had also to be recognised, according to Lady Hale's comments. She also reinforced the point made by earlier speakers that

continuity of the Ministerial and the civil service and Inspectorate team (headed by Sir William Utting) was the key to an implementation stage that took two years, compared with the ten years it had taken for the 1975 Act to be implemented. She concluded, 'to be allowed to be a small part of an Act that has had such a brilliant effect was absolutely wonderful.'

A lively buzz during the tea break was followed by contributions from Jane Tunstill, June Thoburn and Jo Tunnard (sometimes at the time referred to as the three JTs) recalling their contributions to the (Part III) family support provisions of the Act. Jane gave a brief overview and critique of the children in need clauses and gave her insider view on why these were never fully implemented. She took us through its early years: a Department of Health report of 1994 regretted that 'full implementation of Section 17 has been slow'; its struggle through its middle years to hold its head up against the hegemony of child protection (2009 Select Committee report following Lord Laming's Victoria Climbié inquiry: 'we are convinced that better early intervention is vital to reducing the likelihood of child misery and ensuring children's wellbeing'); and warned that cuts in funding (a decline of 55% to early intervention services in the last five years and present Department of Education proposals, section 29 of the Children and Social Work Bill) may see it changed beyond recognition.



Jane Tunstill, Jill Manthorpe, Wendy Rose, June Thoburn, Lady Bottomley, Lady Hale, Jo Tunnard and Terry Bamford at the meeting at King's College London on 8 June 2016

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June provided a reminder that provisions for 'voluntary care' were within the family support parts of the Act, as indeed was all the legislation on children once they were in care, whether on a court-order or voluntary basis. She emphasised that this signalled the emphasis on working collaboratively with parents and children to support family connectedness, even when care orders were needed. She regretted that budget cuts leading to higher thresholds for the receipt of family support services have resulted in a decline almost to extinction of one of the more innovative provisions: a series of short term placements to help families under stress; and to a negative view of Section 20 accommodation, and this now being seen as part of the child protection services rather than, as intended, part of a support package to help families through difficult times.

Jo took up the theme of partnership. Even though the word itself is not on the face of the Act, the importance of seeking to work in partnership with family members was frequently used in the guidance. She spoke of the role of the Family Rights Group in helping to frame the detailed guidance and the training materials made available to all local authorities to help embed the principle of partnership with family members into everyday practice. She noted that, although they have taken a battering as social work practice has increasingly focused on child protection issues, partnership principles are alive and well in some settings and approaches to practice. Of particular note are teams using a neighbourhood social work approach: Sure Start family centres that have survived recent cuts; family group conferences and Family Court areas using the Family Drug and

Alcohol approach, which Jo described in more detail.

There was just time for some questions covering both then and now, and the discussion and reminiscences continued as wine was served to celebrate the longevity (with very few changes) of this amazing piece of legislation and, not a little strategy talk about how to ensure the Act's emphasis on balancing support and protection, family responsibilities and children's rights, continues for another 25 years.

But let us urge you to go to a slightly different perspective on the evening in *Professional Social Work* (July 2016) or to [our Network webpage](#) where the paper of Brenda Hale and the slides of Jane Tunstill, June Thoburn and Jo Tunnard are available. Sadly, these give only a flavour of the many asides and personal stories that accompanied them. But you could not come away from this event without being fully aware that the making of the Children Act 1989 was something very special in the history of child and family welfare. Some will join us in regretting that this determinedly cross-party and cross-agency approach to underpinning values, as well as meticulous consideration of detail is notably absent from recent and pending major policy changes and legislation affecting vulnerable children and families.

June Thoburn is Emeritus Professor at UEA. In November she received the award for Outstanding Contribution to Social Work at the Social Worker of the Year Awards 2016. Jane Tunstill is Emeritus Professor at Royal Holloway, University of London and a member of the SWHN.

Bob Holman: life and legacy



Terry Bamford, Chair of the meeting, with speakers: Maggie Mellon, Annette Holman, Dave Wiles and Terry Philpot at the SWHN Bob Holman event at King's College London on 30 November 2016

Keith Bilton reports on the papers given at the Social Work History Network meeting on 30 November

After qualifying in social work, Bob Holman worked as a child care officer in Hertfordshire from 1961 to 1966. For the next ten years he was a lecturer at Birmingham and Glasgow Universities and Professor of Social Administration at the University of Bath. He left this post in 1976 in order to spend all his time on neighbourhood work in Bath's Southdown council estate, where he and his wife Annette kept open house for residents. They worked there until 1987, when they moved to Rogerfield, which with Easterhouse forms a large housing scheme in Glasgow's East End. There they did similar work, and as a result FARE (Family Action in Rogerfield and Easterhouse) was set up in 1989. Their work in Southdown was continued by Dave Wiles. In July 2015 Bob was told that he had motor neurone disease. He died in June 2016. FARE continues to provide a centre for services and mutual self-help run by and for the people of Easterhouse and other parts of Glasgow's East End.

Annette Holman

Bob's widow Annette spoke about his earlier years, about the beliefs and teachings of R H Tawney, the Christian Socialist who greatly influenced him at the London School of Economics, and, on request, about what it was like to keep 'open house' on the edge of Southdown housing estate in Bath, which she dismissed as 'no big deal'. She was out, working in Bristol [she was a lecturer in social work at the University] most of the time. There was plenty of space in the house and the youngsters who came gathered in the greenhouse and were seldom any bother. Bother was more likely to come from adults, dissatisfied with their lives. Ruth and David, their children, benefitted from having adults around other than their parents when they were adolescents.

Bob was born in Ilford, from where he was much evacuated, first at age three in the care of his six-year-old sister, then several times more with his mother, returning to Ilford in time for the V1s (flying bombs; doodlebugs), the V2 rockets and an enemy plane which flew down the street and strafed their windows. One result was that his experience of being ostracised as a refugee by local children gave him a lifelong understanding of,

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and fellow feeling for, the underdog. A second was the result of forming a strong dislike of a farm labourer with whom they were billeted. Bob used to provoke him although he knew that was not in his own interests. He recognised this contrary behaviour in many young people. Another was that he missed a lot of schooling, was dubbed 'backward' and twice failed his 11+. His Senior School was, however, redesignated as a Grammar School in the implementation of the Education Act 1944, and he left it with a State Scholarship. Returning from National Service, he refused to seek the privilege of an Oxbridge education, and was never again spoken to by a headmaster deprived of this chance of a feather in the school's cap.

Bob was a keen and talented sportsman, and at 14 he was selected for a church boys' club football team, willingly complying with a requirement to attend Baptist Sunday meetings. His Christian faith was awakened, and he was baptised in 1951. During his degree course [in history and economics] at University College London, he regularly went back to help in the boys' club.

After graduating, Bob did the Diploma in Social Administration course at LSE, where the staff included those great names of social policy, Richard Titmuss, Peter Townsend, Brian Abel Smith and Roy Parker. But it was the historian and Christian Socialist R H Tawney who most influenced him. Tawney's upbringing was very different from Bob's; born in India, prep school, Rugby, Balliol, school friend of Archbishop William Temple, college friend of William Beveridge. He worked at Toynbee Hall, taught at Glasgow University and at the same time at Workers' Educational Association meetings in Stafford and Rochdale, fought in the 1914-1918 war, where he refused a commission, and was badly wounded.

Tawney held that all men are created equal, are of equal worth and should have equal opportunities. (He was of his time in that he did not write about gender, or about family.) Inequality of power was inevitable, but its abuse could be prevented. He wrote *The Acquisitive Society* in 1922, arguing that

capitalism had taken on the character of another religion, idealising property and making industry a master instead of a servant. He was not a utopian, but believed that a progressive increase in social justice was possible. Liberty did not lie in absence of restraint, but in concrete freedoms in place and time, and in the idea of a good life as a life lived for the good of all. Bob believed all of this. He was a practical idealist. The biggest Christian influence on him was the Bible, which he read every day together with biblical commentaries and writings on its application. He always wanted to be clear about the evidence for the source of his Christian principles.

Dave Wiles

Dave Wiles first met Bob in 1973, when, although still holding the Social Administration Chair at the University, he was already deeply involved in work in Southdown. Dave had experienced a radical Christian conversion after a turbulent adolescence. Bob 'was the answer to my prayer, although he seemed to think I was the answer to his'. Dave joined Bob in his community social work, and from Bob and Annette's home, which was open to all, there grew work with 30 different clubs, groups and projects, and with hundreds of individuals. Bob responded to kids at the door, and trod the streets listening to people, and acting on their views. He used his East End humour and cricket and goalkeeping skills, as well as his listening skill and memory for fine detail, to form quick and deep connections with people and purposeful and meaningful relationships. He practised true community work, which involves living on the patch and using indigenous workers. He had a deep faith and a confident realism. He was also a master of puns. His support for West Ham football team should not be held against him.

Terry Philpot

Terry Philpot spoke about Bob's friendship with Iain Duncan Smith (hereafter IDS). They were very different people; IDS was a Conservative Old Etonian and former Guards officer, with whom he did, however, share a Christian faith, though IDS's Catholicism was a rather private affair, while Bob

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always wore his Christian Socialism on his sleeve. The friendship started in February 2002 when IDS visited Easterhouse. The roots of this visit lay in the then Conservative leader William Hague's interest in 'compassionate conservatism', a concept borrowed from the USA. IDS wanted to put 'flesh on the bone' of this, as he said, and to establish the Tory party as a party of social justice. IDS was visibly moved by his visit to Easterhouse and sought to develop policies based on taking local people seriously, with no no-go areas when looking for ideas that would work. Bob believed that he was sincere in his aims and worked with him. In 2003 Bob, a lifelong Labour party member, spoke at the Conservative Party Conference, and IDS attended the Labour Party Conference with Bob. In 2004 IDS set up the Centre for Social Justice, aiming to put social justice at the heart of politics. Here Bob did some work, seeing this as a hopeful change for those he was concerned about.

In 2010 IDS became Secretary of State for Work and Pensions and Bob seems to have been initially hopeful. However, when IDS set about implementing his plan to simplify the benefit system, Bob became disillusioned. He never doubted IDS's sincerity, but he saw him as bowing to pressure from the Chancellor to make savings on the social security budget. Bob became disillusioned. Six years later, IDS resigned.

The oddest thing in all this was not Bob's relationship with IDS, but his influence on a party he had so consistently opposed.

Maggie Mellon

Maggie Mellon spoke about the context and impact of Bob's work in Scotland. Easterhouse, six miles east of the city centre, is one of Glasgow's big peripheral housing schemes, built in the 1950s to rehouse people living in slum areas, with the aim of rehousing 50,000 people. It was built in tenement style, with six to eight apartments per block, shared gardens, and no amenities, no centre and few shops. Whole inner city communities were broken up by this rehousing programme, and Easterhouse from the beginning had high rates of poverty, unemployment and ill health. Bob and Annette moved in there in 1987 with their family.

Bob's articles and letters in the press kept Easterhouse's poverty in the public eye.

At the national level, industrial decline in Scotland began at about the same time as the discovery of North Sea oil, the revenue from which has been squandered by Westminster in contrast to Norway's investment in an oil fund. Equality in Scotland peaked in 1969, when a very high proportion of the population lived in social housing.

At the same time, there were big changes in the organisation of social work services and of local government. The Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 set up large departments bringing together former children's and welfare departments with probation services, and in 1975 local government reorganisation transferred these departments to nine new Regional Councils (with separate Island Councils for Orkney, Shetland and the Western Isles). Glasgow formed part of Strathclyde Region, the largest in population and second largest in area, with a population of more than two million. Regional Councils had big spending powers, and the social work services of these Councils tended to exercise a 'we know what's good for you' philosophy. This empowered public sector saw voluntary organisations as old-fashioned, still rooted in philanthropy rather than community development. This 'big state' philosophy went together in Scotland with a certain traditional harshness towards children. The result has been high numbers of young children coming into care and a readiness to categorise children as neglected or emotionally abused.

Bob represented those elements in social work that oppose 'we know best' attitudes, fight for social justice, can be rebellious when necessary, and believe in community-led practice. It has been argued by critics that Bob's approach cannot be 'upscaled', and that 'FARE works with easy families', but these are defensive responses which should not distract us from recognising Bob's great achievements and the significance of his work to the future.

Bob Holman, born 8 November 1936, died 15 June 2016.

Attlee, Toynbee Hall and the importance of direct social work practice

Luke Geoghegan

Clem Attlee recounts this story in his book *The Social Worker*:

I met a small boy in the street one day and we walked along together. "Where are you off to?" said he, "I'm going home to tea" said I. "Oh, I'm going home to see if there is any tea" was his reply, thus drawing a very useful economic distinction. (Attlee 1920: 134. All subsequent quotes in this article are taken from Attlee 1920)

According to [The Trussell Trust](#), over 1,000,000 people accessed food banks in 2014/2015—a group of people larger than the City of Birmingham.

So for me, history, particularly the history of social change, among other things, is both an inspiration and a resource for how we make society a better place today.

Toynbee Hall, what would now be called a voluntary sector organisation, was the first and the pre-eminent example of what became known as the Settlement Movement, a movement that became international, spreading to Europe, India, Japan and the USA.

Attlee was one of many people who volunteered at Toynbee Hall and then went on to a paid role at Toynbee.

When Terry Bamford, the SWHN chair, originally floated the idea with me of doing a talk on Attlee, Toynbee Hall and perhaps other individuals involved in the Settlement Movement my first thought was, I could talk for hours.

Many extraordinary people volunteered or worked for Settlement Houses. Examples included Jane Addams, who made it on to a United States stamp and won the Nobel Peace Prize and W.E.B Dubois, author of *The Souls of Black Folk*, published in 1903 and a classic for the United States Civil Rights movement.

Settlement Houses are a living tradition in the US so there is a large volume of literature. But, in the time frame available I can't do justice to all this, so I propose simply to whet your appetite. I will emphasise the importance of linking theory with practice and set out what the implications might be for today. I'll conclude with some thoughts on practice, social change and politics. I will rely heavily on the words of Attlee writing in *The Social Worker*.

Social work has had a range of meanings over the years. It can emphasise the importance of social change, as does the International Federation of Social Workers definition. Or, it can crudely attempt to subordinate all social work to the direct control of the state. I refer you to the Children and Social Work Bill currently before Parliament. As I hope you will agree, I believe Attlee's understanding of social work is firmly within the tradition of social work for progressive social change.

Needless, to say, the material presented is my own and does not necessarily reflect the views of my current employers.

A big emphasis at Toynbee Hall historically, and when I was Chief Executive, was on volunteering. This was not simply what might be called 'constrained' volunteering, but volunteering at all levels. For example, we had volunteers who worked with the Metropolitan Police and other agencies around the issue of sex workers. Volunteering in this manner helps us reflect on society; it is an eye-opener.

Here are Attlee's words. He is describing a typical settlement house volunteer who has recently graduated and is now working in the City or West End (much volunteering was around 'clubs', what we would call structured leisure activities).

The volunteer:

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goes out to referee for them [the boys football team] at football, and finds it the only available ground is 4 miles away and he remembers that somewhere he heard of an agitation for open space as well question of getting them [there] makes him consider transport problems, trains, rail and buses, and he may begin to enquire who is responsible for the services.

He finds his boys get there late so that the moon is already up, and perhaps a centre-forward on whom he was relying, cannot get there at all; he finds it is a case of overtime, and the demand for shorter hours of labour becomes a reality; he [the volunteer] always played in the afternoon at school, and even at work in town gets off in fairly good time...

A little later he will perhaps visit one of his boys who is sick and begin to see the housing problem from the inside – perhaps the family cannot afford proper treatment for the boy, and he is forced to consider the provision now made for the sick, and further the wages question begins to interest him after he's had a talk with the boy's father who is in the building trade and gets only occasional work. (212).

Attlee describes how experience and direct observation lead to reflection:

Theory and practice must work together, it is no good to leave theory to the universities and practice to the social workers (233)

And he gives an example:

A good example of a piece of investigation by social worker on a specific subject is William Beveridge's study of unemployment worked out while he was a resident at Toynbee Hall which is one of the causes for the adoption of the system of Labour Exchanges in this country. (236)

Perhaps because Attlee has walked the walk and not simply talked the talk, his observations on social work have an extraordinary immediacy:

One is very apt to feel a fool when starting social work. (132)

All social work is apt to be discouraging at times and it needs a fairly robust faith in the general

goodness of human nature to resist depression. (65)

It is hardly necessary to add that the work of social service requires great patience and tolerance, a sense of justice, and an infinite capacity for suffering fools gladly.... There is, too, always a fair proportion of fools, many of them in positions of importance'. (141)

Many social workers wear themselves out through failing to map out their work ahead (144)

And the one I particularly enjoy:

Nothing is more common in a meeting of social workers than to find a total absence of business methods. The chairman is often appointed not from his or her ability in conducting business and keeping members to the point... With the result that long rambling discussions take place with no real idea of what is the point at issue so much time is wasted (143)

But, back to the main point I want to make:

I would argue that social work has been beset by a divide, a divide between theory and practice. I would define practice as *direct* work with clients. What happens in other professions? Senior doctors continue to see patients. My wife's cousin is a Professor of Psychiatry. He sees patients and he treats them, a role which he combines with his academic research. This is not unique to him— it is embodied in the idea of a teaching hospital. My Chair of Trustees at Toynbee was a partner in a 'magic circle' City law firm. My sense was he saw clients every week.

But in Children's Services and Adult Care direct contact with clients is lost from Practice Manager or first tier manager upwards.

I have not seen the criteria for continuing registration of doctors and lawyers. I do know that in the Health and Care Professions Council criteria for re-registration of social workers there is nothing about direct practice.

Why is this important? Because practice, *direct* contact with the patient or client, should be at the heart of what we do. The risk is that social work practitioners lose touch with research insights,

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social work academics lose touch with how social work is actually delivered, and social work managers lose touch with the front line of their own organisation. This 'loss of touch', in my opinion, results in ineffective solutions, or 'solutions' that actually make matters worse.

I'm not sure how this situation came about. I wonder if it is something to do with confidence and something to do with the 1970s and early 1980s. Confidence because, unlike medicine and law, social work does not enjoy the highest prestige, and maybe in an attempt to secure prestige, there is an attempt to distance oneself from vulnerable clients. In the 1970s, influenced by certain takes on Marxism, there was a reaction in social work against 'professionalism'. Practice, and indeed lack of qualifications, was privileged over an academic perspective that was equated with 'elitism'. Both had the tendency to widen the gap.

Seven years ago, after luxuriating in various management, policy and study roles I went back to direct practice. It was a revelation to see how things worked, or failed to work. I gained insight into numerous service providers including prisons and courts, immigration, schools and the benefits system and, of course, Children's Services itself. Like Attlee's volunteer I'd aimed simply to take on a role at a football game, but instead was provoked into thinking about a range of other social work and social policy issues from a fresh perspective.

Here's Attlee again:

We claim then that theoretical training is necessary, but not more so than practical; the two should go hand-in-hand, so the problems encountered in practical work may be related to the theoretical principles studied and the latter illuminated by living examples. (152)

I now want to argue that what made Attlee's blend of theory and practice give his social work vibrancy and impact extended to how he did politics.

We have a situation today, where a high political career goes like this: excellent school (could be private or state, ideally, Westminster, St Paul's, or Holland Park); Philosophy, Politics and Economics

at Oxford, any college you like so long as it's Balliol, dissenters can go to Brasenose; internship with MP or Cabinet minister leading onto policy role or speechwriter. Get a job in what a friend of mine calls 'The Dark Arts' (a term from Harry Potter): consulting, strategic marketing, public relations or communications. Safe seat. Cabinet. Implement social reform. Wonder why the electorate isn't grateful.

I think Attlee would have said: take time out to connect with real people in real situations. Here is Attlee again:

This type of man will criticise and condemn all methods of social advance that do not directly square with his formulae, and will repeat his shibboleths without any attempt to work out their practical application. In despair he waits for the social revolution without any real attempt to further it. Here again a dose of practical work is the remedy. The dreamer must keep his feet on the Earth and the thinker must come out of his study. (139)

Coming out of the study needn't involve being employed as a social worker by Children's Services. Volunteering at a food bank can be eye-opening enough.

So the social worker who can combine theory and practice can be a real force for change. As Attlee says:

The social worker is in high company, and social service is not the preserve of the parish worker, the charity monger and the statistician, but is the legacy of the prophets. (5)

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Luke Geoghegan is Policy Officer at BASW. He spoke, along with Jonathan Dickens and Dave Burnham, at the SWHN meeting on 'Attlee and social work', 21 September 2016.

Social Work and the British Journal Thereof: a History

Ian Shaw



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A case study of the *British Journal of Social Work (BJSW)*, 1971-2013, has been completed by Ian Shaw and a team of colleagues at York and in the USA. The *BJSW* is the most obvious instance of continuous applied social work scholarship stemming from the United Kingdom (UK). This multiple-method study included archive and documentary research, oral histories and analysis of journal content for the final year of the eleven editorial regimes. The *BJSW* offers an apt focus for such a study for several reasons:

- It has an uninterrupted history stretching back forty-five years.
- It has an established role as a British Association of Social Work journal, and hence in the wider social work community.
- For much of that period it was the only prominent social work journal published out of the UK.

The report deals with four central themes:

1. The identity of the journal

The journal's identity is elusive and difficult to pin down. For example, we encountered claims about the 'international' character of the journal. The idea and the word came up in editorial minutes and reports, as part of former editors' memories, and by inference from the analysis of the contents of the journal over forty years. But just what is meant by being international? What counts as evidence one way of the other?

Olive Stevenson, the first editor of the *BJSW*, immediately set a contrast with predecessor journals, 'The Journal must speak for itself and justify—or fail to justify—its claim to be "a learned journal"', comparable to those in other professions and academic disciplines.' So Olive Stevenson opened the editorial of the first issue of the *BJSW*, both declining to express a position, yet also expressing one while doing so. Later, editorial participants in general had a sense of being heirs to a history, the more so as years pass. Even if what exactly that history consisted of seemed unclear, its burden remained.

2. Journal practices

Broadly speaking, there are those practices that are located primarily within the immediate creation of volume upon volume, and there are practices through which the journal interacts with those worlds that touch on its boundaries. We have much to say about editorial appointments, editors' visions, the work of reviewers, the practice of editorial judgement, and the infrastructure of technology, all of which are located fairly close to the journal's day to day practice.

3. Journal form and content

The *British Journal of Social Work*, at the time of writing, has published more than two thousand articles over its history. Who writes these articles? From where do they write? How are they written? What subjects come under their scrutiny? What can we learn regarding social work research methods and practices? Have there been trends and changes over the time of the journal's history?

Articles under the eleven regime sample years totalled 483. 257 (53.9%) were first authored by men and 220 (46.1%) by women. There is evidence that the gender balance in published social work scholarship shifts over time, and that the proportion of women as first authors is higher now than at some previous periods.

Sixty percent of the articles drew directly on empirical work. Of these, a little under sixty percent were wholly qualitative, and just over thirty percent wholly quantitative. About one in ten were mixed methods. Quantitative methods had a period of relative ascendancy in the middle years of the journal, but fell off rather dramatically after the turn of the century. However, the actual *number* of quantitative social work studies has risen steadily, as the size of the journal has grown, though the rise in absolute numbers is even more striking for qualitative studies.

Women were significantly over-represented among first authors of qualitative articles, and men similarly over-represented among authors of quantitative articles.

There were marked developments in writing styles comparing later *BJSW* with predecessor journal (*Social Work*) and early *BJSW*:

- Style and volume of citation
- There was a stronger USA-directed gaze in early articles.
- Few early empirical articles made reference to research literature or indeed any literature.
- The treatment of others with formal respect comes through occasionally in early writing. This was carried through to how men and women were referred to in the journal.
- Some language categories are strikingly different from what later would be acceptable or appropriate.
- Immediacy: e.g. correspondence. There is a sense of exchange and a small scholarly community in early articles that is rarely found later.

4. The *BJSW*'s wider world

Moving outward, the Board, the publishers, the British Association of Social Workers, developments in university libraries, social work programmes and governmental research assessment programmes all form part of the worlds within which the journal is placed. We explore the *BJSW* in relation to: political and policy trends; as a BASW-owned journal; through its claims and efforts to be international and recognized in the USA; in its relations with its publishers; in relation to developments in universities, through ratings of research and concerns about the impact of research.

The full report of some 43,000 words is available at [Ian Shaw's York University website](#) and a lengthy article dealing with part of the report is pending in the *BJSW*. We drew general conclusions:

1. The journal is a journal of record, and a significant repository of social work scholarship in the UK over a period of more than forty years.
2. Whether or not social work is a discipline, has discipline-like qualities, or is a field with boundaries enclosing diverse borrowings, applications and adaptations, it makes sense to understand the *BJSW* as more than a journal, but as representing the field of social work scholarly enterprise.
3. We were struck by the strong sense of continuity—in terms, for example, of how those to whom we spoke understood the journal's identity, the ways in which editorial successions have been managed, and in our empirical analysis of what has found place between its covers. But, there is no reason to imagine that the *BJSW* now is in some finished state of arrival.
4. The journal demonstrates a sustained capacity to incorporate and embody changes—writing voice, technology, size of operation, and so on. These changes have typically been marked by conservative incrementalism. More rapid change is only likely to occur when there is a (perhaps fortuitous) coincidence of interests between the editors and the publishers, but these always will be influenced by the nature of the *BJSW* as a professionally owned journal.
5. We have noticed the presence—indeed we might say *essential* presence—of tensions in the identity and development of the journal. The classic example of this lies in the question of if and how the journal is or ought to be 'international.'
6. The journal is the home of *British-led* applied social work scholarship, and is likely to remain so, though this is not the same as saying that it is simply a British journal.

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The Great War: Suffrage, Surveillance and the First Crisis in Social Work

Dave Burnham

Abstract

The impact of the First World War on the development of social work has not been well researched and the aftermath, so runs the orthodox view, produced little in the way of lasting 'progress'. However, the war years and immediate post-war era are associated with key changes in society: the enfranchisement of women over thirty; employment opportunities for women; vast and imaginative efforts by the voluntary sector; the loss of, and injury to, hundreds of thousands of men and new freedom to debate subjects such as birth control, Venereal Disease and managing mental incapacity. Research into the activities of women's political and suffrage groups during and after the war reveals a considerable contribution to social work at the time, leaving a subtle post-war legacy, which paradoxically included a strand of public surveillance of women's behaviour, and paid roles to conduct that surveillance. A focus on child care led to the establishment of paid roles, many state funded, with those workers co-ordinating the work of volunteers. All this contributed to a crisis in the idea of social work as practised by pre-war voluntary social workers and led to the establishment of the idea which dominated social work training and practice for the next fifty years.

The impact of the Great War on welfare provision was limited...

The current debate around the centenary of the Great War has confirmed the view of that conflict as one of tragic futility compared to the noble and heroic Second World War (Wheatcroft 2014). This attitude, appearing in the 1960s, has strengthened in the public mind ever since (Clark 1961; Chilton 1961; Curtis & Elton 1989) and despite attempts at revision (Pugh 2008; Reynolds 2013; Todman 2005), this view holds. It encompasses the consequences of both conflicts: 1914-1918, leaving an almost

invisible legacy; 1939-1945 introducing a 'New Jerusalem'. This last has a special place in the history of social work. The Labour victory of 1945 was the platform for social legislation-making statute of much that had been trialled over the war years. Although a minor aspect of that legislation, Local Authority Children's and Welfare Departments became the focus of social work activity, receiving increasing funding over the next two decades and becoming the springboard for the ambitions of social work's leaders in the 1950s and 1960s. Although there was considerable continuity in 1948 in both practice and staffing in these departments, this period is justly seen as a new beginning (Burnham 2011; Holman 2001).

In 1918 serious ambitions and concrete plans were in place and reconstruction the word of the moment. The Maternity and Child Welfare Act 1918 empowered local authorities to sponsor maternity clinics. The Local Government Board (LGB), responsible for the administration of the Poor Law, was replaced by the Ministry of Health and the Housing Act 1919 obliged local authorities to plan for social housing. There were also great hopes in the notion of the extension of full citizenship to newly enfranchised working people (Attlee 1920).

But countervailing forces were significant. The December 1918 election did not see a new breed of Members of Parliament (MPs) elected, as many MPs supporting the coalition government agreed not to stand against each other. A short post-war boom was followed by a serious economic downturn. Sound money policies required curbs in spending and the 'Geddes Axe' of 1922 (a financial review) scythed its way through welfare spending plans. Hope was soon replaced by public debate shot through with doubt and disaffection (Overy 2009).

Elizabeth Macadam, summing it up in 1944, says, 'A graph of public interest in the social services during the last quarter century would show a peak of the reconstruction boom after the last war declining in the early twenties' (Macadam 1945: 2). Subsequent histories of social work make scant comment about this period and recent consideration of First World War social work has been cursory. Pierson, for instance, and Horner, in introductory analyses of social work make no comment, nor did Payne in his comprehensive international history of social work (Woodroffe 1962; Younghusband 1978; Pierson 2011; Horner 2009; Payne 2005).

Social work in 1914

In 1914, the idea of social work was much broader than the current prescribed notions. The focus of social work was upon poverty, although a huge range of activities was included, from legal aid, to education, social research and political lobbying, as well as voluntary visiting and local authority activity. There were, then, seven primary strands of activity.

Early social work is epitomised in orthodox histories by individual pioneers such as Octavia Hill with her housing management (Darley 1990), Edward Rudolf and the Waifs and Strays Society, and Benjamin Waugh of the NSPCC (Ashton & Young 1956). What was true nationally was equally true locally up to the Great War, with social work activity driven in many towns by local *social entrepreneurs*: the Rathbones in Liverpool, for instance (Simey 1951), Mary Higgs in Oldham (Talbot 2011), Mary Haslam in Bolton (King 2010), Mary Brown in Burnley (Liddington 1984). These were all high status women, although some working class trade unionists were as influential: Sarah Reddish in Bolton, for instance, and Selina Cooper in Burnley (Liddington & Norton 1978). These local entrepreneurs, mostly women, were locally active in various *focused voluntary organisations* such as the National Society for the Protection of Cruelty against Children (NSPCC), District Nursing Societies, and Girls Friendly Societies, and so on. These women served on School Boards, and as Poor Law Guardians, introducing ideas, lobbying for improvements and initiating projects, but also

were involved in direct work, running clubs or visiting families.

University settlements, first established in the 1880s, epitomised the spirit of the socially committed graduate who wanted to serve the poor. Liberal and paternalistic, settlement residents attempted to instil their ideals of culture, thrift and morality in local people, as well as offering practical help. Important in early social worker training, they were the proving ground for many mid-twentieth century social reformers, including Eleanor Rathbone, William Beveridge, Clement Attlee, Eileen Younghusband and Margaret Simey. Their passion and commitment was bolstered by a confidence that working people would respond to their leadership, because of their superior education and standing. But they clustered in university cities, no more than 15 across the United Kingdom (UK), in addition to the 27 in London (Attlee 1920) and nowhere near as ubiquitous as the hundreds of *religious missions* operating across the country. Religious missions distributed food, clothing, shoes and organised outings for poor children, gifts at Christmas and entertainments. They also responded to individuals in need.

Trades unions, co-operative societies and friendly societies offered to their hundreds of thousands of members, programmes of education, leisure activities and mutual support for people in difficulties. Friendly societies, for instance, all employed sick visitors and were the template upon which the National Insurance Act of 1911 was based. A corollary of this, the small *occupational welfare* movement or social workers employed in factories, was just emerging as the war began; an adjunct to the tiny employer-led welfare approach to employees epitomised by William Lever, Titus Salt and the Cadburys.

Voluntary visiting charities assessed needs and offered financial and practical help to significant numbers of people, individuals and families. Many different organisations operated across the UK. In England there were over 100 affiliated branches of the Charity Organisation Society (COS), overwhelmingly in the south. Guilds of Help established in 1904 (whose volunteers were less monolithically affluent than the COS), were widespread across the

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North of England and Midlands—about 40 affiliated Guilds operating when the war broke out (Leybourn 1994).

At the bottom of this apex of activity (or, perhaps holding the whole edifice up), stood the Poor Law. Locally elected *Poor Law Boards* managed the local workhouse, infirmary and doctors, vaccination and registrars. There was also a strengthening tradition of part-funding local voluntary groups such as the NSPCC, District Nursing Associations and so on, these two attracting significant funding, as they were seen as crucial to the local welfare economy. But the ‘front door’ of the Poor Law was the Relieving Officer, who assessed applicant’s needs, presented a case to the Board, then paid ‘out-relief’ (benefit) for those eligible, delivered regularly to their home in the case of older people. Relieving Officers were also responsible for removing lunatics to asylums and identifying and proposing to the Guardians, children who should be taken ‘under control’ under the Poor Law Act 1899.

A new atmosphere of increasing state responsibility for both public health and poverty was discernible from the 1890s, much of which came to fruition in the 1906 Liberal government (King 2010; Rose 1985). This confronted the orthodox differential social work response to poverty in place since the 1870s, the offer of support through voluntary workers to those thought capable of becoming self-reliant, leaving to the Poor Law those incapable of bettering themselves (Lewis 1995). So, although voluntary organisations did undertake surveillance work, in penitentiaries (Mumm 1996) for instance and street patrols (Cree 1995), their self-appointed role was educational and supportive (Bosanquet 1914), while Poor Law officials undertook the bulk of surveillance and control, obliged as the service of last resort to respond to destitution and abandonment. In 1914, Poor Law workers were nearly all male, while voluntary work attracted a significant proportion of women. In addition, volunteers were accorded greater respect than paid workers, being from a superior background, better educated and, it was argued, more honourably motivated and less likely to be subject to financial corruption. Where volunteers and paid staff worked together (COS and Care Committees for

example), ‘paid officials’, although undertaking much investigatory work, were often not allowed to ‘take cases’ (Snell 1936, Attlee 1920, Burnham 2012). Also ‘paid officials’ were seldom referred to as ‘social workers’, a title reserved, by and large, for affluent volunteers.

But it was during this pre-war period that this differentiation began to break down, the roles of volunteers and paid workers blurring slightly. This is nicely demonstrated in Bolton. Poor Law Boarding Out Committees managed visiting for children in public care and the secretary was responsible for securing and co-ordinating volunteer visitors. In Bolton from the mid-1890s, this post had been held by Alice Barlow, an affluent volunteer. From 1910, the LGB required such posts to be paid and the Bolton Guardians kept Miss Barlow on, paying her a token sum (£5 per year)—keeping on a valuable volunteer though sticking to the rules by paying her (Bolton History Centre, Barlow). From 1910 the LGB encouraged Boards to employ ‘Lady Visitors’ to manage the after-care visiting of children discharged from public care. They also visited children in families receiving ‘out relief’ where there were ‘unsatisfactory’ reports, checking on health, bedding, neglect and intemperance. But a significant proportion of their work was finding and directing volunteers to undertake the bulk of the visiting (BHC, Borland). Separately from the Poor Law, the Mental Deficiency Act 1913 saw the establishment of the Central Association for Mental Welfare, which appointed paid enquiry agents to recruit and co-ordinate volunteers to visit mental defectives and their families in their own homes. Magistrates were empowered in 1908 to appoint Probation Officers (Probation of Offenders Act 1907) and Women Probation Officers were encouraged by the Home Office from 1912. These were part of the state, but were often funded by The Church of England Temperance Society. Education Care Committee Volunteer Co-ordinators were appointed in small numbers after the Education Act 1906, although at the time some at least of the co-ordinators were volunteers themselves (Stocks 1970).

This new spirit saw, as well, the blurring of voluntary and paid roles, more paid social work occupations and more jobs occupied by women. Also, by 1914 most of the activities we

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recognise as social work functions today were in place across local government.

But the most successful pre-war assault on poverty was nothing to do with either Poor Law or visiting charities. The Liberal Government bypassed the deliberations of the Royal Commission on the Poor Law (1905-1909) with its Old Age Pension, Sickness and Unemployment Benefit legislation. Initially, benefits were limited to certain 'respectable' groups and were not generous, so their introduction was a principle established, not a comprehensive safety net. Here again was the beginning of integration of state function and voluntary effort; state funded sickness benefit for instance being managed locally by 'Approved Societies', either commercial insurance firms or friendly societies.

The voluntary and state response

As soon as the lamps went out in August 1914, there was a burst of voluntary activity. People gave money from the beginning and consistently through the war. Initially, there was great concern about the distress likely to be suffered by families left by their husbands and people thrown out of work by industries put on hold by the war. By 1915 the latter fear was passing and by 1916 there was as near full employment as at any time in the whole century. But, the comprehensive, kaleidoscopic voluntary efforts continued (Adie 2003; 2013). New organisations sprang up to meet new needs: the Women's Defence Relief Corps, Women's National Land Service Corps and Voluntary Aid Detachments, attracted thousands of young women. One particularly interesting group, bearing in mind what happened later, was Almeric Paget's Military Massage Corps (physiotherapy). This voluntary organisation began in November 1914, with 50 masseuses, but by January 1919 had 2000.

The state response was initially less emphatic, although the Government took powers to itself immediately in order to manage transport, labour and to boost production. Initially, the overwhelming welfare response was financial with national hardship funds being established, the responsibility for whose use being delegated to each town's 'Mayor's Hardship Fund Committee'. From 1916, War Pensions were introduced which were paid to wounded

men and war widows, ameliorating, despite price inflation, the financial hardship so feared at the beginning of the war.

By 1915, the manufacture of munitions, uniforms, vehicles and so on was vast and the government was indirectly paying the wages of a growing proportion of workers, raising tax levels to fund that activity. The government also, (although only from 1917, once women in work and uniform were accepted), sponsored new support organisations: the Women's Royal Navy Reserve, Women's Royal Air Force, Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, the Women's Land Army. Councils and the Post Office took on women administrative workers, tram conductors, street cleaners. (Watson 1997; Adie 2003; 2013).

The welfare efforts in one town

One of the notable features of pre-war welfare activity is the connection between the women involved in local Poor Law administration as Guardians, voluntary social work activity, and the women's suffrage movement. Women involved in one of these activities were often involved in all. Emmeline Pankhurst, for instance, leader of the radical Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), worked as a Poor Law Registrar in the 1890s and was, for a time, a Poor Law Guardian (Fortune 2014). Her daughter, Sylvia, was active throughout the war as a Guardian, and worked with poor women in London, setting up a toy making workshop and distributing food. Charlotte Despard, committed suffragist and founder of the Women's Freedom League, was a Guardian and social worker in Battersea through the war (Todman 2005). Emmeline Pethick Lawrence, sometime secretary of the WSPU, had worked as a 'sister of the people' at a London Mission, and established the Esperance Club for poor girls. Edith Rigby, famous for burning down Lord Leverhulme's bungalow in 1913, started her public life setting up an educational group for working class girls and as a prison visitor (Hesketh 1992).

What was true nationally, was replicated locally. For example, in Bolton in 1913, there were 12 female Poor Law Guardians, nine of whom were sponsored by the Bolton Women's Local Government Association (BWLGA, minutes 1912-18). Many of these were also

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leading members of the Bolton Women's Suffrage Society (BWSS); Mrs Hulton, Mrs Barnes, Miss Barlow, Miss Bridson, and Mary Haslam, who was also the driving force, setting up the Bolton Women's Suffrage Society (BWSS) in 1908. Each of these women also followed their own charitable interests. Mary Haslam was a leading light in the Guild of Help, the NSPCC and Bolton Tuberculosis Health Week (King 2010; Burnham 2012). Sarah Reddish, a national leader of the Women's Co-operative Guild, active suffragist and Guardian, set up and championed the voluntary Mother and Baby Clinic, the 'Babies Welcome' (Liddington 1984).

The interconnectivity of these women's activities was beyond formal politics, despite clear differences. Mary Haslam and Sarah Reddish for instance could not have had much in common. The 1901 Census records Haslam's household as having five live-in servants and she was politically Liberal. Reddish was working class and a socialist and chose not to actively engage with the middle class BWSS, led by Haslam. But this did not seem to hinder their working relationship on other matters. In 1911 when Sarah Reddish said she would stand down as a Guardian due to pressure of work, Mary Haslam persuaded her to stay on. Numerous other examples in the records of the BWLGA confirm mutual trust on both welfare and suffrage questions (BWLGA minutes 1912-18). No, the interconnectivity of activity was based, at least in part, on gender. Women with a social conscience, religious vocation or political commitment had very limited choices in 1914. They could seek out charitable work; visiting individuals or working on committees, work associated with women's traditional caring role. From 1894, after the Local Government Act, franchise extension allowed more women to stand as Poor Law Guardians. As the Poor Law was about relieving poverty this dovetailed with charitable work they did. Some working women, especially in heavily industrialised areas such as Lancashire, took on leadership roles in trades unions (Liddington & Norris 1978). But that was it. Even for the rich, there was limited access to the professions and although universities were by 1914 accepting women, they could not take degrees. On the other hand, a significant attraction was the

burgeoning women's suffrage movement. A slow-burn affair in the last decade of the nineteenth century, the leading organisation was the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), chaired by Millicent Fawcett. The NUWSS was middle class, constitutionalist and operated by back door influence. The wider movement was ignited and split by the militant activity of the Pankhursts, WSPU from 1905, and the steady diet of controversy which followed. Suffrage societies unsurprisingly raised other issues relating to women's citizenship work, marriage, child care. There is, of course, debate about the varying and conflicting motivations driving those involved but, undeniably, the relationship between suffrage activity, social work commitment and Poor Law roles was a powerful one (Cowman 2004; Liddington & Norris 1978; Gottlieb 2013).

When the war began, some women campaigned for peace, while others vigorously supported the war (BHC BWSS Minutes 1908-18; Liddington 1984). Most women's organisations took a pragmatic line, accepting that whatever their position, there would be hardship for many and therefore work to be done. In Bolton, as elsewhere, many wanted to contribute; the Guild of Help experiencing an increase in the number of volunteers from 400 to a 1,000, a number sustained for most of the war. In July 1915, a Women's Defence Relief Corps was established in the town, attracting 200 members. But the two organisations investigated in detail here, the BWLGA and BWSS were both political. The BWLGA campaigned for women to be elected (successfully) as Guardians and (unsuccessfully) as Councillors. But elections were not held during the war, making political work redundant and the NUWSS nationally called a halt to 'ordinary propaganda'. So the BWSS, too, looked to other activities. It is no surprise then, that within the first year of the war starting, both the BWLGA and the BWSS became involved in a number of social work activities. The BWLGA became involved in:

- Visiting women with husbands in the army, whose behaviour was 'unsatisfactory' (getting arrested for drunkenness, neglecting children and so on).

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- Police court visiting; BWLGA members being on the lookout for women brought before the court for immoral behaviour. Their purpose was to ensure women's proper treatment by the authorities and/or to persuade the women away from immoral lifestyles. Their presence was supported by Miss Burton, the Probation Officer's daughter.
- Representation on the County Council Mental Deficiency Committee.
- Discussion of Women's Patrols which sought out couples in public places and dissuaded them from immoral behaviour. It seems no Women's Patrols were established in Bolton, but they were in many towns and cities (Goslin 1970).
- The aftercare of children leaving public care.
- Support for Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases, proposals which were to establish clinics run by the local authority and ensure education was available locally, both moral and practical (BHC, BWLGA minutes 1912-18).

The BWSS, which had 300 members in 1914, became involved in:

- Nominating members to help with school dinners, nine volunteers a day being needed.
- Representation on the War Emergency Worker's Committee, the Women's Relief Corps and the local War Pensions Committee.
- Providing two helpers a day at the Poor Protection League, a visiting charity.
- Setting up a kitchen for poor mothers, for training and the provision of cheap food. By late 1915, with increased employment, attendance at the kitchen dwindled.
- In 1916 the BWSS responded enthusiastically to a suggestion from the Manchester Federation of WSSs, that they work with the Scottish Women's Hospitals to establish a hospital in Serbia. Bolton WSS set themselves a target of £100 to raise,

eventually achieving £260, supporting a hospital for Serbian refugees in Corsica.

- They lobbied central government about VD, the Criminal Law Amendment Act and vigorously opposed women being asked to leave court during immorality cases (BHC, BWSS minutes 1908-18).

Despite political and generational differences the groups operated in tandem. The mix of 'controlling' activity (managing women's 'unsatisfactory' behaviour) and 'caring' interventions (supporting women's rights at work and in court for instance) highlights the clear views these women had of how working class people should behave, demonstrating that sense of entitlement so readily evidenced in the pre-war writings of the COS leadership (Bosanquet 1914) and actions of individual affluent visitors (Hodson 1909). This was also played out in their use of social connections with councillors, MPs and the Chief Constable to achieve their ends and confident expectation that the working class women they visited would conform to their advice (BHC, BWSS minutes 1908-18). Of special significance was the work both the groups did encouraging the local authority in stepping into support voluntary activity. In 1915, the LGB offered a grant to local authorities to develop maternity clinics, there being increasing concern about the care of infants. At first the BWSS expressed doubt about the council's interest in this, not something previously within the council's range of responsibilities, as the voluntary 'Babies Welcome' was already in place (BHC, BWSS minutes 1908-18). But, the BWSS worked with the Council, which by the end of the war part funded the 'Babies Welcome'. Into the 1920s, the Council managed an expanding network of maternity clinics.

Post-war changes

These two linked organisations merged in 1918 under the banner of the Bolton Women's Citizen's Association (BWCA). This seems to have been more successful than others, Women's Citizen's Associations elsewhere folding almost immediately (Liddington 1984). But, there were enough nationally to support the National Union of Societies for Equal Citizenship (NUSEC), which replaced the NUWSS. After Millicent Fawcett stepped down,

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this was led by Eleanor Rathbone. Interestingly, Eleanor Rathbone's life partner, Elizabeth Macadam, acted, for a time, in a secretarial capacity for NUSEC, another example of the interconnectivity between the women's movement and social work. Macadam was secretary of the Joint Universities Council for Social Work Training and with her three publications, *the Equipment of a Social Worker* (1925), *The New Philanthropy* (1934) and *The Social Servant in the Making* (1945), is justly regarded as the doyenne of social work training between the wars.

As well as pursuing political aims, the Bolton WCA was active in social work through the 1920s:

- lobbying for greater numbers of women Relieving Officers and Sanitary Inspectors and for an increasing use of welfare officers in local industries;
- ensuring the Watch Committee established women police in Bolton in 1919, four were employed in response to the WCA demand for six (Goslin, 1970: 72);
- Supporting at least one woman social worker. (Alice Kearsley, Poor Law Lady Visitor, was sacked by the Guardians in 1919 on the pretext of returning to pre-war practices. She got in touch with the WCA pointing out that as a 'Lady' Visitor she had not taken on a man's job. The WCA wrote to the local newspaper. Alice was re-instated immediately much to the Guardians' embarrassment (BHC, Alice Borland n.d.));
- Taking on individual 'casework'. Florence Blincoe, paid secretary of the WCA, worked with individual women suffering domestic abuse, those abandoned by their children's fathers and those treated badly at work. Matters of general concern from her casework she brought before the committee (BHC, WCA minutes n.d.).

Although still involved in local charities, the WCA's overwhelming focus was on encouraging women to take on the full responsibilities of citizenship. Part of this was pressing the Guardians and the Council to improve their

services. This reflected a national pattern after the war with 'local authorities becoming...the natural focus for social service' (Attlee 1920; Macadam 1925).

But, as the considerable increase in membership of Labour and Conservative women's sections nationally demonstrated, more politically and socially motivated women after the war chose mainstream politics as their platform than women's organisations (Hunt & Hannam 2013). Others chose to enter professions, as they became slightly more open to women. So, as the social entrepreneurs who had driven welfare in 1914 aged, there were fewer women who chose, voluntarily, to focus all their efforts on local social work.

Another significant post-war change in the landscape was that religious missions and settlements became more narrowly focused and the operational footprint of visiting charities, such as the COS, shrank. This was for a number of reasons. Free school meals, school medical examinations and maternity clinics contributed to the wartime improvement in child health. Better wartime wages, better nutrition for workers, the availability of unemployment and sickness benefits, old age pensions and war pensions for 2.4 million men all contributed to a healthier population. None of these financial benefits were substantial, but their availability curbed the worst excesses of poverty (Pugh 2008). In addition, wartime intervention to control alcohol consumption was not reversed and seems to have had a cumulative impact into the 1920s. There were, for instance, a lower proportion of children taken 'under the control' of the Guardians in Bolton as a result of drink in the interwar period than in 1914 (Barr 1995, BHC, GBO/27 n.d.). So, state action in relieving the worst excesses of poverty and drunkenness began to pinch off demand for voluntary social work's traditional interventions.

There were also fewer young people who could afford to volunteer full time. Death duties, land taxes and an increase in income tax from 6% (in 1914) to 30% (in 1918), reduced the numbers of families which could live off private incomes (Pugh 2008). And younger women coming to adulthood during the war had a different attitude, "What did people do before the

war?” asked one young woman, who did ‘not wish to go in for the more or less futile social life that was the lot of many in pre-war days and could not conceive of life without work’ (Attlee 1920: 28). So although traditional visiting charities did not disappear, they stagnated, holding by 1920 ‘a minor place in social service’ (Attlee 1920: 67).

The higher wartime tax requirement could not be reversed. With 75% of the population now enfranchised, no government could renege on paying war pensions or old age pensions. So the proportionate spend of gross domestic product by the government was maintained after 1918, having doubled during the war to 27.4% and rising slowly in the interwar years (Pugh 2008). And, there are many examples of needs identified and responded to by voluntary action taken over after the war by the state. For instance, by 1919 the War Office had taken responsibility for a sizable medical and nursing service, an incipient NAAFI, welfare officers for troops and a physiotherapy service run by the War Office and the Ministry of Pensions which replaced Almeric Paget’s voluntary massage service. Another example of the triumph of the wartime voluntary spirit, heralding its demise, was in nursing. The considerable number of volunteer nurses used during the war had been crucial to the war effort. The Nursing Registration Act of 1919 recognised the contribution made and the expertise of the nurse, establishing entry and training requirements. This, paradoxically, banished the affluent volunteer from pitching up, claiming to be a nurse. And requirements on Local Authorities about Venereal Disease clinics, maternity care and of the Blind Person’s Act of 1920, shifted the relationship between voluntary effort and state responsibility for welfare definitively (Lewis 1991).

A new surveillance?

As well as the shift towards state responsibility for welfare, the changed relationship between state and voluntary effort and an emphasis on ‘citizenship’, two other major post-war themes, are discernible into the 1920s. The first was an emphasis on child welfare. The Maternity and Child Welfare Act 1918 obliged local authorities to establish child welfare clinics. Education Care Committees spread across the UK. The crèche movement took off, stimulated by the need for

child care arrangements for women workers and trained social workers sometimes ran these (BHC, Ada Wainer’s personnel record n.d.). Adolescent delinquency became a focus of activity too. Day continuation schools under the Education Act 1918 offered schooling after the age of 13 for working class children. Three separate associations, agitating for a legal standard for adoption, sprang up and opportunities for paid work with children slowly improved, with Poor Law authorities establishing more Women Visitor posts during the 1920s.

The other theme, what might be termed a new surveillance of women’s behaviour, arose from the new freedoms enjoyed by women during the war, the unease caused to traditionalists seeing women living less constrained lives and a reaction in the early post-war years against those freedoms (Pedersen 2004). The franchise extension of 1918 to women over thirty epitomises this unease about female power and choice. Women’s Patrols were set up in many towns during the war and the Home Office encouraged a formalisation of local Women Police from 1919 (Woodson 1993). Their role was to prevent women falling into immoral behaviour, policing prostitution and dissuading couples from sexual activity in parks, their wartime success relying on the deferential response of young working class women to instruction from socially superior uniformed ladies. This role, over time, came to include a range of child care activities. Similarly, during the war local Moral Welfare Committees (MWCs) began to emerge. Over the next decade these replaced the penitentiaries, which took in ‘fallen’ women and unmarried mothers for a period of asylum, training and moral guidance. Local MWCs tended to have a House of Refuge for confinements, but from the early 1920s Moral Welfare Outworkers were appointed to work with women in the community (Morris 1954). Occupational welfare officers had set up a national association in 1913 with 60 members, but by 1918 there were hundreds of occupational welfare officers in factories, whose role was to both support and manage women employees (Coles 2003). Another strand of control was that all three associations lobbying for formalised adoption were concerned that

adopted children should only be taken by respectable people who were committed to providing a stable home, replacing an unregulated free-for-all. There were supportive and protective aspects to all this, but it would be naïve not to note underlying surveillance and control. So, while before the war conventions limiting women's behaviour operated in both public and private, the public freedoms enjoyed during the war and rights gained immediately afterwards (easier divorce, child care availability, employment opportunities and latterly birth control) were girt around with moral prohibitions, some of which had social work roles to enforce them. Ironically, such roles had been established and championed during the war by activist women of a generation whose ideal included public service for women while maintaining Victorian standards of behaviour; standards comprehensively compromised by the war.

Poverty and method

As has been noted above, the casework taken on by the WCA in Bolton in the 1920s was not about poverty *per se*, more about people's circumstances or behaviour. It is also noteworthy that the justification for children being taken 'under control of' the Guardians in Bolton in the 1920s was as likely to relate to feeble mindedness or sexual immorality as to poverty and neglect associated with drink, which was the overwhelming justification before 1914. Something was changing in both demand and response. In *The Social Worker*, Attlee pins down what must have been a perplexing situation for social workers in visiting societies. He suggested that as so much financial support by 1920 was offered by the state, voluntary visiting charities could best withdraw from general social work and instead offer support in the form of 'personal influence'. Macadam quotes Sidney Webb as making the same point, conceding that 'the Public Authority' now had overall responsibility, but as the 'salaried official...[has] no fingers...only thumbs' the voluntary worker was needed to be the 'eyes and fingers' of officialdom (Macadam 1934: 29). The COS, meanwhile, soon came to criticise public welfare as a vast bureaucracy (Peel 2011). So, the shift in responsibility towards state leadership was accepted, bringing on

something of a crisis for visiting charities; a crisis compounded by fewer volunteers, fewer problems caused by alcohol, and slightly less grievous poverty.

The pre-war focus of voluntary visiting had been poverty and the methods used had been careful record keeping, eligibility differentiation and personal influence based on class superiority. But with the majority of the population now enfranchised, the idea of 'citizenship' implying a degree of social equality, dents in the upper class armoury of deference exposed by wartime experience, and more affluent women employed rather than volunteering, class superiority as a 'method' of influence had clear limitations. Younger social workers also thought differently. As Pedersen notes, pre-war feminism and suffrage activism was very often 'high minded', requiring a 'levelling up of men's standards of sexual morality' (Pedersen 2004: 172), while after the war, younger, active women, encouraged by the new psychology and more open debate about sex and birth control were open to new ideas. As a result social work educators, as Macadam noted, began looking for a distinct 'technique'. They borrowed from modern sciences, using several ideas: from Freudian psychology came the emphasis on childhood experience and maladjustment; from Cyril Burt came intelligence classification; and, from eugenic thinking, came the notions of 'feeble mindedness' and the 'social problem group'. (Overy 2009). In 1914 social work's leaders, while talking about 'casework' and a 'scientific approach' relied on a philosophy of *Moral Education* of the 'poor', the language of Loch and Bosanquet. By 1930, social workers in voluntary organisations and the small but elite new social work groups such as Psychiatric Social Workers and Almoners, while still talking of 'casework' and a 'scientific approach,' were moving towards a philosophy of *Psychological Method*, maintaining the superiority over their clients enjoyed by their forebears, but claiming psychological expertise rather than assuming class authority (Timms 1964).

Conclusions

Elizabeth Macadam referred to a 'unique structure of social services' in place after the war, albeit one with 'scrappiness ... inadequate provision here, the overlapping there, the

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delays, the waste of time, effort and money, the unconstructive unscientific attitude and above all the absence of any plan for ... suitable education and training' (Macadam 1945: 1). But, an emerging network was in place. A great deal had changed as a result of the war:

- In 1914, many functions subsequently regarded as social work activities were in place, piecemeal, in local authorities. By the 1920s, state-led welfare activity had expanded, employing more workers who co-ordinated the work of volunteers. This compromised the previous superiority of the volunteer over the paid official.
- The enfranchisement of and freedoms taken by affluent women during the war led those after the war, who in 1914 might have been local social entrepreneurs, into local politics, a profession, or new paid roles. Freedoms gained were hedged around by socially sanctioned surveillance of working women's behaviour, some of which were played out on social work roles.
- Established visiting charities, the backbone of much pre-war activity, stagnated, with fewer volunteers, fewer in desperate need and a compromised philosophy. Young social workers in voluntary agencies sought instead, work of personal influence. Over the next decade 'casework', the individual recording of work done in separate case files, began its transition into 'casework', a method of analysis and therapeutic intervention.

The shift in attention of social work from poverty, towards people's behaviours and circumstances, led to the narrowing of the wider pre-war interpretation, and as younger social workers were casting around for a 'method', this, rather than 'function', became a defining feature of the occupation, setting the tone for the idea of 'social work' for the next fifty years.

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Book review

Sarah Matthews

Social Work and Received Ideas

By Chris Rojek, Geraldine Peacock and Stewart Collins

Social work is about people. It is also about words. These are the opening sentiments of this late 1980s book which has grabbed the attention of the *Bulletin of the Social Work History Network* since it revisits historically the perennial dilemma about what is the nature of social work.

As befits this *Bulletin*, the review of this book focusses on its historical aspects taking us as it does on a journey through the received ideas of social work and also on those suggested by its authors. To begin there is a discussion of the ambiguities that have beset social work language from the earliest days and also the perceptions of it as friendship and art, or as a profession and science. In addition, the moves to transform social work from a part time activity of the rich and well-born into a skilled and professional activity with its own scientific

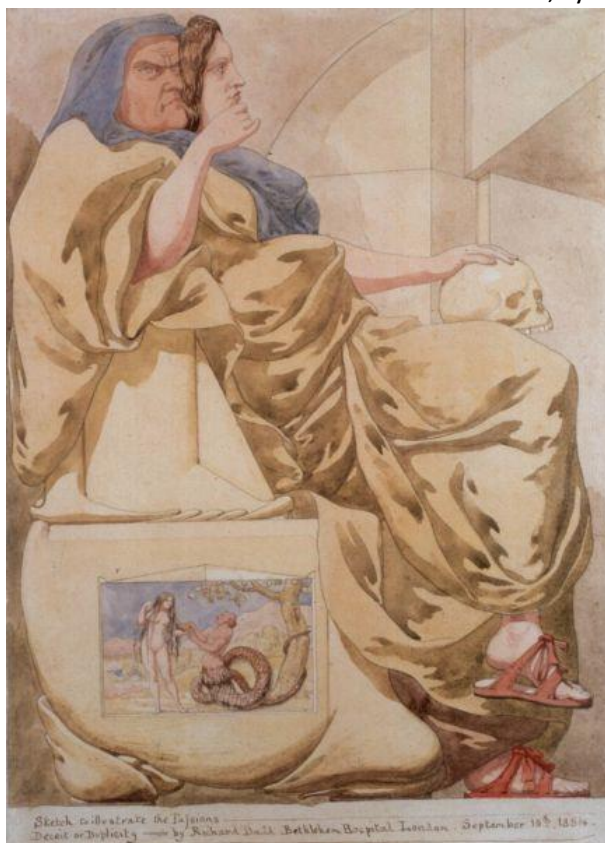
professional language is discussed. At the heart of early thinking was the idea of the defective or diseased person to which some sort of therapeutic intervention could be applied, and

this was further confirmed by the assimilation of psychoanalytical ideas. Some of the leading components of the latter have received attention in a previous *Bulletin*, for example Charlotte Towle (see vol. 1(1): 23-24).

Using Richard Dadd's *Deceit or Duplicity* for its cover illustration, this book aims to challenge its readers to explore these received ideas. Divided into two somewhat enforced binaries, traditional and radical social work, the authors provide a critique. Of particular interest is the discussion that is had about the different types of social work. First, 'traditional' or what the authors refer to as casework, systems models, the unitary

approach, task-centred work, group work and crisis intervention. All different approaches, in some respects, but united, according to the authors, through the aim of bringing about the adjustment of the client to presently existing conditions in society, or in other words, the technical management of personal problems and the maintenance of order. Second, 'radical social work', a collective term that includes many conflicting strands of social work theory and practice such as labelling theory, critical psychoanalytical models, Marxism, feminism and discourse theory. The

authors they criticise traditional social work on the ground that it applies an ahistorical view of social work values and also neglects to itemise the structural context in which personal problems are



Sketch to Illustrate the Passions - Deceit or Duplicity (1854)
by Richard Dadd (Bethlem Museum of the Mind)

produced and reproduced. They also suggest that such psychoanalytical concepts are not fully understood in social work and have perhaps been overtaken by other ideas such as transference and counter-transference, the 'resistant' client and manipulation, to name a few. The authors propose that psychoanalytically based discourse in social work is influenced by a narrow set of received ideas but which nonetheless constitute the ethos. Ideas which are vague, ambiguous and fallible.

So, what then is the authors' alternative vision? This they propose is dialectical, a view of social work which recognises that all things exist in time and because of this they are contradictory, transient and changeable. For them the conduct of individuals cannot be understood accurately unless it is placed in the context of natural, historical and social relations. There is a twofold action of language and received ideas that are both constraining and enabling. Such worn out slogans and formulas they contend is a view adopted by those who eschew radical social work as opposed to traditional social work who take the view that this language is irrelevant or inadequate to describe people's problems and that the focus on case studies and individual problems deflects attention away from the structural causes of social and economic problems in class society, a language they suggest not of reform but of resignation. Traditional social work is rejected for perpetuating the existing conditions of patriarchy and class inequality in capitalist society. The 1960s and 1970s criticised traditional social work for perpetuating restricted notions of need and care and by extension neglecting the structural dimensions of personal problems. Giving the client hope for a better future is a common feature of traditional and radical social work yet its future is reliant upon the past and the present.

This review has been a whistle stop tour of this critique of received ideas in social work and of course the book is of its time. Nonetheless, what

the authors succeed in doing is revise the debate about what social work is, based in an historical analysis which is of course of interest to the readers of this particular issue of the *Bulletin*. The authors conclude that to understand how our needs and obligations compare and differ we must speak in open and relevant ways. They want to see a welfare system which takes the unique needs of clients seriously and a form of social work that handles issues of, as they describe, gender, class, race and handicap, positively. For the authors, the received ideas of social work are frequently singled out as symbols of what is wrong with social work and a move from donatory to participatory forms of care is suggested. They also argue that community work has produced vital experience of participatory welfare. However, the experience must be taken much further in social work and funded adequately, albeit even this will not put an end to ambiguity. The authors make a plea for social workers to be given real powers to make their words count in the planning and administration of care. Does this resonate with today? One wonders if individual budgets are participatory forms of care. Will the current of current Sustainability and Transformation Plans involve participation either from social work, social care or those who stand in need of such care?

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