

Einleitung / Introduction aus:

100 Jahre Soziales Lehren und Lernen.
Von der Sozialen Frauenschule zur Alice
Salomon Hochschule Berlin

Mit Beiträgen von

Adriane Feustel, Hedwig Rosa Griesehop, Gerd
Koch, Elke Kruse,
C. Wolfgang Müller, Dietlinde Peters, Regina
Rätz-Heinisch

Herausgegeben von

Adriane Feustel und Gerd Koch.

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Adriane Feustel, Gerd Koch

Introduction: From the Social Women's School to the Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin

Following a 15 years experimental and pilot phase, in 1908 the first interdenominational school was founded in Germany with a two-years training for female social workers: the Social Women's School, today the Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin. If the time since 1899 is counted when the first one-year training courses were set up, the school is among the world's oldest schools for social work alongside the School voor Maatschappelijk Werk in Amsterdam and the New York School of Philanthropy (now the Columbia University School of Social Work). This laid the foundations for training which have proved sound right up to the present day: a scientific basis, interdisciplinarity, close links between theory and practice, international orientation and interdenominationalism. And these foundations are still in place today despite the rapid developments in the training due to Europeanization, diversification and specialization in the Masters courses. Even though these foundations have not always been equally recognised and respected, they have contributed to the fact that the school has always enjoyed a good reputation and to the undisputed quality of the training – although it was regarded as highly contentious at times, for example in the 1970s.

A look at history can stem from different motivations and, depending on the perspective, can produce different results. This book is proof of this. However, when subjected to scrutiny, the inspiration and creativity of social work and training in its infancy becomes apparent and the extent of the temptation that can arise to realise social welfare at the expense of the individual is plain to see. Whereas at the beginning the question was how individual emancipation could be combined with social commitment and specifically with help for those in need of it in society, after 1933 a focus was on denying the conflict and allowing both – the individual and social welfare – to be extinguished in the construct of the “Volk” and persecuting the denied conflict on the back of minorities. A look back at the history of the Social Women's School can help us to remember that social welfare cannot be presumed to be a given factor and that neither can a “good” per se be assumed; rather, it must always be created anew and there must be a consensus on what it consists of.

Parallel to the general history, the school can be divided into separate phases which are distinguished by specific questions: the pre-founding and founding of the school is oriented to the emancipation of women and social justice (1893–1916) – Establishment and professionalization of social work as a contribution to the social state of the Weimar Republic (1917–1932) – Construction of social work for the “Volkserziehung” (education of the people) (1933–1945) – A hesitant new start in training: the 1950s and 1960s – Recent history: the university in its experimental phase and the development of new study concepts (1971–2008).

THE PRE-FOUNDING AND FOUNDING ERA OF THE SOCIAL WOMEN'S SCHOOL 1893–1918

When the Social Women's School was founded in 1908, social work had already started to develop a profile as a modern occupation for women and was increasingly gaining recognition. The foundation of the school offering a two-year training course was a result of this. In the same year following long debates women were granted the political right of congregation and association and also the right to higher education leading to a university entrance qualification and admittance to university courses. Furthermore, they had fought for access to public offices, for example in the field of caring for the poor and orphans or factory supervision. The school was also able to fall back on a training concept that had been developed in a 15-year experimental phase following the trigger to start a project for social women's work with the foundation of the "Girls' and women's groups for social service work" in 1893. The desire of individual women for emancipation from oppressive family set-ups and the wish to have their own perspectives combined with the prospect of alleviating the plight of those in need of help and helping to bridge the differences between the social classes through practical social work. Social work around the turn of the century was understood (as defined by Alice Salomon) as involvement in social reform and as an attempt to re-establish social cohesion which seemed to be in question and threatened in view of hardened social and political disputes and increasing isolation. The training was based on the political-ethical understanding of social work which the training itself also played a part in developing. Both theoretical and practical foundations had to be developed. The history of the Social Women's School shows in detail how and by whom the training was developed and imparted. A pioneering generation of women and men from the fields of public and private poor relief, youth welfare, social medicine, pre-school pedagogics etc. were involved in this.

AMERICAN METHODS, SOCIAL UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN AND RESEARCH – THE TRAINING IN THE 1920s

Recognising the importance of the loss of international contacts for the development of social work and training as a result of the First World War and re-establishing international relations was one of the important contributions made by Alice Salomon to the Social Women's School in the 1920s – and not only to this. They were destroyed once more by National Socialism, this time with further reaching consequences. The extent of the consequences has only come to light in the last few years when the question of the international dimension in the context of globalization was given a new meaning and attention was directed to the history of international relations – a subject previously barely been touched on by research.

In connection with the re-establishment of international exchange and against the background of the development of the social state in the Weimar Republic and state recognition of the profession and training, the question of the methods used in social work in connection

with training methods came to the fore. The reception of “social diagnosis” and the “case studies” enabled a new professional self-image which included the democratization of the relationship between the social worker and the client. At the same time the method of “understanding”, going back to humanist psychology and pedagogics, gained in importance and was formulated as a teaching concept by the new director of the Social Women’s School, Charlotte Dietrich, a Spranger student appointed in 1925. In order to further professionalize social work, in 1925 the “Academy for Social and Educational Women’s Work” was founded on the premises of the Social Women’s School. It offered a university-like, academic postgraduate course for social workers and related professions and a course for higher level nurses and – based on the methods of women’s social work – carried out the first social-empirical research project on family research in Germany. To a certain extent the academy anticipated the developments since the foundation of the University for Applied Sciences for Social Work and Social Education at the beginning of the 1970s and its present structuring into Bachelor and Master courses.

SOCIAL WORK AS “VOLKSERZIEHUNG” UNDER NATIONAL SOCIALISM

Despite and indeed because of its good reputation, the Social Women’s School continued to exist under National Socialism. It was used as an instrument by the Nazis, who initially rejected every form of social work as a strengthening of the weak, but did not have their own concept for social work and training. Under the direction of Charlotte Dietrich the Social Women’s School not only made the transition; it redefined the task of social workers by falling back on the term “Volkserziehung” used programmatically in the 19th century and gave the school a new orientation. Although to all appearances the social worker continued to mediate between the interests and needs of the individual, the person in need of help and society, in actual fact she acted out the role of a guardian and educator in the name of the “Volk” (‘the people’), a construct of the national community to assert this over the divergent needs of the individual. The director of the school saw National Socialism as a chance not only to give social work a new orientation following the “confusion” of the Weimar Republic, but also to give it a central place in social life. Jewish and liberal democratic teachers were immediately dismissed and Jewish students left the school within a short space of time. Cooperation was smooth with the newly elected chairman of the Pestalozzi-Fröbel-Haus (to which the Social Women’s School had belonged since 1925), the Nazi councilman Eduard Spiewok. Alice Salomon was no longer allowed to enter the school after she closed down the Academy for Social and Educational Women’s Work at the beginning of May 1933 instead of dismissing the Jewish director Hilde Lion as demanded by the Nazi authorities.

In 1935 Charlotte Dietrich broke off the last, albeit only abstract, connection to Alice Salomon and declared the withdrawal of the Social Women’s School from the International Committee of Schools for Social Work on the grounds that Alice Salomon was its chairwoman. The changes that took place at the Social Women’s School that would be inadequately described by the term “enforced conformity” can be seen from the school’s files of the time.

After 1945 there are barely any records of a critical discussion of National Socialism at the school, although there were sharp reactions to individual cases of anti-Semitic remarks. The Nazi period was not hushed up, but neither were any questions raised. Files and interviews give the impression of a hesitant rather than a liberated new beginning. As in other institutions, too, a critical public examination of the school's actual history during the Nazi period did not start until the 1980s.

On the content of this book:

In her contribution *Adriane Feustel* traces the history of the Social Women's School from 1908 to 1945 (including its early history since 1893) based on publications by its most important representatives, the sources collected by the Alice Salomon archive and interviews with former students and lecturers. In the context of major social conflicts – the conflicts between classes, sexes and generations – she illustrates the specific questions and main focuses of social training in the various historical phases of this period and shows their development. She devotes particular attention to the question of how “social welfare” is understood at the school and the way in which it was taught and learnt.

To date little research has been done into the 1950s and 1960s. Here, they are examined in a political context for the first time. In an excursus on “Methods as a Medium for Reorientation” *C. Wolfgang Müller* outlines the methods of social work and social education in Germany following National Socialism and explains them, substantiated by his own story, as a piece of democratic history.

Dietlinde Peters' contribution looks at the period from 1945 to 1971 – a quarter of a century which covers the first “post-war period”, the “calm” 1950s and the turbulence at the end of the 1960s. During this period the Social Women's School, i.e. a “project for women's emancipation” that started in Empire days, became an institute for social work which trained both women *and* men for social work in a democratic welfare state. Dietlinde Peters expressly presents the history of the institution against the background of the history of the city of Berlin. The questions and main focuses of her portrayal result from the special period that is looked at here. It is a time of hesitant, difficult “new beginnings” following the end of the Nazi dictatorship and following destruction of the very special and exemplary history of social welfare in Germany. This is why – in addition to the data and facts of a chronicle – this section has a special political accent.

Dietlinde Peters describes the critical analysis of the Nazi period by teachers and students, including the “gaps” i.e. relating to their own past and the reaction of the institution to the offers of modern times: from “outside” to the women's school, interpreted by the author as firm attempts to politicize an institution and profession that see themselves as “unpolitical”. The protagonists and their ideas come alive here – long forgotten Berlin politicians of the first hour, representatives of US American authorities and finally activists in the Berlin student and social worker movement (which will celebrate its own anniversary in 2008). For her contribution Dietlinde Peters examined previously unpublished material in Berlin archi-

ves which enables her to demonstrate the influence of US-American social work in specific cases in her excursus on the welfare department of the US American military government. Her research here took her as far as the USA. But it was worth it: the history of the city, the profession and methods become one.

In her contribution *Elke Kruse* follows on from Dietlinde Peters' exposition. Her starting point is the transition of the Alice Salomon Academy to the new form of a university of applied sciences in 1971. The contribution is based on an intensive analysis of files in the framework of which Elke Kruse and Dietlinde Peters examined and evaluated reports, research reports, papers and records archived by the university. Based on the material that was compiled in this way for the first time, the recent history of the Alice Salomon Hochschule up to the present day has been reconstructed. This has been done with the general developments in social work and training in West Germany in mind in this period to enable typical general development patterns which are also found at the FHSS/ASFH to be highlighted and their special features and deviations shown.

Elke Kruse takes an especially in-depth look at the institutional changes in the early 1970s and the consequences for lecturers, students and curricular questions, the status and location questions of the still young university of applied sciences in the following decades and recurring focal topics such as the international orientation of the university and research activities. The specialisation and differentiation with the founding of numerous new courses since the 1990s, especially within the framework of the Bologna process, is a further focus of the exposition. In its entirety the contribution offers an overview of a part of history which many people still working at the university have experienced themselves and which some of them have even played an active part in shaping. It also looks at what makes ASFH what it is today – one day also to be history.

Whilst Elke Kruse deliberately does not include supplementary information from personal memories from staff members in her section, these find a place in the contribution that follows.

In their contribution *Hedwig Griesehop, Gerd Koch and Regina Rätz-Heinisch* with assistance from the students *Ramona Schnekenburg* and *Yasmin Zibner* and also from *Dr. Birgit Griese* interviewed former and present lecturers and compiled personal memories. For the foundation phase of the University for Applied Sciences for Social Work and Social Education in 1971 (now the Alice Salomon Hochschule Berlin) full-time colleagues who played a part in actively shaping events at the university since this time were interviewed. Research into contemporary history and job biographies has provided valuable information that cannot be found in documents, files or study regulations. Extensive reminiscences are presented here.

Very different viewpoints are reflected in the stories and reports that document the variety and many facets of the university. Detailed memories of the eventful time of the foundation of the university in 1971 up to more recent developments such as the move of the university to Berlin-Hellersdorf are presented.

The project group has drawn on a proven method used by local history associations, exchanges with contemporary witnesses and memory work in adult education to present the

memories. This means that a number of topical “story cafés” are simulated for the following keywords: Academization in a historical, social and university policy context/women and gender/research and doctorates/internationality/further education/teaching and lecturers/variety of courses/interdisciplinarity/theory and practical work/teaching and learning forms and personal suitability and personality formation.

In the accounts reality is constructed from the perspective of the interviewees. Reading the authorised excerpts of the interviews clearly shows the various assessments of the same phenomenon. This demonstrates that not just one history of the university has been experienced; rather, there are many memories based on very different and in part even contradictory interpretations. The complexity attained through this makes history comprehensible in a specific way. For students and lecturers in theory and practice and for the university administration a vivid picture of the contemporary history of the university is created. Experience has shown that such an arrangement of texts in turn stimulates readers to evoke memories from which a kind of co-productivity can develop. The interplay of Elke Kruse’s contributions on the one hand and those by Hedwig Griesehop among others on the other clearly illustrate the topics found in both archived history and the stories told and they also show different perspectives, personal focuses and highlight gaps in the files.

Both the authors and the editors of this publication deliberately refrain from drawing a final conclusion. On the contrary, by presenting different perspectives our aim is to underline the unconcluded character. In this we agree with Alice Salomon who never tired of asking questions about and considering social welfare and the conflicts between social work and training. To continue these historical studies, online documentation on the history of the school and university is being set up in the conceptual tradition of Alice Salomon.

Among other things it contains commented detailed programs of the lectures offered by the Social Women’s School and the Academy for Social and Educational Women’s work, reports and texts by Alice Salomon, documents on the international history of social training – including the International Association of Schools of Social Work – and photos. These can be viewed and read in the original on the web pages of the Alice Salomon archive of the ASFH Berlin <www.alice-salomon-archiv.de>.