

# Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education in Divisive Times

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March 30, 2023  
GADE Annual Conference



2023-03-30

Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education  
└ Front Matter

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I would like to thank the GADE for the invitation to come speak with you all today on social work history and the implications for doctoral education in divisive times.

I would also like to thank Dr. Poco Kernsmith and Melissa Parsinen for organizing all of this.

## A Few Comments

- Complex history of white supremacy, colonialism, racism
- Perpetuation and response to historical atrocities
- Ethical dilemmas challenging law and professional values
- Resistance efforts of social and racial justice
- Preparing doctoral students for today's challenges
- Presentation of historical facts and interpretations
- Opinions may not reflect views of GADE or ASU

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

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└ A Few Comments

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- Perpetuation and response to historical atrocities
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- Resistance efforts of social and racial justice
- Preparing doctoral students for today's challenges
- Presentation of historical facts and interpretations
- Opinions may not reflect views of GADE or ASU

1. This keynote presentation will examine the complex history of social work and its connection to white supremacy, colonialism, and racism. We will explore how social work has perpetuated and responded to historical atrocities, with a focus on the ethical dilemmas faced by social workers when their conscience challenges the law and professional values.
2. The presentation will also cover the resistance efforts made by marginalized populations and the social work profession against inequality in the pursuit of social and racial justice. By understanding the origins of "social work" and its meaning to historically excluded populations, social work doctoral students can be better equipped to navigate complex ethical dilemmas in promoting a more equitable and just society.
3. My presentation includes social welfare and social work historical facts and interpretations from multiple perspectives and narratives, including my own
4. The opinions expressed in this presentation are my own and may not reflect the view of GADE or ASU (but I hope they do)

## Outline

1. Definitions of Social Work
2. Social Work in Divisive Times
  - 1860s–1880s: Reconstruction Era
  - 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement
  - 1910s–1950s: Red Scares
  - 1940s: Japanese Internment Camps
  - 1950s–1970s: Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements
  - 1980s–1990s: Reproductive Rights and Environmental Justice Movements
  - 2000s–Current: Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism Movements
  - Other Key Social Movements
3. Social Work History in Doctoral Education
  - Barriers
  - Advancing
  - Leveraging
4. Conclusion

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Front Matter

- └ Outline

In this presentation, I will cover several topics related to the history and future of social work. I will begin by discussing various definitions of social work and implications for our profession. Next, I will explore social work during divisive times spanning 8 key periods. I will then discuss the state of social work history in doctoral programs, including barriers to advancement and strategies for leveraging these programs. Finally, I will conclude with some key takeaways and recommendations for the future of social work.

### Outline

1. Definitions of Social Work
2. Social Work in Divisive Times
  - 1860s–1880s: Reconstruction Era
  - 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement
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# Social Work History

## Inattention to Social Work History

“Social work, like many fields, has sometimes suffered from an inadequate and distorted understanding of its own history. A profession’s inattention to its past is an unfortunate thing”

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Leighninger and Knickmeyer, 1976, p. 166.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- Front Matter

- Social Work History

Social Work History

Inattention to Social Work History

“Social work, like many fields, has sometimes suffered from an inadequate and distorted understanding of its own history. A profession’s inattention to its past is an unfortunate thing”

Leighninger and Knickmeyer, 1976, p. 166.

1. I want to start with this quote that draws attention to our struggle with social work history.
2. The context of this statement is the recognition that the profession of social work has not always paid enough attention to its own history, leading to a lack of understanding and awareness of the contributions, successes, and failures of the profession over time.
3. This can result in a distorted understanding of the profession, its role, and its potential impact on individuals and society. Without a clear and accurate understanding of its past, social work may struggle to effectively address the challenges and opportunities of the present and future.
4. My goal for this presentation is to demonstrate that resistance is deeply intertwined in our profession’s history as well as the histories of people and communities of color who have resisted our profession’s atrocities and inequalities—a theme that is critical in doctoral education.



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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education  
└─ Definitions of Social Work

Definitions of Social Work

## Definitions of Social Work

Understanding the origin of the term "social work" and how its definition evolved over time is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, it provides insight into the historical and cultural context in which social work emerged, and sheds light on the various social and political factors that shaped the bounds of the profession. Additionally, by examining competing definitions of the term, we can gain a better understanding of the profession's core values and principles. This knowledge is essential for social work doctoral students, as it provides a foundation for research and practice that is grounded in the history and tradition of the people and the profession.

# Origins of the Term “Social Work”

- Social work origin uncertain
- Simon Patten not true coiner
- Term rooted in *church* work vs *social* work
- Term scarce in 19th century
- Usage picked up after 1905

Luquet and Tomczak, 2022.

## The Origin and Evolution of the Term “Social Work”

Wade Luquet  
Gwynedd Mercy University

Stephen Monroe Tomczak  
Southern Connecticut State University

*The origin of the term “social work” has long been misattributed to the 1907 work of economist Simon Patten. While Patten’s contribution to social work is important, though mostly forgotten, the term had been used long before regarding the work of nuns and settlement workers. Quoting archival and historical findings, this article traces the origin, evolution, and widespread use of the term “social work.” The words of the early founders of social work are utilized to tell the story of how the work of persons doing “the social work” of the church or settlement evolved into the name of the profession. These shifts in terminology in social work’s early history have influenced the subsequent direction of the field up to the present day.*

*Keywords: history, social work, Simon Patten, settlements, profession*

With over 680,000 social workers in the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018) that are practicing “social work,” minimal attention has been directed to the label for the work they do. The etymology of the term “social work” has not been given serious study in the social work literature. An internet search often credits a 1905 lecture by University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business economist Simon Patten titled “A Programme of Social Work,” but the lecture, included in a 1907 collection of Patten’s work *The New Basis of Civilization*, only mentions the term three times, and only in one chapter. In fact, the term had been used many times prior to Patten’s lecture to describe work being done by settlement workers and religious sisters dating back to the mid-1800s. While there is

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Definitions of Social Work

### Origins of the Term “Social Work”

1. Let’s look at where the term social work originated
2. According to Luquet and Tomczak, Social work’s origins are often attributed to Simon Patten’s 1905 proposal that social workers could help the working class become prosperous. However, social work was used in various ways prior to Patten. The term’s roots seem to be linked to women in the church doing social work, whereas men did the spiritual work of the church. The term continued to be used in the context of church work and settlements. It was scarcely used among charity and philanthropy workers in the late 19th and early 20th centuries but began to gain popularity after 1905.

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## Origins of the Term “Social Work”

### A Critical Limitation

“While we were not able to establish a direct link to the development of the term social work to early African-American and other social workers of color, this points to the need for further research to establish the role of these communities on this topic. This likely reflects the unquestioned white dominance of the leadership of the field in the early 20th century and later. While important research has highlighted the contributions of African-American social workers, in particular, to the development of the profession, the specific role of communities of color in the shifts in terminology for this field has not been established.”

Luquet and Tomczak, 2022, p. 89.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Definitions of Social Work

### Origins of the Term “Social Work”

1. However, authors raise one vital limitation that reflect on resistance in social work. They state “While we were not able to establish a direct link to the development of the term social work to early African-American and other social workers of color, this points to the need for further research to establish the role of these communities on this topic. This likely reflects the unquestioned white dominance of the leadership of the field in the early 20th century and later. While important research has highlighted the contributions of African-American social workers, in particular, to the development of the profession, the specific role of communities of color in the shifts in terminology for this field has not been established.”
2. Moving forward, I want you to consider how this limitations affects definitions of today, and why the term “resistance” may be omitted in current definitions.

### Origins of the Term “Social Work”

#### A Critical Limitation

“While we were not able to establish a direct link to the development of the term social work to early African-American and other social workers of color, this points to the need for further research to establish the role of these communities on this topic. This likely reflects the unquestioned white dominance of the leadership of the field in the early 20th century and later. While important research has highlighted the contributions of African-American social workers, in particular, to the development of the profession, the specific role of communities of color in the shifts in terminology for this field has not been established.”

Luquet and Tomczak, 2022, p. 89.

# Contemporary Definitions of Social Work

## National Association of Social Workers

- Professional application of social work
- Helping people obtain tangible services
- Counseling and psychotherapy
- Helping communities or groups
- Improve social and health services
- Knowledge of human development and behavior

NASW, 2023.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Definitions of Social Work

#### Contemporary Definitions of Social Work

1. Let's look at how Social Work is defined today
2. According to NASW, "Social work practice consists of the professional application of social work values, principles, and techniques to one or more of the following ends: helping people obtain tangible services; counseling and psychotherapy with individuals, families, and groups; helping communities or groups provide or improve social and health services; and participating in legislative processes. The practice of social work requires knowledge of human development and behavior; of social, economic, and cultural institutions; and of the interaction of all these factors."
3. This definition is limited in addressing the needs of marginalized populations. The emphasis on individual counseling and therapy, as well as the focus on obtaining tangible services, can obscure the structural and systemic factors that contribute to social inequality and oppression. As a result, social workers must be mindful of the limitations of this definition, and work to develop a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of the profession that is responsive to the needs and experiences of marginalized communities.

- Professional application of social work
- Helping people obtain tangible services
- Counseling and psychotherapy
- Helping communities or groups
- Improve social and health services
- Knowledge of human development and behavior

# Contemporary Definitions of Social Work

## International Federation of Social Workers

- Practice-based profession, academic discipline
- Promotes social change, development, cohesion
- The empowerment and liberation of people
- Social justice, human rights, collective responsibility
- Respect for diversities are central
- Theories of sciences, humanities, indigenous knowledge



IFSW, 2023.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Definitions of Social Work

### Contemporary Definitions of Social Work

1. Let's compare NASW's definition to IFSW's definition.
2. According to the International Federation of Social Workers, "Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility, and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities, and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance well-being."
3. I think this definition is more reflective of the origin of the term "social work" and more responsive to the needs of marginalized communities.
4. Going into this presentation I want you to consider how these two different definitions of social work account for social work (as a verb) as compared to social work (as a profession), and the implications for each on doctoral education.

#### International Federation of Social Workers

- Practice-based profession, academic discipline
- Promotes social change, development, cohesion
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IFSW, 2023.



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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└─ Social Work in Divisive Times

Social Work in Divisive Times

# Social Work in Divisive Times

## 8 Historical Points Spanning 150 Years of Divisive Times

### Historical Context → Social Work → Lessons

- From the 1860s Reconstruction Era ...
- Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, Eugenics Movement
- Red Scares
- Japanese Internment Camps
- Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements
- Reproductive Rights and Environmental Justice Movements
- ...To the Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism Movements of the 2020s

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### └ Social Work in Divisive Times

### └ 8 Historical Points Spanning 150 Years of Divisive Times

1. In this section, I'm going to trace 8 historical points spanning 150 years of divisive times in social work in the U.S. In doing so, I'll provide historical context to the moment, followed by descriptions of social work during the time, followed by lessons for doctoral education.
2. Throughout this presentation, I hope to convince you that the current social and political challenges facing our profession are not new, but rather part of a long and complex history of social work in divisive times. By exploring this history, we can gain valuable insights into the principles and practices that have shaped our profession, and develop strategies for moving forward in the face of ongoing social and political struggles. Ultimately, by looking back, we can move social work doctoral education forward.

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└ Social Work in Divisive Times

└ 1860s–1880s: Reconstruction Era

Let's start with the Reconstruction Era.

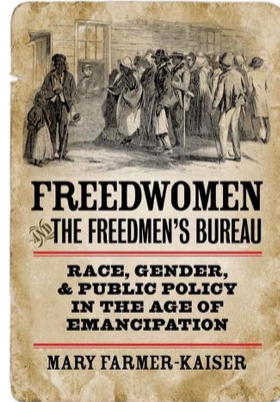
1860s–1880s: Reconstruction Era



## The Reconstruction Era

- Period after the Civil War
- Aimed to rebuild the South
- Abolished slavery and citizenship to Black people
- Radical Reconstruction sought racial justice
- Black codes, segregation, and violence impeded progress
- Reconstruction ultimately failed to achieve lasting change

Farmer-Kaiser, 2010.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1860s–1880s: Reconstruction Era
    - └ The Reconstruction Era

The Reconstruction Era

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Farmer-Kaiser, 2010.

1. The Reconstruction Era was a period of significant change following the Civil War, but also a time of intense conflict and resistance as efforts to build a more just and equitable society were met with opposition.
2. While the Reconstruction Amendments abolished slavery and granted citizenship to Black people, the reality of life in the South was one of segregation, discrimination, and violence.
3. The Radical Reconstruction period sought to address these injustices through policies aimed at promoting racial justice, but ultimately these efforts were impeded by white supremacist opposition.
4. Black codes and Jim Crow laws enforced segregation and limited Black Americans' access to education, voting, and economic opportunities. Violence, including lynchings and massacres, was used to intimidate and oppress Black communities.
5. Despite the progress made during Reconstruction, including the establishment of schools and the election of Black politicians to local and national office, ultimately the era failed to achieve lasting change and racial justice.

## Social Work During the Reconstruction Era

- “Social work” did not exist as a profession
- Emerged several decades after the end of Reconstruction
- Proto-social work
- Black self-help and mutual aid
- Resistance against social, economic, and political change
- Black-led movements for civil rights and enfranchisement

Weaver, 1992.

### African-Americans and Social Work: An Overview of the Ante-Bellum Through Progressive Eras

Hilary N. Weaver

**ABSTRACT.** The history of social welfare can provide important insights into current policy and practice. Although a disproportionate number of social work clients are minorities, including African-Americans, little comprehensive information has been compiled on the development of social services for this population. This paper presents an overview of social welfare services available to African-Americans in the Antebellum period through the Progressive Era. African-American sponsored organizations, white philanthropy, public agencies, and inter-racial efforts are discussed in the context of major political and social developments in these eras. Organizations discussed include: Freedman's Aid Societies, African-American mutual aid and benevolent societies, fraternal orders, the Freedman's Bureau, the Women's Club movement, settlement houses, Charity Organization Societies, and the National Urban League.

The history of social welfare and social service organizations is an important component of social work education. A review of the historical development of policies and services helps to illuminate current issues and dilemmas. Minorities, including African-Americans, account for a disproportionate number of clients in the social welfare system, therefore, the history of services for African-American

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

#### 1860s–1880s: Reconstruction Era

### Social Work During the Reconstruction Era

1. Social work did not exist as a profession during the Reconstruction Era
2. Profession of social work emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, several decades after the end of the Reconstruction Era.
3. Although Social work was not yet a profession during this time, some communities and entities focused on social welfare engaged in social work like activities to support marginalized and segregated Blacks. This also includes Black leveraging long-standing traditions of self-help and mutual aid.
4. During the Reconstruction Era, resistance took many forms, including violent resistance to social, economic, and political change. White supremacists used terrorism and intimidation to undermine the gains of Reconstruction and maintain their grip on power.
5. Black communities also resisted oppression and fought for their rights, organizing movements for civil rights and enfranchisement. These movements challenged the assumptions and practices of white supremacy and laid the groundwork for future social justice movements.

### Social Work During the Reconstruction Era

- “Social work” did not exist as a profession
- Emerged several decades after the end of Reconstruction
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Weaver, 1992.

African-Americans and Social Work:  
An Overview of the Ante-Bellum  
Through Progressive Eras  
Hilary N. Weaver

# Lessons from the Reconstruction Era for Doctoral Education

- “Social work” (verb) proceeds “social work” (profession)
- People and communities of color exemplify social work
- Cultural traditions leveraged to ensure social welfare
- Early social work included resistance and liberation
- Intersection of social welfare/work and political struggles
- Anti-oppressive practice and social justice advocacy

Schiele, 2017.

## The Afrocentric paradigm in social work: A historical perspective and future outlook

Jerome H. Schiele

College of Professional Studies, Bowie State University, Bowie, Maryland, USA

### ABSTRACT

The Afrocentric paradigm in social work is an important professional development towards rendering social work practice more culturally competent. Grounded in a critique of Eurocentric models of social science and social work practice, the paradigm draws heavily on the shared cultural values and practices of traditional Africa that have been articulated most poignantly in Chiechi Anta Chep's two cradle theory. The Afrocentric paradigm also relies on the shared experiences African-Americans have had with Eurocentric domination since the initiation of the transatlantic slave trade and their efforts to contest the venial effects of this form of oppression. This article provides a historical overview of the Afrocentric paradigm and examines its relationship to social work. It also offers some ideas about the future viability of the paradigm within the new era of oppression by incorporation.

### KEYWORDS

Afrocentric, cultural competence, social work theory, social oppression, social welfare history

The Afrocentric paradigm has been the source of critical debate and discussion in academic circles for some time. It emerged from a cadre of African American social scientists who questioned the relevance of Eurocentric or Western social science theories in explaining and solving the problems of African Americans (Albur, 1984, 2004; Ant, 1994; Asante, 1988; Baldwin, 1985; Bent-Goodley, 2005; Boykin, 1984; Dove, 1995; Harvey & Rausch, 1997; Hilliard, 1989; Kambon, 1992; Karenga, 1993, 1996; Myers, 1993; Nohls, 1986; Robinson & Howard-Hamilton, 1994; Schiele, 2000; Shujaa, 1994). Diverging from the cultural deficiency thesis of Black life, Afrocentric social scientists suggested that the cultural link between African Americans and Africa had not been severed by slavery, racial discrimination, and the imposition of European American cultural norms. Instead, Afrocentrists argued that the behavior and values of African Americans were formed significantly by the continuity of West African cultural ethos and that the study of African Americans should center on this African influence. This focus on Africa not only placed Afrocentric social scientists at odds with proponents of the cultural deficiency school of Black behavior. It also challenged the ideas of African American social scientists who denied the role of Africa and who continued to rely exclusively on Eurocentric theories to examine the social problems faced by African Americans.

The debate over the role of Africa in the lives of contemporary African Americans would take some time to penetrate the social work literature. Social work, however, was contextually suited for this discussion. Social work's emphasis on cultural diversity and competence and its concern over the disproportionate representation of African Americans in many social problem categories rendered it a very probable professional location for the further exploration of Afrocentric ideas. In 1994 this exploration began to filter into social work's peer-review journal literature and has currently expanded to more than 30 since that time as well as five books.

Although the contemporary integration of Afrocentric content in the social work literature is fairly recent, many of its themes were employed and incorporated by pioneer African

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

### 1860s–1880s: Reconstruction Era

## Lessons from the Reconstruction Era for Doctoral Education

1. Social work doctoral education must recognize the deep cultural and traditional roots of social work in communities, including the origins of the term “social work” as a verb.
2. To center the experiences and perspectives of marginalized populations, social work doctoral programs must prioritize the principles and practices of social work exemplified by people and communities of color.
3. By leveraging cultural traditions, social work doctoral students can gain valuable insights and strategies for ensuring social welfare and promoting social justice.
4. Social work doctoral education must prepare students to challenge the status quo and empower oppressed communities, emphasizing the importance of resistance and liberation in the history of social work.
5. To promote equity and justice, social work doctoral programs must equip students with the knowledge and skills to recognize and address systemic and structural factors that contribute to social inequality and oppression. This includes developing anti-oppressive practice and social justice advocacy as foundational components of social work doctoral education.

## Lessons from the Reconstruction Era for Doctoral Education

- “Social work” (verb) proceeds “social work” (profession)
- People and communities of color exemplify social work
- Cultural traditions leveraged to ensure social welfare
- Early social work included resistance and liberation
- Intersection of social welfare/work and political struggles
- Anti-oppressive practice and social justice advocacy

Schiele, 2017.

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└ Social Work in Divisive Times

└ 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement

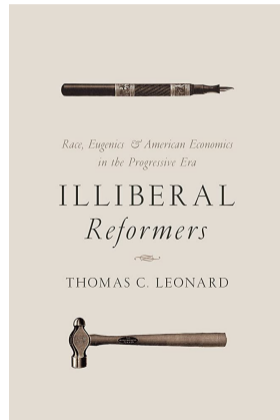
## 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement

Let's move on to the Progressive, Reformist, and Eugenics Movements

## Progressive Era

- A period of social and political reform
- Rejected laissez-faire economics and individualism
- Emphasized regulation and public intervention
- Fought for labor rights and workplace safety
- Advocated for women's suffrage
- Promoted racial justice and civil rights

Leonard, 2017.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

### 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the

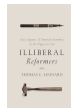
### Eugenics Movement

### Progressive Era

#### Progressive Era

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- Advocated for women's suffrage
- Promoted racial justice and civil rights

Leonard, 2017.



1. The Progressive Era was a time of significant social and political change in the United States, marked by a rejection of the laissez-faire economic policies and individualism of the late 19th century.
2. Instead, progressives advocated for government regulation and public intervention to address social problems and promote the public good. This era saw important victories for labor rights, workplace safety, women's suffrage, and civil rights.
3. While the era was not without its challenges and setbacks, it marked an important shift towards a more equitable and just society.

# Social Work during the Progressive Era

- Emergence of professional social work
- Focus on reforming social systems
- Settlement house movement
- Creation of charity organizations
- Jane Addams and Hull House
- Advancements in social policy and legislation

Diner, 1970.

## CHICAGO SOCIAL WORKERS AND BLACKS IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA

STEVEN J. DINER  
Chicago, Illinois

This essay explores the relationship between social workers and blacks in Chicago between 1900 and 1920. In a city peopled by some thirty different nationalities, leading social workers discovered many similarities between poor blacks and poor immigrants, but they were impressed as well by the unique problems faced by black people because of racial discrimination. Both the charity and settlement wings of social work sought to discover in these years the place of blacks in a pluralistic society.

Are American blacks another group in a pluralistic society, or do they constitute a people apart? This question, so hotly debated nowadays, was posed a half-century and more ago by social workers engaged in a war against poverty. If for no other reason than perspective, it is useful to examine the relationship between social workers and blacks during the Progressive Era.

Chicago is a fitting place to examine this relationship under a microscope. In 1910, Chicago's population was 77 percent immigrant or first-generation American. Of some thirty groups, blacks—then called Negroes or colored people—ranked tenth according to the 1910 census, less numerous than Germans, Irishmen, or Italians, for example, but more numerous than Greeks, Dutchmen, or French Canadians (39: 95, 614). In 1920, as a result of the great migration during World War I, Chicago's black population of 108,000 ranked seventh (40: 108-9, 378-81).

By then, in the city of Jane Addams, social work was well developed. Modern social work derived from a merger of the scientific charity and social settlement movements which began in the

last decades of the nineteenth century. Charity workers had emphasized individual self-help as a means of combating poverty, while settlement workers called for changes in the social environment (20: 18-22). By the outbreak of World War I, however, Chicago's charity and settlement workers had joined together in groups like the Juvenile Protective Association, the Chicago School of Civics and Philanthropy, the United Charities of Chicago, the League for the Protection of Immigrants, and the Chicago Urban League.

The central purpose of these and other social work activities was to eliminate poverty among all of Chicago's ethnic groups. Yet the poverty of one group—blacks—stood out. Migrants from the American South, black people experienced the same difficulties as foreign-born Americans in adjusting to northern urban life. But blacks, in addition, suffered special handicaps because of their skin color. Whether or not these handicaps were sufficient to render blacks a separate group is a question which puzzled Chicago social workers throughout the Progressive Era.

### CHARITY: SELF-HELP

Chicago charity workers thought that poverty could best be minimized through hard work and individual initiative,

The writer has expressed appreciation to Professor Arthur Mann, of the Department of History of the University of Chicago, whose critical reading of successive drafts of this article strengthened it immeasurably.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement
    - └ Social Work during the Progressive Era

### Social Work during the Progressive Era

- Emergence of professional social work
- Focus on reforming social systems
- Settlement house movement
- Creation of charity organizations
- Jane Addams and Hull House
- Advancements in social policy and legislation

Diner, 1970.

1. The progressive era saw the emergence of professional social work as a distinct field, with social workers seeking to reform social systems in order to alleviate the negative effects of poverty and inequality.
2. One important development was the settlement house movement, which sought to provide services and support to immigrant communities, and played a crucial role in Americanizing immigrants.
3. Charity organizations were also created during this time, providing aid to those in need and working to address societal issues such as child labor and urban slums.
4. Jane Addams was a key figure in the progressive era social work movement, founding Hull House in Chicago and advocating for social justice and women's suffrage.
5. The progressive era saw significant advancements in social policy and legislation, including the establishment of the Children's Bureau and the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act, among others.



# Lessons from Social Work During the Progressive Era

- Examine diverse historical perspectives critically
- Promote critical thinking and advocacy skills
- Emphasize cultural humility and competence
- Address concerns for cultural imperialism
- Advocate for social justice resistance skills
- Equip doctoral students to challenge oppression

Kirschner, 1975.

## The Ambiguous Legacy: Social Justice and Social Control in the Progressive Era

Don S. Kirschner  
Simon Fraser University

Over the years most American historians have written sympathetically of the social justice reformers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The reformers, according to these historians, saw man as the product of social forces, basically malleable, capable of creative self-fulfillment, and deserving of the opportunity to realize it. Proceeding from this optimistic assumption, and appalled by the gap they perceived between physical abundance and social poverty, the reformers worked to relieve misery and liberate the poor by humanizing the social order. In the 1890s they emphasized a variety of locally-oriented social services, and tended increasingly to cluster in and around the new settlement houses of the urban slums. Before long they realized that private charity and localism were inadequate to the job and began to work for extensive social legislation, at first through the state governments, and finally, by about 1910, at the Federal level. Their generous efforts to ease the burdens of the poor by limiting the working hours of women and children, improving factory, housing and health conditions, and introducing rudimentary forms of social insurance, according to this interpretation, mark them as path breakers to the New Deal and the modern welfare state. With innumerable variations, this is the line of analysis that the prevailing liberal historians worked out from the Great Depression into the 1960s. It has been challenged since then, but recent writings testify to its continuing vitality.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>For a sampling of the vast literature that develops, or works within this framework, see Robert H. Bremner, *From the Depths* (New York, 1956); Clark A. Chambers, *Paul U. Kellogg and the Survey* (Minneapolis, 1971); Allen F. Davis, *Spearheads for Reform* (New York, 1967); Harold U. Faulkner, *The Quest for Social Justice* (New York, 1931); Daniel Levine, *Jane Addams and the Liberal Tradition* (Madison, 1971); Arthur Mann, *Yankee Reformers in the Urban Age* (Cambridge, Mass., 1954); George E. Mowry, *The Era of Theodore Roosevelt* (New York, 1958); Walter I. Trattner, *Homer Folk, Pioneer in Social Justice* (New York, 1968).

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

### 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement

### Lessons from Social Work During the Progressive Era

1. Variations in social work approaches during the Progressive Era highlight the need for social work doctoral education to examine the profession's diverse historical perspectives critically.
2. The advocacy for radical social reforms underscores the importance of promoting critical thinking and advocacy skills in social work doctoral education.
3. Social work has been criticized for imposing white values and undermining the autonomy of marginalized communities, underscoring the need for cultural humility in social work doctoral education.
4. Cultural imperialism and assimilation have been concerns raised by critics, emphasizing the importance of cultural competence and critical reflection in social work doctoral education.
5. Resistance from labor unions and political groups during the Progressive Era highlights the importance of equipping social work doctoral students with the skills to challenge systemic oppression and advocate for social justice.

### Lessons from Social Work During the Progressive Era

- Examine diverse historical perspectives critically
- Promote critical thinking and advocacy skills
- Emphasize cultural humility and competence
- Address concerns for cultural imperialism
- Advocate for social justice resistance skills
- Equip doctoral students to challenge oppression

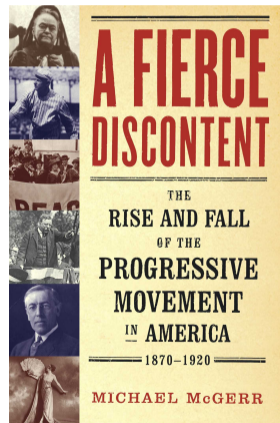
Kirschner, 1975.

The Ambiguous Legacy:  
Social Justice and Social Control  
in the Progressive Era

## The Reformist Movement

- Rise of the reformist movement in 19th–20th century
- Desire for social change and moral reform
- Advocacy for temperance, suffrage, labor, & education
- Reformers saw themselves as agents of social control
- Often viewed as elitist and paternalistic
- Notable reformers include Addams, Kelley, and Richmond

MacGerr, 2005.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement
    - └ The Reformist Movement

### The Reformist Movement

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MacGerr, 2005.



1. The reformist movement emerged in the late 19th and early 20th century, driven by a desire for social change and moral reform.
2. Reformers advocated for temperance, suffrage, labor laws, and education, seeing themselves as agents of social control.
3. However, they were often viewed as elitist and paternalistic, as they sought to impose their values on others.
4. Notable reformers in the social work field include Jane Addams, who founded the Hull House settlement, Florence Kelley, who fought for labor and consumer protection, and Mary Richmond, who developed the first comprehensive social work case recording system.



## Social Work During the Reformist Movement

- Social work expands during reformist movement
- Charity Organization Societies (COS) emerge
- COS focused on efficient charity
- Advocated for scientific charity methods
- Jane Addams founded Hull House
- Settlement houses focus on assimilation

Allen and Allen, 1983.

### RELUCTANT REFORMERS

Racism and Social Reform Movements in the United States



ROBERT L. ALLEN AND CHUDE PAMELA ALLEN  
Foreword by Jamelle Bouie

2023-03-30

## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement
    - └ **Social Work During the Reformist Movement**

Social Work During the Reformist Movement

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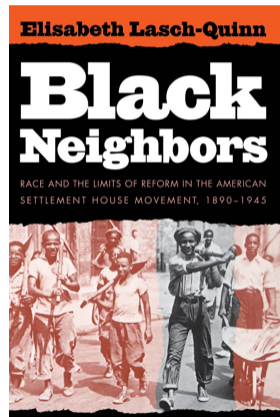


1. Social work experienced significant expansion during the reformist movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
2. Charity Organization Societies (COS) emerged, focused on efficient charity and advocating for scientific charity methods.
3. One notable example of social work during this time was Jane Addams founding Hull House in Chicago, a settlement house that served as a community center for the working class and recent immigrants (not Black people though).
4. Settlement houses, like Hull House, focused on Americanization and assimilation of immigrants, as well as hygiene, education, and recreation.
5. Overall, the reformist movement helped to shape social work into a more professional and scientific field, with an emphasis on efficient charity and community-based solutions to social problems.

## Lessons from Social Work During the Reformist Movement

- Resisting oppressive social work models
- Promoting critical thinking and innovation
- Empowering clients and community-based approaches
- Examining ethical implications of practice
- Addressing systemic issues and root causes
- Challenging power structures and promoting advocacy

Lasch-Quinn, 1993.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### └ Social Work in Divisive Times

### └ 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement

### └ Lessons from Social Work During the Reformist Movement

Lessons from Social Work During the Reformist Movement

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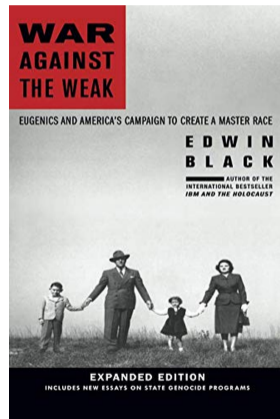
Lasch-Quinn, 1993.

1. During the Reformist Movement, there was resistance to traditional charity-based models of social work. This highlights the need for social work doctoral education to promote critical thinking and innovation in addressing social problems.
2. The emphasis on individual empowerment and self-help underscores the importance of promoting client self-advocacy and community-based approaches in social work doctoral education.
3. Criticism of social control and moral regulation highlights the importance of examining the ethical implications of social work practice in social work doctoral education.
4. Calls for systemic change emphasize the need for social work doctoral education to address the root causes of social problems and equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to effect systemic change.
5. Resistance involved challenging dominant power structures and amplifying the voices of marginalized communities. Social work doctoral education must equip students with the skills to challenge systemic oppression and advocate for social justice.

# Eugenics Movement

- Progressivism aimed to improve living conditions
- Prevention of social ills was important
- Eugenic policies seen as prevention
- Sterilization viewed as public health measure
- Eugenics and reform not viewed as contrary
- Reformers believed in eugenic policies

Black, 2012.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### └ Social Work in Divisive Times

### └ 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement

### └ Eugenics Movement

#### Eugenics Movement

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Black, 2012.



1. At the heart of Progressivism was the belief that social science and conformity with "American" values could be used to develop policies that would improve living conditions and assist those who struggled to make ends meet.
2. The prevention of social ills was a hallmark of Progressivism, and many believed that eugenic policies fit nicely under the banner of the movement since it was a means of prevention. Sterilization was viewed by many as being akin to other public health measures.
3. Euthenics and eugenics were not generally viewed as contrary social goals, and many believed that in order to be most effective, environmental, occupational, and educational reforms needed the assistance of eugenic policies.

# Social Work and the Eugenics Movement

- Controversy over dysgenic practices
- Settlement houses as a bulwark against degeneration
- Settlements grew as germ theory became important
- Americanization focused on cleanliness and purity
- Social work's roots in degeneracy and eugenic theories

## Quote from Henry Fairchild in 1929

“the program of eugenics conflicts in no way with the activities of philanthropists and social workers who aim to make life as easy as possible for those already in the world. On the contrary, the spirit of eugenics is wholly in sympathy with those efforts.”

Kennedy, 2008; O'Brien, 2023.

### Eugenics, “Degenerate Girls,” and Social Workers During the Progressive Era

Angie C. Kennedy  
Michigan State University

The U.S. eugenics movement, which sought to encourage the “wellborn” to have children and actively discourage and even prohibit the “unfit” from having children, became increasingly popular and influential during the Progressive Era, shaping public discourse, emerging social work practice approaches, and state and federal public policy. This article details the eugenics movement, examines why young women, particularly those who were poor, non-Anglo-Saxon, and living in urban areas, were targeted as the key to preventing the unfit from propagating, and explores the relationship between eugenics and early social workers, focusing particular attention on their work with young women.

**Keywords:** adolescent girls; eugenics; Progressive Era; social workers

During the Progressive Era, eugenic ideas became increasingly popular and influential, shaping the work of social scientists, politicians, social reformers, and social workers of many different political persuasions (Leonard, 2005). An extension and elaboration of social Darwinism, the term *eugenics* was coined in 1883 by Sir Francis Galton (Carlson, 2001) and is defined as the scientific study of inherited characteristics, with a focus on encouraging “wellborn” people with desirable traits to propagate, while discouraging—even preventing—those who are deemed “unfit” from doing so (Haller, 1963; Pickens, 1968). The rise of the eugenics movement in America during this time dovetailed with other social reform efforts, namely, the social purity/social hygiene reform movement, the women’s temperance movement, and the budding public health movement (D’Emilio & Freedman, 1988; Pernick, 1997; Pivar, 1973, 2002) and, as I will argue, was an important influence in shaping many early social workers’ beliefs about and approaches to social problems (Bruno, 1957; Davies, 1923; Kuntzel, 1993; Pickens, 1968; Tice, 1998).

Scholars of social work history have examined early caseworkers’ and settlement house workers’ roles in assessing for, controlling, and, in some cases, criminalizing adolescent female sexuality during the Progressive Era (see Abrams & Curran, 2000; Britz, 2005; Kuntzel, 1993; Tice, 1998). Although this work has touched on eugenics and its relationship to early social workers and adolescent female sexuality, the influence of eugenics has not been fully explored. Using an intersectional feminist approach that examines issues of gender, race, ethnicity, and class simultaneously (Anderson & Collins, 2004; Crenshaw, 1991), this article foregrounds the eugenics movement and comprehensively details the crucial role that eugenic ideas played in influencing public policy and the practice approaches of early social workers, particularly in their work with young women. I chose an intersectional feminist approach to illuminate the ways in which these so-called degenerate girls’ social location—*young, female, poor, non-Anglo-Saxon, and urban*—made them vulnerable as

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement
    - └ Social Work and the Eugenics Movement

1. Early social work faced criticism for perpetuating the “hereditarily unfit.” Some workers recognized the potential for their efforts to be viewed as dysgenic.
2. Settlement houses aimed to combat degeneration and disease, emphasizing cleanliness and purity. This also included eugenics as a mechanism of control used by leaders in the movement.
3. Settlement workers saw their organizations as “disinfecting agencies to the community.” Their success was measured by the health of the children they served.
4. Social work’s emergence as a profession coincided with eugenic theories. The development of social work’s professional role had roots in the discourses of degeneracy and social reform.
5. While some agreed with certain eugenic goals, most social workers had broken away from eugenics by the 1920s.

### Social Work and the Eugenics Movement

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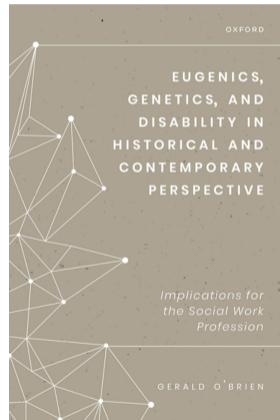
Kennedy, 2008; O’Brien, 2023.



# Lessons from Social Work During the Eugenics Movement

- Understand the historical context of eugenics
- Recognize the misuse of social work for eugenic goals
- Analyze the focus on controlling marginalized populations
- Learn from African American social workers' resistance
- Study Indigenous resistance to eugenics
- Evaluate the role of resistance in dismantling eugenics

O'Brien, 2023.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

#### 1880s–1920s: Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, and the Eugenics Movement

#### Lessons from Social Work During the Eugenics Movement

Lessons from Social Work During the Eugenics Movement

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O'Brien, 2023.

1. The eugenics movement promoted improving genetic quality of populations through selective breeding, with social work seen as a tool for achieving eugenic goals. This highlights the importance of promoting ethical decision-making and social justice in social work doctoral education.
2. African American social workers resisted eugenics, arguing that it was racist and discriminatory. This underscores the importance of promoting resistance and liberation in social work doctoral education.
3. Indigenous communities also resisted eugenics, with some arguing that it was a continuation of colonialism and cultural genocide. This highlights the need for social work doctoral education to promote anti-colonialism and Indigenous rights.
4. Resistance to eugenics led to its downfall, with atrocities committed by the Nazis during World War II discrediting eugenics as a viable scientific theory. This highlights the importance of promoting evidence-based practice and critical thinking in social work doctoral education.

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└ Social Work in Divisive Times

└ 1910s–1950s: Red Scares

We'll now cover a huge span of time with the Red Scares that I think is perhaps the most relevant for contemporary political and academic discourse.

1910s–1950s: Red Scares

# Red Scares

- First Red Scare: 1917–1929
- Red Scare Interregnum: 1930–1945
- The Second Red Scare: 1945–1957
- Backlash against progressive changes
- Accusations against various groups
- Social workers targeted and suppressed

Little 'Red Scares'  
Anti-Communism and Political  
Repression in the United States,  
1921–1946

Edited by  
ROBERT J. GOLDSTEIN



Abramovitz et al., 2023; Goldstein, 2016; Storrs, 2006.

2023-03-30

## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1910s–1950s: Red Scares
    - └ Red Scares

Red Scares

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Abramovitz et al., 2023; Goldstein, 2016; Storrs, 2006.

Little 'Red Scares'  
Anti-Communism and Political  
Repression in the United States,  
1921–1946

R

1. The First Red Scare took place from 1917 to 1929. It was a period of intense anti-communist hysteria in the United States, marked by government crackdowns on left-wing groups and individuals, with vigilante violence and widespread public fear.
2. The Red Scare Interregnum, which took place from 1930 to 1945, was a period marked by a decrease in anti-communist activity due to the focus on addressing the Great Depression and implementing the New Deal policies.
3. The Second Red Scare, also known as "McCarthyism," took place from 1945 to 1957. Marked by government investigations, blacklists, and witch hunts targeting suspected communists and their sympathizers.
4. These periods of the Red Scare were marked by a broader backlash against progressive changes in American society, which included labor and civil rights, and social welfare programs.
5. During these Red Scare periods, accusations were often made against various groups, including socialists, communists, labor organizers, civil rights activists, and others who were seen as threatening the status quo

# Social Work During the Red Scares

- Political attacks on social workers
- Bertha Capen Reynolds forced to resign
- Inabel Lindsay suspected to be a Communist
- Eduard Lindeman and Ira Krasner investigated
- Erik Erikson and 35 other faculty dismissed
- Social Work Today labelled a “communist front”

Abramovitz et al., 2023.

SOCIAL WELFARE HISTORY GROUP  
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Red Scares, Political Repression, and Social Work: Why Now?

**From the Editors**

**What is a Red Scare? “Red Scares” describe the times in US history when a group on the government level, seeking to uphold the class, race, and gendered status quo, publicly identifies and undermines their political opponents (often without evidence) by calling them communists, socialists, anarchists, or subversives and accusing them of disloyalty to the United States. The term *red scare* comes from the historic connection of the color red with communists.**

**When and Why Did Red Scares Occur?** The first Red Scare (1919–20) followed activities and calls for systemic change in the US sparked by the 1917 Russian Revolution. In the aftermath of the Great Depression, during the New Deal period (1933–39), communist and socialist ideas enjoyed a popularity that culminated in the expansion of the welfare state and the rise of trade unions, and the emergence of influential and vibrant pro-labor, anti-racist, and feminist consumer movements (Starr, 2006). The backlash against these movements and progressive changes generated anti-communist sentiment that laid the groundwork for the “Second Red Scare,” also referred to as McCarthyism (1947–57) (Cronkley.org, 2022). The conjunction of oil-derrick strikers demanding higher wages and hours/workers demanding lower prices and higher quality products alarmed American conservatives who charged government workers, Hollywood artists, labor leaders, teachers, social workers, consumers, and civil rights leaders as communists or “leftist traitors.” In the eyes of their critics, the successful support for social change, social planning, a larger role for government in the US, as well as justice for Black people and women, posed a challenge to the power of the prevailing political and corporate elite that needed to be stopped. The Red Scare crusades typically raised the specter of communists to discredit the challenge and to justify the ensuing political repression (Goldstein, 2014). The key federal agencies and Congressional committees that investigated Red Scare fears and managed the repression included the well-known Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (1908 to present), a network of “justice” organizations (JOSAs), the Special House Committee to Investigate Un-American Activities (1918–1946), the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUCAC) (1946–1975), and Senate Internal Security Subcommittee (SISS) (1955–1971). The Second Red Scare actively fueled the Cold War (1947–1991).

Taken together, the American red scares point to an evolving political landscape rather than isolated bursts of anti-communist hysteria that exploded out—and then vanished—from the political scene (Goldstein 2014). The repeated pattern suggests that throughout the 20th century, powerful interests in government and business mobilized sophisticated forms of an internal Communist enemy to silence, discredit, or stamp out activist individuals and progressive political organizations whose labor, actions, and policies challenged systemic racism and sexism, capitalism, militarism, and colonialism (Wade-Rozza, 2022). In such red scares, fear of the charges of subversion spread through American politics, culture, and wider society. Thousands of ordinary people lost their jobs, suffered organized violence, deportation, or prison, and/or lost family, marriages, friends, and other important personal relationships. The resulting climate of fear, suspicion, and restrictions on civil liberties intentionally chilled discussions of

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

#### 1910s–1950s: Red Scares

#### Social Work During the Red Scares

1. Anticommunism intensified, leading to political attacks on social workers
2. Due to her Marxist teachings and attempts to unionize the faculty, Bertha Capen Reynolds, a member of the Communist Party, was compelled to resign from her faculty position at the Smith College School of Social Work.
3. The House Un-American Committee also investigated Inabel Lindsay, a prominent activist, advocate for racial justice, and founding Dean of Howard School of Social Work, on suspicion of being a Communist.
4. Eduard Lindeman, a social activist and professor of community organizing at Columbia University School of Social Work, as well as Ira Krasner on the faculty at Wayne State University School of Social Work, were targeted by the government.
5. Additionally, Erik Erikson and 35 other faculty who refused to sign a loyalty oath were dismissed from the School of Social Work at University of California Berkeley.
6. Dies Committees targeted several unions that represented social workers and declared Social Work Today a “communist front.”

#### Social Work During the Red Scares

- Political attacks on social workers
- Bertha Capen Reynolds forced to resign
- Inabel Lindsay suspected to be a Communist
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Abramovitz et al., 2023.

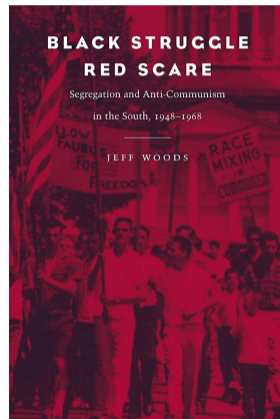




# Lessons from Social Work During the Red Scares

- Period of intense political and social anxiety
- Social work education driven by political climate
- Vigilance in protecting academic freedom and diversity
- Potential for political pressures to influence education
- Develop a critical understanding of social work's role
- Responsiveness and relevance to marginalized people

Woods, 2004.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1910s–1950s: Red Scares

### Lessons from Social Work During the Red Scares

Lessons from Social Work During the Red Scares

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- Develop a critical understanding of social work's role
- Responsiveness and relevance to marginalized people

Woods, 2004.



1. The Red Scares of the late 1910s and 1950s were periods of intense political and social anxiety, characterized by a fear of communism and radicalism in the United States.
2. During these periods, social work education was heavily influenced by the political climate, leading to a suppression of academic freedom and a narrowing of the scope of the profession.
3. Lessons from the Red Scares can inform social work education today in several ways.
4. First, we must be vigilant in protecting academic freedom and ensuring that diverse perspectives are represented in the curriculum.
5. Second, we must recognize the potential for political pressures to influence the direction of the profession, and actively resist any attempts to narrow the scope of social work.
6. Third, we must be aware of the ways in which historical contexts shape social work education and practice, and work to develop a critical understanding of these contexts.

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└ Social Work in Divisive Times

└ 1940s: Japanese Internment Camps

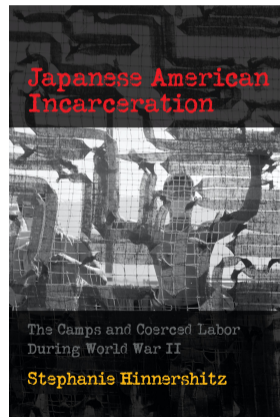
Let's move on to Japanese Internment

1940s: Japanese Internment Camps

# Japanese Internment Camps

- Executive Order 9066
- Internment of Japanese Americans
- Forced removal from homes
- Racial discrimination and prejudice
- Loss of property and livelihoods
- Long-lasting trauma and impacts

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1940s: Japanese Internment Camps
    - └ Japanese Internment Camps

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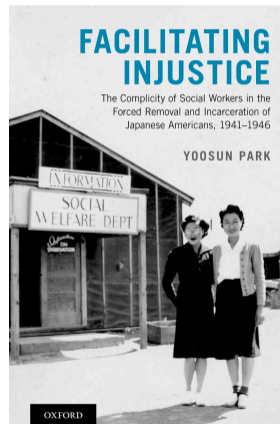


1. On February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which authorized the forced relocation of Japanese Americans from their homes on the West Coast to internment camps.
2. Approximately 120,000 Japanese Americans were interned, two-thirds of whom were American citizens.
3. Japanese Americans were forced to leave their homes, businesses, and belongings behind and were given only a few days' notice to do so.
4. This action was driven by racial discrimination and prejudice against Japanese Americans, who were seen as potential security threats despite a lack of evidence.
5. Japanese Americans faced significant losses of property, livelihoods, and personal freedoms as a result of internment.
6. The trauma and impacts of internment persisted long after Japanese Americans were released, with many suffering lasting effects on their physical and mental health and their sense of identity and belonging in the United States.

# Social Work During Japanese Internment

- Social work involvement in internment
- National Japanese American Student Relocation Council
- Resettlement and employment programs
- Reestablishment of family life
- Criticisms of social work involvement
- Perpetuating Whiteness

Park, 2020.



2023-03-30

## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1940s: Japanese Internment Camps
    - └ Social Work During Japanese Internment

### Social Work During Japanese Internment

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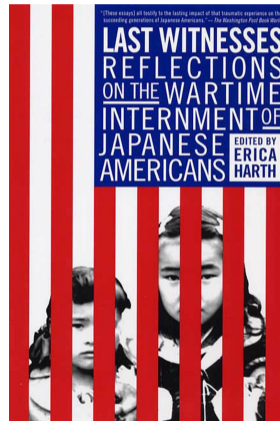


1. Social workers were involved in the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, particularly through the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council. The council worked to relocate college students and provide financial assistance to them during their relocation.
2. Following internment, social workers were involved in resettlement and employment programs for Japanese Americans. Social workers also worked to help Japanese American families reestablish themselves and find housing.
3. Critics have argued that social work's involvement in internment and resettlement was problematic, particularly in light of the racism and discrimination that led to internment in the first place. Social workers have also been criticized for not doing enough to advocate for Japanese Americans during this time.

# Lessons from Social Work During Japanese Internment

- Address historical internment support
- Encourage dissent and challenge unjust policies
- Advocate for due process and examine biases
- Emphasize community support and organizing efforts
- Apologies help, but direct action necessary
- Address migrant detention and promote advocacy

Harth, 2003.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

#### 1940s: Japanese Internment Camps

#### Lessons from Social Work During Japanese Internment

1. Social work doctoral education must confront historical support for internment, emphasizing critical thinking to avoid repeating past mistakes.
2. Recognize the importance of dissenting voices within the profession, encouraging future social worker doctoral students to challenge unjust policies.
3. Teach the significance of advocating for due process and examining biases in policy development to prevent racially prejudiced actions.
4. Highlight the resistance of past Japanese American social workers, emphasizing the value of community organizing and support.
5. Acknowledge that formal apologies help, but not as much as direct action. Promoting a commitment to ethical practice and social justice in doctoral students is essential for the profession.
6. Address migrant detentions, emphasizing the role of social work doctoral students in researching, understanding, and challenging systemic issues that contribute to the detention of migrants and advocating for their rights and well-being.

- Address historical internment support
- Encourage dissent and challenge unjust policies
- Advocate for due process and examine biases
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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└ Social Work in Divisive Times

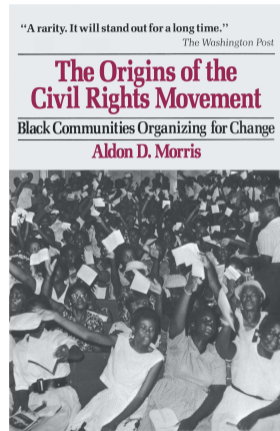
└ 1950s–1970s: Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements

1950s–1970s: Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability  
Movements

# The Civil Rights Movement

- Began in the 1950s
- Aimed to end racial segregation and discrimination
- Nonviolent protests and civil disobedience
- Led by prominent figures such as Martin Luther King Jr.
- Resulted in significant legal victories
- Continued to inspire social justice movements

Morris, 1986.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

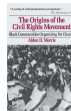
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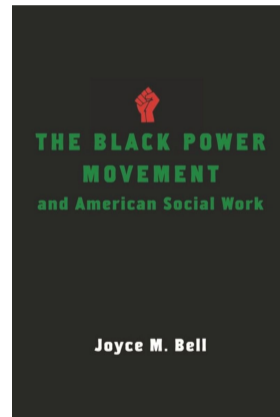


1. The Civil Rights Movement emerged in the 1950s as a response to the institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination that pervaded American society at the time.
2. The movement was characterized by nonviolent protests and civil disobedience, including sit-ins, boycotts, and marches.
3. Prominent figures such as Martin Luther King Jr. played a key role in the movement, and their leadership and advocacy helped to mobilize large numbers of people across the country.
4. The Civil Rights Movement achieved significant legal victories, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which aimed to overcome barriers that prevented African Americans from exercising their right to vote.
5. The Civil Rights Movement had a profound impact on American society and inspired subsequent social justice movements, including those related to women's rights, LGBTQ+ rights, and immigrant rights.

## Social Work During the Civil Rights Movement

- Many social workers involved in civil rights activism
- Pushed for desegregation and equal rights
- Advocated for community organizing and empowerment
- Participated in boycotts, sit-ins, and protests
- Organized campaigns to end discriminatory practices
- Social workers played key roles in voter rights campaigns

Bell, 2014.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

#### 1950s–1970s: Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements

#### Social Work During the Civil Rights Movement

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Bell, 2014.



1. During the Civil Rights Movement, many social workers became involved in the fight for desegregation and equal rights for all.
2. Social workers not only pushed for legal changes, but also advocated for community organizing and empowerment.
3. Social workers often participated in boycotts, sit-ins, and protests to draw attention to discriminatory practices.
4. They also organized campaigns to end discriminatory practices, such as discriminatory hiring or housing policies.
5. Social workers played key roles in voter rights campaigns to increase Black voter participation.
6. Despite their involvement, social workers were not immune to criticism for perpetuating the very systems of oppression they were trying to dismantle.



# Lessons from Social Work During the Civil Rights Movement

- Reflect on social work's role during the CRM
- Recognize the importance of challenging the status quo
- Learn from Black social workers' advocacy for change
- Address power dynamics within the social work profession
- Build upon the foundation of anti-oppressive practice
- Concurrently address colonialism and racism

Hamilton and Hamilton, 1997.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

#### 1950s–1970s: Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements

#### Lessons from Social Work During the Civil Rights Movement

Lessons from Social Work During the Civil Rights Movement

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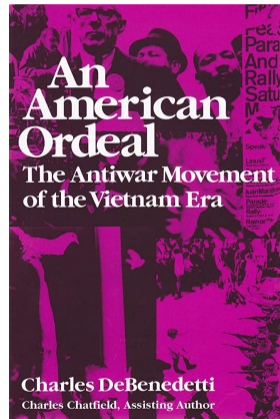
Hamilton and Hamilton, 1997.

1. Lessons from the Civil Rights Movement emphasize the need to reflect on social work's role in advocacy and social change. Promoting systemic change and challenging the status quo should be emphasized in social work doctoral education.
2. Black social workers' advocacy for change highlights the importance of client empowerment and community-based approaches. Social work doctoral education should highlight the significance of client self-advocacy and community organizing.
3. Examining power dynamics within the social work profession is critical to promoting social justice. Social work doctoral education should equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to challenge systemic oppression.
4. To promote equity and justice, the foundation of anti-oppressive practice must be built upon. Social work doctoral education should emphasize ethical decision-making and cultural humility.
5. Concurrently addressing colonialism and racism is essential to promote social justice. Social work doctoral education should emphasize anti-colonialism, Indigenous rights, and anti-racism.

## The Anti-war Movement

- A social and political movement
- Opposed U.S. involvement in Vietnam War
- Began in the early 1960s
- Grew as the war escalated
- Criticized war as immoral and unjust
- Resistance varied from peaceful protests to violence

DeBenedetti, 1990.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1950s–1970s: Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements
    - └ The Anti-war Movement

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1. The Anti-War Movement was a social and political movement that emerged in opposition to U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War. It began in the early 1960s and grew as the war escalated, with millions of people participating in protests and demonstrations across the country.
2. The movement was united in its criticism of the war as immoral and unjust, and its resistance took many forms, from peaceful protests to violent confrontations with police and military forces.
3. The Anti-War Movement was not without its challenges, as critics accused it of being unpatriotic and undermining the war effort. Nevertheless, it played a significant role in shaping public opinion and ultimately influencing U.S. policy towards the war.

# Social Work During the Anti-war Movement

- Social workers opposed Vietnam War
- National Association of Social Workers resolution
- War seen as a threat to social welfare programs
- War's impact on minority communities
- Black and Latinx soldiers disproportionately affected
- Resistance through activism and civil disobedience

Chandler, 2004; Reichert, 1970.

## "Curiously Uninvolved": Social Work and Protest against the War in Vietnam

SUSAN KERR CHANDLER  
University of Nevada, Reno  
School of Social Work

*This article reviews four leading social work journals from 1965–1975 for content on the War in Vietnam and the social issues arising from it. It finds that social work's major journals carried nearly no articles, letters, editorials, or short subjects related to the war and concludes that the dominant discourse constructed in the journals excluded meaningful engagement with the war or protest against it.*

Key words: Vietnam War, peace, protest, anti-war movement, sixties

And it's one, two, three, what are we fighting for? Don't ask me, I don't give a damn. Next stop is Vietnam. And it's five, six, seven, open up the pearly gates. Well, there ain't no time to wonder why. Whoopee! we're all gonna die.

*Country Joe and the Fish  
Feel like I'm Fixin' to Die Rag, 1965*

You all know me and are aware that I am unable to remain silent. At times to be silent is to lie. For silence can be interpreted as acquiescence.

*Miguel de Unamuno, Salamanca, Spain, 1936*

In 1968, according to historians Zaroulis and Sullivan (1984), the balance tipped against the United States' military effort in Vietnam. Sentiment against the war raged among students, clergy, business leaders, teachers, and civil rights activists. Citizens increasingly reacted with skepticism to administration assurances that the nation could have both guns and butter, noting that

*Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, December, 2004, Volume XXXI, Number 4*

2023-03-30

## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

#### 1950s–1970s: Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements

## Social Work During the Anti-war Movement

1. Many social workers were opposed to the Vietnam War, citing the impact of the war on social welfare programs and the disproportionate impact on minority communities.
2. In 1967, the National Association of Social Workers passed a resolution opposing the war, calling for a shift in national priorities towards social welfare programs.
3. The war was seen as a threat to social welfare programs, as government spending shifted towards military spending instead of social programs.
4. The war had a disproportionate impact on minority communities, with Black and Latinx soldiers being sent to fight in higher numbers than white soldiers.
5. Social workers resisted the war through activism and civil disobedience, with some participating in protests and others providing support services to war resisters and their families.
6. Resistance to the war was a significant part of the broader social and political movements of the 1960s, with many seeing it as part of a larger struggle for social justice and civil rights.

## Social Work During the Anti-war Movement

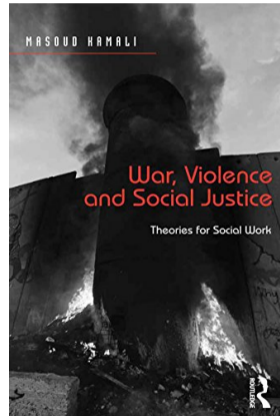
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Chandler, 2004; Reichert, 1970.

## Lessons from Social Work During the Anti-war Movement

- Reflect on connections to military and government
- Recognize the importance of social work stances
- Role of protests and civil disobedience
- Examine social work's values and priorities
- Examine backlash against dissenting social workers
- Understand social, political, and historical contexts

Kamali, 2015.



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### Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

#### └ Social Work in Divisive Times

#### └ 1950s–1970s: Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements

#### └ Lessons from Social Work During the Anti-war Movement

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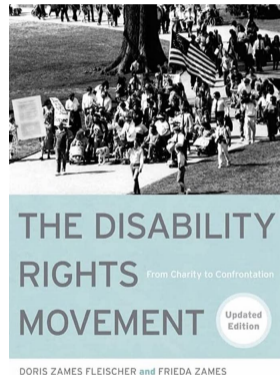
Kamali, 2015.

1. Lessons from the Anti-war movement highlight the need for critical reflection on social work's connections to military and government. Social work doctoral education must emphasize the ethical implications of such relationships.
2. Opposition to the Vietnam War shows the importance of examining power dynamics within social work and promoting social justice through challenging systemic oppression. Social work doctoral education must equip students with skills necessary to challenge oppressive systems.
3. Involvement in protests and civil disobedience demonstrates the importance of advocacy and resistance in social work. Social work doctoral education must encourage students to use their voice and agency to promote social justice.
4. The anti-war movement led to a reevaluation of social work's values and priorities, emphasizing the need for greater attention to power, privilege, and social justice. Social work doctoral education must prepare students to think critically about issues.
5. The Anti-war movement underscores the importance of social work doctoral students thinking critically and contextually about social issues.

# The Disability Movement

- Emerged in 1960s
- Advocated for inclusion and equal rights
- Fought to end institutionalization
- Promoted community living
- Social services and support networks
- Challenged marginalization and prejudice

Fleischer and Zames, 2011.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

#### 1950s–1970s: Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements

#### The Disability Movement

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Fleischer and Zames, 2011.

1. The disability rights movement emerged in the 1960s as a response to the exclusion and marginalization of people with disabilities. Activists pushed for inclusion and equal rights, advocating for the elimination of barriers to access and full participation in society.
2. Disability rights advocates fought to end institutionalization and promote community living as an alternative. This was seen as a way to provide greater autonomy and self-determination for people with disabilities, allowing them to live with dignity and participate fully in their communities.
3. Social workers have played a key role in developing and implementing policies and programs aimed at providing services and support for people with disabilities. This has included advocacy for disability rights, as well as the development of social services and support networks aimed at promoting inclusion and empowerment.
4. Overall, the disability rights movement has been a key force for social change, challenging the assumptions and prejudices that have historically marginalized people with disabilities.

# Social Work During the Disability Movement

- Disability rights activists demanded inclusion
- Social work initially viewed disability negatively
- Independent living movement challenged social work
- Protests at social work schools and conferences
- Social work schools included disability rights
- Disability rights activists critiqued social work

Beaulaurier and Taylor, 2001.

## Social Work Practice with People with Disabilities in the Era of Disability Rights

Richard L. Beaulaurier, PhD, MSW  
Samuel H. Taylor, DSW

**ABSTRACT.** Social workers, especially those in health care and rehabilitation systems, must consider practice changes necessitated by recent legislation and the growing activism of disability rights groups. The authors review essential elements of the emerging sense of both oppression and empowerment that is occurring for many people with disabilities and groups; consider key aspects of ADA and other pertinent legislation that place new emphases on the self-determination of people with disabilities; and discuss what implications changing practice roles might have for social workers' relationships and patterns of interaction with other professionals in medical, health care and rehabilitation settings. The authors outline a beginning effort at designing a conceptual framework that promotes practice that: (1) maximizes clients' involvement in exploring an expanded range of options and choices; (2) prepares clients to be more effective in dealings with professionals, bureaucrats and agencies that often do not understand nor appreciate their need for self-determination; and (3) at the organizing level, mobilizes and helps to empower groups of people with disabilities to consider policy and program alternatives that can improve their situation. This framework may also be useful in work with people who have other long term care needs, chronic conditions, etc. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service:]*

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

### 1950s–1970s: Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements

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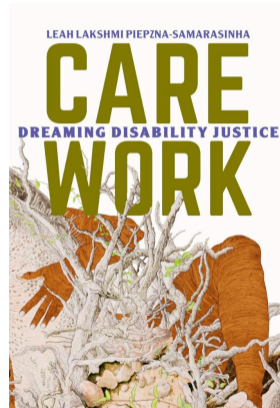
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1. Activists advocated for inclusion and equal rights.
2. Social work played complex role in disability oppression and liberation. Early social work focused on institutionalization and segregation, but some social workers advocated for disability rights and inclusion.
3. Disability rights advocates fought for community living to provide autonomy and self-determination, enabling people with disabilities to live with dignity and participate fully in their communities.
4. Social workers played key role in developing policies and programs to provide services and support for people with disabilities. This included advocacy for disability rights and the development of social services and support networks promoting inclusion and empowerment.
5. Disability rights movement challenged prejudices that marginalized people with disabilities. Social work played mixed role, but also instrumental in promoting awareness and support for disability rights and inclusion.

## Lessons from Social Work During the Disability Movement

- Examine past institutionalization of people with disabilities
- Examine historic inclusion, equal rights, and community living
- Emphasize advocacy, policy development, and support networks
- Assess accessibility barriers in social work education
- Promotes the inclusion and empowerment of people with disabilities
- Disability movement instrumental for social change

Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

#### 1950s–1970s: Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements

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Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018.



1. The disability rights movement offers important lessons for social work doctoral education. Social work has a mixed historical role in disability rights, with early focus on institutionalization and segregation of people with disabilities. It is crucial to critically examine this history and learn from it.
2. Disability rights advocates have pushed for inclusion, equal rights, and community living, allowing for greater autonomy and self-determination. Doctoral education should learn from these efforts and incorporate them into practice, policy development, and service provision.
3. Social workers have contributed to disability rights through advocacy, policy development, and support networks. Emphasizing these roles in doctoral education can further promote inclusion and empowerment.
4. Doctoral education must address accessibility barriers and prioritize disability rights and inclusion in curricula and training.
5. Social work doctoral education should promote the inclusion and empowerment of people with disabilities.

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└─ Social Work in Divisive Times

└─ 1980s–1990s: Reproductive Rights and Environmental Justice Movements

Moving on to reproductive and environmental movements

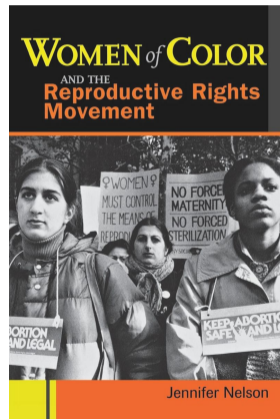
1980s–1990s: Reproductive Rights and Environmental Justice Movements



# The Reproductive Rights Movement

- Fight for reproductive autonomy and equality
- Emerged in the 1960s and 1970s
- Advocacy for access to safe abortions
- Resistance to history of eugenics
- Challenges to traditional gender roles
- The movement continues today

Nelson, 2003.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
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    - └ The Reproductive Rights Movement

### The Reproductive Rights Movement

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- The movement continues today



Nelson, 2003.

1. The Reproductive Rights Movement is a social movement focused on ensuring individuals have the right to make decisions about their own reproductive health and lives.
2. The movement emerged in the mid-twentieth century in response to restrictive laws and policies surrounding abortion and contraception.
3. Advocates for reproductive rights have worked to expand access to reproductive healthcare and to challenge the social and political stigmas surrounding reproductive health.
4. Activism includes a range of actions, including advocacy for reproductive rights and the development of services and programs aimed at promoting reproductive health and justice.
5. Rooted in history of U.S.'s promoting eugenics and involuntary sterilization in which gender, race, and class intersect to create barriers to reproductive rights.
6. Overall, the Reproductive Rights Movement has challenged social work to confront its biases and actively work towards reproductive justice for all individuals.

# Social Work During the Reproductive Rights Movement

- Access to birth control
- Abortion as reproductive right
- Social work role in advocacy
- Historic social work support for eugenics
- Conflict between pro-life and pro-choice
- Importance of intersectional approach

Liddell, 2019.

## Reproductive Justice and the Social Work Profession: Common Grounds and Current Trends

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DOI: 10.1177/0898010118803646  
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SAGE

Jessica L. Liddell<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

Reproductive rights and justice frameworks, which take an intersectional and social justice approach to reproductive health, are compatible with social work's philosophical and theoretical foundations and its practical goals of advocating and promoting social justice. However, reproductive rights and justice are not frequently addressed in social work publications, an important gap that should be addressed. The search term "reproductive justice" was used to identify 10 articles published between 1994 and 2018 among the top 50 social work journals (using SCImago Journal and Country rankings). Only 3 of these 10 articles focused substantively on reproductive justice. By comparison, 55 articles were identified with the search term "reproductive rights." An analysis of the reproductive justice articles was conducted for purpose and topic, location, study population, year, journal, key findings, and implications for the social work profession. All articles called for an increase in research on reproductive justice topics. Encouragingly, these articles also included an analysis of the role of the social work profession with these frameworks. However, there is a lack of articles on reproductive justice, and the range of topics, and the methodological approaches, covered are limited. Although the increase in reproductive rights literature is heartening, there is a need for reproductive justice framings in social work practice and research.

### Keywords

reproductive justice, reproductive rights, social justice, social work literature, social work practice

Reproductive rights and justice frameworks, which take an intersectional and social justice approach to reproductive health, are compatible both with social work's ethical and historical foundations and with its practical goals of advocating and promoting social justice. Despite its importance, reproductive rights and justice are not frequently addressed in social work publications. Previous reviews have analyzed the reproductive health and family planning literature (Wright, Bird, & Frost, 2015),

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

### 1980s–1990s: Reproductive Rights and Environmental Justice Movements

## Social Work During the Reproductive Rights Movement

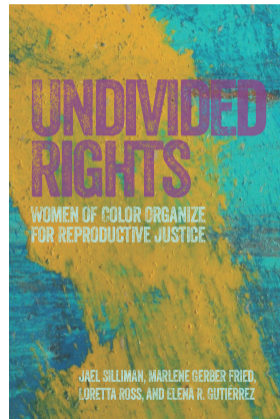
- Access to birth control
- Abortion as reproductive right
- Social work role in advocacy
- Historic social work support for eugenics
- Conflict between pro-life and pro-choice
- Importance of intersectional approach

Liddell, 2019.

1. The Reproductive Rights Movement has focused on issues such as access to birth control, abortion rights, and reproductive justice. Social work has played a role in advocating for these issues, but has also faced criticism for its historic support for eugenics and reproductive control.
2. Social work has been involved in both pro-life and pro-choice movements, highlighting the ongoing tension within the profession between social justice and individual rights.
3. An intersectional approach to reproductive rights has become increasingly important, recognizing that issues such as race, class, and gender intersect in complex ways to shape reproductive experiences and outcomes.

## Lessons from Social Work During the Reproductive Rights Movement

- Examine history of social work in reproductive freedom
- Prioritize diversity and representation in reproductive work
- Acknowledge complicity, promote reproductive advocacy
- Emphasize reproductive justice framework
- Prioritize marginalized communities in advocacy
- Prepare students to work towards reproductive justice



Silliman et al., 2016.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### └ Social Work in Divisive Times

### └ 1980s–1990s: Reproductive Rights and Environmental Justice Movements

### └ Lessons from Social Work During the Reproductive Rights Movement

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  - Prioritize marginalized communities in advocacy
  - Prepare students to work towards reproductive justice



1. Social work doctoral education must critically examine the historic role of the profession in perpetuating oppressive policies and practices that harm marginalized communities' reproductive autonomy.
2. Doctoral education must prioritize diversity, representation, and the inclusion of communities most affected by restrictive reproductive policies in social work leadership and decision-making.
3. Social work doctoral education must acknowledge complicity in perpetuating restrictive reproductive policies and practices and promote advocacy for comprehensive reproductive health education and care.
4. A reproductive justice framework must be emphasized in social work doctoral education, prioritizing the experiences and voices of marginalized communities in advocacy and practice.
5. Social work doctoral education must prepare students to actively work towards reproductive justice, advocating for comprehensive reproductive health education, access, and autonomy for all individuals.

# The Environmental Justice Movement

- Addresses unequal environmental burdens
- Advocates for fair access to resources
- Emphasizes intersectionality of oppression
- Opposes corporate exploitation of communities
- Demands accountability and just policies
- Recognizes Indigenous sovereignty and rights

Cole and Foster, 2001.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1980s–1990s: Reproductive Rights and Environmental Justice Movements
    - └ The Environmental Justice Movement

- The Environmental Justice Movement**
- Addresses unequal environmental burdens
  - Advocates for fair access to resources
  - Emphasizes intersectionality of oppression
  - Opposes corporate exploitation of communities
  - Demands accountability and just policies
  - Recognizes Indigenous sovereignty and rights

Cole and Foster, 2001.



1. The Environmental Justice Movement emerged in response to the disproportionate burden of pollution and environmental hazards faced by communities of color and low-income communities.
2. The movement advocates for equitable access to resources and a healthy environment, and recognizes the intersectionality of oppression, such as the links between environmental racism and economic injustice.
3. The movement challenges the corporate exploitation of communities and demands accountability for environmental harm, while also recognizing indigenous sovereignty and rights.

# Social Work During the Environmental Justice Movement

- Environmental justice addresses inequalities and injustice
- Social work can play a role
- Critiques of social work's historic role
- Calls for anti-oppression training
- Need for centering the voices of affected communities
- The importance of addressing intersectionality

## Rethinking Social Work's Interpretation of 'Environmental Justice': From Local to Global

Dawn Philip & Michael Reisch

*This article challenges social workers to expand their understanding of the 'person-in-environment' perspective and become more active in addressing current environmental crises. Although social work scholars have begun to explore the relationship between social work and the natural and built environment and professional organizations mandate the integration of this content into practice and education, these goals remain unrealized, particularly in the USA. To address these issues more effectively, social work educators will need to distinguish between understanding persons in their environment and environmentalism, and between environmentalism and environmental justice. This article analyzes the emergence of the environmental justice movement in the USA and other nations and its relationship to environmental racism. It presents a case study of a local environmental justice effort to demonstrate how social workers can use their knowledge and skills to make important contributions to environmental justice and sustainability. It also discusses the potential of 'green social work' and transformative learning theory as tools to help social work educators better equip students to make strategic alliances across professions, disciplines, and systems to address contemporary environmental crises.*

**Keywords:** Environmental Justice; Environmentalism; Environmental Racism; Green Social Work; Social Work Education; Sustainability; Transformative Learning Theory

### Introduction

Scholars have recently begun to explore the relationship between social work and the natural and built environment (Gray & Coates, 2013; Pulla, 2013); and professional organizations (National Association of Social Workers, 2009; International Federation of Social Workers, 2013) mandate the integration of this content into practice and

Philip and Reisch, 2015.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

### 1980s–1990s: Reproductive Rights and Environmental Justice Movements

### Social Work During the Environmental Justice Movement

1. Social work has the potential to address environmental justice with its focus on social justice and human rights, but has been criticized for perpetuating inequalities and limited engagement.
2. Critiques include social work's reliance on the medical model, which treats environmental health problems as individual issues rather than systemic problems.
3. Calls for anti-oppression training and education in social work address the intersection of environmental injustice with other forms of oppression such as racism, sexism, and ableism.
4. Centering the voices and experiences of affected communities is crucial. Social workers must recognize their own biases and listen to the perspectives of those most impacted.
5. Intersectionality is essential in addressing environmental justice as multiple forms of oppression can create unique challenges and barriers to achieving justice.

### Social Work During the Environmental Justice Movement

- Environmental justice addresses inequalities and injustice
- Social work can play a role
- Critiques of social work's historic role
- Calls for anti-oppression training
- Need for centering the voices of affected communities
- The importance of addressing intersectionality

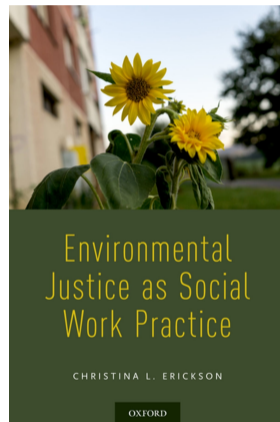
*Rethinking Social Work's Interpretation of Environmental Justice: From Local to Global*  
Philip and Reisch, 2015

Philip and Reisch, 2015.

## Lessons from Social Work During the Environmental Justice Movement

- Social work complicit in environmental racism
- Critique of individualistic social work approach
- Call for systemic, community-centered approach
- Resist co-optation of grassroots activism
- Center voices and experiences of color communities
- Actively work towards environmental justice

Erickson, 2018.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 1980s–1990s: Reproductive Rights and Environmental Justice Movements

## Lessons from Social Work During the Environmental Justice Movement

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  - Call for systemic, community-centered approach
  - Resist co-optation of grassroots activism
  - Center voices and experiences of color communities
  - Actively work towards environmental justice



1. Social work doctoral education must critically examine the profession's historic role in perpetuating environmental racism and the ways in which social work has supported institutionalized practices and policies that disproportionately harm communities of color.
2. Doctoral education must acknowledge the limitations of individual-level interventions and prioritize systemic approaches to address the root causes of environmental injustice.
3. Environmental justice advocates have emphasized the importance of greater accountability and participation from affected communities, and social work doctoral education must prepare students to listen to and center the voices and experiences of these communities.
4. Centering the experiences of communities of color must be prioritized in developing solutions to environmental injustice, and social work doctoral education must prepare students to take an active and community-centered approach.
5. The Environmental Justice Movement has challenged social work to confront its

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

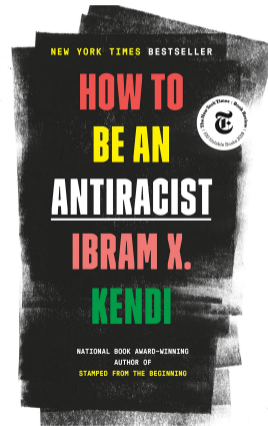
└ Social Work in Divisive Times

└ 2000s–Current: Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism Movements

2000s–Current: Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism  
Movements

## Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism Movements

- Global movement demanding racial justice
- Critique of colonialism and neocolonialism
- Emphasis on decolonization and restitution
- Intersectional approach to oppression
- Challenges to dominant narratives and power structures
- Need for systemic and transformative change



Kendi, 2023.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

#### 2000s–Current: Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism Movements

#### Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism Movements

#### Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism Movements

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- Intersectional approach to oppression
- Challenges to dominant narratives and power structures
- Need for systemic and transformative change

Kendi, 2023.



1. The Anti-Racism and Anti-Colonialism Movements have gained momentum globally, as people demand racial justice and challenge the ongoing legacy of colonialism and resulting racism.
2. These movements emphasize the need for decolonization and restitution, and challenge dominant narratives and power structures that perpetuate systemic oppression.
3. An intersectional approach recognizes the ways in which different forms of oppression, such as racism, sexism, and classism, intersect and reinforce each other.
4. These movements call for systemic and transformative change, and challenge individuals and institutions to actively work towards a more just and equitable society.



# Social Work During the Anti-racism/colonialism Movements

- Criticism of social work's complicity in oppression
- Emphasis on anti-oppression education and action
- Centering marginalized voices and intersectionality
- Addressing systemic power and privilege
- Resisting co-optation and tokenism
- Demanding dismantling of oppressive structures

Abrams et al., 2020.



## ABOUT

Social work has a complex history of upholding White supremacy alongside a goal to achieve racial justice. Moreover, our profession simultaneously practices within racist systems and works to dismantle them. In the wake of a fervent #BlackLivesMatter movement and persistent racial disparities in key social welfare institutions, these paradoxes have come to the forefront of discussion in academic and practice circles. This unique moment presents an opportunity to interrogate our profession's relationship to White supremacy and racial justice in order to reimagine an anti-racist future.

We hope you'll join us for a series of virtual symposia that will address these themes. Symposium events will occur throughout the academic year and will address different aspects of our past, present, and future. Specific dates for each event are below. The tabs above will direct you to each event's main page where you can view recordings of past events and additional information about upcoming events.

Part One – *Social Work's Historical Legacy of Racism and White Supremacy*  
November 12 & 13, 2020

Part Two – *Addressing Racism Within the Social Work Profession: Reflections on Our Past and Present*  
January 28 & 29, 2021

Part Three – *Envisioning an Anti-Racist Future: From Practice to Policy*  
March 4 & 5, 2021

Part Four – *Strategies for Achieving Racial Justice in Social Work Education*  
April 15 & 16, 2021

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work in Divisive Times

### 2000s–Current: Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism Movements

### Social Work During the Anti-racism/colonialism Movements

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- Emphasis on anti-oppression education and action
- Centering marginalized voices and intersectionality
- Addressing systemic power and privilege
- Resisting co-optation and tokenism
- Demanding dismantling of oppressive structures

Abrams et al., 2020.

1. In recent years, social work has faced mounting criticism for its historic role in perpetuating racism and colonialism, particularly in relation to the experiences of Black and Indigenous communities.
2. Calls for anti-racism and anti-colonialism training and education have become increasingly urgent within the profession, as social workers strive to confront their biases and work towards greater inclusivity and equity.
3. This has involved centering the voices and experiences of people of color and Indigenous communities, recognizing the intersectionality of oppression, and resisting tokenism and co-optation of grassroots activism.
4. The 2021 Social Work, White Supremacy, and Racial Justice symposium was an important step in addressing racism in social work, but it's not the first attempt. We need to learn from past reckonings and apply those lessons to our current efforts.
5. Social work has a long way to go in confronting White supremacy, racism, and colonialism. But with continued effort and a willingness to learn, we can move forward towards a more just and equitable profession.

## Lessons from Social Work During the Anti-racism/colonialism Movements

- Social work struggles to address racism/colonialism
- Disconnecting links to white supremacy
- One-size-fits-all approach insufficient
- BIPOC communities face racism similarly, yet differently
- Unique elements of colonialism
- Distinct elements of colonialism

Yearwood et al., 2021.

Editorial  
Dismantling White Supremacy in Social Work Education:  
We Build the Road by Walking<sup>1</sup>  
Charla Cannon Yearwood  
Rosemary A. Barbera  
Amy K. Fisher  
Carol Hostetter

We are excited to share this special edition of *Advances in Social Work* with you. When we distributed a call for abstracts, we were inundated – in a good way – with proposals. The need for social workers to discuss the role that white supremacy occupies within our history, education, and practice was obvious. Because of the number of abstracts received, we made the decision to publish a double edition so that the important information contained in these articles can be widely shared. The submissions fell into three general themes—historical, instructional, and institutional examinations. Each set of articles offers much for us to reflect and act upon moving forward. There is a reckoning happening and we are thrilled that this special edition is part of that reckoning.

The purpose of this issue is to spark curiosity and critical thought around the ways white supremacy permeates our profession and our teaching. The Black Lives Matter Movement, along with other movements, have increased our awareness of how white supremacy invades all aspects of our society and the systems that govern it. Social workers claim to make use of systems theory and to adhere to a Code of Ethics (NASW, 2021) that includes the values of social justice, integrity, and the dignity and worth of all as central to social work practice. Given these values and the use of systems theory, the focus on understanding the pervasiveness of white supremacy should not be a new idea for social work. However, it is important for us to slow down enough to consider our blind spots and reevaluate our complacency in the structures we claim to resist. While it is true that there has been racial reckoning of sorts in the United States since the ongoing and despicable murders of Black people by the police, very few concrete changes have happened, even within social work. For example, the Council on Social Work Education created a task force that examined the proposed 2022 educational and policy statements (EPAS). The very first competency in the proposed EPAS called on social workers to be anti-racist, to go beyond non-racism to actively fight against racism. In the same competency, however, CSWE continued to center gatekeeping – a white supremacist concept – and to prioritize “professional” communication, which really means white forms of communication (Gray, 2019). This centering of white norms is often carried over to discuss “professional” dress and hair styles within our profession.

Social work has a stated commitment to social justice. At the same time, social work practice and education have a long history of engaging in practices that are racist and that perpetuate white supremacy. The roots of social work in the United States are tied to the

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ 2000s–Current: Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism Movements
    - └ Lessons from Social Work During the Anti-racism/colonialism Movements

Lessons from Social Work During the Anti-racism/colonialism Movements

- Social work struggles to address racism/colonialism
- Disconnecting links to white supremacy
- One-size-fits-all approach insufficient
- BIPOC communities face racism similarly, yet differently
- Unique elements of colonialism



Yearwood et al., 2021.

1. Social work has historically struggled to effectively address racism and colonialism, often failing to recognize the connections between white supremacy, racism, and colonialism.
2. A one-size-fits-all approach to addressing racism is insufficient for other BIPOC groups since racism has elements that are either common to or unique among specific racial groups based on the type of colonialism each group has been dominated and exploited by.
3. To address racism and colonialism, social work must understand how some racialized systems of colonization affect all BIPOC communities, including neo-colonialism, police colonialism, and welfare colonialism.
4. Additionally, social work must recognize that some forms of racialized colonization are unique to different BIPOC communities, such as settler colonialism, planter colonialism, and imperial colonialism.
5. Social work doctoral education must prioritize critical examination of these issues and provide anti-colonial, anti-racist frameworks to address these complex and unique

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└─ Social Work in Divisive Times

└─ Other Key Social Movements

There are additional social movements that are important, but beyond the scope of my talk.  
Let's review a few.

## Other Key Social Movements

## Additional Lessons to Learn

- Labor Movement (1920s–1950s)
- Rank and File Movement (1930s–1950s)
- Women's Rights Movement (1960s–1980s)
- LGBT Movements (1960s–Present)
- Racial Justice Movement (1990s–Present)

Thompson, 2002.

### Social Movements, Social Justice and Social Work

Neil Thompson

*Neil Thompson is a Director of Avenue Consulting Ltd and a Visiting Professor at the University of Liverpool.*

*Correspondence to: Neil Thompson, Avenue Consulting Ltd, PO Box 2060, Wrexham LL13 0ZG, Wales, UK.*

#### Summary

This paper explores the relationship between social movements, social justice and social work. It examines the role of social movements in promoting social justice and considers the influences of such movements in the development of emancipatory forms of social work practice. It also considers the question of whether social work can be viewed as a form of social movement in its own right. A central theme of the paper is the fundamental tension between social work as a force for social regulation and as a force for social development and emancipation.

#### Introduction

The historical development of anti-discriminatory practice can be traced to sets of influences both within and outside social work itself. One such external factor was clearly the role played by social movements. That is, the push from various pressure groups and related cultural formations can be seen to have played a role in challenging traditional approaches to social work and destabilizing the psychodynamic, individually oriented paradigm which held sway for many years (Barber, 1991) and laying the foundations for a more sociologically influenced theoretical base to emerge, with a clearer and stronger focus on social justice. To begin with, the sociological base was primarily a class-based analysis, gradually broadening out to take account of race and gender dimensions and, subsequently, age, disability and sexual identity (Thompson, 2001). That sociological perspective in turn laid the foundations for emancipatory practice—that is, forms of practice which seek to challenge discrimination and oppression.

This paper explores how the development of new social movements played a part in laying those foundations, giving a much higher level of attention to the pursuit of

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

- └ Social Work in Divisive Times
  - └ Other Key Social Movements
    - └ Additional Lessons to Learn

### Additional Lessons to Learn

- Labor Movement (1920s–1950s)
- Rank and File Movement (1930s–1950s)
- Women's Rights Movement (1960s–1980s)
- LGBT Movements (1960s–Present)
- Racial Justice Movement (1990s–Present)

Thompson, 2002.

1. These movements all have important implications for social work doctoral education.
2. The Labor Movement challenged the exploitation of workers, and doctoral education should prepare students to advocate for workers' rights and understand the intersection of economic justice with social work practice.
3. The Rank and File Movement emphasized community-based organizing, and social work doctoral education should empower students to work alongside marginalized communities to create lasting change.
4. The Women's Rights Movement called for gender equity, and doctoral education should prioritize intersectional feminist perspectives in social work practice.
5. The LGBT Movements challenged discrimination and promoted cultural humility and advocacy for LGBT rights, and social work doctoral education should prepare students to address issues of sexual orientation and gender identity.
6. The Racial Justice Movement challenges systemic racism and calls for centering the voices and experiences of communities of color, and doctoral education should prioritize anti-racism and anti-colonialism education.

Social Movements, Social Justice and Social Work

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└ Social Work History in Doctoral Education

Social Work History in Doctoral Education

Now let's look at the current state of social work history in doctoral education.

## Social Work History in Doctoral Education

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└ Social Work History in Doctoral Education

└ Barriers

Let's begin with some barriers.

Barriers

# 1. Larger Efforts to Hide America's Colonialist and Racist History

## A number of recent efforts have been made to hide U.S. colonialism and racism

- Bans on the use of critical race theory
- Forbidding the teaching of historical racial inequality and racism
- Avoidance of dialogue around anti-colonialism and anti-racism
- Rise of "alternative facts"

🐦 @SAFEmansion (CF Edley III)

"Can you imagine being so ashamed of your history that you would make it illegal to teach it to your children?"

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### └ Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### └└ Barriers

#### └└└ 1. Larger Efforts to Hide America's Colonialist and Racist History

1. Efforts to hide U.S. colonialism and racism have been on the rise in recent years.
2. This includes bans on the use of critical race theory in education and the forbidding of teaching historical racial inequality and racism.
3. There has also been a trend of avoiding dialogue around anti-colonialism and anti-racism in public discourse.
4. The rise of "alternative facts" has also contributed to a lack of understanding and recognition of America's colonialist and racist history.
5. These efforts have significant implications for social work education, which must prioritize anti-colonial and anti-racist frameworks to address the ongoing impacts of colonization and racism on marginalized communities.
6. Social work doctoral education must prepare students to challenge these efforts and promote an accurate understanding of America's colonialist and racist history.

1. Larger Efforts to Hide America's Colonialist and Racist History

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being so ashamed of your history that you would make it illegal to teach it to

## 2. Social Work's Desertion of Historical Research

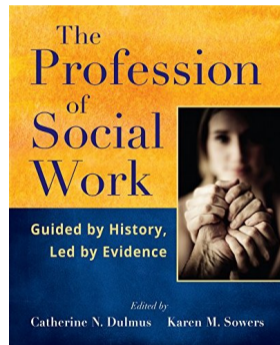
### History of social work is central to the profession

- CSWE associates w/ professional social work identity
- Critical to the self-understanding of our profession

### However, it's largely been deserted by the profession

- History as a research method has faded in social work
- Historical social work dissertations have declined
- Historians of social work/welfare in schools are few
- Role of historical research for practitioners has been lost

Danto, 2008; Fisher and Dybicz, 1999; Graham and Al-Krenawi, 2010; Lasch-Quinn, 1993.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Barriers

## 2. Social Work's Desertion of Historical Research

1. The history of social work is crucial to the profession's identity and self-understanding, as recognized by the CSWE.
2. However, the profession has largely deserted historical research. This is evident in the decline of historical social work dissertations and the lack of historians of social work/welfare in schools.
3. The role of historical research in informing social work practice has been lost, as history as a research method has faded in social work.
4. This desertion of historical research is concerning as it limits the profession's ability to critically reflect on its past and present practices, and risks repeating past mistakes.
5. Therefore, social work doctoral education must prioritize the importance of historical research and its role in shaping the profession's understanding of itself and its practices.
6. This includes promoting historical research methods in social work and encouraging scholars to explore the rich history of the profession to inform contemporary social work practice.

### 2. Social Work's Desertion of Historical Research

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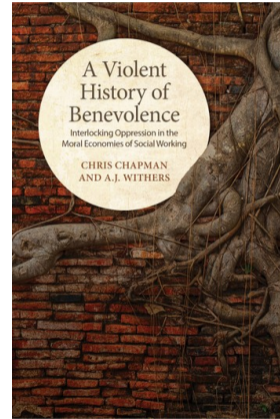
Danto, 2008; Fisher and Dybicz, 1999; Graham and Al-Krenawi, 2010; Lasch-Quinn, 1993.



### 3. Deemphasis of Historical Social Work Knowledge

#### Historical social work research has illuminated:

- Historical contributions of BIPOC social workers
- Roles of BIPOC traditions and ideas in social work
- Historic social work issues, responses, and solutions
- How historical social problems have been contextualized
- Roles of philosophy, theory, and research in social work
- Social works' history of building a profession (good/bad)



Chapman and Withers, 2019; Danto, 2008; Fisher and Dybicz, 1999; Graham and Al-Krenawi, 2010; Schiele, 2019.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Barriers

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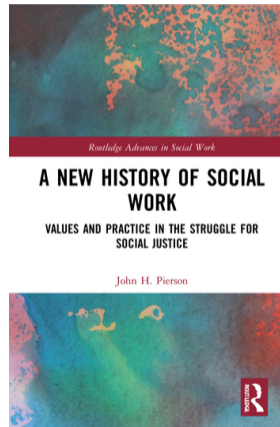
Chapman and Withers, 2019; Danto, 2008; Fisher and Dybicz, 1999; Graham and Al-Krenawi, 2010; Schiele, 2019.

1. In recent years there has been a de-emphasis of historical social work knowledge, which threatens to erode the progress made in these areas.
2. Historical social work research has been crucial in highlighting the contributions of BIPOC social workers and their role in shaping social work practices and traditions.
3. It has also provided insight into the historic social work issues, responses, and solutions that have helped shape the profession.
4. By contextualizing social problems historically, we are better able to understand their current iterations and develop more effective solutions.
5. Historical social work research has also played a role in examining the development of social work as a profession, both the positive contributions and the areas where social work has fallen short.
6. Social work doctoral education must prioritize the role of historical research in developing a better understanding of the profession, its history, and its relationship to social justice issues.

## 4. Diminishing Social Work Historians in Schools of Social Work

### The role of social work historians is important to:

- Define a profession of social work/field of social welfare
- Build historical record from social work perspectives
- Add historical lens to contemporary social work debates
- Teach historical methods responsive to social work
- Expand our profession's knowledge base & research skills
- Examine/reflect on our past to move profession forward



Bell, 2014; Danto, 2008; Fisher and Dybicz, 1999; Graham and Al-Krenawi, 2010; Pierson, 2021.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Barriers

## 4. Diminishing Social Work Historians in Schools of Social Work

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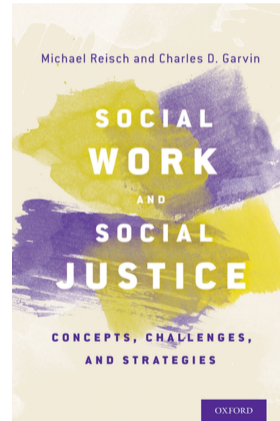


1. The role of social work historians is critical to the profession in multiple ways. They define social work as a profession and social welfare as a field.
2. Historians build a historical record from social work perspectives and add a historical lens to contemporary social work debates.
3. Social work historians teach historical methods responsive to social work and expand our profession's knowledge base and research skills.
4. It's important to examine and reflect on our past to move the profession forward.
5. However, the role of social work historians in schools of social work has diminished over time.
6. The diminishing presence of social work historians in schools of social work can result in a lack of expertise on the profession's historical context and its relevance to contemporary social issues.
7. This limits our ability to understand our profession's history, learn from our mistakes, and identify best practices for moving forward.

## 5. Complexity of Social Work History and Current JEDI Efforts

### The null social work history lacks JEDI

- Links to White supremacy, colonialism, and racism
- Controlled by colonial matrix of power and Whiteness
- Researchers overlook historical harms and resistance
- A lack of action on colonialism and racism
- Acknowledging and addressing our past is essential



Almeida et al., 2019; Andrews et al., 2019; Reisch, 2019; Reisch and Garvin, 2016; Thibeault and Spencer, 2019.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Barriers

### 5. Complexity of Social Work History and Current JEDI Efforts

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Almeida et al., 2019; Andrews et al., 2019; Reisch, 2019; Reisch and Garvin, 2016; Thibeault and Spencer, 2019.

1. The history of social work is deeply entangled with the structures of White supremacy, coloniality, and racial division
2. The control of social work history are features of the colonial matrix of power and White supremacy
3. Researchers have failed to fully examine the context of history, racism, and colonialism in the community, culture, neighborhood, and people we study.
4. Social work history reflects our professions' reluctance to confront the issues of racism and colonialism and have rarely taken action that matches the profession's sweeping rhetorical statements.
5. Social work efforts towards anti-racism and decolonization will continue to fail if we do not acknowledge its history of racism, colonialism, and White supremacy
6. By acknowledging and addressing the historical legacies of racism, colonialism, and other forms of oppression, social workers can work towards creating a more diverse and inclusive practice that promotes social justice and positive change.

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└─ Social Work History in Doctoral Education

└─ Advancing

I'd like to share a few ways that I think we can advance social work history in doctoral education.

Advancing

# My Historical Grand Challenge: Rationale

## My Proposed Grand Challenge for Social Work: Recover History

- The Issue
  - Social work has forgotten the significance of studying history as a research method, has allowed historical social work dissertations to vanish, and has devalued the importance of having historical social welfare and social work scholars on faculty. Furthermore, social work history has largely failed to recognize, incorporate, and teach the contributions of Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) to social welfare and social work history.
- Societal Goal
  - Social work's ability to achieve racial justice, social justice, eliminate racism, and dismantle inequality will be greatly strengthened by examining the historical roots of the profession and recovering the historical contributions of BIPOC communities omitted in dominant social welfare and social work history.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Advancing

### My Historical Grand Challenge: Rationale

1. I want to begin with a grand challenge that I made for myself, but may be useful to others.
2. My proposed Grand Challenge for Social Work is to recover history, which involves addressing the issues of forgetting the significance of studying history as a research method, vanishing historical social work dissertations, and devaluing the importance of having historical social welfare and social work scholars on faculty.
3. Moreover, social work history has largely failed to recognize, incorporate, and teach the contributions of Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) to social welfare and social work history.
4. The societal goal of recovering history is to strengthen social work's ability to achieve racial justice, social justice, eliminate racism, and dismantle inequality by examining the historical roots of the profession and recovering the historical contributions of BIPOC communities omitted in dominant social welfare and social work history.

#### My Historical Grand Challenge: Rationale

##### My Proposed Grand Challenge for Social Work: Recover History

- The Issue
  - Social work has forgotten the significance of studying history as a research method, has allowed historical social work dissertations to vanish, and has devalued the importance of having historical social welfare and social work scholars on faculty. Furthermore, social work history has largely failed to recognize, incorporate, and teach the contributions of Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) to social welfare and social work history.
- Societal Goal
  - Social work's ability to achieve racial justice, social justice, eliminate racism, and dismantle inequality will be greatly strengthened by examining the historical roots of the profession and recovering the historical contributions of BIPOC communities omitted in dominant social welfare and social work history.

## My Historical Grand Challenge: Objectives

### My Proposed Grand Challenge for Social Work: Recover History

- A Decade of Work
  - Over the next ten years, schools of social work can engage in a variety of inclusive activities that will advance this Grand Challenge:
    1. Reclaim history as a research method in social work, encourage students to pursue historical social work dissertations, and employ social work historians as faculty
    2. Incorporate BIPOC social welfare and social work history into theory, evidence, practice, curriculum, and doctoral comprehensive exams
    3. Interview and document the history of contemporary BIPOC social work scholars, communities, and organizations so they are not lost in history
    4. Obtain library books on BIPOC social work history, purchase access to journals on BIPOC issues, and cultivate BIPOC social work archives
    5. Celebrate the historical contributions of BIPOC social workers year-round

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Advancing

### My Historical Grand Challenge: Objectives

1. The proposed grand challenge seeks to recover the lost history of social work and social welfare, by acknowledging the contributions of BIPOC communities to the profession and incorporating their perspectives into the curriculum.
2. The first is to reclaim history as a research method in social work, encouraging historical dissertations and employing social work historians as faculty.
3. The second objective is to incorporate BIPOC social welfare and social work history for a comprehensive understanding of social work that includes diverse perspectives.
4. The third objective is to interview and document the history of contemporary BIPOC social workers to preserve the voices and experiences of those who contributed to the profession.
5. The fourth objective is to obtain texts on BIPOC social work history and cultivate archives, creating a comprehensive resource collection.
6. The final objective is to celebrate the historical contributions of BIPOC social workers year-round.

#### My Historical Grand Challenge: Objectives

##### My Proposed Grand Challenge for Social Work: Recover History

- A Decade of Work
  - Over the next ten years, schools of social work can engage in a variety of inclusive activities that will advance this Grand Challenge:
    1. Reclaim history as a research method in social work, encourage students to pursue historical social work dissertations, and employ social work historians as faculty
    2. Incorporate BIPOC social welfare and social work history into theory, evidence, practice, curriculum, and doctoral comprehensive exams
    3. Interview and document the history of contemporary BIPOC social work scholars, communities, and organizations so they are not lost in history
    4. Obtain library books on BIPOC social work history, purchase access to journals on BIPOC issues, and cultivate BIPOC social work archives
    5. Celebrate the historical contributions of BIPOC social workers year-round

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└─ Social Work History in Doctoral Education

└─ Leveraging

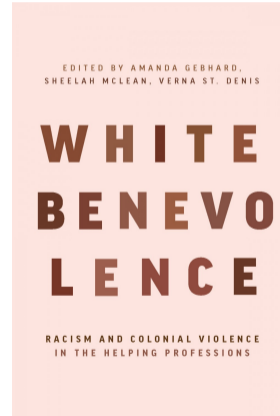
I now want to share 6 ways that I think we can effectively leverage social work history in doctoral education.

Leveraging

# 1. Concurrently Address Whiteness, Racism, and Colonialism

- Social work must confront racism and colonialism
- Address unique histories of BIPOC
- Target efforts on BIPOC populations
- Address common aspirations and goals
- Racism and colonialism linked to White supremacy
- Failure to address perpetuates White supremacy

Gebhard et al., 2022; Harty, In press.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Leveraging

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Gebhard et al., 2022; Harty, In press.



1. To move social work doctoral education forward, we need to examine the history of social work and its connection to racism and colonialism.
2. We must address White supremacy, racism, and colonialism simultaneously, and acknowledge the similar and divergent histories and goals of BIPOC populations.
3. It's important to target efforts among BIPOC populations, including universal and common abolition causes, while also acknowledging divergent abolition goals.
4. Failure to address all three is linked to White supremacy, and we must strive to work towards antiracism and anticolonialism to create a better future for all.



## 2. Create Meaningful Reform and Engage Abolition

- Reform and abolition to address racism
- Licensing exams: reform or abolish?
- NABSW and CSWE Task Forces called for abolition
- Social work exams perpetuate racism
- Recent debates question profession's existence
- Where does our future lie?



### THE END OF SOCIAL WORK

*A Defense of the Social Worker in Times of Transformation*



STEVE BURGHARDT

Burghardt, 2020; Harty, In press.

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Leveraging

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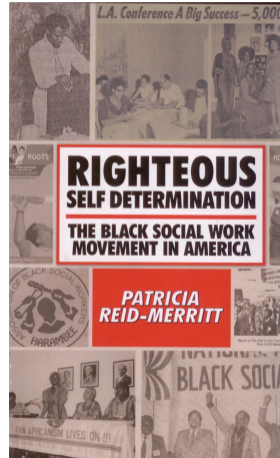
Burghardt, 2020; Harty, In press.

1. The issue of whether to reform or abolish social work licensing exams has become a prominent topic of discussion in recent years. This is not a new issue. Approximately 50 years ago, the National Association of Black Social Workers and two CSWE task forces called for abolishing racist licensing standards and exams.
2. If the profession had only listened to NABSW's calls for abolishing social work licensing exams, perhaps the profession could have protected BIPOC social workers from decades-long racist licensing exams perpetuated by the Association of Social Work Boards.
3. Recent debates have even gone as far as questioning if social work as a profession must be abolished.
4. Ultimately, the soul of social work lies within our professions' ability to reform if appropriate or abolish when needed. This requires critical examination of our history and current practices, and a commitment to challenging systems of oppression and racism within our profession.

### 3. Learn From Our Past

- British social work experiment in U.S. has failed
- Reckon with social work's past
- Five CSWE Multicultural Task Forces
- National Association of Black Social Workers
- Making curriculum changes for diverse populations
- Acknowledging social work's harms

Harty, In press; Reid-Merritt, 2010.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Leveraging

### 3. Learn From Our Past

1. The adoption of British social work during colonialism has failed in the United States, leading to a troubled past that must be acknowledged.
2. Approximately 50 years ago, the Council on Social Work Education formed five task forces to address issues of racism, discrimination, and oppression within the profession.
3. The recommendations made by the CSWE Multicultural Task Forces are strikingly similar to those made at the 2021 Social Work, White Supremacy, and Racial Justice symposium, demonstrating that social work has failed to learn from its past.
4. To move forward, social work must change and grapple with its history to avoid another 50 years of inaction.

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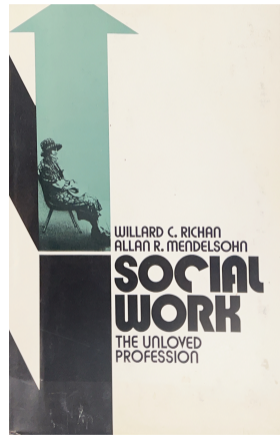
Harty, In press; Reid-Merritt, 2010.



## 4. Acknowledge Past Atrocities

- Racism in social work education
- Racist social work practices
- Racism affected other racial and ethnic communities
- Social work complicit in atrocities
- Acknowledge social work's racial harm
- Delink from White supremacy, colonialism, and racism

Harty, In press; Richan and Mendelsohn, 1973.



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Leveraging

#### 4. Acknowledge Past Atrocities

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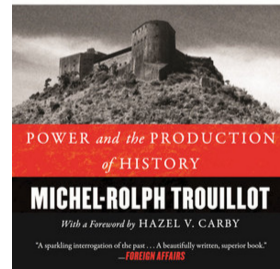
1. Social work has a troubled history, including racism in social work education, curriculum, and practices. This history includes denying or restricting services for clients of color, providing low-quality services, and ignoring how racism affects interactions with clients.
2. Social work has also been complicit in atrocities outside of the academic and training settings, such as the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II and the exclusion of migrants, Indigenous boarding schools, and the eugenics movement.
3. To move forward as a profession, we must acknowledge our history of contributing to racial harm against BIPOC communities and actively work to ensure that these harms do not continue in the future. We must confront the uncomfortable and shameful parts of our history, make changes to our curriculum and practices, and work to ensure that our profession is inclusive and anti-racist.
4. Just like we cannot ignore the uncomfortable parts of our history, we cannot ignore the ongoing effects of racism and colonialism in our work as social workers. We must

## 5. Teach an Inclusive Social Work History

- Inclusive of BIPOC contributions
- Historical omission of BIPOC history
- Slow inclusion of BIPOC histories
- Grapple with history of Whiteness
- Acknowledge and include social work history
- Move forward with honest inclusion

Harty, In press; Trouillot and Carby, 2015.

# SILENCING THE PAST



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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Leveraging

## 5. Teach an Inclusive Social Work History

1. To push social work towards an antiracist and anticolonialist future, it must become more inclusive of the contributions of BIPOC social workers and communities in the history of our profession. This requires understanding the three ways that the contributions of BIPOC social workers and communities continue to be covered and recovered.
2. First, historically, these contributions have been covered up and omitted from social work history.
3. Second, previous efforts to recover these histories have been slow to include them in our profession.
4. Third, social work must grapple with the history of Whiteness, racism, and colonialism.
5. To move forward, social work must make more substantial efforts to be honest and inclusive of our profession's history.

### 5. Teach an Inclusive Social Work History

- Inclusive of BIPOC contributions
- Historical omission of BIPOC history
- Slow inclusion of BIPOC histories
- Grapple with history of Whiteness
- Acknowledge and include social work history
- Move forward with honest inclusion

Harty, In press; Trouillot and Carby, 2015.



## 6. Reengage Historical Research Methods in Social Work

- Social work forgot its history
- Contributions of BIPOC ignored
- Recover social work's ignored past
- Incorporate BIPOC history into research
- Cultivate archives of BIPOC contributions
- Document contemporary BIPOC social work

Danto, 2008; Harty, In press.



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### Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

#### Social Work History in Doctoral Education

#### Leveraging

#### 6. Reengage Historical Research Methods in Social Work

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- Cultivate archives of BIPOC contributions
- Document contemporary BIPOC social work

Danto, 2008; Harty, In press.



1. It is crucial to acknowledge that social work has neglected history's role, particularly the contributions of social workers and communities of color. If we want to dismantle inequality and eliminate racism, we must reinstate the importance of history in our profession and recover the BIPOC social welfare and social work contributions ignored in the dominant narrative.
2. To move social work forward, we must continue recovering the ignored past, documenting future history, and cultivating archives of local, national, and international BIPOC social work and social welfare contributions. This entails integrating BIPOC history into research, teaching, and practice and researching and publishing contemporary BIPOC social work efforts that will become our history.

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Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└─ Conclusion

Conclusion

I want to wrap up by looking at our past, present, and future.

Conclusion

## Our Past

- Conceptualizations of social work
- Reconstruction Era
- Progressive Era, Reformist Movement, Eugenics Movement
- Red Scares
- Japanese Internment Camps
- Civil Rights, Anti-War, and Disability Movements
- Reproductive Rights and Environmental Justice Movements
- Anti-racism and Anti-colonialism Movements

1. To move our profession forward, we must begin by acknowledging that social work has a deep history of contributing to harm against BIPOC communities across 8 key eras and movements spanning nearly 150 years.
2. However, these harms and atrocities were met with resistance from within the profession of social work. Social workers resisted these harms and atrocities by centering the voices and experiences of those most impacted by oppression, advocating for systemic change, and using their positions of power and privilege to challenge and dismantle oppressive structures. By learning from this history of resistance, social work can continue to move towards a more just and equitable future for all.
3. Perhaps more important, the history of social work is deeply intertwined with a histories of people and communities of color that resisted our professions' ongoing attempts to impose a White supremacist and colonialist agenda on their lives and well-being. These histories of resistance provide valuable lessons for social work to learn from and incorporate into our present and future practice.

## Our Present

- Larger efforts to hide America's colonialist and racist history
- Social work's desertion of historical research
- Deemphasis of historical social work knowledge
- Diminishing social work historians in schools of social work
- Complexity of social work history and current JEDI efforts

- Larger efforts to hide America's colonialist and racist history
- Social work's desertion of historical research
- Deemphasis of historical social work knowledge
- Diminishing social work historians in schools of social work
- Complexity of social work history and current JEDI efforts

1. Efforts to hide America's colonialist and racist history and deny the existence of systemic racism have implications for social work education and practice.
2. Social work's neglect of historical research means that the profession has lost sight of the significance of studying history as a research method, leading to the decline of historical social work dissertations and the absence of historical social welfare and social work scholars in schools.
3. There has been a devaluation of historical social work knowledge, such as the contributions of BIPOC social workers, BIPOC traditions and ideas in social work, and historical social problems that have been contextualized.
4. The diminishing number of social work historians in schools of social work has resulted in a failure to define a profession of social work and build historical records from social work perspectives.
5. The complexity of social work history and current justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) efforts presents challenges that require a comprehensive examination of social work history and current JEDI efforts to promote social justice



## Our Future

- Concurrently address whiteness, racism, and colonialism
- Create meaningful reform and engage abolition
- Learn from our past
- Acknowledge past atrocities
- Teach an inclusive social work history
- Reengage historical research methods in social work

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## Social Work History: Lessons for Doctoral Education

└─ Conclusion

└─ Our Future

### Our Future

- Concurrently address whiteness, racism, and colonialism
- Create meaningful reform and engage abolition
- Learn from our past
- Acknowledge past atrocities
- Teach an inclusive social work history
- Reengage historical research methods in social work

1. Recently, America had to reckon with White supremacist symbols and the removal of racist and colonialist monuments.
2. To move social work forward, we must come to terms with the idea that our profession may be a lasting symbol of White supremacy.
3. Perhaps the racist and colonialist monuments needing removal are social work syllabi, courses, research, interventions, and practices that marginalize and oppress BIPOC communities.
4. For social work to progress, we must take action on each of these six items to continue our resistance against White supremacy, racism, and colonialization.

**Thank You!**

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└ Conclusion

└ **Thank You!**

**Thank You!**

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