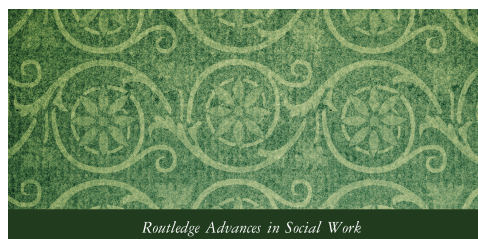


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Learning from the Past

Vivienne E. Cree, Robert MacKenzie

This is a social work history with a difference. Written with and by a retired social worker and three former residents of a children's home in Edinburgh, Scotland, it tells the story of one agency's response to unmarried mothers and their children during and after the Second World War, and alongside this, the story of what was, at the time, a new and experimental approach to group care for children.

Based on the experience of the Guild of Service for Women, then a prominent Scottish voluntary agency, and Edzell Lodge and Margaret Cottage family group homes, we learn from the inside what life was like for unmarried mothers and their children between the early 1940s and early 1960s. The book draws on three very different sources of evidence: social policy and legislation, historical sources and social work literature; memories of children (now older adults) and staff members; and archival research (agency records and genealogical sources).

Taken together, these present a rich and nuanced picture of social work and childcare in the past, offering much learning for social work and childcare in the future, as well as a timely example of a co-produced, collaborative research and writing project.

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