



**WESTERN
MICHIGAN**
UNIVERSITY

The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare

Volume 30
Issue 2 June

Article 18

June 2003

Council on Social Work Education: Its Antecedents and First Twenty Years. Katherine Kendall.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw>



Part of the Social Work Commons

Recommended Citation

(2003) "*Council on Social Work Education: Its Antecedents and First Twenty Years.* Katherine Kendall.," *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 30: Iss. 2, Article 18.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15453/0191-5096.2909>

Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol30/iss2/18>

This Book Note is brought to you by the Western Michigan University School of Social Work. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.



a better understanding of the issues. Tucker's account of the Pioneer Fund, and the history of race research in the United States makes an important contribution and should be of interest to anyone engaged in social policy research today

Katherine Kendall, *Council on Social Work Education: Its Antecedents and First Twenty Years*. Alexandria, VA: Council on Social Work Education. \$23.95 papercover.

The introduction and subsequent expansion of professional social work education in the United States is undoubtedly a success story. When compared to many other professions, and to trends in other countries, American social work educators have been able to establish professional education for social work within many of the nation's universities, including its most prestigious universities. Often, schools of social work at these universities are autonomous academic units represented by deans who are in a position to control budgets and represent the profession at the highest levels. Several other professions such as town planning, architecture, clinical psychology and vocational rehabilitation are not represented by deans. Student interest in social work is buoyant and enrollments have soared. In addition, the professional education of social workers is directed by a single, well recognized organization, the Council on Social Work Education which establishes educational policy and accredits professional social work programs. Accordingly, uniform curricula have been introduced and social work education is now highly standardized.

In her latest book, Katherine Kendall traces the history of social work education in the United States from the vantage point of the struggles and conflicts that attended the creation of the Council on Social Work Education in 1952. Kendall was the founder Executive Director of the Council and she has, for many years, continued to play a decisive leadership role in promoting social work education not only in the United States but internationally as well. Her experience, wisdom and commitment to the field give her unique insights into the historical evolution of social work education during the 220th century. Her personal knowledge of the events which led up to the creation of the Council, and her links with many of the professional leaders give this book a

distinct poignancy which makes it essential reading for all social work educators.

However, the book provides little ground for the profession to engage in self-congratulation. It is to Kendall's credit that she does not offer a romanticized view of the history of social work education. Instead, she presents a *verismo* account showing how different factions struggled around a number of key issues. The most serious struggle concerned the issue of graduate versus undergraduate education but other issues, such as curriculum content, the nature of social work practice and the relationship with the practice community consumed an enormous amount of time and emotional energy. One cannot help thinking that these inward focused struggles deflected the profession from being an effective agent for social change and social justice. Unfortunately, these struggles continue today. While has been made progress in recognizing the value of undergraduate education, the tendency to be exclusionary still characterizes contemporary debates on social work education. For example, the latest revision of the accreditation standards discriminate and excludes from leadership positions in social work education those who do not have an MSW degree. Those with an undergraduate social work qualification, immigrants and non-social workers who have worked for many years in schools of social work are not permitted to serve as deans or directors. Kendall's excellent history should give pause for thought. Her discussion of the role of the universities and their impatience with intrusive accreditation is salutary. The profession needs to learn from its past and hopefully, by transcending internal squabbles and struggles, it will play a more positive role in the far more critical struggle for social justice facing our society today.

Guy Standing, *Beyond the New Paternalism: Basic Security as Equality*. New York: Verso, 2002. \$70.00 hardcover, \$22.00 paperback.

People's welfare has historically been closely associated with their ability to engage in activities that may be described as 'work'. For millennia, families, clans and tribes met their needs by using their skills, knowledge and physical capacities to hunt and gather food. Subsequently, skills, physical resources and knowl-