

History of Social Work

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1. Origins of Social Work

- Social work has its roots in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.
- It emerged as a response to the social problems arising from industrialization, urbanization, and poverty.

2. Early Influences

- The Charity Organization Society (COS) and Settlement House Movement were early influences on social work.
- COS focused on individual casework, while Settlement Houses provided services and advocacy for community improvement.

3. Professionalization of Social Work

- The early 20th century saw the professionalization of social work with the establishment of schools and training programs.
- The first social work school was founded at Columbia University in 1898.

4. Key Figures in Social Work

- Jane Addams, a pioneer in social work, founded Hull House in Chicago in 1889.
- Mary Richmond, known for her work in casework, published "Social Diagnosis" in 1917, a seminal text in social work.

5. Social Work during the Great Depression

- Social work played a crucial role during the Great Depression, providing relief and support to those affected by economic hardship.
- The New Deal programs under President Franklin D. Roosevelt also contributed to the expansion of social work.

6. Post-World War II Developments

- The aftermath of World War II saw the expansion of social work in areas such as mental health, child welfare, and community development.

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- The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s influenced social work's focus on social justice and equality.

7. Modern Social Work

- Contemporary social work encompasses a wide range of practice areas, including healthcare, criminal justice, and international development.
- Social workers today play roles as advocates, counselors, community organizers, and policy analysts.

8. Challenges and Future Directions

- Social work continues to face challenges such as funding cuts, increasing demand for services, and addressing systemic inequalities.
- The future of social work lies in promoting social justice, advocating for marginalized populations, and adapting to changing societal needs.

By understanding the history of social work, we can appreciate the evolution of the profession and its ongoing relevance in addressing social issues and promoting well-being in society.