

Celebrating 100 Years of Social Work

University of Birmingham
Ann Davis

1968—1988



1908—1928

1988 - 2008



Social work and
multi-agency working
Making a difference

Edited by KATE MORRIS

SOCIAL WORK IN PRACTICE series



1948—1968



1928—1948



2008 was the year in which the University of Birmingham became the first University in the UK to reach its centenary of teaching and researching in social work. With over four hundred social work qualifying, post qualifying and research students it continues to make a major contribution to professional and academic excellence.

This brief illustrated history was written to give readers a glimpse into what the University of Birmingham has contributed locally, nationally and internationally to social work education and research. This is not an “official history” but is written by someone who has worked in social work research and education in the University of Birmingham for over 30 years and brings to the telling of this story, her personal perspective.

In compiling this publication for the celebratory seminar being held on 10 December 2008 I have been assisted by a range of individuals and organisations. In thanking them I would like to mention those without whom this publication would not have been completed:

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November 2008

1908—1928

“If social work is going to take its place, as surely it ought to, as one of the professions, it is necessary to organize a system of training for it.”

Professor John Muirhead
Foreword to the Equipment of the Social Worker (1925)

On Tuesday 6 October 1908 the doors of The University of Birmingham were opened to students enrolled on the new one year social studies course. The course was advertised as a training for social and philanthropic work. Birmingham was the first UK University to give aspiring social workers full status as students.

From its founding in 1900 University staff had been actively involved in social welfare and philanthropic work in the City of Birmingham. Through research into the employment and housing conditions of poor people in Birmingham and a series of evening classes offered to welfare workers in 1905-06. John Muirhead, Professor of Moral Philosophy and William Ashley, Professor of Commerce were at the forefront of these developments. Key too, was the Birmingham Settlement, established in Aston, Birmingham in 1899 as a neighbourhood response to the poverty and disadvantage of individuals and families struggling with the rapidly changing social and economic conditions of a growing and industrialising City. From its inception the Settlement Committee built strong links with the University.

Birmingham at this time was a city whose poorest inhabitants lived and worked in appalling conditions. To address the consequences of these conditions a range of charitable organisations and institutions had developed. At a national level the welfare reforming liberal government which came into power in 1908 introduced a raft of legislation which began to build administrative structures for delivering social welfare provision.

The 1914-1918 war saw a change of direction in social welfare, locally and nationally, away from welfare reform to meeting the immediate needs of a population at war. The City's social welfare organisations such as the Birmingham Settlement, found themselves working with a growing number of families needing financial and material help. The

1908

UoB Social Studies course opens

1910

UoB Social Studies Committee set up

University's Aston Webb buildings became the 1st Southern General Hospital which treated returning casualties of war and the University finished its academic years on 31 March so that staff and students could devote themselves to the war effort. The option of taking the social studies course part time over two years was introduced to meet wartime conditions and in 1916 and 1917 in conjunction with the Birmingham Settlement, University staff ran a short emergency course to train women in munitions factories as Welfare Supervisors.



The Great Hall 1914



Munition workers 1915

The recognition of the worth and standing of social work after the first world war was recognised nationally through the establishment in 1918 of the Joint University Council for Social Studies (JUCSS). The aim of the Council was to co-ordinate and develop the work of Social Studies departments in Universities across Great Britain. The first Chair of JUCSS was Sir William Ashley. Birmingham's launch of a two year Diploma in Social Studies in 1920 with increased opportunities for students to engage in practical work had a curriculum which showed the national influence of JUCSS on its member Universities.

There was a growth in social workers employed across diverse fields during the 1920s as an increasing number of state agencies were established to provide health and welfare services. The training role of Universities as well as the role of social workers themselves was given more official acknowledgement and encouragement. Although the majority of social workers, overwhelmingly women, remained unpaid at this time there was an increase in the numbers who were being trained and paid for their work.

Of the 350 students who enrolled during these first two decades of social work training at Birmingham, 239 succeeded in gaining a certificate. A survey of the employment outcomes for students over these two decades showed that the posts taken up included:

Public Departments, Central and Local

- Factory inspectors
- Inspectors under National Insurance and Trade Board Acts
- Inspectors of Boarded-out Children
- Sanitary Inspectors and Health Visitors
- Secretaries and Clerks to Employment Exchanges and to Juvenile Employment Committees
- Organisers of Children's Care Committees and Juvenile Organisations
- Investigators of Old Age Pension Claims
- Managers and Rent Collectors under Local Housing Authorities
- Women Police
- Probation Officers
- Relieving Officers

Voluntary Bodies

- Welfare Workers in Factories and Commercial Undertakings
- Hospital Almoners
- Organisers or Secretaries of Councils of Social Welfare, Charity Organisation, Child Welfare Agencies, Clubs, Social Institutes, Holiday Funds, Rural Associations, Social Activities of Churches and Religious Organisations
- Settlement Workers

There was an international dimension to this period too. A student won a scholarship to New York and some visited agencies in France and Belgium with Birmingham Settlement workers. Connections with the Theological colleges at Selly Oak also attracted a number of international students to the University's Social Studies programme.



Guild of Undergraduate Committee, UoB, 1920

1920

UoB 2 year Diploma in Social Studies begins

SOCIAL STUDY TRAINING FOR SOCIAL AND PHILANTHROPIC WORK

The following series of lectures has been arranged for the coming year. The morning lectures are ordinary University classes. Those in the afternoon and evening have been especially arranged for the scheme. Each set of lectures can be taken apart from the rest, and apart from the general scheme of training, on payment of the fee for the particular subject. The composition fee for the whole group of lectures and demonstrations will be £6.6s.0d including Membership Fee of £1.1s.0d, which gives admission to the University Library.

THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION—Professor Masterman

Twenty Lectures Fee £1.1s.0d.

ENGLISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT—Professor Masterman

Twenty Lectures Fee £1.1s.0d.

INDUSTRIAL HISTORY—Professor Ashley

Ten Lectures Fee 10s.6d.

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS—Professor Ashley

Seventeen Lectures Fee £1.1s.0d.

METHOD OF STATISTICS—Professory Ashley

Twenty Lectures Fee £1.1s.0d.

INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS—George Shann

Ten Lectures Fee 10/-

SANITATION AND HYGIENE—John Robertson

Ten Lectures Fee 10/-

LAW FOR SOCIAL WORKS—Frank Tillyard

Five Lectures Fee 5/-

AIMS AND METHODS OF SOCIAL WORK—Professor Muirhead

Five Lectures Fee 5/-

In connection with particular parts of the course arrangements will be made for visits under competent escort to the following institutions etc:

ADMINISTRATION

(a) **POOR LAW**—Workhouse—Infirmary—Receiving House for Children—Cottage Homes—Epileptic Colony—Home for Defective Children

(b) **EDUCATION**—Infant and Elementary Schools—Schools for Defective, Blind, Deaf and Crippled Children—Technical and Art Schools

(c) **JUSTICE**—Children's Court—The Probation System—Reformatory and Industrial Schools

SANITATION AND HYGIENE

Housing Improvements—Hospitals (General and Special)—Elementary Schools (Hygiene and Domestic Teaching)

INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS

Factories—Industries and Domestic Workshops

A certificate will be granted after examination on the completion of the curriculum. In order to encourage the attendance of suitable students of limited means, who might not otherwise be able to devote their whole time for a year to such a course of preparation, it is proposed to offer free tuition to a limited amount of students (no more than six). Applications for this remission should be accompanied by a confidential statement as to previous career, aim of study, and means.

1928—1948

“All university departments exist in the long run to serve the community, but the school of social study is in a special sense an amphibious body which requires two elements, not only for its full development but for its very existence. It belongs to the university and it belongs to the city.”

Elizabeth McAdam
The Equipment of the Social Worker (1925)

The students who the diploma course in 1928 held a wide range of aspirations for their future careers. The course was designed for social workers in a range of voluntary, state, church and industrial settings as well as those interested in working for trade unions, co-operative societies, or holding public office on local councils. Students had to make visits of observation, record their learning on those visits and engage systematically in specified areas of practical work.

1928 was a time of global economic depression. Unemployment across Britain was steadily rising—reaching a peak of 2.5 million in 1932. The established range of social welfare agencies found that they were unable to cope with the need generated by these conditions. Whilst the development of the motor industry in Birmingham provided protection for some, voluntary sector organisations were actively involved in developing initiatives to address the desperate material, social and emotional conditions of those with least. The social welfare policies introduced were a mix of reform, e.g. the 1929 Local Government Act abolished the Poor Law Board of Guardians but a stringent Means Test was introduced in 1931 for those facing destitution.

By 1939 most social workers, whether qualified or not were women working for relatively little pay. It was the experiences of the 1939—1945 war which shifted this pattern and profile of social work. The war generated a range of opportunities for social workers to prove their worth and they emerged with a high positive profile in the eyes of the public and politicians. As in World War I, social workers were vital to work with individualised distress at times of crisis, linking individuals and families to the resources they needed to survive. What was distinct about this war, however, was that new initiatives had to be devised to deal with the devastating impact of enemy bombing on civilian populations. Social workers were involved in organising the evacuation of City

children to the country, working with homeless bombed families and the welfare needs of those engaging in factory war work and much more.

The welfare responses made to war also revealed the appalling conditions that had been faced for decades by families living in poverty. A Women's Group on Public Welfare study about the concerning behaviour and health of young evacuees described children who were undernourished, inadequately clothed and who had never used toilets before. The report highlighted the unhealthy conditions in which these children had lived in cities and asked questions about the acceptability of such poverty in an industrialised country. War time evacuations also brought to light the inconsistent and poor level of support for older people left alone and triggered schemes to provide home helps and meals on wheels.



Back to back housing, Birmingham, 1930

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In responding to the problems of a country at war, social workers found themselves identifying and trying to fill gaps in welfare provision. In doing this they contributed to the evidence that William Beveridge was reviewing as he wrote his report to government about the need to establish new national provision for the welfare of citizens. The Beveridge Report provided

the basis for major changes to welfare and social care legislation introduced by the post war Labour Government.

Welfare State Foundations

- **Education Act (1944):** Introduced free primary, secondary and further education and nursery schools
- **Family Allowance Act (1945):** Provided a fixed weekly amount of benefit for each child, after the first, up until the age of 16
- **National Health Service Act (1946):** Free health care for all and the introduction of a national system of hospitals and general practitioners.
- **National Insurance Act (1946):** Entitlement to financial provision for all of working age except married women; on the basis of contributions paid while working. Sickness, unemployment and old age benefits and maternity and death grants
- **Industrial Injuries Act (1946):** Compensation for those injured, disabled or killed at work, and those suffering from industrial diseases.
- **National Assistance Act (1948):** Provided financial entitlements for those below the minimum subsistence level and those not entitled to social insurance in times of need.
- **The Children Act (1948):** Enacted the findings of the Curtis Committee (1945), local authorities to establish Children's Departments; and employ Child Care Officers

As the war neared its end, the Carnegie Trust commissioned a review from Eileen Younghusband, social work academic about the employment and training of social workers. The Younghusband Report published in 1947, provided a review of the courses offered by Universities and concluded: *"The profession has now reached the*

point of development when neither general social science courses nor purely professional training fully meets its needs".

The recommendations of this report shaped thinking about the postwar direction of social work education.



Bomb damage, Stirchley, 1940

Youngusband Report Recommendations

- More trained and salaried social workers are needed
- Research into casework and groupwork is needed to establish a credible base for the profession
- Schools of Social Work which are graduate professional schools need to be established within Universities to raise national standards of training
- Attention should be paid to American social work education and training as a good model to aspire to

Social work training at the University of Birmingham during and after the war went through a period of rapid change. During the war, staff on the social work programmes at Birmingham provided emergency training for the Ministry of Labour for factory welfare workers, but it was in the immediate post-war period that programmes were expanded to meet the workforce needs of the newly emerging Welfare State and student numbers doubled. In 1945 a three year course in Social Studies was introduced building on the established two year social studies diploma with additional academic courses and a requirement of six months of practical work spread over the three years. In 1947 a degree programme in social administration was established described as a 'bridge between social sciences and social work', and the following year a Child Care training course was introduced designed to train and educate Child Care Officers for the newly created local authority Children's Departments.



Erdington Cottage Homes

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDY

Training for Public and Social Work

A course of systematic instruction, combined with practical training, is instituted for those who propose to engage in public and social services. It has in view the needs especially of the following classes:

1. Those who desire to engage as officials in national or municipal administration (eg employment, exchanges, insurance, sanitation, poor law, pension, probation work etc).
2. Those who desire to take part in philanthropic work, whether as volunteers or as salaried secretaries, or organisers of citizens' committees, guilds of help, or as almoners of hospitals.
3. Those who desire appointments as welfare supervisors in factories.
4. The officials of trade unions, co-operative societies, and similar organisations.
5. The clergy and church workers of the several dominations.
6. Those who desire to prepare themselves for the duties of elected or co-opted members of local governing bodies.

The programme of instruction and training will cover two academic years. Candidates who are under the age of twenty years, are required to apply to the chairman for permission to take the course before the candidate enters the training or registers as a student.

Social Study Diploma

The requirements for the diploma fall under three heads:

1. University Courses of Lecture and Class Teaching
2. Visits of Observation and Explanatory Lectures
3. Practical Work

The University Courses include: Industrial History—Sanitation and Hygiene—Industrial Law—Social Philosophy—Principles of Economics—Central and Local Government—Personal Health—Statistics of Trade and Industry—Business Administration.

Visits of Observation are to institutions of special interest to social students:

1. **ADMINISTRATION**
 - (a) **POOR LAW**—Workhouse—Infirmary—Cottage Homes—Receiving House for Children
 - (b) **EDUCATION**—Infant and Elementary Schools—Kindergartens—Schools for Defective Children—Home for Defective Children—Care Committees
 - (c) **JUSTICE**—Children's Court—Remand Home—Reformatory Schools
 - (d) **MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT**—Meetings of City Council
2. **PUBLIC HYGIENE**
Housing Improvements—Hospitals (General and Special)—Elementary Schools (Hygiene and Domestic Teaching)
3. **INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS**
Factories—Home Industries—Domestic Workshops—Employment Exchanges

Students will be required to attend the visits arranged under the direction of the Warden of the Settlement, who will give a course of explanatory lectures with reference to the visits and arrange for talks by experts in the several lines of social work. All students are required to write brief accounts of the visits and notes of the accompanying explanations and the note books containing them must be sent, at the end of each term, to the Tutor in Practical Work concerned.

The following list indicates the general character of the **practical work** of which students can gain experience in Birmingham:

- A. **Office Work:** this includes Correspondence and the preparation and filing of systematic Records (use of case papers, Indexing, Mutual Registration etc) and attendance at Case Committees.
- B. **Visiting:** this includes Visiting in connection with the work of the Citizens' Committee for the purpose of enquiry as well as *Systematic* Visiting in connection with Care Committees, the Country Holiday Fund, Provident Dispensaries and *Continuous* Visiting in connection with Provident Collecting, District Visiting, Child Care and After Care, Rent Collecting.
- C. **Factory, School, Club and Health Work:** Definite work as a regular helper in welfare work or a factory, in an approved school, club, class or play centre, out patients department or dispensary.

The Practical Work of candidates for the diploma must include some experience under the head A and some experience under at least one of the heads B and C.

Source: The University of Birmingham Calendar 1928-1929

1948—1968

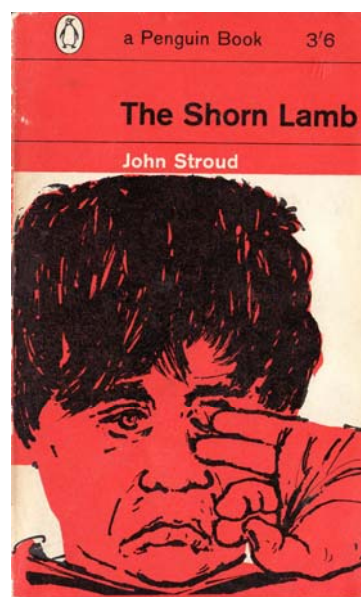
“Our impression at the University was that the country outside was dotted with castle-like institutions in which hundreds of children dressed in blue serge were drilled to the sound of whistles. We were going to replace or re-educate the squat and brutal custodians. I had a dream of myself letting up a blind so that sunshine flooded into a darkened room as I turned, with a frank and friendly smile, to the little upturned faces within”

John Stroud

Author, former social worker and student of the University of Birmingham, describing his thoughts on joining one of the new local authority Children’s Departments as a Child Care Officer.

The Shorn Lamb 1962

Birmingham in 1948 had a wider range of programmes to offer students than ever before. The demand for qualified social workers in the growing welfare services also meant that there was more government financial support available to help students enrol on the programmes. Alongside its specialist programme for Child Care Officers the University was offering a two year certificate in social study to non-graduates and a one year diploma for those already holding a relevant degree. Entry to these programmes depended on candidates being successful at an interview undertaken by a committee of academic staff and practitioners which was designed to determine their suitability for social work.



When Winifred Cavenagh, a member of the social work teaching group at this time, published, through the Faculty of Commerce and Social Science, her research report ‘**Four decades of students in social work**’, Professor Sargent Florence, Head of the Faculty Research Board, noted in his preface that the types of work that students with a social work qualification from Birmingham were entering in 1949 were:

1. Family case workers and case workers for invalid children, blind people etc.

1948

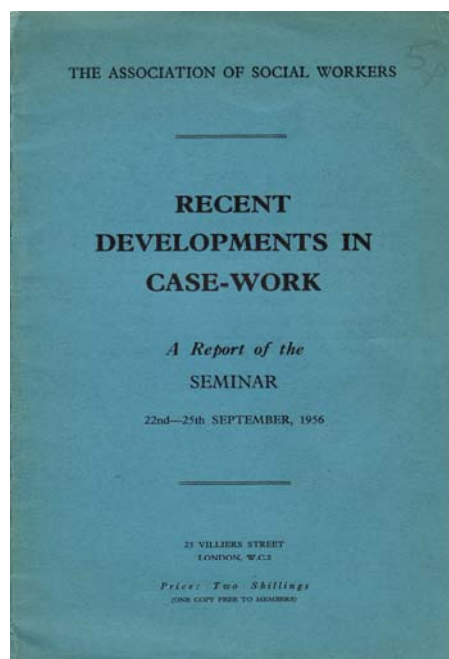
UoB Child Care Officer
Programme starts

2. Mental Health workers in child guidance clinics, mental hospitals and organisations caring for mental defectives.
3. Child welfare workers under local authorities and voluntary organisations.
4. Almoners in hospitals and other health services.
5. Housing managers and social workers in connection with housing schemes.
6. Moral welfare workers.
7. Social workers dealing with delinquency, probation officers, welfare officers, housemasters and mistresses in Approved Schools.
8. Organisers for youth employment and welfare.
9. Personnel managers in industry, commerce and the public services.
10. Youth leaders, wardens of Community Centres and Settlements.
11. Organisers of councils of social services, Citizens Advice Bureaux and similar bodies.
12. Social Survey investigators.

The world to which social workers were contributing was one in which the hopes held out by the introduction of the Welfare State were being tested in the new local authority Children's Departments, Health and Welfare Departments providing services for older and disabled people and the Probation Departments working with offenders. Welfare reform continued through legislation which included the 1959 Mental Health Act and the following development of community care provision in the mental health services as well as services for older and disabled people. New children and young person's legislation (1960 and 1963) emphasised the importance of preventative work with children and families.

As social work began to establish itself alongside other welfare state professionals such as doctors, teachers and nurses, debates about its qualifying education continued. Eileen Youngusband continued to exert an influence on the direction of social work education in Britain through a series of reports (1951, 1955, 1959). To meet concerns about the shortage of qualified social workers as well as the maintenance of the quality of candidates entering training, she recommended that Universities offer more general training in applied social studies rather than extend specialist training. Students should, she argued, be equipped with an overview of the profession as well as the basic knowledge and skills to work in any of the specialist social work agencies. At the same time further education colleges were encouraged to offer general courses for students working in the health and welfare services—the National Certificate of Social Work.

The establishment of the Council for Training in Social Work (CTSW) in 1962 and the introduction of a system of government student grants for social work training supported a steady expansion of social work education throughout the 1960s. In Birmingham National Certificate of Social Work courses were established at the Birmingham College of Commerce (now Birmingham City University), and the Selly Oak Colleges. At the University of Birmingham the generic applied social studies course introduced in 1956 and the postgraduate diploma in social work took an increasing number of students from home and abroad. A degree in social administration, offered within the same department, became increasingly viewed as an entry to postgraduate social work training. This expansion of social work education led to a shortage of suitable practice placements locally and nationally. Following the National Institute of Social Work's (NISW) national survey in 1966 a recommendation was made to create student units in which up to 8 students would be supervised by a practice teacher in key placement agencies.



Despite the hopes that had been raised in the 1940s about the impact that the welfare state would have on the profile of inequality and poverty in Britain social workers in their daily practice in the 1960s witnessed the struggles of clients to manage with the resources they had at their disposal. A combination of groundbreaking social research, media coverage and grassroots campaigning focused on the continuing



Cathy Come Home, 1966

poverty and disadvantages which were embedded in so called 'affluent Britain'. 'Cathy Come Home' a Ken Loach film, shot in 1966 in some of the poorest streets of Birmingham about the way in which homeless families were treated, influenced the establishment of Shelter, who alongside the Child Poverty Action Group campaigned for further reforms to social welfare.

1963
Children & Young Person's Act

1968
Seebohm Report

FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Certificate and Diploma in Social Study

Before entry, candidates are interviewed by a committee as to their suitability for social work. Priority is normally given to older and more experienced candidates. Early application is advisable.

Requirements for the Certificate and Diploma in Social Studies:

- (a) Visits of Observation
- (b) Practical work
- (c) The following:
 2. Modern British Economic History
 3. Economics 1 (excluding the study of industrial resources)
 4. Social Administration
 5. Elements of Physiology and Psychology
 6. Social and Political Philosophy

Two of the following:

- 6.(6 & 7) Principles of Government—Industrial Law—Industrial Relations and Psychology—Social
Medicine—Sociology

One of the following:

- 8. Industrial Law if not taken already—Psychology Part 1—Principles of Education—Local
Government Administration

The **Certificate** is awarded to non-graduates after a two years' course in which 1—4 are normally taken in the first year; the remaining lectures in the second year.

The **Diploma** is awarded after a one year course to those holding degrees, the requirements of which include at least two of the courses specified above.

Candidates looking forward to Personnel Management in factories will be required to include Industrial Relations and Psychology. Candidates looking forward to Youth leadership and Club work will be required to include Psychology and Principles of Education. Special instruction will be provided in the principles and methods of Club work.

The **Higher Diploma** in Social Study is awarded only to graduates in allied subjects after at least one year's research.

1968—1988

“We recommend a new local authority department, providing a community based and family oriented service, which will be available to all. This new department will, we believe reach far beyond the discovery and rescue of social casualties; it will enable the greatest possible number of individuals to act reciprocally, giving and receiving service for the well-being of the whole community’

‘The achievement of these ends will depend partly on the quality of the training received by all the staff in the department’”

HMSO(1968)

Report of the Committee on Local Authority and Allied Personal Social Services

The Seebohm Report

Social work students at Birmingham during this period lived through a series of radical and contrasting changes to welfare policy and provision as well as social work education. In 1968 the diploma in social work programme provided a general training in social casework with specialist options which was recognised as a professional qualification by the major specialist professional bodies. It gave equal weight to the standards students achieved in their academic work and their fieldwork placements (see page 19 for details).

In 1968 the Seebohm Committee recommended that the specialist areas of local authority social work should be fused to provide a single community based response to the range of needs that individuals, families and communities presented. Whilst in England and Wales (unlike Scotland) probation work was not brought into the local authority services, it continued to be part of the new generic social work programmes that were designed to meet the workforce requirements of Social Service Departments (SSDs).

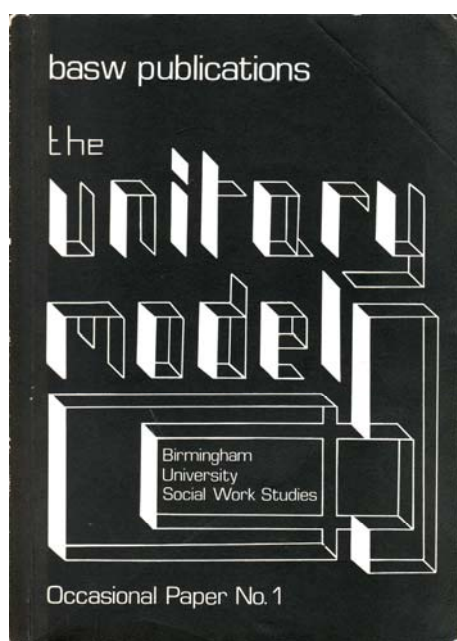
Following the 1970 Local Authority and Social Services Act SSDs were tasked with a range of new responsibilities through the 1969 Children and Young Persons Act and the 1970 Chronically Sick and Disabled Person Act. At the same time the organisational base of the profession was transformed. In 1970 the British Association of Social Workers (BASW) replaced the seven previous social work associations. The next year the Central Council for Education and Training in Social Work (CCETSW) was established replacing six separate UK training

1969

Children & Young Person’s Act

councils and taking responsibility for the education and training of social workers. Through CCETSW, two professional awards were made available to social work students - the Certificate of Qualification in Social Work (CQSW) and the Certificate in Social Services (CSS) for social care staff.

Following these changes Birmingham offered their one year and two year courses at postgraduate diploma or Masters level with CQSW. They also established a four year social work degree with CQSW for a period which provided two years of social work training after a two year programme in social sciences. The social work curriculum as well as the assessment of practice had to conform with the national requirements and regulations of CCETSW. Students on these programmes continued to be eligible for government funding from either the Department of Health or, for probation students, the Home Office. Some were seconded on full salary by local SSDs who were wanting to qualify their workforce.



The Unitary Model

The late 1960s and early 1970s was a period of global radical political action. This had an influence on social work education and practice. Radical social work texts emerged analysing the structural and political positions of social work clients and critiquing social casework as the dominant method of practice. The social work teaching at Birmingham moved in 1973 from a social casework focus to a 'unitary model' approach. An approach designed to educate students about the range of political, economic, social and personal systems which impacted on clients lives as well as the range of techniques and strategies needed to work with them.

Birmingham had the largest SSD in the UK. Serving the needs of a population of almost 1 million it employed social workers with generic caseloads serving an ethnically diverse population. Offices were located in local communities and there was an emphasis on building community based services for all. However, the growing resources which had been targeted at the development of SSDs dried up as the economic problems of the mid 1970s onwards saw a rise in unemployment and cut backs in social welfare expenditure.

1970

Local Authority Social Services Act

1970

British Association of Social Workers (BASW) launched



From 1979 until the end of this period a succession of governments with a declared opposition to public sector welfare, sustained these budgetary constraints. The 1980s witnessed unemployment levels reaching 3 million and new approaches to the provision of welfare services designed to break up the established patterns of state welfare provision. Following the Barclay Committee Report in 1982 the government signalled that the future for local authority social services were as regulators and purchasers of care rather than as sole providers. The Griffiths Report on Community Care in 1988 recommended that they should become brokers to a

range of suppliers of care services. Care management rather than social work was seen as key to these changes. As the social work programmes at the University adapted to these changes in direction they also developed new programmes. In response to the 1983 Mental Health Act post qualifying training was provided locally and nationally to equip Approved Social Workers for their new roles and a Masters programme in Mental Disorder Studies for social workers and nurses working in the mental health services in the UK and abroad was introduced. The programmes were based in the Muirhead Tower.

In this climate social workers employed by local authorities found themselves required in a situation of increasing demands and contracting resources to prioritise work with groups deemed by their agencies and the legal frameworks in which they worked, to be high risk. The focus on, and direct contact with communities which had been the hallmark of the 1970 changes was gradually replaced. More distanced, formal contacts with people using social work services that were shaped by concerns with child abuse procedures and reaching targets, were introduced. By the end of this period generic social work approaches had been replaced by SSDs organised into teams working with children and families and teams working with older and disabled adults.



Druids Heath

1971

Birmingham Social Services Department
established

1983

Mental Health Act

FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Diploma in Social Work

This one year course is designed to provide a general training in social casework. It is recognised as a professional qualification by the Association of Psychiatric Social Workers, the Institute of Medical Social Workers, the Probation Division of the Home Office and the Central Training Council in Child Care.

Applicants must normally hold a recognised qualification in Social Administration which includes field experience. The qualification may be a degree in Social Administration with supervised field experience, or a degree in another subject followed by a course in Social Administration with supervised field work.

The training period, combining academic study with field experience, runs from the beginning of October to the following August. For some branches of casework an extra period of practical work may be required. Child care students are required to do a month's residential placement before beginning the course, if this has not been included in their previous experience. The first four weeks of the Autumn Term are spent at the University, save for the periods of observation of infants and young children. During the second half of the Autumn term and in the Spring and Summer terms three days each week are spent in practical work. There are short holidays at Christmas and Easter, but for the main part of these vacations and for approximately eleven weeks of the summer vacation students work full-time in their practical placements.

During training each student is assigned to two successive field placements in social agencies within reasonable travelling distance of the University. They work under close supervision of fully qualified social workers with a special interest in student training. Practice is co-ordinated with academic study by means of individual and group discussion with teaching staff and practical work supervisors.

The courses of study are in the following groups of subjects:

1. **Sociology of the Family**—lectures given by the Sociology Department
2. **Groups**—group dynamics and group situations in which social workers are involved
3. **Human Growth and Development**—Personality Development—Adult Psychiatry—Child Psychiatry and Mental Subnormality—Physical Health and Disease
4. **Family Law**—lectures outlining family law
5. **Either Mental Health Services or Law and Administration for Child Care or Law and Administration for Probation Officers**
6. **Relevant Settings Course**—small seminar group discussions on the principles and methods of social casework; lectures and discussions on social work in the context of social change

In determining whether a student shall be awarded the Diploma, equal weight is given to the standard achieved in academic work and field placements. The academic requirements for the Diploma are pass marks in:

A University examination in the Law relating to one of the specialist areas in 5.

A long essay on a topic concerned with administration and related to the student's first field placement

A long essay concerned with an individual or family and related to the student's second field placement.

The field placement requirement of a satisfactory standard as assessed in the light of the agency reports and the advice of the external examiner. Performance in five tutorial essays submitted during the Autumn term may also be taken into consideration.

1988—2008

“The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well-being. Utilising theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work....The holistic focus of social work is universal, but the priorities of social work practice will vary from country to country and from time to time depending on cultural, historical, and socio-economic conditions.”

International Association of Schools of Social Work and
International Federation of Social Workers, 2001

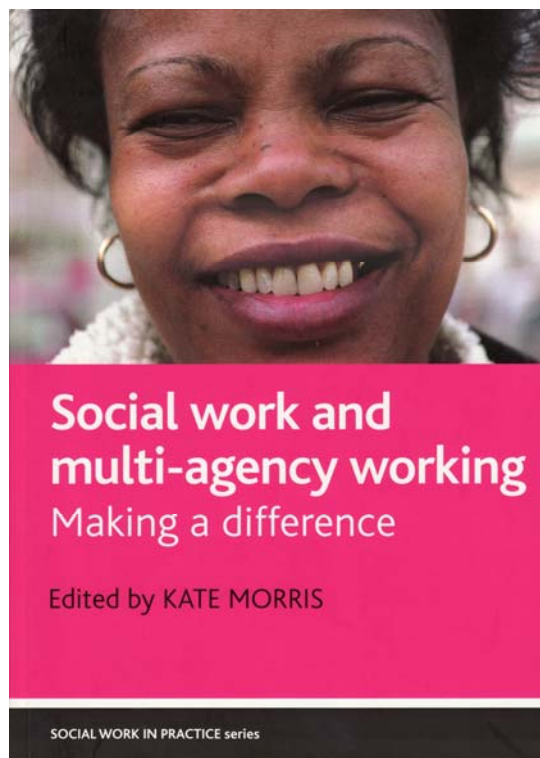
The students enrolling on the one and two year diploma/masters social work programmes at Birmingham in 1988 were noticeably different from the 1908 cohort. The majority were still women but there was a higher percentage of men that at any time in previous decades. Social Services Departments, Probation Services as well as some of the large voluntary organisations now had managerial structures in which men predominated. The average student age was around 28 years and the class and ethnic origins of the group were far more diverse than in previous eras, mirroring the population of the West Midlands.

These students also knew that the statutory services which most of them were planning to join as qualified workers were due for major transformations. A new Children Act introduced in 1989 emphasised the need for partnerships with families, children’s needs and rights as well as family responsibility. The introduction of the most far reaching changes in the finance, organisation and delivery of social care services since the 1940s came in with the 1990 National Health Service and Community Care Act. The programmes the students entered were organised so that they could follow either Adult or Children pathways in their second year, alongside these strands students were also being trained for probation work.

However, the core of what social work was about had not changed. Whatever the organisational structures, duties, tasks and legal powers of social workers they continued to work with the poorest, most vulnerable and excluded members of society. In Birmingham throughout this period this has meant working with individuals and

families bearing the brunt of de-industrialisation, as well as communities excluded from the mainstream because of their ethnicity or other devalued identities such as disability, age and mental health issues. The increasing inequality and lack of social mobility that has marked the last decade of this period has intensified need amongst these groups as a time when dependency on state provision has been marked out as a sign of personal failure and/or individual irresponsibility.

In the late 1980s there was a government review of social work education shaped by concerns about the need to establish standards required for a competent workforce. The review led to a new UK professional qualification for social work being introduced in 1994, the Diploma in Social Work (DipSW). It replaced the CQSW and CSS and required University's to enter provider partnerships with local sector employers to deliver programme's which met national requirements. Alongside this development three post qualifying programmes for social workers were also established. in mental health, child care and practice teaching. However, the separation of probation training from social work education in the late 1990s meant a loss of the University's long-standing connection to education for probation work.



Social work and multi-agency
Working—,making a difference
Edited by Kate Morris

Barely ten years passed before there were further changes in social work education. A three year degree in social work open to 18 year olds as well as two year Masters programmes were introduced by government. Students on these programmes are required to undertake 200 days of supervised and assessed practice learning. A new regulatory body for social work and social care the General Social Care Council (GSCC) replaced CCETSW in 2001 to oversee education and registration. 1 April 2003 marked the creation of a professional register for qualified social workers—a first in the history of the profession.

1994

Diploma in Social Work introduced

2000

Selly Oak Colleges merge with UoB

The University's social work teaching team increased in 2000 when social work teachers from the Selly Oak colleges with a distinguished forty year tradition of social work education joined the University. This group prepared to offer a BA social work degree and a two year MA in social work from 2004, alongside a range of post qualifying programmes. In addition there was a growth in the number of postgraduate social work



Living Out of the Book, by Phil Hill

research students from home and abroad registered for Masters and doctoral work. The social work activities at the Institute of Applied Social Sciences (IASS) also embraced a range of European and international partnerships in education and research. Currently social work programmes based at IASS offer education and training to around 400 students a year .

Since 2003 one of the requirements of social work education in the UK is that people with experience of using services or caring for people who are service users are involved in the design, delivery, assessment and management of social work education. At Birmingham established partnerships with service users and carers and their organisations have grown to make this requirement a reality. New students meet service users and carers alongside academic staff and practitioners at admission interviews, fitness for practice panels and in the classroom. These colleagues in social work education are enriching student's learning experience and adding through publications and papers to the knowledge base of social work.

Celebrating its 100th year the University of Birmingham's social work education and research activities are set fair for working for change with those who face difficulties locally, nationally and globally.



2001

General Social Care Council
established

2003

Professional registration of qualified
social workers starts

Welcome to the Social Work Homepage

This page provides information about the undergraduate and postgraduate Social Work programmes at the University of Birmingham, which offer an exciting opportunity to comprehensively study issues related to current social work and social care in a vibrant and dynamic university environment. Our students come from diverse cultural and national backgrounds and cover a wide age range.

We offer two Social Work degrees i.e. an undergraduate route (3 year BA Social Work), and post-graduate route (2 year MA Social Work). Successful completion of either of these programmes will allow you to register with General Social Care Council (GSCC) as a qualified Social Worker.

The Social Work programmes sit within the Institute of Applied Social Studies (IASS). The Institute provides a wide range of undergraduate and post graduate social policy and social work programmes, including accredited post qualifying awards in social work. IASS has three research centres and staff within IASS have a strong national and international research profile. Our programmes work within the following vision statement:

'The University of Birmingham offers a range of social work programmes. These reflect our interest in and commitment to social justice and anti oppressive practice and relationship based social work. These frameworks inform all our teaching and learning. We seek to develop and promote social work learning through the linking of research and teaching and the involvement of those who use and provide social work services in the programmes' design, delivery and assessment. We see our role as educators to support the development of knowledgeable, questioning and independent thinkers to the discipline of social work and to ensure our education is evidence informed and dynamic.'

[BA in Social Work](#)

[MA in Social Work](#)

Both programmes fulfil all the requirements of the Government to enable you to qualify as a Social Worker. As part of this all students will undertake specific learning in, and will be assessed in, the following key areas:-

- assessment, planning, intervention and review
- communication skills with children, adults and those with particular communication needs
- law
- partnership working and information-sharing across professional disciplines and agencies

For both programmes there is a requirement for students to undertake 200 days of supervised and assessed practice learning during the course of the programme. (Please note that students are expected to word process their assessed work and some of the modules also rely on easy access to computers and internet facilities. The university has extensive IT resources for students but it is still advantageous for students to have their own personal arrangements in place for accessing computers and internet services.)

All applications for these programmes must be made via the UCAS entry form. You can contact UCAS on their website www.ucas.ac.uk. You can also visit the 'Information' section of the UCAS website to calculate the tariff points you have from various types of qualifications and calculate the equivalents of the points required for the social work course. You can find out more about student finance by going to: <http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/study/support/finance/>

Source: www.iass.bham.ac.uk, November 2008

Further reading and resources

Brook, E. and Davis, A. (1985), *Women, the Family and Social Work*, London: Tavistock

Glasby, J. (1999), *Poverty and Opportunity: 100 years of the Birmingham Settlement*, Studley, Brewin Books

Payne, M. (2005), *The Origins of Social Work; Continuity and Change*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Rimmer, J. (1980), *Troubles Shared: the Story of a Settlement, 1989-1979*. Birmingham: Pholgiston Publishing

Walton, R. (1975), *Women in Social Work*, London: Routledge

The Social Work History Network—for details email
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