**Land Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge that the University of Michigan, named for Michigami, the world’s largest freshwater system and located in the Huron River watershed, was formed and has grown through connections with the land stewarded by Niswi Ishkodewan Anishinaabeg: The Three Fires People who are Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi along with their neighbours the Seneca, Delaware, Shawnee and Wyandot nations.

**Legacies**

As we live and learn on these territories, we must keep in mind the community struggles for self-determination and colonial legacies of scholarly practices. I use community struggles broadly to include indigenous peoples, enslaved peoples, and those peoples of the Mexico-Republic of Texas territories. I use colonial legacies to reflect our existing social structures, institutions, systems, and policies built from colonial domination.
# Course Syllabus

**SW 825 Historical and Contemporary Issues in Social Work and Social Welfare**  
Fall Term 2020

Tuesday 2:00-4:00ish (Synchronous)  
Remote: Synchronous & Asynchronous

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor:</th>
<th>Karen M. Staller, Ph.D., J.D.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pronouns:</td>
<td>She, her, hers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td>(<a href="mailto:kstaller@umich.edu">kstaller@umich.edu</a>)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone and Voicemail</td>
<td>763-5769</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virtual Chats:</td>
<td>By appointment</td>
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“Progress in human affairs, whether in science or in history or in society, has come mainly through the bold readiness of human beings not to confine themselves to seeking piecemeal improvements in the way things are done, but to present fundamental challenges in the name of reason to the current way of doing things and to the avowed or hidden assumptions on which it rests. I look forward to a time when the historians and sociologists and political thinkers of the English-speaking world will regain their courage for that task.”

- Edward Hallett Carr, Historian

## Preliminary Note:

The course was designed as a required course for the joint doctoral students in social work and social sciences. As such it has three major objectives: 1) to provide a sound grounding in the history of the profession of social work; 2) to provide an equally sound grounding in the history and philosophy of social welfare policy and services in the U.S.; and 3) to introduce and apply comparative frameworks for examining domestic, cross-national and/or global social work, social welfare policy, and/or program or service interventions.

## Course Abstract

This course centers on the examination of the purposes of social welfare and social work and how they have reflected different philosophical and ideological positions, diverse class, racial, ethnic, and cultural perspectives, and the particular historical contexts in which they emerged. It covers long standing conflicts and tensions in the field such as the role of social responsibility vs. social control, how needs are recognized and determined, the nature of helping, perspectives on social justice and charity, the professional role of social workers, and organizational arrangements for social work and social welfare. The focus of this course is on the development of U.S. social welfare and social work with a comparative, cross-national and multicultural lens.

## Course Objectives
Demonstrate an ability to explain and critique the emergence and transformation of the U.S. welfare state;

Distinguish between different theoretical, philosophical, and practice assumptions throughout the history of U.S. social welfare. Critically apply these assumptions in comparative work;

Demonstrate an ability to explain and critique the development of social services in the U.S. from a multicultural perspective assessing the influence of racial, gender, class, religious and cultural factors;

Develop an understanding of the evolution of the social work profession in the U.S. and its relationship to the “scientific” and/or “research” enterprise (including the role of movements: scientific charity, empirical practice, the evidence-based practice movement and the historical roles of methods: such as case study, social surveys, intervention, single-subject design, etc);

Develop a sense of your own place in the history and future development of social welfare, social work and knowledge production and/or scholarship;

Demonstrate an ability to differentiate between the public, nonprofit, and for profit sectors and critique the relative benefits and limitations of their contributions to social welfare and social justice agendas;

Demonstrate an ability to utilize historical research methods to analyze the emergence of professional social work, the generation of social work knowledge, and/or social welfare policies or programs;

Demonstrate an understanding of how historical conflicts and tensions have shaped the development and contemporary landscape of social welfare policy and the profession of social work;

Demonstrate an ability to identify and analyze various conceptual frameworks (including differing ideological positions, cultural norms and values, political tensions, economic systems, and social goals) and assess their impact on the evolving definitions of social problems and the range of alternatives (programs, services, and policies) proposed to address them. In particular be able to critically assess these frameworks in cross-national contexts;

Demonstrate an ability to recognize and explain the recurring nature of themes, conflicts, and debates in U.S. social welfare and interpret the ways in which they were shaped by their historical context. Be prepared to evaluate these basic ideas in a global context;

Demonstrate an ability to identify a variety of policies and strategies in global interventions (such as the world bank, micro enterprises, the role of non governmental agencies, disaster relief, private philanthropy, and world aid projects).

Course Fall 2020 (Remote)

Zoom Meetings. You must be logged into class through your "umich.edu" account in order to access this link. You will find weekly links on our Canvas page.

Join Zoom Meeting
https://umich.zoom.us/j/97861883330
Meeting ID: 978 6188 3330
Passcode: SW825

Required Reading:
• Articles. Required articles are posted on Canvas. They are organized by weekly module. You should be able to locate them in the module. Also note the "file" folder for supplemental material.

The Book Discussion Assignments and Discussion Dates (5-6 total):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Title (TBD)</th>
<th>Discussion Leader (TBD)</th>
<th>Discussion Thread Submission Dates</th>
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<td>Sept 20</td>
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Book Selections: Choices due by September 8th.

Below is a list of books from which to choose for our reading this semester. The list is by title (in random order) followed by the list with a brief description of each book. I am willing to entertain additional titles as suggested by students as long as the book fit the genre of social work history.

Note that the titles reflect diverse topics and subjects. On the list you will find titles that focus on macro practice, direct practice, and community organizing. Some are written by social work scholars, others are about social work but written by authors outside the profession (history, sociology). Some take a critical race perspective, some a radical view, and others not. Some focus on agencies, others are population-based. A few are autobiographical or biographical. Some are classics, others are newcomers to the list. As you contemplate your choices, you might also consider the date of publication. They span the 20th and 21st century.

Possible Book Choices by Title (random order)

• Margolin, Leslie (1997). *Under the Cover of Kindness: The invention of social work*. University of Virginia

**Recommended Books and “Deleted” Readings:**

• Fellin, Phil (undated). The history of the University of Michigan School of Social Work (on Canvas).

• Articles. Recommended articles are posted on Canvas. We will talk about this, however, the lists are primarily there for your reference. Also, I have deleted scores of articles used in prior semesters from this syllabus. You will find a list of “deleted” articles as well as all the articles on Canvas. You might find some of interest.

**Course Organization/Assignments:**

**Course Organization:** This course will be conducted as a seminar that combines lectures by the instructor, student-led class discussions on 6 major readings (selections determined by students), and student presentations on individual original research projects. To be successful, a seminar requires the full participation of all members in all aspects of this course. This includes active and critical engagement with the assigned readings, preparation for class, and thoughtful and respectful participation in class.

**Assignments and Grading:** There are 3 basic assignments for this course. Detailed instructions for the original research assignment (or its equivalent given the current pandemic) will be distributed under separate cover. In brief, these assignments are:
1) **Lifetime Achievement Award or Retirement Statement.** (1-2 pages) Due: Sept. 8
Ungraded, performed, and submitted through Canvas. Write your own professional life time achievement award or retirement statement. (In essence it should speak to what you hope to accomplish in your professional life as social worker, researcher, scholar, teacher etc. What intellectual and/or practice “footprint” or legacy do you wish to leave on the social work profession and how might it connect to what’s already been done? How does it relate to your social science?)

2) **Book Discussion and Question Submission.** Discussion Dates: Sept 22, Sept 29, Oct 13, Oct 27, Nov 10 or Nov 17. We will be reading 5-6 books on some aspect of social work history written (or compiled) by contemporary, preeminent scholars in the field. **All students are responsible for reading all books (selections will be determined by students preferences).** The totality of this assignment will reflect 40% of your final grade. Each student will lead (or co-lead) a 1-1/2 hour discussion on one of the books. All other students will submit a list of 2-3 discussion thread questions to the presenting student(s) no later than the prior Sunday at 6 pm for each book.

The presenting student will a) organize the discussion questions; and b) lead the class discussion using some, all, or none of suggested questions. During the presentation, consider providing a concise summary of the content of the book, offer a critical assessment (what was its significance? how did it enhance or inform your views about social work? What are its contributions? Does it contribute to your development as a social work scholar?)

3) **Original Historical Research Paper (or equivalent) and Presentation (See separate handout).** (Updates/Outlines due Sept 15th, Oct. 6th, Nov. 3rd and presentations: Nov 17th, Dec 1st, Dec 8th. The assignment requires researching and writing an original historical paper and presenting your findings. It is critical to start early. Historical research takes time, including identifying a topic and finding original sources. This will reflect 60% of your final grade.)
# Course Overview in Brief

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date/Time</th>
<th>Agenda</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SECTION ONE – INTRODUCTIONS AND HISTORICAL PLACEMENT</strong></td>
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</table>
| Week 1  
Sept 1 | Why Historical, Why Comparative, Why this Course? | |
| Week 2  
Sept 8 | Intellectual DNA  
And  
Historical Overview | Lifetime  
Achievement  
Statement |
| **SECTION TWO – TOPICAL THEMES AND RECURRING TENSIONS**  
**SOCIAL WELFARE FRAMEWORKS** |
| Week 3  
Sep 15 | Social Workers as Humanitarians or Agents of Social  
Control?  
Othering and Policing the Poor | Preliminary  
Project Plan |
| Week 4  
Sept 22 | Colonizing and 'Indigenous' Social Work Practices  
"Help" from whose perspective? | Book Discussion |
| Week 5  
Sept. 29 | Missionaries, Proselytizers, & Charity Workers  
Morality and Moral Contaminants/Spirituality and Healing | Book Discussion |
| **SECTION THREE – PROFESSIONALIZATION OF PHILANTHROPY & CHARITY WORK:**  
**EDUCATION, PRACTICE & KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT** |
| Week 6  
Oct 6 | Professionalization Project: Scientific Philanthropy  
Social Work Education  
Race & Gender | Project Update |
| Week 7  
Oct 13 | Social Work Practice Models  
Indoor or Outdoor Relief: Asylums, COS, and Settlements  
Race, Nativity, Ethnicity and Social Class | Book Discussion |
| Week 8  
Oct 20 | Social Work Knowledge: “Science” and Practical Wisdom  
Enduring Controversies and Critiques of Epistemological  
Debates | |

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### Week 1

**Sept 1**
- **Why Historical, Why Comparative, Why this Course?**

### Week 2

**Sept 8**
- **Intellectual DNA**  
**And**  
**Historical Overview**
  - **Lifetime Achievement Statement**

### Week 3

**Sept 15**
- **Social Workers as Humanitarians or Agents of Social Control?**  
**Othering and Policing the Poor**
  - **Preliminary Project Plan**

### Week 4

**Sept 22**
- **Colonizing and 'Indigenous' Social Work Practices**  
**“Help” from whose perspective?**

### Week 5

**Sept. 29**
- **Missionaries, Proselytizers, & Charity Workers**  
**Morality and Moral Contaminants/Spirituality and Healing**

### Week 6

**Oct 6**
- **Professionalization Project: Scientific Philanthropy**  
**Social Work Education**  
**Race & Gender**
  - **Project Update**

### Week 7

**Oct 13**
- **Social Work Practice Models**  
**Indoor or Outdoor Relief: Asylums, COS, and Settlements**  
**Race, Nativity, Ethnicity and Social Class**
  - **Book Discussion**

### Week 8

**Oct 20**
- **Social Work Knowledge: “Science” and Practical Wisdom**  
**Enduring Controversies and Critiques of Epistemological Debates**

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| Week 9  
Oct 27 | **Social Work and State Building**  
*Creation of the Welfare State* | **Book Discussion** |
| Week 10  
Nov 3 | **Social Movements, Protests, and Community Organization**  
*The role of advocacy in Social Work* | **Project Outline** |
| Week 11  
Nov 10 | **Neoliberalism, Markets, Privatization**  
*and Social Work* | **Book Discussion** |

**SECTION FOUR – YOUR ORIGINAL RESEARCH**

| Week 12  
Nov 17 | **CLASS PRESENTATIONS ON HISTORICAL RESEARCH**  
*OR*  
**BOOK DISCUSSION** | **Book Discussion?** |

**TRANSITION FOR THANKSGIVING**

| Week 13  
Dec 1 | **CLASS PRESENTATIONS ON HISTORICAL RESEARCH** | |
| Week 14  
Dec 8 | **CLASS PRESENTATIONS ON HISTORICAL RESEARCH** | **Final Paper Due** |

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES IN DETAIL**

**SECTION ONE – INTRODUCTIONS AND HISTORICAL PLACEMENT**

**Session 1 – Tuesday September 1st**  
**Introductions: Why Historical, Why Comparative, Why this Course?**

“But, we all know, the present has no more than a notional existence  
as an imaginary dividing line between the past and the future.”  
Edward Hallett Carr

**Abstract:** Introductions. Course background, content, and expectations. The first, of several comparative frameworks: generic concepts to consider through time and space. Freeing up the idea of historical associations. What are the big questions? How do meanings change with contexts? What are the implications? Social Welfare History: who owns it? What is historical evidence? How is it used? Narrator and reader: what are the implications? Interpretation and reinterpretation: should we view the past with a present-day lens?

**Reading Required:**
Why History?

Shaping Discourse

**Session 2 - Tuesday September 8th**

**Considering Social Workers & Their Contributions**

**Lifetime Achievement Assignments Due**

**Abstract**: Discussion of influential social workers or social welfare history from biographical perspective. Considering the significance of the joint doctoral program. How will your work be read and interpreted 100 years from now? Social welfare history in the future: what evidence? Implications for your use of evidence and construction of scholarship. Intellectual and professional DNA. Where did you come from? What will you find here? What will that mean for Social Work? How are your social sciences important? Use of historical and contemporary evidence in constructing and reconstructing meaning.

*In Class Exercise*: “Perform” the “life achievement” assignment.

**Required Readings (on Canvas):**

- **Intellectual DNA and Placing Yourself**

- **Historical Overviews: Skeleton Frameworks**

**Unwritten History?**
- Henry J. Meyer and Suzanne M. Meyer Collection [https://search.lib.umich.edu/catalog/record/002740666](https://search.lib.umich.edu/catalog/record/002740666)
- Harold Johnson [https://search.lib.umich.edu/catalog/record/002742526](https://search.lib.umich.edu/catalog/record/002742526)

**Recommended Reading:**

SECTION TWO – TOPICAL THEMES AND RECURRING TENSIONS
SOCIAL WELFARE FRAMEWORKS

Session 3 -- Tuesday September 15th

Humanitarians or Agents of Social Control?
Othering and Policing the Poor

Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless tempest-tost to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.
-Emma Lazarus

Know-Nothing Political Platform, 1856

• Repeal all naturalization laws,
• American Constitution and American Sentiments
• More stringent & effective emigration laws
• The sending back of all foreign paupers
• Formation of societies to protect American interests
• Our country, our whole country, and nothing but our Country
• American Laws, and American legislation, and death to all foreign influence

Preliminary Project Plan due

Abstract:

Reading

Othering and Social Work
• Chambon, Adrienne (2013). Recognising the Other, understanding the Other: A brief history of social work and Otherness. Nordic Social Work Research, 3 (2): 120-129

Movement, Settlement and Social “Citizenship”
• Law of Settlement

Able-bodied and “ugliness”: Inclusion, exclusion, and extinction

- Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601
- Social Security Act – Barusch Table of Contents Comparison

Watch and Listen
  - Ugly Laws PBS [https://www.pbs.org/video/why-it-was-illegal-to-be-ugly-c8ps4i/](https://www.pbs.org/video/why-it-was-illegal-to-be-ugly-c8ps4i/)

Humanitarian and Social Control


Recommended Reading


Session 4 - Tuesday September 22nd

Colonizing and ‘Indigenous’ Social Work Practices: Help from Whose Perspective?

**Book Discussion**

Tensions between and among agendas between those doing the “helping” and those being “helped.” Who controls and who imposes? Colonizing tactics and indigenous (local) practices. Special populations of note “dependents, delinquents, defectives, idiots and epileptics.”

**Required Reading**


Recommended Skim Reading
• International Congress of Charities, Correction and Philanthropy, (1893). Commitment, Detention, Care and Treatment of the Insane. (Skim table of contents)
• International Congress of Charities and Correction and Philanthropy, 1894. The Care of dependent, neglected, and wayward children: being a report of the second section. (Skim table of contents).

Session 5 - Tuesday September 29th

Missionaries, Proselytizers, & Charity Workers
Morality and Moral Contaminants
Book Discussion
Project Update Due

“True meaning becomes synonymous with authoritative interpretations, and authoritative interpretations are based on conferred power within particular contexts.”
- Stanley Witkin

Abstract: Social work as a moral project. Where are the boundaries between religion and social work? Proselytizing, saving others and charity work? Charitable Organizations, Religious Missions and Philanthropy? Consider the role of Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Quaker, Mormon, and Muslim. Regulating Morality and moral contaminants: alcohol, substances, gambling and “low” theater attendance. Charity work, missionary work, the role of religion and the secularization of philanthropy in antebellum America. What role does faith play social work intervention?

Required Reading:

Mormon

Jewish Philanthropy

Catholic Philanthropy

Indigenous
**Salvation Army**


**Recommended Reading:**


**SECTION THREE – PROFESSIONALIZATION OF PHILANTHROPY & CHARITY WORK: EDUCATION, PRACTICE & KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT**

**Session 6 -- Tuesday October 6th**

The Professionalization Project: Scientific Philanthropy
The Birth of Social Work Education
Gender & Race

Charity is no substitute for justice withheld.
- St Augustine

**Abstract:** The progressive era and traditionally recognized roots of social work. The gendered nature of social work. We will consider: the inception of social work education, competing models of social work practice (specifically the Charitable Organization Societies [COS] and the Settlement House models), public and private philanthropy; the role of professional organizations and conferences and social work knowledge (research and practice base). Overview of the history of social work education; education for what purpose? Training schools or academic endeavor? Early Social Work Education and Comparative Current Practices These topics will occupy class discussion/lectures for the next few weeks. The professionalization project; Is social work a profession? Was it a profession? Should it be a profession? Is it a social science? Can it be a profession and a social science? Social Work’s relationship to sociology, psychology, economics, and other social sciences. Professional organizations, scholarship and journals, practice.

**Required Reading**

- **Selected Book**

**Professionalization**

- Flexner, A. (1915). Is social work a profession?

**Social Work Education**

• **Race Considered**
  

• **Gender Considered**


**Recommended Reading:**


**Session 7 -- Tuesday Oct 13th**

**Social Work Practice Models**

**Indoor and Outdoor Relief: Asylums, COS, and Settlements**

**Ethnicity, Nativity, Race and Social Class**

**Book Discussion**

**Abstract:** The implications of "social" in social work. The business of social work practice and case recording? What are the implications? Is social work radical, progressive, conservative? Flexible, responsive, or reproductive of the status quo? Advocacy oriented or rule bound? Early Social Work Practice: Almshouses and Asylums, Charitable Organization Societies (COS) and Settlement Houses: Methods, Models and Comparative Threads (Hull House and CAS) (Hull House and Wheatley House)

Social services in the progressive era. Social needs in the progressive era. Immigration, Industrialization, Urbanization. The role of the state in social welfare? Charitable organization societies (COS), Settlement House, Mutual Aid, Public or private responsibility? The role of philanthropy. Case work and social welfare societies. Role of race, gender, ethnicity, nativity, and social class in social work development Mothers Pensions. Maternalist movement. Charities and Corrections

**Required Readings:**

**Indoor or Outdoor Relief: Asylums and Placing Out: Charity and/or Correction**


**COS Case Work, Case Record and Controversies**

- Sears, The Charity Worker: A handbook for beginners. (Skim contents).

**African America Social Workers and Social Working**


**Social Settlements**


**Recommended Reading**


**Session 8 -- Tuesday October 20th**

**Social Work Knowledge: “Science” and Practical Wisdom**

Enduring Controversies and Critiques of Epistemological Debates

“Breaking rules entails risk. In my view, if social work is to carry out its responsibilities of providing leadership, raising important questions, addressing important issues, and encouraging knowledge development that will support social workers’ professional mission, it must not shy away from controversy.”

Stanley Witkin, Social Worker Scholar

**Abstract:** Surveys, community-based social indicators, and case investigation. Role of science in “applied philanthropy” The relationship of social work to “science” and/or knowledge development. For what and whom? Tensions among micro, mezzo and macro practices. Science, social science, practice wisdom, scholarship, research, knowledge. What informs social work practice? What is
social work research? Who conducts it? Who utilizes it? How is it conveyed and to whom? What is the relationship of social work knowledge to that of the disciplines? How does a joint doctoral student at the University of Michigan make sense of this?

Required Reading:

Knowledge Debates by Eras

20th Century “Science”


21st Century “Science”


SECTION THREE – SOCIAL WELFARE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS
SOCIAL WELFARE MOVEMENTS

Session 9 -- Tuesday Oct 27th

Social Work and State Building
Creation to Retraction of the U.S. Welfare State

Book Discussion


Project Outline Due

Required Reading:

- Staller (2020). Creation of the Welfare State

Welfare Reform

- Edin & Shaefer (2015) Welfare is Dead. (Chapter 1) In $2.00 a Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America.

Social Workers and Japanese Internment


Health


Immigration

Session 10 -- Tuesday Nov 3rd
Social Movements, Protests, and Community Organization

Abstract: Community organizing, social and political movements. The role of civil rights, labor rights, feminist, gay rights and other movements. The role of public entities and private providers?

Required Reading:

- Boulding, K.E. (1960). Toward a theory of protest
- King, M.L. Letter from Birmingham Jail.
- Cooper, Lauren (undated). Native American Activism: 1960s to Present. Teaching a People's History.
- Fernández, Delia (2016). Rethinking the urban and rural divide in Latino labor, recreation, and activism in West Michigan, 1940-1970s. Labor History, 57:4, 482-503.
- Opie, Frederick (2014). Upsetting the Apple Cart: Black-Latino Coalitions in New York City from Protest to Public Office

Session 11 -- Tuesday Nov 10th
Neoliberalism, Markets, Privatization

Book Discussion

Who should deliver “social welfare” and “social services”? The role of the marketplace. Public responsibility, private response, privatization of public responsibility?

Required Reading

- Zunz, Olivier (2011). Ch. 8 "In Search of a Non-profit Sector."


SECTION FOUR – YOUR ORIGINAL RESEARCH

Session 12 -- Tuesday Nov 17th (possible book discussion as well)
Session 13 -- Tuesday December 1st
Session 14-- Tuesday Dec 8th

CLASS PRESENTATIONS ON HISTORICAL RESEARCH

Three presentations by students on their historical research projects
Readings: Students will suggest based on their historical research.

HAVE A GREAT BREAK!!