



Scotswummin

**YOUTH WORK'S CONTRIBUTION
TO THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT**

The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every receipt, invoice, and bill should be properly filed and indexed for easy retrieval. This not only helps in tracking expenses but also ensures compliance with tax regulations.

In the second section, the author provides a detailed breakdown of the company's financial performance over the past year. This includes a comparison of actual results against budgeted figures, highlighting areas of both success and concern. The analysis covers various departments, from sales and marketing to operations and R&D.

The third section focuses on the company's strategic initiatives and future outlook. It outlines the key goals for the upcoming year and the strategies being implemented to achieve them. This includes plans for market expansion, product development, and operational efficiency improvements.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the overall financial health and a call to action for all employees to continue working towards the company's long-term success. It expresses confidence in the team's ability to overcome challenges and reach their full potential.

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MAINICHTHE
LEIS A'CHRANNCHUR
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YouthLink
Scotland
The national agency for youth work

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Preface

What does youth work have to do with feminism? In the following report I explore how the two are interrelated both historically and presently.

The purpose of this report is to examine the contribution of youth work to the women's movement since 1850. Whilst at its roots this is a heritage piece, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, we also wanted to make it relevant for current youth work practitioners and young women today. It offers new oral histories from across the youth work sector and a comprehensive review of historical archives to bring together a story for Scotland. Written to capture the rich history within youth work of the Girls' Work Movement, as like other women of influence, much of this history has been unrecognised. Feminism is back on the agenda and YouthLink Scotland wanted to celebrate the achievements of the youth work sector in helping to improve the lives of girls and young women across Scotland.

The report follows a chronological timeline but you can start at any of the

five main sections and get a feel for what was going on within youth work in relation to the women's movement at that time. There is also a visual timeline to help guide you through the main milestones of youth work history and the women's movement.

I would like to thank the Scotswummin steering group for their support, encouragement and input into the report. They have been instrumental in guiding me in the research journey and shaping the final report: Denise King - Chair, Susan Batchelor, Amy Todman, Lauren Ross, Lesley Orr, Mena Kirmani, Sheila Hamilton, Kate Kelman and Janet Batsleer.

I would also like to thank my colleagues Amy Goulding and Tim Frew for their guidance and assistance. Lastly, I am grateful to everyone who took part in the research and shared their experiences.

Lisa Gallacher, YouthLink Scotland

July 2017

Foreword

I am delighted to see the rich contribution that youth work has made to girls' lives being recognised and celebrated through this project.

Over the last 150 years girl-led organisations and initiatives have played a vital role in empowering each generation to break down barriers, challenge conventional wisdom and blaze new trails. As the Chief Executive of Girlguiding Scotland, I've seen first-hand how this radical vision is still alive and well in today's youth work sector.

Ever since a handful of girls gate-crashed the first ever Scout rally, demanding 'something for the girls' and sparking guiding as we know it, we've been committed to providing a safe space where girls can enjoy new experiences, learn new skills, grow in confidence and have fun.

While our uniforms and some of our badges have changed, Girlguiding Scotland's purpose hasn't and our young members continue to tell us that having a space for girls is as important today as it has ever been.

Together with youth organisations across Scotland, we're proud to be part of a movement that empowers girls and young women. This report is a testament to how much we have achieved together over the last 150 years and offers just a glimpse of what the future holds.

Denise King, Chair of Steering Group,
Chief Executive of Girlguiding Scotland

Foreword

This account gives an insight into the lives and experiences of young women in Scotland, and the role that youth workers in both uniformed and non-uniformed youth work organisations have played to support them. The struggles of feminist youth workers come alive, as original oral history material is included here.

Young women still relish the chance to be active, as they did in the time when Girl Guides emerged, and they still feel strong pressures not to take part in sport or outdoor activities once they reach the age of 14. Their desire to take part in non-traditional activities may not be encouraged enough, and so a small flicker of desire is quashed and seems to disappear, rather than being fanned into a flame.

They may still be thought to be more reliable than boys and maybe better spies (as they were when they supported the Marconi Wireless Telegraph) but girls on lead guitar are still all too rare, and, whilst in mixed groups they can be relied on to moderate male behaviour, their own desire to have a wild time is best supported in all girls' groups, as it was in the all-female residential of the 1970s where they took part in activities usually limited to boys. Finding oneself a poor second to a boy, who has had every chance to learn a particular skill, and so becoming disheartened from the start, and even mocked for poor achievements, is the reason we still must offer single sex opportunities to girls and women in our youth work and community education settings.

Janet Batsleer, *Principal Lecturer in Youth & Community Work*
Manchester Metropolitan University

Island

By Terry Nealson from
"Confessin' the Blues"
1984

I am an island
But I'm telling you now
I'm not made of stone
Sometimes I'm weak sometimes I'm strong
Sometimes I feel I can't go on
When it comes to feeling like this
I'm not the only one
Oh no, I'm not the only one

I was brought up to believe
Climbing trees was not for me
Or I'd never grow up to be a proper lady
Don't play with footballs, soldiers or guns
Play with dolls it's much more fun
Help you later on when you have your family

You don't want to be big and strong
You're told it's unfeminine
You're told it's wrong
Ah but you've got to be soft and warm
To mother the world
But I want to see
Who's gonna mother me

When I come of age I knew the score
A woman shouldn't ask for more
So I put myself into the firing line
Playing war games with macho men
Scoring twelve out of ten
Instead of respect I got a rough time

A woman should learn how to lose
With a smile on her face
Realise her place
Do it with grace and mother the world
But I want to see
Who's gonna mother me

I am an island but I bleed when I'm cut
I'm made of flesh and bone
Sometimes I'm sad
And I love to love and I love to laugh
When it comes to feeling like this
I'm not the only one
Oh no, I'm not the only one

***Taken from the Strathclyde Regional Council Community Development Committee Sub Group
on Youth Work, 1987 report, Work With Girls And Young Women***

Background

Scotswummin was a Heritage Lottery Funded project where YouthLink Scotland supported five youth groups across Scotland to examine women of influence in Scottish communities. YouthLink Scotland worked with 10 early career youth workers from across these five groups to develop their capacity to deliver youth-led research.

It resulted in 60 young heritage researchers conducting research and unearthing inspirational women who had gone unrecognised in their communities, in areas of fashion, business and many more. Their findings were displayed in a final exhibition at Glasgow Women's Library.

As part of this project, YouthLink Scotland produced a report on Youth Work's Contribution to the Women's Movement Since 1850. The report was based on original interviews with the youth work sector, new oral histories and a historical examination of archives at the National Library of Scotland and within the youth work sector.

The research was guided by a steering group, chaired by Denise King, Chief Executive of GirlGuiding Scotland, and made up of members from within the youth work sector, young people, academics and colleagues at the National Library of Scotland.

OBJECTIVES

The core purpose of this report was to capture the heritage that existed within youth work on working with girls and young women and to consider how this impacted the women's movement and the lives of young women in Scotland.

The objectives included the following:

- *Explore youth work's contribution to the women's movement from 1850 to present day.*
- *Explore movements such as Girlguiding and YWCA Scotland - The Young Women's Movement.*
- *Consider the barriers and social contexts that have impacted women's lives.*
- *Create a picture of the evolving landscape of youth organisations and opportunities for young women in Scotland.*
- *Consider factors which influence youth work today and their impact on the lives of young women in Scotland.*

Methodology

The methodology for the heritage report included both primary and secondary research. The secondary research was conducted between September and December 2016 and the primary research was conducted between January and May 2017. Secondary research was conducted before the primary research to develop an understanding of the topic and inform the line of questioning used in the primary research.

Secondary Research

The secondary research included an extensive literature review and examination of historical archives based on the following sources:

- Glasgow Women's Library
- National Library of Scotland
- Archives within the youth work sector
- Historical SCAN publications c.1973-1988 (Scotland's Community Education Newspaper)
- Online resources e.g. Women's History Scotland www.womenshistoryscotland.org/ and Infed www.infed.org

Primary Research

The primary research method for the Scotswummin heritage report was qualitative research. Qualitative research was chosen to explore the history of youth work and its contribution to the women's movement as it enables an in-depth understanding of topics to be gained and people's experiences and perceptions to come to life.

This qualitative approach produced original in-depth semi-structured interviews and new oral histories from individuals with direct experience of working with girls and young women in the youth work sector, both historically and in the present day.

The total number and breakdown of the primary research stage included:

- **14 in-depth interviews**
 - 9 face to face
 - 5 telephone
- **2 focus groups**
 - 1 mini group (3 participants)
 - 1 large focus group (14 participants) was conducted with members of the Trefoil Guild in Glasgow, many of whom had been involved with the Guides since before World War Two.



Interviews lasted for one hour and focus groups lasted for 90 minutes. A digital recorder was used to record the audio and research findings were transcribed. Data from the primary research was analysed into key themes and examined against the literature review of the time period. In many cases new findings arose as a result of the primary research and these were analysed against the wider report for relevance.

Semi-structured interviews

A significant proportion of the research included semi-structured interviews. These were conducted on a one-to-one basis and allowed for a safe and reflective space for participants to talk about their experiences within youth work.

Focus groups

Two focus groups were conducted for the Scotswummin heritage report. Focus groups encourage a supportive environment where participants can be empowered to contribute and they can foster a consensus to be reached. However, potential limitations can be seen when individuals feel reluctant to share opinions that differ from the rest of the group or where dominant voices lead the consensus being reached.

Sample

Participants were specifically selected based on their involvement in the subject and their experience of working with girls and young women within youth work. The majority of participants had at least 20 years' experience within the sector. Participants were drawn from a mixture of statutory and voluntary organisations, in addition to those who would have been involved in earlier time periods who have now retired.

Interviews were also conducted with senior figures within youth work both presently and historically, in addition to prominent academics in the sector.

All quotes have been anonymised to ensure openness and confidentiality of research participants.

A range of locations across Scotland were included to ensure a geographical spread and that findings were as representative as possible at a Scottish level within the time and budget of the project.

Introduction

This report will discuss youth work's contribution to the women's movement since 1850 and it will tell the story of youth work with girls and young women, focusing on Scotland.

The contribution of youth work to British society has been powerful and varied. Youth work has shaped the lives of countless young people since its early origins over 150 years ago. Whilst it has developed and adapted over time, at its heart, youth work has always aimed to do its best for young people within the context of the time it was operating in. There is a rich history within youth work of activity which sought to empower and serve the needs of girls and young women. This report aims to capture that heritage and investigate the relevance of these activities in the present day.

The report will examine key eras in youth work with girls and young women. It will consider the wider social and cultural issues of the time with particular reference to the situation of women and the women's movement in each time period. For example, it will show how feminist youth workers in the 1970s and 1980s battled to set up girls' clubs and girls' only sessions to tackle a growing disengagement of girls within youth work settings. Using original material, it will

show how the histories of youth work and the women's movement are intertwined, influencing each other in positive ways.

The eras explored include:

1850 – 1918: *Founding of Girls Clubs and the Suffrage Movement.*

1918 – 1945: *Suffrage, World Wars and the Peak of Girls Clubs.*

1945 – 1975: *Post-War Britain and Establishment of Mixed Clubs.*

1975 – 1990s: *The Rise and Fall of Feminist Youth Work.*

2000 to Present: *Youth Work in A Changed World.*

The women's movement is a broad social and political movement which campaigns for and actively works towards improvements in women's rights, on issues such as reproductive rights, maternity leave, equal pay, domestic violence, sexual harassment and sexual violence.¹ In the past, the women's movement campaigned for women to have the right to vote, to work, to earn equal wages to men, to own property, to receive an education, to have equal rights within marriage and to have maternity leave. The women's movement in Britain was a collective enterprise that grew from the experience of many different individuals.²

The women's movement is also known as the Women's Liberation Movement, the feminist movement or feminism.

Today, youth work is defined as work undertaken with young people as partners in a learning process, where young people choose to participate and the work builds from where the young people are at.³ It is a distinctive form of practice with young people, both in terms of approach and

Feminism at its core is a radical political movement to end sexist oppression. It includes a range of social and political movements and ideologies that share a common goal, which is to define and advance the political, economic, personal and social rights for women. For example, feminism seeks to establish equal opportunities for girls and women in education and employment.

response to young people, where they are encouraged to aim for more in life than they might otherwise have considered or thought possible.⁴ Typically, it includes activities undertaken in the evenings and at weekends, in a youth club or on residential trips away. The focus of this report is on organised forms of youth work, however, historically there were informal youth clubs in Scotland.

Furthermore, the report looks at both statutory and voluntary youth work and highlights some of the key differences between the two. Initially, youth work was mainly undertaken on a voluntary basis by people who decided to set up a local boys' or girls' club or who volunteered to help run a local Scout or Guide group. In time, these groups came together to form a club management committee or national organisation or movement, such as the National Organisation of Girls Clubs established in 1911.⁵ The government began to get involved in youth work long after it was already up and running in the voluntary sector, particularly from the 1940s onwards, when youth work was seen as a good way to help support young people and subsequent funding to local authorities followed.⁶

1850 - 1918

*Founding of
Girls' Clubs
and the
Suffrage
Movement*

Role of Women

The role of women in society between 100 to 150 years ago was far different in many ways from today. Victorian values ruled this period and included a strict social code of conduct in British society.

Victorian beliefs about women were based on assumptions about the biological division of labour where women were to be concerned with domestic work and men were to support households through work outside the home.⁷ In addition, women were relative beings, i.e. they were defined in relation to men and children. Crucially, with beliefs rooted in Darwinian ideas about nature, they were believed to be inferior to men and should therefore be subordinate to them. For example, it was widely believed by doctors that men were more intelligent as they were thought to have heavier brains.⁸

In contrast to today, the key difference is the lack of life choices women had, particularly in terms of employment, which was also varied hugely by social class.⁹ Working class women's jobs were often very low paid, physically demanding and unskilled and middle class women

could largely only choose between teaching domestic subjects or philanthropy in girls' clubs, whilst upper class women would most likely not work at all.

In terms of education, girls and women were educated in ways to help prepare them for this domesticated future, at the expense of other forms of education and skills, such as taking lessons in knit work rather than science or engineering. Furthermore, women could not attend university and were excluded from most professions outside of teaching.¹⁰ Education was regarded by some as threatening to a woman's ability to perform her domestic work and bear children.¹¹ Exceptions to this were middle and upper class girls who were taught skills that might attract a high standing husband and hold his attention at dinner parties i.e. playing an instrument or having knowledge of the classics, art or literature.¹²

Suffrage Movement

At the turn of the 20th century women did not have the right to vote and were not classed as full citizens under the law;¹³ a 'person' was defined as a 'male person' under the Municipal Corporations Act. Even worse, women did not have full rights to their body, children, property, divorce proceedings, and lacked the right to a full education.¹⁴ They were not even supposed to go outside the home by themselves. The right to vote was so important because women's legal status needed to be first created and, only then, would women have a say in decisions that directly affected their lives.¹⁵ Thus, women participating in public works such as establishing provisions for the poor were also establishing their own entitlement to a life beyond the confines of married domesticity.

The women's suffrage movement sought to change the position of women in society. The Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU) was the main movement, famously led by Emmeline Pankhurst¹⁶ and aimed at

enfranchising women to lead full human lives. It is also considered to be the earliest form of the women's movement and the first wave of feminism. The WSPU grew to be high profile and at times militant, which was deemed necessary due to fierce resistance to women's

suffrage after over 50 years of unsuccessful campaigning for the vote.

There were a number of women's movements in Scotland, including The National Society for Women's Suffrage formed in 1867, with meetings taking place in Edinburgh, Dundee and Glasgow. They organised a mass movement in Scotland and attempted to raise awareness, educate and influence public opinion on the matter of woman's suffrage.¹⁸ The Women's Freedom League,

established in 1907 as a peaceful alternative to the WSPU, was a very big movement in Scotland. In Dundee and Glasgow, suffragists campaigned for woman's suffrage and equality through demonstration, disruption, and refusal to pay taxes and complete the census.¹⁹

'Suffrage' means 'the right to vote'. Women's suffrage societies campaigned for the right to vote since the 1850s. The NUWSS (National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies) was created in 1887. They undertook peaceful protests such as using leaflets and petitions, and were known as suffragists.

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Suffragettes believed in a more direct approach, sometimes using violence, and broke away from the suffragists to form the Women's Social and Political Union in 1903, created by Emmeline Pankhurst. Their motto was "Deeds not Words".¹⁷



Early Youth Work

The origin of youth work in the United Kingdom (UK) can be traced back to the mid-19th century with the formation of The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in 1844, which is regarded as one of the first major youth organisations. During this time, Christian Sunday Schools, which ran activities for poor young people through churches and chapels, and Ragged Schools, which were concerned with the physical, mental and moral well-being of young people, were the other main forms of youth work.²⁰ Much of this early youth work was religiously motivated and rooted in Christian evangelism, forming a vast part of public education in the late 19th and early 20th century in the absence of state provision. In addition, Socialist Sunday Schools began to emerge in the 1890s, mostly to teach socialist values to the children of socialists, starting the trend of secular youth clubs.²¹ For example, *The Young Socialist* was a popular monthly publication by the National Council and was first issued in Glasgow in 1901. As early practices of youth work they can all be characterised as informal education and would go on to set the tone for future work with children in youth organisations.²²

An important factor in the emergence of voluntary youth organisations was the development of 'youth' as a distinct phase. For example, there were growing numbers of articles in newspapers about the problems facing young people and the issues they presented to society.²³ Another key factor was the impact of

industrialisation, which changed British society significantly as people moved from rural areas to cities to find work in manufacturing. For example, by 1901 the population of Glasgow had grown to 762,000 and it became known as the second city of the empire, after London.²⁴ As a result, poverty and destitution were commonplace with a very high proportion of children growing up poor, illiterate, and hungry.

Girls' Club Movement

The first ever national body of the Work with Girls' Movement was the Girls Club Union established in London in 1880. It later went on to be known as the London Girls Club Union and is now part of London Youth.²⁵ It came into being after a surge in the establishment of girls' clubs, such as the founding of the Anglican Girls Friendly Society in 1875,²⁶ and led the way for continued growth in the numbers of girls' clubs being established across Great Britain towards the end of the 19th century. Indeed, a scattering of girls' clubs and unions had existed since 1861.²⁷

CASE STUDY



Maude Stanley, a well-connected middle class woman with links to the aristocracy, was one of the driving forces behind the formation of the 1880 Girls Club Union and helped pave the way for the formation of girls' clubs. Her book, *Clubs for Working Girls* (1890), was written as a guide on how to set up and run a youth club for girls all over the UK.²⁸ It included detailed advice on activities, club sizes, discipline, fundraising and book-keeping. She saw the goal of youth clubs to be a way to make poor girls more decent and to advance the working classes in society. For example, she encouraged the refinement of girls' manners in girls' clubs, through

strict correction by middle class volunteer helpers. The aim was to prepare “the vulgar and rough working woman” to be a more civilised wife. As an unmarried woman of substantial means, Maude Stanley was able to dedicate herself to her work. She saw her fair share of social problems, but failed to grasp the underlying reasons for poverty. She was known for being demeaning to the girls and too harsh in her mission to force etiquette training onto girls born into poverty. Nevertheless, her model for the mass organisation of youth clubs was widely used and acted as a template for youth work with girls at the end of the 19th century.

CASE STUDY

Two of the first people to bring a social and political perspective to youth work with girls and young women were Lady Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence (1867-1954), who came to prominence as one of the leaders of the suffrage movement and started the publication, *Votes for Women* in 1907,²⁹ and Mary Neal who is widely recognised as one of the key people behind the revival of the disappearing Morris dance tradition within English Folk Song and Dance.³⁰ As social reformers, they formed a youth club for girls called *The Espérance Club*, which was aimed at helping young working-class women being exploited by the appalling conditions in the West End dress trade.³¹ *The Espérance Club* taught girls and

young children acting, singing and dancing, along with lessons in politics, journalism, workers' rights, sex education and well-being. They were one of the best early examples of youth work's contribution to the women's movement.

In both formal schools and youth clubs, girls were only allowed to take part in activities such as sewing, knitting, cooking, pattern cutting, bible class, singing, dancing and homemaking.³² As girls were expected to grow into women who would assume sole responsibility for child-rearing and domestic duties,³³ the idea of investing time and energy doing anything else with girls was seen as unnecessary at best and, at worst, threatening to their 'natural' development into their womanly role.³⁴ Given that there were so many restrictions, many Victorian feminists initially thought that

“Girls’ clubs were set up by upper middle class women, who of course did not (and were often prevented from) take up paid employment. The clubs were for girls who were ‘less fortunate’ than oneself – working class young women. All the women were volunteers and, although a humanitarian sense of duty prevailed throughout the work, there were many women involved who were working to create change within the Suffragette movement, the Women’s Social and Political Union and other women’s organisations.”
Carpenter and Young (1986)

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domesticated subjects were better than nothing and sought to increase the way these subjects were seen in the education system, in order to increase the status of women's work.³⁵ This is quite different to what many feminists would think of doing today and only goes to highlight the stark differences between then and now. However, modern day debates continue about whether so-called 'feminine' subjects are in fact undervalued in the education system and, more widely, debates continue about whether feminism that seeks for equality has to abandon a concern with difference.³⁶

There was a difference between boys' and girls' experiences, both in life and youth clubs, 100 to 150 years ago. For example, it was common for Scottish working class girls to leave school at the age of 14

or earlier,³⁷ get a job towards helping with the family income and to help with domestic chores at home.³⁸ As the working age was much lower than it is today, and coupled with domestic responsibilities, the working girls that came to the clubs in the evenings were often physically exhausted and would bring their work issues to the clubs.

In contrast, working class boys did not have the same restrictions placed upon them in life as girls.³⁹ Boys could choose to stay on at school until 16 and many did not have the burden of domestic responsibilities at home. At clubs, boys could relax with their friends and enjoy far greater freedom than girls. Much of the work with boys in the latter part of the 19th century and early 20th century took the form of 'Muscular Christianity', a Christian idea of health and manliness.⁴⁰ Youth work with boys and young men that followed this ideal, such as with the Boys' Brigade, sought to militaristically toughen up the boys and distance them from any activities and behaviours associated with femininity.⁴¹

CASE STUDY



THE BOYS' BRIGADE

The Boys' Brigade was formed in Glasgow in 1883 and was the first voluntary uniformed organisation in the world.⁴² Partnering with local churches, it provided youth work for boys and was the predecessor to the Scouts. The Boys' Brigade shared the gospel and encouraged the development of a personal Christian faith. It was also a mostly working class organisation and pioneered the idea of organised camping for young people. Today in Scotland, it works with over 1400 churches of all denominations to reach out to over 50,000 children and young people each week.⁴³ Internationally, the Boys' Brigade works with over 1 million children and young people around the world through their Global Fellowship.

Founding of the National Organisation of Girls Clubs

The National Organisation of Girls Clubs (NOGC) was founded in 1911 and is now known as UK Youth. A grassroots organisation, it was the result of a merger between The National Union of Women Workers and The Clubs Industrial Association, who campaigned for the welfare of girls working in factories.⁴⁴ The newly created NOGC supported all youth clubs who offered clubs for girls and young women working in poor conditions within factories. Overall, the NOGC wanted to bring about radical changes to how girls were looked after within the youth club movement.⁴⁵ The organisation saw that training was needed to provide better youth clubs for girls and, therefore, helped to facilitate this.

“It was from a Working Girls’ club that the demand came for legislation regarding the working conditions for underground workrooms. The resulting Underground Workrooms bill sought to obtain the same standards of ventilation, warmth, daylight and absence of drain openings for underground workrooms as those required for rooms in which people slept. Girls’ clubs also petitioned for an increase in the number of women factory inspectors.”
(Carpenter and Young, 1986)⁴⁸

The work of the NOGC was very much about performing youth work as a way to contribute towards the women’s movement, as there was a strong connection with the first wave of feminism.⁴⁶ The NOGC made a huge contribution to the women’s movement and specifically to the lives of the girls and young women working in the factories, by fighting for their rights. For example, it campaigned and fought for girls and women to receive a paid break during their shifts and to have a seat whilst working in factories. The theme of employment; be it the lack of employment opportunities for middle class women or the exploitative conditions for working class women was central to the issues faced by women at the start of the 20th century.⁴⁷



CASE STUDY

Lily Montagu (1873-1963), one of the founders of the NOGC, who went on to have a significant influence in the girls' and young women's movement, was another key figure involved in early youth work. Initially running Jewish youth clubs, she moved on from religiously motivated youth work towards a more socially progressive type of youth work.⁴⁹ Similar to Maude Stanley, she came from a wealthy family and moved in influential circles, however, Lily Montagu sought to understand the reasons for the poverty and destitution that affected the lives of so many girls and young women of the time.⁵⁰ Influenced by the Liberal party and their socialist values, she wrote extensively on the topic of class analysis from a woman's perspective. For example, in a paper she wrote titled 'The girl in the background' she was critical of her fellow middle class female philanthropic peers:



“They peep down the abyss in which the underfed, the ill-housed, and badly clothed work out their life’s drama, and then they turn their energies to surface polishing. They try to make the girls conduct themselves well in clubs, and interest them and amuse them as best they can during their evening’s leisure. But they are inclined to ignore the industrial life; they like to forget the grim truth that if girls work for less than a living wage, in a vitiated atmosphere, they are not likely to become the strong, self-controlled women whom we desire the clubs to train...”

(Montagu, 1904: 249/50)

Founding of Girl Guiding

Around the same time as the National Organisation of Girls Clubs was forming, the Girl Guides also came into being. The formation of the Girl Guides, which started because girls demanded it, was a radical activity in its day. After the founding of the Boy Scout Movement, by decorated military officer Robert Baden-Powell in 1907, girls all over Britain saw what was happening for the boys and wanted to join in.⁵¹ On September 4th, 1909 a group of brave young women famously stormed the first Scout Rally in Crystal Palace. This precipitated the formation of the Girl Guides, despite being against the wishes of many adults at the time who felt it would ‘lead to the negation of womanliness’.⁵²

The Girl Guides was officially launched in 1910 by Robert Baden-Powell’s sister Agnes Baden-Powell. Agnes Baden-Powell looked to the Girl Guides to help preserve the British Empire, which was showing early signs of decline. In 1912, she launched the first Girl Guide Manual, *How Girls Can Help Build up the Empire*,⁵³ which famously included instructions on “Duties of Girl Guides”, for example:

1. To be prepared to help your country
2. To be brave – To be womanly – To be strong
3. To live a frontier life if necessary

The rise of the Girl Guides was a significant change in British society, as thousands and thousands of girls and young women across the UK flocked to join the movement, of which nothing had existed like it before.⁵⁴ The movement grew spontaneously from girls meeting together to enjoy new outdoor activities. Inspired by the Girl Guide Movement, girls proactively formed new patrols and established themselves on a substantial level to foster what would become the largest single sex youth work organisation.⁵⁵

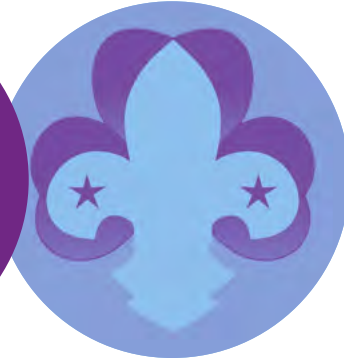
As a voluntary organisation for girls and young women there was, and still is, a strong emphasis on service and personal development. The Girl Guide Movement went on to be endorsed by the Royal Family, with Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret joining in 1937 and going on to be active members in the movement.

In Scotland, the first registered Girl Guides’ group was the 1st Peebles Patrol in 1910, whilst the Girl Guide Movement was officially

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Famous former Brownies and Guides from Scotland include writer JK Rowling, journalist Kirsty Wark, singer Lulu, radio DJ Edith Bowman and TV presenter Lorraine Kelly.⁶²



established in Scotland in 1912.⁵⁶ Girl Guiding in Edinburgh exploded onto the scene between 1912 and 1914,⁵⁷ with new patrols popping up all over the city. They worked towards badges, taking part in many of what they famously termed “Good Turns”, and participated in camping and outdoor pursuits. Girls relished the tests and challenges, as previously they had been severely restricted by old Victorian values.

The movement also quickly spread throughout the world.⁵⁸ By 1919 there were Girl Guides in 24 countries around the world, each adopting its own uniform, badges and rules, but all based on the principles originally set out by Robert Baden-Powell in 1910.

It is worth remembering that when the Girl Guides began, it was frowned upon for girls to be

physically active. Critics denounced it as a “mischievous new development, an idiotic sport and a foolish and pernicious movement”.⁵⁹ Today, much progress has been made, however, continuing beliefs about gender still impact girls and women and their experiences of sport and physical activity. Research shows that girls are not as physically active as boys and there is a huge drop off rate in sporting participation in girls aged around 14.⁶⁰

“It was considered inelegant for girls to run, so it was like girls and women had their knees tied together, figuratively speaking, but the Guides let them run.”

GirlGuiding Scotland

“The movement was considered radical at first. In an age when skirts were ankle length and young ladies never ran, the idea of girls camping, hiking and the like did not go down well.”

Leslie’s Guiding History

GIRLS' BRIGADE

The Girls' Brigade was another significant uniformed voluntary organisation for girls. The Girls' Brigade we know today was established in 1965 from the amalgamation of three organisations: The Girls' Brigade (Ireland), set up in 1893, The Girls' Guildry (Scotland), set up in 1900, and The Girls' Life Brigade (England), set up in 1902. The Girls' Brigade took elements from each of its founding organisations to form a modern Christian organisation for girls and young women that is represented today in countries across the world.



"The Girls' Life Brigade, The Girls' Guildry and The Girls' Brigade of Ireland, all sister organisations of The Boys' Brigade, announced that agreement in principle has been reached on the formation of a new united organisation and that details will be worked out as soon as possible. This agreement is the result of negotiations which have been carried on for some time in a spirit of cordiality and it is believed that the united body, which will be known as The Girls' Brigade will be of great benefit to all concerned."
Press Statement, June 1964⁶³

The union was formally confirmed in 1968. The movement is international and interdenominational, with its world-wide membership embracing many races, languages and dialects. Today, The Girls' Brigade can be found in more than fifty countries and nations throughout the world.


SCOTSWUMMIN



YWCA

The YWCA, Young Women's Christian Association, was founded in 1855 by two women in London, Lady Mary Jane Kinnaird, who was a philanthropist, and Emma Roberts, who was a Christian. In 1877, the "Scotch Division" was set up in the west end of Edinburgh. Over a few short decades, it had spread all over the world similar to the guiding movement.⁶⁵

From the outset, the YWCA was interested in empowering women and worked to improve their lives. They offered housing, education and support to young single women coming to London from rural areas, for work during the industrial revolution. Social clubs run by the YWCA brought girls and women together⁶⁶ and it became a place of refuge and warmth during a time when girls and women were particularly vulnerable to poverty and discrimination. In this way, we can recognise the contribution that the YWCA had on the women's movement over 100 years ago, which was battling stark inequalities for women, in areas such as the right to vote and employment.



1918 - 1945

*Post-Suffrage,
World Wars
and the Peak
of Girls' Clubs*

Suffrage

In 1918, women achieved the vote for married women over 30 years old.⁶⁷ It is considered the most significant social and political change of the 20th century.

The right to vote was also given to male soldiers who were previously not allowed to vote. As the First World War (1914-1918) had disrupted the activities of the suffragist movement and with repeated defeats before 1914, the terms of the 1918 policy were quietly accepted, despite not applying to all women.⁶⁸ Full suffrage was later given to all women in 1928.⁶⁹

There was also a strong suffragist movement in Scotland. For example, in 1914 there was a mass protest outside Perth Prison at the incarceration of four suffragettes who were force fed. Two thousand Scots sang 'Scots Wha Hae' at the gates in their support for the women.⁷⁰

During both world wars, women played an important role in the national war effort by 'keeping the home fires burning' and by taking both voluntary and paid employment in diverse fields they had not previously been allowed to enter.⁷¹ With millions of men overseas fighting the wars, women had to take jobs in a range of industries such as munitions factories, textiles, and offices. This helped to further the role of women in society as they proved to be just as capable as men.⁷²

Post-Suffrage

When World War One ended and men returned home, women lost their jobs and had to return to the domestic sphere. Marriage bars were widely in place throughout Great Britain, which meant that a woman would lose her job once she got married, or would not gain employment if she was a married woman. For example, the BBC implemented a marriage bar in 1932, which lasted until 1944.

The Sex Disqualification Removal Act of 1919 was another key milestone in the women's movement. The Act made it illegal to disqualify a person by sex or marriage from the exercise of any public function, such as to work as

a solicitor or to be admitted to university.⁷³ However, a significant amount of discrimination against women continued after this initial act.

In the 1920s, opportunities began opening up for women and there was a new freedom of discussion taking place among a small proportion of educated and advanced thinkers.⁷⁴ Concepts of youth, femininity, and youth leisure were shifting during the interwar years. A new 'adolescence' outside of class, poverty, and old social work philosophies was emerging in both the UK and the US.⁷⁵

The interwar period also saw big changes in the economic and labour conditions of the country. Cuts in wages and worsening conditions for workers brought about a General Strike in 1926.⁷⁶ It was also the period in which Great Britain experienced its worst financial crisis of the 20th century, known as the Great Depression.⁷⁷

Peak of Girls Clubs

Since the formation and expansion of girls-only clubs in Britain, by the early part of the 20th century youth work with girls and young women was commonplace, mainstream and largely celebrated.⁷⁸ Separate youth work was considered natural and right.⁷⁹ Separate spheres allowed girls to be taught how to be

feminine and boys how to be masculine. By 1935 the Girls Work Movement was at an all-time high;⁸⁰ tens of thousands of girls and young women were enjoying girls' clubs around Great Britain, doing activities they could only have dreamed of a short time before such as learning new practical skills or being active outdoors.

Girl Guides

The First World War disrupted the youth club movement and other youth work. However, the Girl Guides remained active, as they were newly established, with a great deal of energy among the movement. For example, the Girl Guides were involved in projects such as fundraising and recycling of materials needed for the war and were seen to be helpful and efficient.⁸¹ Furthermore, a select group of 90 teenage Girl Guides worked for MI5 on official business distributing highly classified information during the First World War. Other Guides acted as messengers of confidential information for The Marconi Wireless Telegraph⁸² and were regarded as more restrained and trustworthy than boys for such important tasks.⁸³

The Guiding Movement grew from strength to strength and by the 1920s became firmly established in Britain, rising to 75,000 registered Girl Guides since it started in 1910.⁸⁴ In Scotland, the movement had swelled to 17,000 enthusiastic girls by the 1920s.⁸⁵ Scottish Guiding became independent in 1933 and the headquarters remain in the west end of Edinburgh to this day.⁸⁶

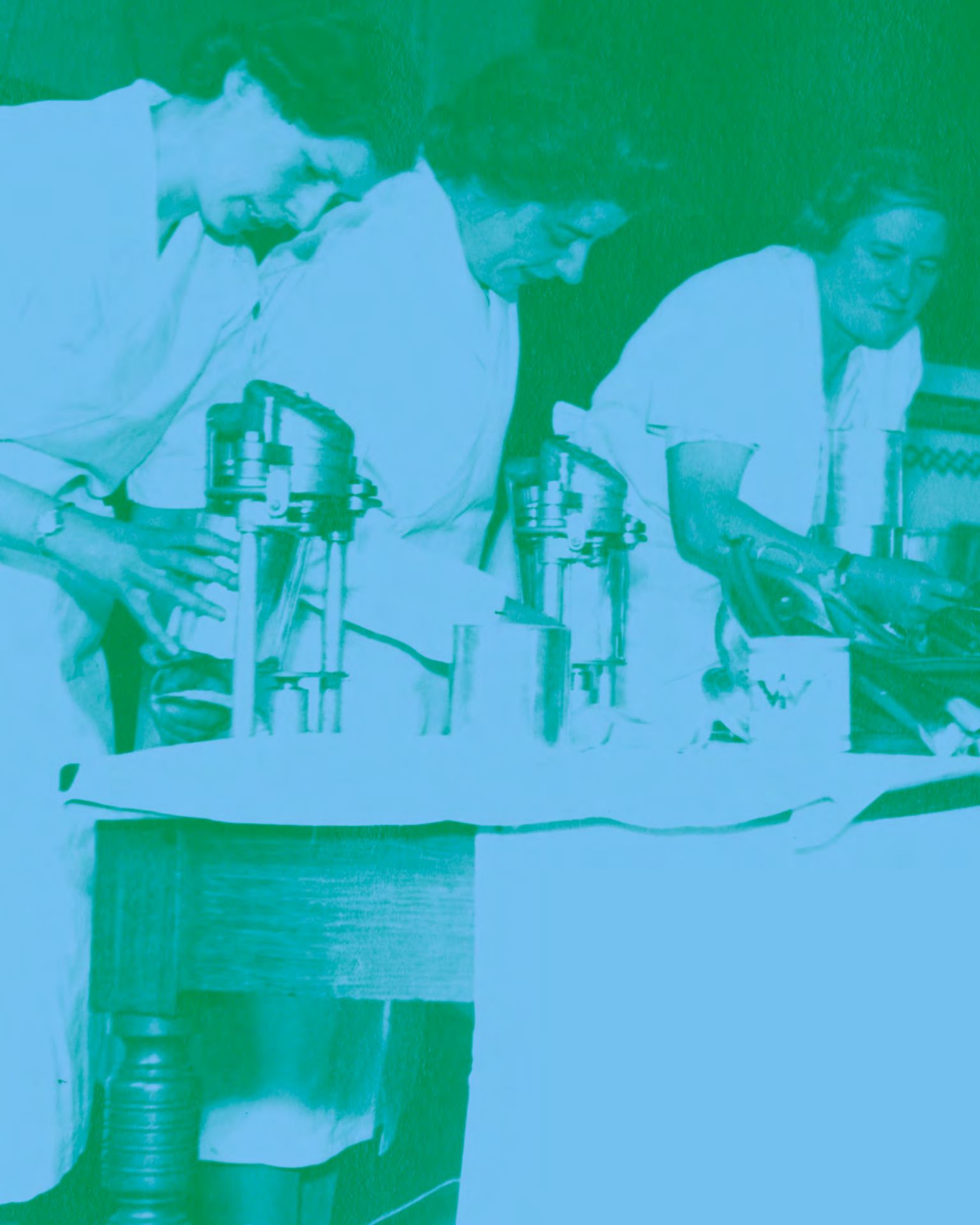
Outdoor pursuits and first aid were popular activities, however, the main focus was still on games and passing tests and badges.⁸⁷ Key tests fell under the categories of Character and Intelligence, Skill and Handicrafts, Physical Health and Hygiene, and Service for Others. These were skills that girls and young women would not have been able to learn elsewhere.

Beginnings of State Involvement in Youth Work

The first sign of state funding made available to local education authorities was in the aftermath of the First World War. This was to establish 'Juvenile Organizing Committees' as up until then youth work had predominantly been through the charity/voluntary sector and philanthropic activities of wealthy individuals.⁸⁸ In the 1920s the term 'youth work' became more widespread and the first booklet titled, *Methods in Youth Work*, was published in 1931.⁸⁹

Early Mixing of Girls Clubs

It was in the course of the interwar years, when the Work With Girls' Movement was at an all-time high, that some mixing of girls' clubs began to start, i.e. boys were allowed to be admitted to girls' clubs,⁹⁰ but girls were not allowed to attend boys' clubs. The National Association of Boys' Clubs, founded in 1925 upon the ideals of masculinity and giving boys somewhere to go in the evening, was determined to maintain its boys-only status.⁹¹ Interestingly, the NAGC was established in 1911, before the NABC in 1925. Yet, given this rich history there was a view within the NAGC that it would benefit girls to mix more with boys. Also, it was a way to increase the numbers participating in the girls' clubs.⁹² In 1944, the organisation changed its name to the National Association of Girls Clubs and Mixed Clubs, to include the affiliation of mixed clubs.⁹³



World War II

The Second World War (1939-1945) affected the running of youth work organisations as they struggled to deal with the impact of bombings and blackouts.⁹⁴ Many children were evacuated to rural areas, for example, children from Glasgow and Edinburgh were evacuated to the Highlands. A more organised service for young people began to take shape with developments in 'open' and 'detached' youth work.⁹⁵ Moreover, throughout the instability of war, youth work provided a safe, stable and secure place for girls and young women.⁹⁶

The Guiding Movement was heavily involved in the war effort. For instance, in 1941 the Ministry of Food made a special request to the Guides for help and even Princess Elizabeth was involved in completing her War Service Badge.⁹⁷ In Scotland, the Guides undertook fundraising activities to raise money for services such as Air Ambulances and Lifeboats. Many of the skills gained by girls and young women during World War Two would have been regarded as more suited to boys a couple of decades before; for example, a Home Emergency Service Qualification for Rangers (older guides) was introduced and included: Discipline, Fitness, Message Corps Work, Household Repairs and Mending, Wartime Cooking and Catering and First

Aid. Again, the Girl Guides provided girls with the opportunity to learn skills they would not have gained elsewhere.

Original research conducted for this report, among members of the Girl Guides in Glasgow who have been active in the organisation since World War Two, explored the impact that Guiding has had on their personal lives. Some of the members, now in their 80s and 90s, went onto become Guide leaders and have stayed part of the organisation for their entire lives. Indeed, the group interviewed had been friends since childhood and reflected on their time with Guiding fondly.

“We learnt things we wouldn't have learnt if we hadn't been in the Guides or Brownies. We went into the countryside, we learnt camping skills, how to live with other people for a week and we enjoyed ourselves.”

Trefoil Guild Member, Girl Guides

“It gave you the confidence to mix with other people. Especially during the war years, it gave you the confidence to leave the house.”

Trefoil Guild Member, Girl Guides



“Basically, there was only the Guides. There weren’t all the other organisations that there are now.”

Trefoil Guild Member, Girl Guides

“It was a movement. We didn’t have to go out and start writing screeds; we want this, we want that. We just did. It was a game for girls.”

Trefoil Guild Member, Girl Guides

“Girls were more constrained. Girls just didn’t do things in those days, the boys got to do more things than the girls did. Girls were supposed to stay home and do their knitting and sewing but we wanted to do more exciting things.”

Trefoil Guild Member, Girl Guides

“Girls wanted to do what the boys were doing. We wanted freedom.”

Trefoil Guild Member, Girl Guides

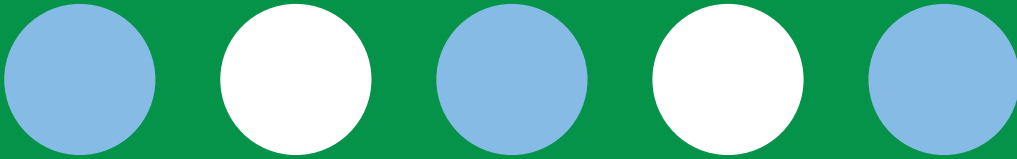
“I think our age group gained so much for being in the Guides. I mean, it has made us what we are today.”

Trefoil Guild Member, Girl Guides

Girl Guides in Glasgow who helped out during the Second World War gained a War Service badge, with one of the activities being to help with childcare.

“We helped to watch the kids in nurseries so the mums could go to work in the munitions factories.”

Trefoil Guild Member, Girl Guides



The most significant skills, experiences and outcomes of being in the Girl Guides included:

- A stepping stone for future employment; Guiding looked good on their CVs and helped them to get jobs
- Practical skills, e.g. first aid, cooking, knitting, and how to tie knots
- Friendship, social skills, and learning how to be a friend to everyone
- A moral code to follow
- An opportunity to try new things
- Learning how to manage and lead people
- Discipline, self-confidence, and public speaking skills
- Sporting opportunities, e.g. dancing, swimming, and learning how to be active in life
- Getting out into the countryside: taking city children to rural areas they otherwise wouldn't have gone to, awareness of the environment, and going camping
- How to look after children
- Thriftiness: learning how to manage money, budgets and personal finances

In summary, youth work had made a major contribution to the lives of girls and young women, and in turn the women's movement, during the latter part of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. Youth work provided a girls' only space where girls and young women could meet and take part in various activities and learn new skills outside the home. Youth work allowed girls freedoms that they had not previously had access to. In addition to the impact of the world wars, youth work helped to open up opportunities for girls and young women, through teaching new skills and fostering greater levels of confidence, however, these developments began to change towards the middle part of the century. In 1943, the Girls Work Movement became the National Organisation of Girls Clubs and Mixed Clubs. The process of mixing the girls clubs had truly begun and it would change the face of the Girls Work Movement for a generation.⁹⁸



1945 - 1975
Post-war
Britain and
Establishment
of Mixed Clubs

Post-war Britain

After the war, Britain was looking to rebuild and make progressive changes. Rationing of food and clothes was still commonplace as the country struggled to get back on its feet.

In 1945, the welfare state was introduced, bringing about huge changes in government policy and spending.⁹⁹ For example, the introduction of the National Health Service (NHS) in 1948 to bring healthcare to all and the Education (Scotland) Act 1945 that emphasised informal education within statutory youth work provision.

By 1951, British society was very conformist; there was a strong respect for authority and class divisions were distinct. In the 1950s, there was a return to traditional gender roles with a reaffirmation of conservative ideals of femininity.¹⁰⁰ Women had made many advances due to the war and had taken on many jobs once the preserve of men; however, women were once again confined to the domestic sphere within heterosexual marriage and men re-assumed the breadwinner role. The phrase “a women’s place is in the home” gained traction once again. As affluence levels started to rise in the 1950s, standards of living improved and the gap between classes narrowed somewhat. Television became available in homes around Britain, helping to create a uniformity of culture and a national standard of taste and behaviour.¹⁰¹

Second Wave Feminism was a period of feminist activity that began in the United States in the early 1960s and spread throughout the Western world and beyond, lasting until the early 1980s.¹⁰⁹

Emergence of Youth Culture

As the 1950s drew to a close, youth culture started to emerge as the generation of baby boomers born after the Second World War began to reach their teenage years.¹⁰² By the early 1960s there would be an extra 800,000 14-21 year olds.¹⁰³ The rise in affluence levels had a big impact on young people as they had more disposable income than ever before, and the growth in leisure time and the spread of education meant that a new generation of youth were asking questions about the status quo. For example, 'teddy boys' emerged as a distinctive working-class youth subculture in the 1950s and were considered a challenge to older people and their ideas about social order.¹⁰⁴

The 1960s was a period of crucial significance in terms of the development of the teenager as it was a time when British society began to break free from the Victorian values that had been dominating it for so long.¹⁰⁵ Throughout the 1960s

youth became a distinctive grouping in and of itself for the first time through dress, fashion, music and leisure activities. For example, the fashion boutiques of Carnaby Street in London set the craze for new fashions and miniskirts, and bands like the Beatles and the Rolling Stones were subversive.¹⁰⁶ There was concern that young people were losing respect for authority and not listening to their elders as they once had. This became known as 'the permissive society'.¹⁰⁷ The newfound discovery of teenagers and rise of rebellious adolescents, who rejected traditional social roles, were seen as a threat. Thus, youth clubs were viewed by the government as a good way to control the new 'social problem' of youth.

Second Wave Feminism

By the end of the 1960s a second wave of feminism and sexual liberation emerged as a reaction to the renewed domesticity of the post-war period. Originating in the United States, the Women's Liberation

Movement was part of a wider social and cultural revolution of the 1960s and 1970s that saw youth cultures in particular revolt against the prevailing conservative ideologies of conformity.¹⁰⁸

Reproductive Rights

Two key milestones for the women's movement in the 1960s included the legalisation of abortion and the introduction of the contraceptive pill. In 1967, abortion was made legal in Britain under certain criteria and with medical supervision. The contraceptive pill was made available on the National Health Service for all women in 1967 and allowed heterosexual young women to have more control over their bodies and sexual practices. Initially, the Pill was available in 1961 only to married women, much like the

right to vote in 1918. For example, in 1964 Helen Brook created a pioneering health service for young women who could not access contraception anywhere else and desperately needed support. Brook clinics opened all over the UK and helped to support, educate and empower young people to make their own choices about sexual health and wellbeing. As a result of the women's movement, women were more able to have careers and be in greater control of when to have a baby and start a family.

Sexuality

In the context of the social and cultural movements of the 1960s and early 1970s, the availability of the contraceptive pill meant sexual practices were no longer completely attached to getting pregnant. Whilst women's sexuality was still closely controlled during the 1960s and 1970s, for example, with sexual double standards in terms of women's reputation in relation to sexual activity and compulsory heterosexuality, attitudes towards sexuality were changing.¹¹⁰

Lesbian and bisexual women were not particularly visible in the 1960s and 1970s. Women's heterosexuality was frequently assumed and it was difficult for homosexual people to be open about their sexuality. 1967 saw limited decriminalisation of homosexual acts for men, however, women's homosexual

activity had never been criminalised but was highly stigmatised. Furthermore, there was considerable tension with religious teachings (and there still is today to an extent, although this tension has lessened). However, the gay and lesbian movement of the 1960s and 1970s was gathering momentum, for example, The Minorities Research Group was the first lesbian organisation in the UK in 1963. In 1974, the Scottish Minorities Group set up a Lesbian and Gay Centre in Broughton Street, Edinburgh, shortly followed by the first ever Gay and Lesbian Switchboard. In 1989, Stonewall Youth was formed in Edinburgh by local activists who were concerned that schools were not safe places for LGBT young people and this organisation became the national organisation for LGBT young people in 2003, renamed LGBT Youth Scotland.

Key Developments in Youth Work

In 1958, there was a government review of the youth service through the Albermarle Committee and in 1960, the Albermarle report on youth work in England and Wales was published. The report investigated how best to respond to the emerging 'teenage culture' and responded to a decline in participation of the youth service. It heralded greater state involvement that

led to a golden age of youth work;¹¹¹ sparking a new era in youth work in terms of investment and literature on the topic from a government perspective.¹¹² Furthermore, the 1964 Kilbrandon report found that the youth service in Scotland was not geared to the current needs and aspirations of the younger generation, particularly those of adolescent age.¹¹³

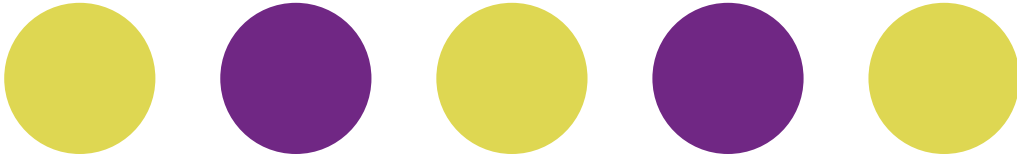
Mixing of Girls Clubs

The mixing of girls' clubs continued steadily throughout the 1950 and 1960s, but as more and more boys were admitted to girls' clubs, girls' participation declined rapidly. In 1953, the organisation changed its name again to reflect the intensification of the mixing of boys into girls' clubs and became the National Association of Mixed Clubs and Girls' Clubs.¹¹⁴ Girls came to be seen as the problem and an unhelpful view that girls only went to the clubs so that they could get the attention from boys began to take root.¹¹⁵ This was a far cry from the opportunities and experiences girls had enjoyed in girls-only youth clubs in the

recent decades before, arguably, in the heyday of the Girls' Work Movement.

The new order of mixed youth clubs had taken over so much so that, in 1961, the National Organisation of Girls Clubs changed its name completely to the National Association of Youth Clubs (NAYC). At the time, decision makers thought that mixing youth clubs would be a progressive step to take towards integration,¹¹⁶ for example, the newly restructured NAYC wanted youth clubs where boys and girls could mix and relate better to the opposite sex, to help reduce segregation in society. However, girls

SCOTSWUMMIN



were now subsumed under the term 'youth' whilst boys continued to have their own boys-only youth clubs and had taken control over girls' clubs.¹¹⁷

The vast majority of girls-only youth clubs were predominantly in the voluntary sector within the Girl Guides and the Girls' Brigade organisations. Youth work might have expanded in the post-war period but it also

produced a contraction of the Work with Girls and Young Women Movement within the statutory sector. Without true changes to wider society and old forms of sexism and control over power, girls remained marginalised in the

youth work sector. The sexist elements of conservative ideologies persisted and youth work was to become a very male dominated sector in the 1970s.¹¹⁸

By the 1970s, youth work with girls and young women had not only become marginalised but seen as a waste of time and resources. As in the late 19th century, it was not seen as worthwhile to provide a wide range of activities for girls and

young women in a youth club setting, as rigid gender norms influenced people's perceptions about girls and young women.

In summary, during the post-war period up until the mid-1970s, youth work reflected society; aiming to be progressive but actually reproducing sexist organisations and institutions that hindered the situation of girls and women

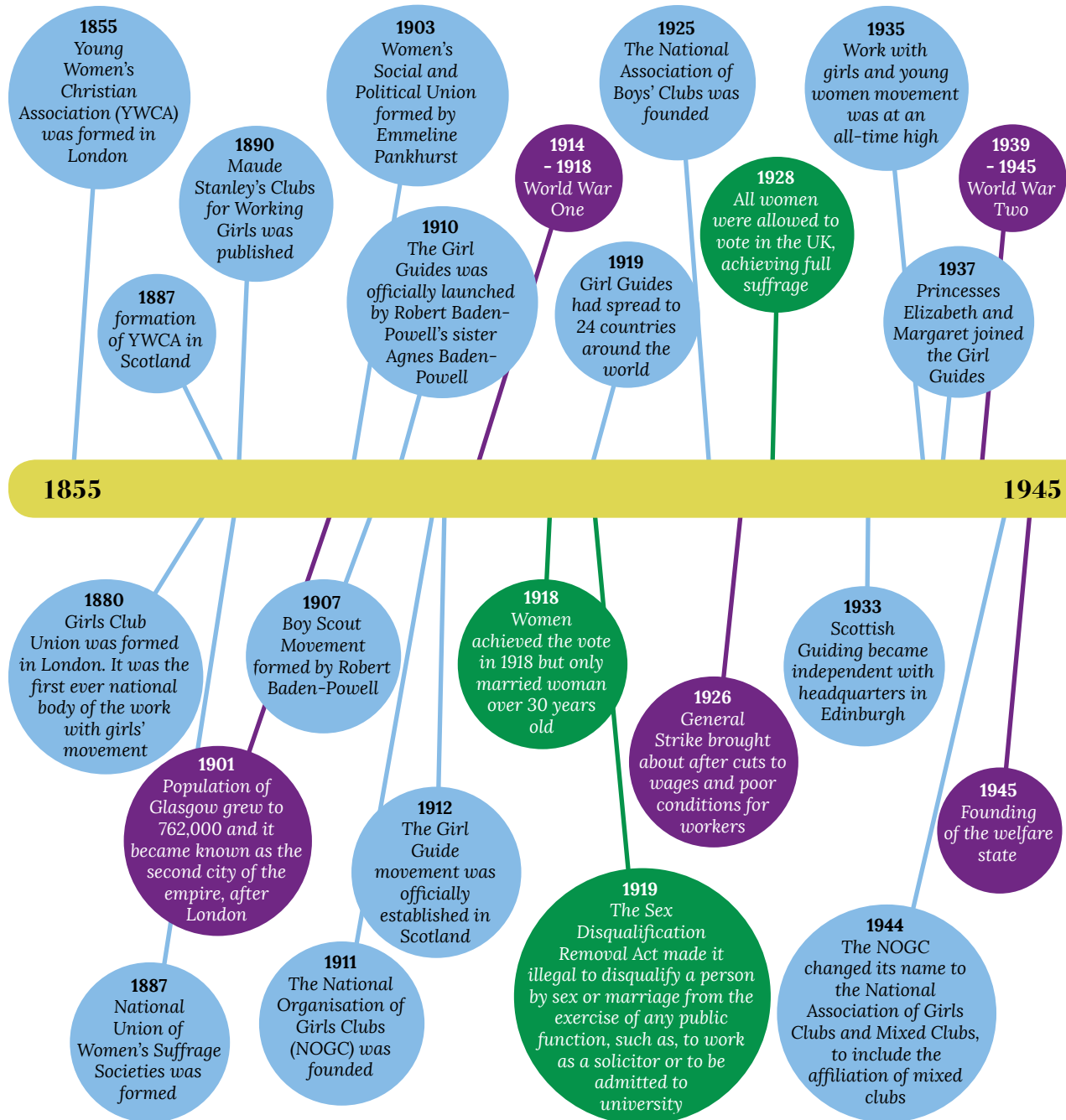
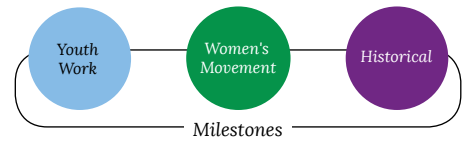
in society. In many ways work with girls colluded with dominant gender norms and perpetuated subordination, due to the emphasis on protecting girls from sexual contact with

“Pre-feminism ‘youth’ means boys: writing and thinking about ‘youth’ was thinking about boys and if, occasionally, girls were mentioned, it was a source of embarrassment and problems for group dynamics.”

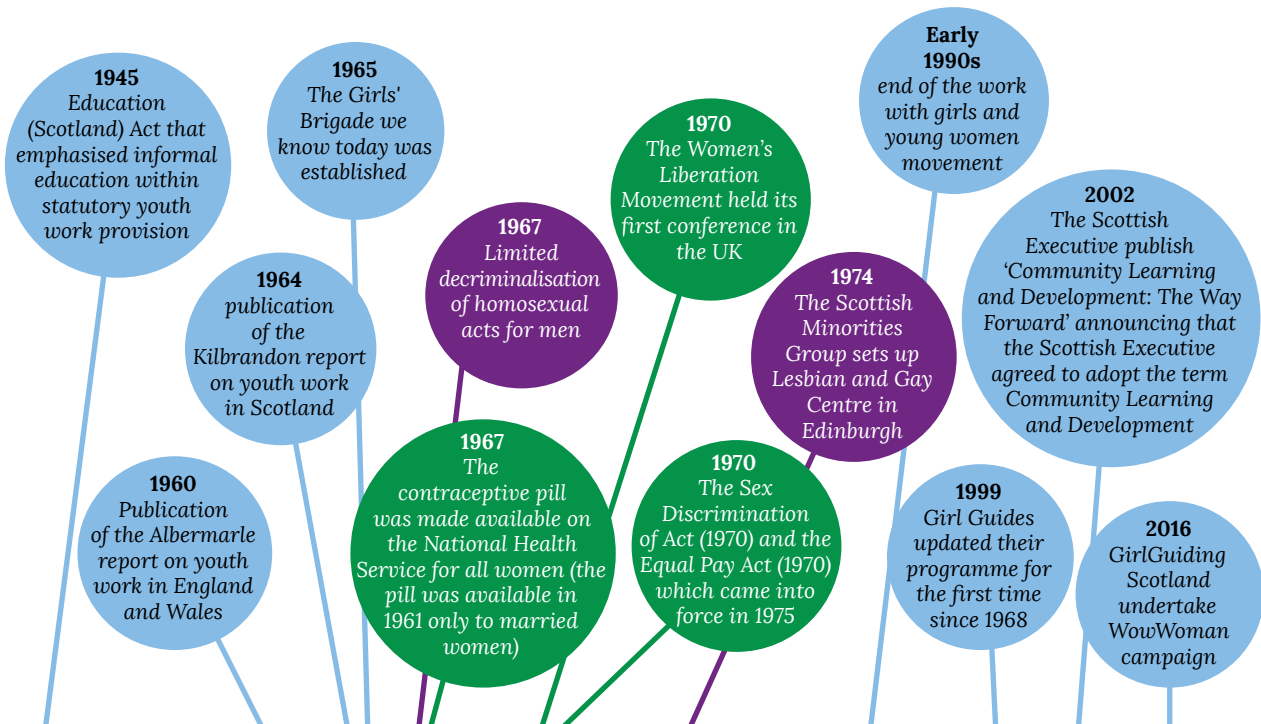
Principal Lecturer in Youth and Community Work, Manchester Metropolitan University

boys and the emphasis on moral surveillance and on preparing girls for their future roles as wives and mothers. As this section has shown, there was a historical marginalisation of girls and early feminism in mainstream youth work and, therefore, youth work did little to contribute to the women's movement before the mid-1970s, when a feminist perspective was introduced in light of the second wave of feminism.

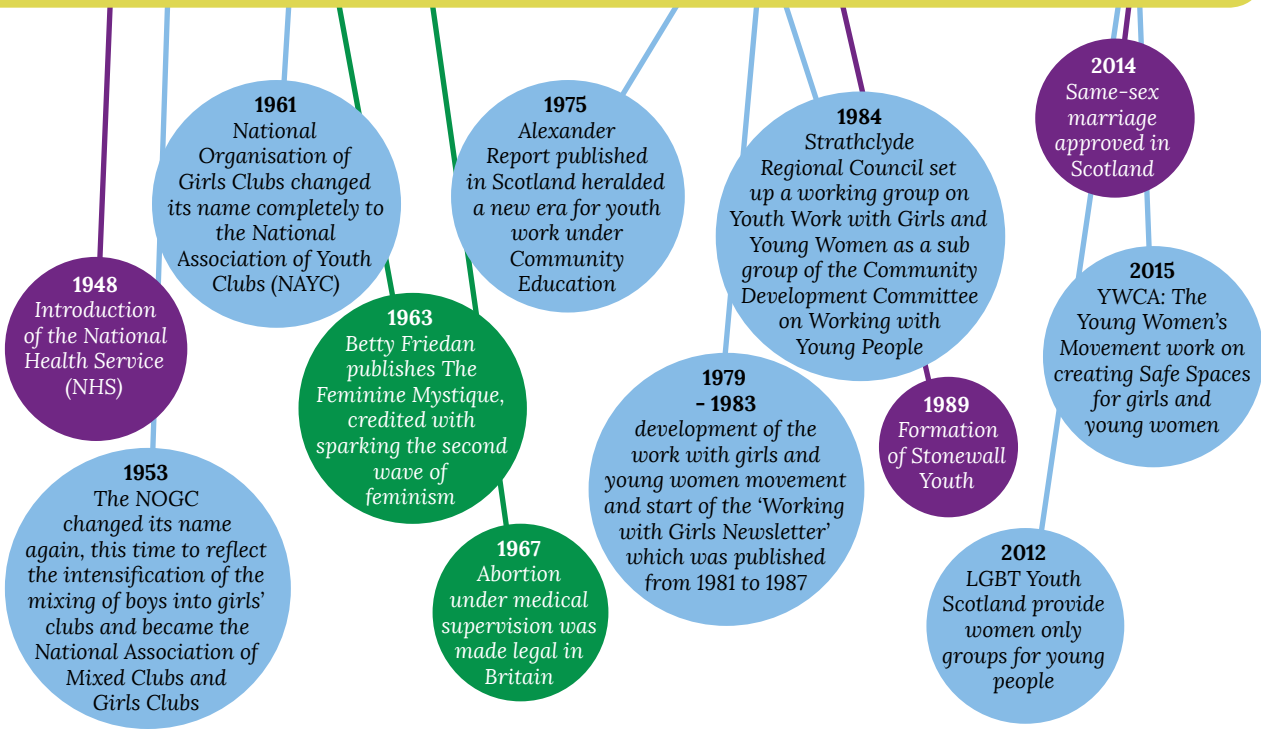
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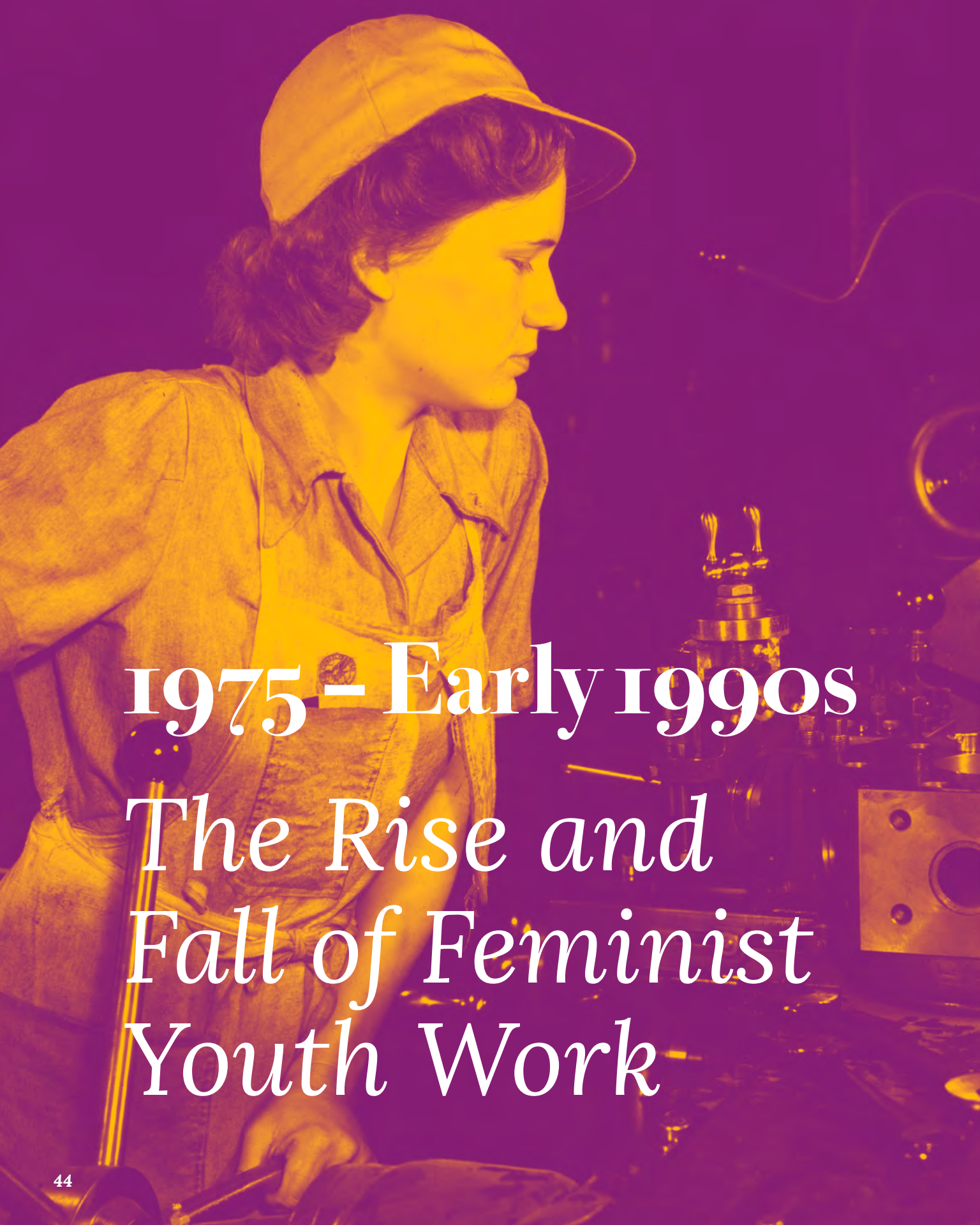


SCOTSWUMMIN



1945 2017





1975 – Early 1990s

*The Rise and
Fall of Feminist
Youth Work*

Women's Movement

While it began in the 1960s, the women's movement of the 1970s began to have a major impact on all parts of society, including youth work.¹¹⁹

It emerged alongside the social and cultural revolutions of the late 1960s, for example the civil rights movement, the gay and lesbian movement, and new forms of artistic and cultural expressions in popular culture. It may have begun among middle class, educated, white women at university campuses, however, as the movement gathered pace it was also driven by black women, working class women and lesbian women.¹²⁰ It ignited the second wave of feminism and came at a point when women's expectations were changing and dissatisfaction had reached boiling point. The development of the contraceptive pill and educational and employment opportunities, in addition to improvements in how men and women related to each other, had given women new aspirations whilst at the same time traditional feminine stereotypes were becoming drastically out of sync with women's real-life experiences.¹²¹ In the UK, the women's movement achieved the

introduction of two new pieces of legislation that would improve the lives of girls and women; the Sex Discrimination Act (1970) and the Equal Pay Act (1970) which came into force in 1975.¹²²

At its heart, the women's movement of the 1970s and 1980s was about consciousness raising among women. It was born out of grassroots organising to make women's voices heard, in order to bring about real changes. Betty Friedan in her 1963 book *The Feminine Mystique*, which is often credited with sparking the second wave of feminism, famously coined the phrase "the problem that has no name", as a way of expressing how tightly woven the subordination of women in society had become and how isolated women felt.¹²³ The women's movement offered a new way of leading and protesting, for example, there was no designated leader and it aimed to be inclusive of all women, although sometimes did not achieve this early on.¹²⁴

The Women's Liberation Movement in the UK held its first conference in Oxford in 1970 and was attended by activists from all over the country.¹²⁵ In due course, they passed seven demands in these conferences that they would actively campaign for over the 1970s and 1980s. These included:

- Equal pay
- Equal educational and job opportunities
- Free contraception and abortion on demand
- Free 24-hour nurseries
- Legal and financial independence for all women
- The right to a self-defined sexuality and an end to discrimination against lesbians
- Freedom for all women from intimidation by threat or use of violence or sexual coercion regardless of marital status; and an end to laws, assumptions and institutions which perpetuate male dominance and aggression towards women

In many ways, women had not taken full advantages of the advances gained by the suffrage movement. By the late 1960s/early 1970s there was still a very low level of women in parliament and in professions, and their employment showed a pattern of menial, underpaid, and supportive roles. Fuelled by youth and new ideas, the new generation of second wave feminists took on the



The “We Can Do It” poster from 1943 was re-appropriated as a symbol of the feminist movement of the 1980s.¹²⁶

institutions of the state, family, and religion, in order to subvert the ‘taken for granted’ subjugation of women in society.¹²⁷

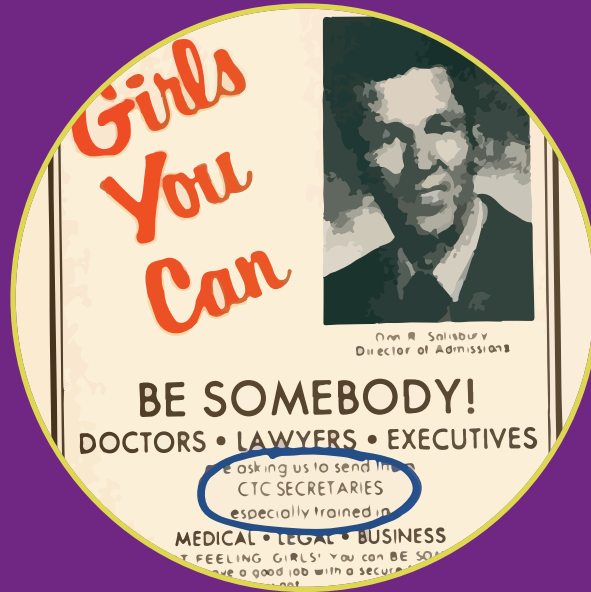
“The modern individual family is founded on the open or concealed slavery of the wife... Within the family, he is the bourgeois and his wife represents the proletariat.”

Friedrich Engels, The Origin of the Family, 1943 p.79



EDUCATION

Mainstream education was distinctly sexist in the 1970s, especially in Scotland.¹²⁸ The working class white male activist, whether in politics or football, was very much at the heart of the culture of the Scottish school system which was overwhelmingly run by men.¹²⁹ The romanticised myth of the 'Lad o' Pairts', which refers to a young boy from a humble background demonstrating academic talent and achieving success due to a meritocratic education system, permeated into what it truly meant to be Scottish.¹³⁰ Girls and women were totally absent from these myths and ideas about national identity, and indeed from Scottish history itself, and this was very much reflected in their experience in the education system and in youth work, in that they were perceived to be 'other' within the male-orientated systems of the 1970s.¹³¹



EMPLOYMENT

Whilst women's participation in the labour market had improved significantly since the turn of the 20th century, young women's employment prospects in the 1970s and 1980s were fraught with gender stereotypes and discrimination.¹³² A young woman was still under heavy expectations to marry, have children, and carry out domestic work within the home. In the context of rising unemployment of the 1970s and 1980s, there was little career support for young women during this stage in life.¹³³ For example, a two-year research study of school leavers in Birmingham in 1979 showed that the transition to full-time employment was a difficult process for young women at the time and careers advice at school was highly gendered. Job adverts were openly sexist and the main prospects for working class young women were lowly paid office jobs, such as secretaries or receptionists. For example, a job advert for a secretary in an office was allowed to openly stipulate that the applicants should be female for this type of job.

LEISURE

Research by Angela McRobbie on feminism and youth culture in the 1970s and 1980s revealed that female youth culture was different from that of male youth culture.¹³⁴ Female youth culture was either ignored, given little consideration or assumed as broadly the same as youth culture in general. Crucially, this was research conducted by women with women. In addition, her research showed that girls' lives were firmly based in the home and local environments, and closely monitored by school, youth leaders and parents. Similar research conducted at the time found that young women's leisure time was more restricted than boys because of their perceived vulnerability and social pressures to act in feminine ways.¹³⁵ For example, girls would mainly meet in the safety of each other's houses in small groups, spend time chatting, and create a culture around each other whilst boys would meet in large groups outside of the home and do activities together, typically football.

However, further research by McRobbie found that young women were increasingly taking part in various youth subcultures, such as mod girls, biker girls, skinhead girls and the hippie movement, as they sought ways to break free from tightly monitored boundaries of their lives.¹³⁶ Other key studies of women's leisure such as *All Work and No Play*, Deem (1986) and *Women's Leisure: What Leisure*, Green et al (1990), emphasised barriers to women's participation in leisure activities. They found that the dual systems of capitalist and patriarchal oppression produced experiences for women which were not desirable. For example, the gendered division of labour meant that women had to take on sole responsibility for domestic work inside the home. It was uncommon for boys and men to take part in these activities as they were seen as 'women's work'.¹³⁷

The women's movement placed emphasis on the personal is political as there was a separation in society between what went on in public and what went on in private. For example, this allowed domestic violence to be considered a private issue rather than a criminal offence. The women's movement changed this perception and continues to campaign on these issues today.

1970s & 1980s Rise of Feminist Youth Work



Statutory and Voluntary Youth Work

During the 1970s, statutory youth work was changing rapidly. There was a growing professionalisation of the youth service within the statutory sector with local authorities given a new remit on youth work. Moves were made to professionalise youth work and reviews of the sector had begun.¹³⁸ In Scotland, the Alexander Report, published in 1975, heralded a new era for youth work under Community Education. It recommended that informal adult education services should be merged with youth and community work

to form Community Education. The main objective of the report was to provide learning opportunities that focused on the needs of the individual as a means of accessing opportunity, which in turn provided a route out of poverty. One criticism of the report is that it said very little about youth work with girls and young women or the position of women in society.¹³⁹ The voluntary sector continued to operate in the way it had done for a number of years and did not go through the same changes that were taking place in the statutory sector.

The Social Problem of 'Youth'

Statutory youth work was operating from a major contradiction in that it was trying to both 'control' the perceived danger of youth leisure time and to 'enlighten' young people.¹⁴⁰ It increasingly veered towards the aim of controlling young people and seeing them as 'at risk' groups. In general terms, young men were perceived by society as being potentially violent criminals, with the need to keep groups of young men off the streets. Young women were perceived as at risk of getting pregnant, sexually vulnerable and only there to get the attention of boys.¹⁴¹ Whilst elements of these concerns had previously existed in 19th century Britain, there was an intensification of such stereotypes in the 1970s, due to a number of interlocking factors including the demographic bulge

of teenagers appearing in the baby boomer generation, the relatively new construction of youth as a category and the reassertion of traditional gender roles from conservatives.

Thus, girls and young women were problematised within youth work as it was considered that they failed to participate in the way boys and young men did, were too passive, did not participate at all or withdrew from the youth organisations altogether. The statutory sector conducted reviews of girls and young women in youth work, however, feminist youth workers and historians argued that they ultimately failed to address the issues as they lacked a feminist perspective.¹⁴²



Emergence of Feminist Youth Work

Set against a backdrop of feminist thinking as a social movement, by the middle of the 1970s a new type of youth work was emerging; feminist youth work practice, specifically, the Movement for Working with Girls and Young Women.¹⁴³ Feminist ideas in youth work started to spread as a result of the women's movement, including other aspects of the women's movement such as Women's Aid, and after a period of trying to understand the full degree of female invisibility that had overtaken youth work practice in Britain.¹⁴⁴ The rise of feminist youth work practice and the re-emergence of the Girls' Work Movement stemmed from two types of female youth worker: existing female youth workers, who liked what they saw in the women's movement and began to question what youth work was offering to girls and young women, thus, adopting feminist practices within youth work; and feminist women, who felt that youth work was ideally suited to raising the confidence and self-worth of girls and young women in Britain.¹⁴⁵

"I was a feminist and thought youth work would be a really good place to practice feminism."

**Senior Youth Work Academic and
Former Youth Worker**

"Most of us had our eyes open to the situation for women and we believed it was an important thing to bring a feminist perspective to youth work. Not all female youth workers had a feminist perspective but they were quite open to it once we got everybody together."

Mini Focus Group with Former Youth Workers

"Girls' and women's work was all interrelated, it didn't work in isolation, you got ideas from what you were doing with women's groups that you could just as easily use with a girls' group and vice versa."

Mini Focus Group with Former Youth Workers

Feminist youth work had two chief aims. First, to focus on the needs of young women and change youth work from within by providing positive action in working with girls and young women. Second, to develop young women, for example, by helping them find new interests and self-confidence, and discussing topics relevant to

their own life experiences. Furthermore, the feminist perspective sought to encourage girls and young women to question the roles they were expected to perform and to challenge these so-called truths.¹⁴⁶

There were numerous initiatives and changes brought about by feminist youth workers in the 1970s and 80s. Indeed, the girls' work movement was so successful because of their hard work, for example, the movement worked collectively and organised an annual conference every year between 1979 and 1983. This was crucial to the development of the Girls Work Movement and led to the 'Working with Girls Newsletter', published from 1981 to 1987.¹⁴⁷ The newsletter was hugely successful and included information for girls and young women on a wide array of topics such as health and sexuality.

Women Worker Groups had spread all over the country by the early 1980s.¹⁴⁸ Feminist youth workers formed networks all over the UK and were a source of support, networking, professional training, self-education and consciousness raising, as well as offering opportunities for developing collective strategies in response to hostile conditions.

"Those of us who felt it was important to agitate for change came together informally at first and then we organised into Lothian Girls' Work Group."

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

"You couldn't fight it all on your own, the problem was too big. The main thing for us was that we worked together, met regularly and supported each other. There wasn't much conflict, which was very much what the women's movement was all about."

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

Feminist youth workers and feminist historians argued that it became apparent that statutory youth work provision was gender blind in the 1970s and 1980s, but mainly tailored to the needs of boys. Statutory youth work essentially became youth work for boys¹⁴⁹ and, up until the 1970s, statutory youth work was typically a very male environment, staffed by men in the evenings and weekends and was considered a less appropriate job for a woman. In addition, decision makers in the sector were predominantly men.¹⁵⁰

"To an extent, there was a testosterone match between the male youth leaders and whoever fancied their chances of creating havoc. That's not to say that there aren't loads of skilled male youth leaders, which there are, but at times the male behaviour was kind of stereotypical back then."

Former Senior Youth Worker

Space and funding lent towards the needs and interests of boys in the statutory sector, for example, boys dominated the activities and facilities of youth work settings, and still do to this day. Boys' clubs were granted the best rooms, the best times for clubs and the best equipment.¹⁵¹ Youth workers coming from a feminist perspective assessed the situation in youth clubs for girls and young women based on real life experiences and on facts and figures, and, for example, boys grew to outnumber girls in clubs by 3:1 and in some cases, even by as much as 10:1.¹⁵² The type of activities and programmes on offer were not geared towards the needs of girls and young women and the attitudes of male youth workers and policymakers often either ignored the girls or saw them as a nuisance, because the main focus was to control unruly teenage boys.

From the primary research conducted for this report there were several examples that highlighted the situation for girls and young women before the feminist intervention:

“It was a youth club 5 nights a week, a mixed club, but it was effectively a boys’ club because it was the boys that were running it and the girls were just hanging around the boys.”

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

“Girls didn’t feel comfortable in the mixed setting because there were always in the clutches of the boys and because boys dominated so much in the activities we did and the activities we did were very male orientated.”

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

“Girls didn’t have the expectation that they should have a space or that they deserved to have anything, really.”

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

“It’s a different space when there are males there, particularly for young women who are conscious of how they look, how they feel... all those kinds of issues.”

Academic, Community Education

Jean Spence, a feminist historian and youth worker in the 1970s and 1980s, noted that second wave feminists working in youth work saw that women-only spaces were needed to empower girls and young women, but they were also political. Whether the boys' banging on the doors was light-hearted banter or not, the battlegrounds had been drawn for girls and young women in youth work settings.

“The girls would never touch the pool table, table tennis table, darts or DJ booths. They would always defer and had absolutely no confidence. There were some tough girls who were desperate to learn how to play but even they didn’t have the confidence to in front of the boys. When we set up the girls’ evening the girls came along and were really excited. Before we knew it, they were all having a go and laughing, having a great time. Then all of a sudden, we heard this noise outside, it was the boys banging on the windows and jumping on the roof. They were raging that they couldn’t get in and that the girls were taking their night away. They had also threatened some of the girls before they came not to go. It felt pretty scary, the pack mentality. Eventually they just gave up.”

Senior Youth Development Worker

“To encourage girls and young women to participate in youth service organisations, women workers in the 1970s and 80s started organising and campaigning for female-only time and space, from an explicitly feminist perspective.”

Jean Spence,

Youth Work and Gender (1990)

Women-only spaces allow women to connect with each other, share stories and experiences and to question their experiences without men’s presence or domination. Feminist youth workers adopted this model for youth work as it had proved so effective in the women’s movement. Having their own space allowed girls and young women to question what they wanted, rather than be told what they wanted, to find common cause with other females who shared their own predicament; they could see their femininity and open it up to change.¹⁵³

“It was giving the girls the space and opportunity to talk about how they felt, the way they were perceived, the role of women, advertising, what you were expected to do, speaking to them about the fact that they had a choice, which not many of them felt they had. It allowed us to raise the bar in terms of what the young women could expect.”

Mini Focus Group

with Former Youth Workers

Barriers to Feminist Youth Work

The surge in feminist youth work initiatives was met with some resistance at first and a degree of hostility from within youth work itself. Over the course of the 1980s the movement had to overcome barriers in order to provide these services for girls and young women. Feminist youth workers who were practising in the 1980s noted that this resistance and hostility often came from male colleagues and older male managers who were not on board with what the Girls' Work Movement was trying to achieve.¹⁵⁴

“You just felt it was a battle all of the time, every day, some of the things people got angry about... they were very angry that girls were going to get a night, that they were going to come in and use the facilities without the boys being there. Nobody could get their heads around it. They just saw the unfairness of it.”

Mini Focus Group with Former Youth Workers

“Some of the volunteers that came in were very sexist. So, you were battling at every committee meeting and at every front.”

Mini Focus Group with Former Youth Workers

“They felt we were getting carried away with ourselves and using our personal agendas in our work. Yet what we were suggesting ticked all the boxes, it was led by the girls, they could meet other girls and do different activities. The management just didn’t like it because it was girls only. They didn’t like feminism and thought we were influencing girls and leading them astray. There was a definite feeling that we were using our outside agendas.”

Senior Youth Development Worker

“There was a view that youth work was being taken over by a bunch of feminists from the universities.”

Senior Youth Development Worker

“They thought that girls just want to chat and boys want to do things and this is still true to this day. Boys will take over the equipment as they feel that is what they have to do and they feel entitled to the space. The thinking is that girls are passive and don’t want to do any activities. Yet when they got their own space they did do things, they loved it. We had over 60 girls at one of our Girls’ Days and all female workers doing all sorts of activities such as making a magazine and drawing. If the boys had been there, there is no way the girls would have done anything.”

Senior Youth Development Worker

“The council were very anti it, very suspicious and threatened by it.”

Mini Focus Group with Former Youth Workers



Punk Youth Work?

Punk, as a subculture, was a strong element within the feminist youth work movement and society in the early 1980s. The punk scene, which centres on music, fashion, forms of expression, ideologies and art, is typically anti-establishment and pro-individual freedoms. Women featured heavily within punk; finding greater freedoms in the punk scene, as, broadly speaking, it was more gender neutral and sexual discrimination was lower among those involved.¹⁵⁵

“Women could dress how they liked, behave how they wanted and develop their own sound without being manipulated by the mostly male gatekeepers of the record industry. Young women who didn’t fit the traditional mould of femininity found a new tribe in punk. A place where they could finally be themselves.”

BBC Radio 4 The Reunion Interview: Women of Punk¹⁵⁶

The primary research carried out for this report found that many feminist youth workers in the 1970s and 80s were rooted

in the punk subculture themselves and were actively involved in pushing the boundaries of practice. For example, such as holding LGBT support groups during the era of Section 28 where it was illegal in the UK to promote homosexuality; finding ways to hand out condoms to young people, when that was not allowed, and organising young women’s groups on car mechanics, when engaging in that type of activity was frowned upon.

Furthermore, in the first edition of the Working with Girls Newsletter in 1981, Val Marshall noted that:

“The major concern of the Youth Services seems to be the preservation of a male dominated society, dependent for its continued existence on a constant supply of home loving wives and mothers, willing to cook, clean, copulate, and procreate on demand, and it will stay that way for as long as the men dominating our professional services refuse to volunteer a realistic partnership with women.”

In many ways those who were resistant to change were likely not aware of doing things in another way rather than explicitly holding girls and young women back.

“The resistance stemmed from more of a lack of understanding from our male colleagues, and some female. It was just a very sexist society back then, where men worked and women didn’t, women stayed at home and men couldn’t understand why girls should want any more than what they had.”

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

“I first started in youth work in the 1970s when I was 22 and you used to attend these huge meetings with no other women there. They were all men in their 60s so there was a kind of 30 or 40 year age gap between you and some of your colleagues. They were a product of their upbringing and the society they lived in. Some of them were ex miners. They moved on and then the new generation of youth workers, male and female, moved in.”

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

Nevertheless, as female feminist youth workers grew in number and became more assertive about what they were trying to achieve they experienced an even greater resistance from male colleagues in decision making positions who held onto traditional sexist views about women whether consciously or unconsciously.¹⁵⁷ For example, feminist youth workers had to consistently prove the worth of girls’ only groups by repeatedly making the case for why they were necessary. This became a tiresome thing to have to do on a regular basis. As Janet Batsleer noted in her speech to the YWCA in 2005 during the Department of Education consultation period for the Youth Matters! Green Paper, second wave feminists working in youth work in the 1970s and 80s were stubborn. They posed the question:

“Why not give young women the space to ask questions about what was on offer to them, in their relationships, in their working lives as mothers, as women, and from black and minority communities? Why not give them space to explore what they had in common and what divided them? To ask for themselves the question that had always been asked and answered from them: what do women want?”

SCOTSWUMMIN



Further, female feminist youth workers often had to justify why they deserved to work as youth workers at all, as women. Whilst things were changing, persistent sexist attitudes held onto the notion that youth work was not the sort of work for women to do as much of it is carried out in the evenings and weekends. In time and with perseverance, these attitudes were overcome by the generation of young feminist youth workers who organised themselves, showed the positive impact they were having on the young women and campaigned for greater equality for girls and young women within the youth service.

Another example of the resistance feminist youth workers faced in the 1980s was consistently being rejected for funding applications in favour of boys' work. Without funding, there was a limit to what could be achieved and those who controlled the funding were openly sexist.

“I think there came a point where they realised that this movement was too strong.”

Senior Youth Development Worker

Overall, it is evident from this that girls and young women were marginalised within youth work in the 1970s and their needs were unmet, following a similar pattern to general society in the 1970s.¹⁵⁸ All of this proved to be damaging for the Work with Girls' Movement, which had proved so positive in the early part of the 20th century. Exceptions to this were in the voluntary and uniformed sector. Although not always operating from a feminist perspective, girls only clubs in the voluntary sector were still flourishing. The Girl Guide movement was going from strength to strength and, for example, by 1975 in Glasgow there were 46,847 girls in the Girl Guides.¹⁵⁹

CASE STUDY

In Scotland, Strathclyde Regional Council set up a working group on Youth Work with Girls and Young Women in 1984 as a sub group of the Community Development Committee on Working with Young People, led by a passionate and politically astute group of feminist youth workers. There was concern about the low level of development of youth work with girls and young women and this sub group's chief aim was to investigate the youth service for girls and young women in Scotland, to look at what had happened in the past and to take stock of what was happening in the 1980s, in order to improve youth work services for women moving forward. The committee found that youth work programmes were male orientated and that girls were adopting a secondary, passive role.

“After the 1984 Working with Young People report, the Strathclyde region identified 3 or 4 areas within youth work practice and one of the things that had a really big focus was working with girls and young women as part of community development based youth work practice.”

Academic, Community Education

They saw that youth work was perpetuating stereotypes of girls and young women through the way male youth workers engaged with young women at youth clubs; through the lack of attention being paid to girls' and young women in youth clubs and through the absence of consideration to girls and young women in decisions made about the youth service in Scotland. They concluded that youth work with girls and young women was a neglected area and they were dissatisfied with the level of debate on the issue.¹⁶⁰ In 1987, the sub group produced a report on Work with Girls and Young Women.

“They have learnt to watch, not to take the lead; to be apathetic and uninterested – all of which underwrite a further lack of confidence and belief in their own ability.”¹⁶¹

CASE STUDY



“Why girls are always in the toilets”

In a May 1984 edition of SCAN, Scotland’s Community Education Newspaper, the paper published a large two-page article on the topic of girls and youth work. It questioned whether girls get a raw deal out of youth work in clubs, and raised some of the key issues and acknowledged the fierce divisions on the subject. It looked at why youth clubs seemed to favour boys and what youth workers were trying to do to redress the balance:

“Do girls get a raw deal out of youth work in clubs? Many people seem to think so and are beginning to develop special programmes to counter what they see as a built-in disadvantage. But it’s a concern that can be matched by a proportional rise in resistance when the subject is broached. “Let’s look at girls...” stimulates either feeble jokes or defensible positions. In an attempt to raise the issue, without raising hackles – which we probably will, anyway! – SCAN looks at why the youth scales seem to be tipped in the boys’ favour and how youth workers are trying to redress the balance.”

Successes of Feminist Youth Work

Arguably the greatest success of the feminist intervention in youth work was the impact it had on the lives of young women in Scotland, increasing young women's confidence, self-esteem and expectations. From the activities on offer, the funding applications, and to the thought provoking conversations with feminist youth workers, girls and young women began to value themselves more and let them see themselves and others perform well at things.

"The first night we had the club to ourselves the girls were wide eyed and all excited. They couldn't believe there were allowed to play with the equipment. One wee girl approached the pool table, picked up a cue and asked me, "which way round do you hold it?" Poor thing. I taught them all how to play and they loved it."

Senior Youth Development Worker

"It helped women to become strong enough in themselves. I've no doubt in my mind that thousands and thousands of young women benefitted greatly from coming along. Learning about themselves; learning that they are valued and that they are worth something. It opened them up to self-realisation and being honest with themselves. Going through that process with women was a massive thing. It changed their outlook, changed their self-belief, thought patterns, how they thought about their kids, their future. It freed them."

Former Senior Youth Worker

Girls' Nights, Girls' Weekends and Girls' Days opened up all over the country. Girls' Days and activity weekends away were organised by feminist youth workers, largely following advice gained in the Working with Girls' Newsletter. Girls' Days allowed girls and young women to pursue

For example, in Aberdeen, one youth club for girls and young women managed to secure funding from the YWCA to do more separate activities with girls, as the YWCA were very keen on supporting girls' work.

their interests on their own terms, whether that be by forming new friendships or practising how to put make up on. They offered role models of women youth workers acting in leadership positions over the days or weekends¹⁶² and all of these initiatives echoed the girls' only youth work movement of the first half of the 20th century.

"The highlights for me were the Girls' Days, you had a community centre in a run-down part of Leith and for one day it was full of girls. They were a lot of work but they were really fun, we got together, organised it all, who's doing the minibus; who's taking the photos. It was great."

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

"We got funding from the YWCA to expand what we were putting on for girls and they were very keen to help because we were coming at it from a feminist perspective."

Senior Youth Development Worker

The voluntary sector was more effective at promoting feminist youth work practices than the statutory sector and it was able to adapt and change more easily along with the times. One oral history from a youth worker in Leith in the 1980s noted:

"I think it was different (in the voluntary sector) because if you were managing your own service you could make decisions that perhaps you couldn't make with the whole hierarchy of the council above you."

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

Printing on Purple Paper

One time in the 1980s a local girls group wanted to print a report on purple paper as this was the colour of the suffragist movement, however, the local authority would not allow the feminist youth workers to print on purple paper!

"They thought the paper was dangerous or that it meant lesbianism or something."

**Mini Focus Group with Former
Youth Workers**

One key success was in changing the attitudes of male colleagues and making it acceptable for male workers to openly support gender equality. Feminist youth workers sought to include male youth workers where possible and to encourage them to obtain training and skills in working with young women, however, men were largely kept at arms-length within the feminist youth work movement itself, again, to protect the women only space.¹⁶³ Whilst men's involvement in feminist youth work was polarised, there were a number of male youth workers open to change and very much in favour of new ways of working with girls and young women. For example, the only man on the 1984 Youth Work with Girls and Young Women working group in Strathclyde was aware of the key issues and supported feminist youth work practice:

“It was hard for women back then, they had battles for why they'd even want to work as youth workers and they had battles on why to have single sex groups, even though men had been running boys' only groups for ages. They worked with girls and young women politically, intellectually and in their practice so that feminist youth work could go forward. They changed the youth work curriculum so the girls could do things that weren't just needlework, such as canoe, climb mountains, meet up with other groups etc.”

**Former Senior Educational Manager,
Youth Worker and Adult Educator**

Another success of feminist youth work practices was on the impact they had on boys. Women working in the field would bring their own qualities to the clubs that provided positive role models for boys.

“Young female youth workers were a great modifying influence in youth work for a lot of young men as they were someone who the young people could go to with an issue, with a problem they might not want to share with their mother. They were good at nurturing, listening, advising and not judging the young people. The other thing they did was modify male behaviour to be more realistic.”

Former Senior Youth Worker

Youth Work with Ethnic Minorities

Scotland saw large immigrant populations settle in the country throughout the 20th century, particularly with South Asian, Jewish and Polish migrants.¹⁶⁴ Each of these communities organised and

ran their own youth clubs for young people, with particular sessions for young women. Research carried out by Glasgow Women's Library on migrant women in Pollokshields shows a rich history of youth and community groups for girls and young women, both to help integrate them into Scottish communities and keep the connection to home traditions alive.¹⁶⁵

“Within the girl’s work that went on in the 80s there was diversity. There was girls’ work that went on with Sikh and Muslim young women, and other work that recognised girls’ sexuality. It did happen although it was on the fringes.”

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

Feminist youth workers in the late 1970s and 1980s began to see that Asian girls and young women had specific needs. For example, that Asian girls were not allowed to participate in mixed youth work settings and benefited from girls only settings. Furthermore, they saw that in certain youth clubs the volunteers were mostly local Asian women, who would demonstrate traditional Pakistani and Indian

crafts, cookery and beauty treatments. In these ways, young Asian girls were presented with models of women in leadership and teaching roles outside of the home, in ways that confirmed their own cultural interests and value.¹⁶⁶ Youth work provided an opportunity to raise the confidence and self-esteem of these girls who suffered the double discrimination in terms of race and gender.

To summarise, the key successes of feminist youth work practice in the late 1970s - 80s were:

- Increasing the confidence, self-esteem and expectations of girls and young women
- Allowing girls and young women to see women youth workers in leadership positions
- Encouraging boys to accept girls; having their own separate sessions and bringing a more balanced atmosphere to the previously male dominated youth clubs, positively influencing the boys
- Changing the attitudes of youth work colleagues about how best to work with young women
- Achieving the acceptance of girls’ work as a necessary and legitimate strand of youth work
- Developing information packs and resources for girls and young women in youth work
- Interpreting the women’s movement practically and bringing it into the daily lives of working class girls and young women
- Raising awareness of personal safety for girls, addressing girls’ fear of crime and working with the police
- Getting gender and equality training approved as part of youth work professional training

Fall of Feminist Youth Work

As separate youth work with girls became accepted, arguably one of the most notable achievements in Scotland was the establishment of full time workers to specifically manage this new area of youth work. However, after specific workers were appointed the movement began to decline as people assumed the 'problem' was now someone else's.

In Scotland, the restructuring of councils and local authorities brought significant changes to youth work, for example, Strathclyde Regional Council broke up into various districts as did Lothian's. New management structures made it harder to be creative and restricted the freedoms feminist youth workers had previously enjoyed.

"For me, it was when the Girls' Work Resource Unit was set up in the Lothian Association of Youth Clubs. You kind of sat back and thought, "Right, the job's done, there's somebody looking after that now, it's got a home". In some ways, that's when it all stopped, at the very point when we'd started to make material gains, a worker, a building, resources, we thought that all we had to do was to support the worker but when it wasn't part of everybody's practice, that's when the movement disappeared."

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

"Before the council changed and the new managers were brought in, we didn't have the same freedom to move around the Lothians, to work with groups in different parts as people had different managers. Once it became City of Edinburgh Council that all stopped."

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

Whilst feminist work, which had increased participation among girls and young women, helped to fulfil the "universal service" aspect of youth work and enabled youth work managers to claim that their organisations were successfully

integrating girls and young women, feminist youth workers had to downplay the feminist characteristics of their endeavours. For example, in order to get funding, feminist youth workers were forced to disguise their feminist practices in funding applications and in formal reports, because if they were positioned as openly feminist initiatives it was commonplace not to receive the funding.¹⁶⁷ In the statutory sector, there had been a move away from overtly politicised youth work in general, and this extended to feminist practice. Even in the voluntary and uniformed sectors, grants to male youth organisations favoured boys' clubs and events.¹⁶⁸ This situation largely stayed the same through the 1980s and into the 1990s where pressures on state funded youth work continued.¹⁶⁹

“There was a decline in resources for feminist youth work from the mid-1980s and there was also an attack on feminists while retaining rhetoric of equality.”

**Youth Work Academic
and Former Youth Worker**

In the end, policy makers and funders ruled supreme and the girls' youth work movement was over by the early to mid-1990s. This was due to organisational disputes, the impossibility of getting funding for explicitly feminist practices and changes to the rules of the Equal

Opportunities Commission.¹⁷⁰ Feminist youth workers could no longer get funding for girls' work under a feminist umbrella within the new language of legalised systems-based approaches to equality. For example, changes to the Sex Discrimination Act, which demanded that any funding granted for single sex work with girls be matched by a parallel and equal arrangement for boys. Politicised interventions would become irrelevant and the new language of equal opportunities ironically diluted feminist practice out of existence.¹⁷¹

*“It became mainstream;
we didn't have to fight the
same battles.”*

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

Overall, feminist youth work was influential in the women's movement between 1975 and the 1990s, by empowering a generation of young women to challenge and question their role in society, by helping young women to become less passive, and by delivering youth services that met the needs of girls and young women in an ever-changing world. It re-ignited the Work with Girls' Movement that had proved so successful in previous generations. However, it ultimately failed to get girls' work to reach its full potential, as by the mid-1990s feminist youth work had virtually disappeared.



*2000 to Present
Youth Work
In a Changed
World*

Social, Political, and Economic Changes

Since the turn of the new millennium, there have been a number of highly significant social, political and economic changes.

The rise of neo-liberalist ideology has had a huge impact. Neo-liberalism simply means a social, political and economic ideology marked by individualism, reduced public spending in favour of privatisation and free market economics. It is where big businesses are highly powerful and financial markets exert the most influence. In this new era, citizens are defined as consumers first and foremost.¹⁷² This agenda has found its way into most aspects of public life as well as youth work, for example, the 2008 financial crisis brought about a new wave of cuts to public services and squeezes on public finances.

“The neo-liberal condition now is that everybody is so busy and people are doing the job of what used to be three people. Not everybody but a lot of people are.”
**Academic,
Community Education**

One of the most significant social changes has been the extended or more complex transitions for young people into adulthood, for example, young people now stay in education for longer and are more dependent on their families into adulthood. The restructuring of the labour market also means that young people today face far more uncertain and precarious futures.¹⁷³ Other key changes include the impact of digital and social media, new technology, smartphones, increased screen time, the commercialisation of leisure activities and the privatisation of public spaces; all combining to create a retreat into the private sphere where the home is the new hub of entertainment.¹⁷⁴

Third Wave Feminism

We are now in what's known as the third wave of feminism or "modern feminism". In many ways, there is a continuation of old challenges, such as equal pay and sexism in the media, however, new challenges include the gendered impact of financial cuts on women, the spiral of violence towards women and the increased sexualisation of girls and young women particularly online and in the media.¹⁷⁵ Much of the progress has been on gaining the feminist support of boys and men, however, much work still needs to be done in this area, particularly around the education of boys on feminism and tackling the issues around pornography, sexualisation of girls and young women and gender-based violence.

Black feminism and women of colour have made a substantial contribution to the women's movement. For example, black legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw coined the term "intersectionality" as a way of describing how multiple oppressions are experienced (e.g. sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, ableism, ageism, and classism).¹⁷⁶

In addition, young women have become more central to the women's movement as there has been a resurgence in the feminist movement. For example, the internet and social media has helped girls and women to connect with each other in new ways to share information and experiences, such as the Everyday Sexism project, a website where women can share their experiences of sexism and bring together the stories of thousands of girls and women from all over the world.¹⁷⁷

1990s Punk Feminism



The Riot Grrrl scene was an international underground movement of young feminists associated with aggressive punk-rock style music. It originated in the 1990s, in Northwest America, and is often associated with the beginnings of third-wave feminism.

Youth Work

Over the last 15-20 years' youth work has changed and continued to reflect society at large. In Scotland, statutory youth work now sits under Community Learning and Development, which draws on a rich history of Community Education, Community Development and Youth Work. Its role is to empower individuals, groups and communities and offer learning opportunities in a variety of ways, such as through play activities, group work, casual conversations and one-on-one sessions.¹⁷⁸

Two of the key changes in youth work have been the shift towards employability as a key driver of practice and funding streams, directing which areas get focused on. For example, employability work is currently topical in youth work and practice based on making young people more equipped for the job market.

“The shift towards employability is quite interesting as that’s what’s getting funded just now. So, there’s no funding for working with girls and young women. And it’s becoming increasingly about having to find funding. People sometimes develop their work around the funding pot rather than around the issue or problem. People have to chase funding as their job depends on finding funding.”

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Another key change within youth work is the de-politicisation of practice, in contrast to the 1970s and 1980s. Findings from the primary research for this report shed light on a wealth of inspiring and politically astute practitioners in Scotland in previous decades, ranging from feminist ideologies to left-leaning progressive agendas. Despite this background, there is a sense that this has largely disappeared from youth work in Scotland and has been replaced with a more obedient culture within the sector.

“I don’t see a lot of leaders. I could rattle off a few people who were inspirational in my emerging professional identity but I don’t see those characters now, I don’t see them at events, being political. We live in a compliant culture and we’ll go where funding is to save jobs. We have an Empowerment Bill but we’re not getting it.”

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Current Contributions

Despite the contraction of work with girls and young women, as it was in the 1980s, there are some key organisations making a huge contribution to the women's movement in Scotland today, through a variety of activities designed to champion girls and young women with youth work, whilst staying relevant to young people today.

YWCA Scotland

YWCA Scotland has developed into the hugely successful Young Women's Movement. It is a feminist organisation that is part of a worldwide movement of women leading change.¹⁷⁹ Their vision is a world where every woman can shape her own life journey and fulfil her potential, where the voices of women are heard, respected and celebrated. Typically working with girls and young women aged 16-30, they encourage people to speak out when women are valued less than men. Like feminist youth workers of the past, they facilitate the process by which girls and young women can question the values, beliefs and traditions that hold women back.¹⁸⁰

"Too often, women don't believe in themselves. We're told to be smaller, quieter."

YWCA Scotland

The Young Women's Movement

YWCA Scotland are also working to revive and re-ignite women and girls only spaces through their projects and programmes, in groups and online, and within their organisation. In these spaces, they nurture an empowering cycle of learning and leadership. Their 'Safe Spaces' model has been used internationally and, more recently, in Scotland the organisation has brought the model up to date.

"It's not about being the best at these safe spaces. They are places where young women can express themselves and be respected. Having a space like that is really important. It's all about holding that space."

YWCA Scotland

The Young Women's Movement

YWCA Scotland – The Young Women's Movement undertakes a variety of projects aimed at helping to shape the life journeys of girls and young women, for example, they have been conducting original research, The Status of Young Women Report, which explores the realities of life for young women in

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Scotland. Another example is work they are doing in Glasgow with refugee or asylum seeking young women. Reaching around 500 young women a year in Glasgow they support these women to integrate into society in such ways as teaching them about the history of Glasgow or how to open a bank account.

“We encourage women and girls to find their own voice and speak out confidently when women are valued less than men. We explore our personal and shared stories together. We question the values, beliefs and traditions that hold us back.”

YWCA Scotland The Young Women’s Movement

“People who challenge single sex spaces or who can’t see the need for young women to have their own space underestimate the challenges young women face. They don’t see the bigger picture or what they are having to go through.”

YWCA Scotland The Young Women’s Movement

“We are the oldest women’s organisation in Scotland and the largest in the world. We are the ones who take young Scottish women’s voices to international platforms such as the UN, the Human Rights Council, and the Scottish Parliament. We’re a heavyweight. But most importantly, we walk the talk in terms of putting young women in leadership positions – be it on our board, advisory panels or senior level. Even all of our researchers for the Status of Young Women Report were young women.”

YWCA Scotland

The Young Women’s Movement

LGBT Youth Scotland

LGBT Youth Scotland is the largest youth and community-based organisation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Scotland. The charity's mission is to empower LGBT people and the wider community so that they are embraced as full members of Scottish family homes, schools and in every community. Their direct work with young people operates from a youth work/ youth-led approach. The contribution to the women's movement is that they have highlighted issues for lesbian, bisexual and transgender young women, providing a space for them through women-only youth sessions. Many of these specific young women's groups are run in Edinburgh and Glasgow.¹⁸¹

“LGBT Youth Scotland provides a space for young people to be who they feel comfortable to be. We have at points in our history had specific groups for young women and that's very much come from those young women themselves and women in our organisation who have been very much part of the women's movement in Scotland.”

LGBT Youth Scotland

LGBT Youth Scotland places a great deal of importance on listening to young women and understanding the issues young lesbian, bisexual and transgender women are facing. They then work to communicate these issues with partner organisations, for example, through direct work with young people and through research they have carried out, they have found that young lesbian and bisexual women feel they experience a sense of invisibility in life.

“Our youth work makes a real contribution in terms of our partnership work with organisations but also to challenge some of the invisibility about lesbian and bisexual women and making sure that young women are a visible part of what we do and do feel included.”

LGBT Youth Scotland





Another contribution that LGBT Youth Scotland, and historically the gay and lesbian movement, has made to the women's movement is a further understanding and challenging of concepts of gender, specifically of binary and non-binary gender identities.

“We have helped young people to challenge binary notions of male and female, or to just challenge what we mean by gender because a lot of the discrimination that LGBT young people face happens when they step outside of what is accepted as the normal behaviour of a young man or a young woman. It's blowing apart these stereotypes although this is not a new thing. The LGBT movement has contributed a lot to gender equality historically, and to the women's movement. It's just in a different form now.”

LGBT Youth Scotland

Another initiative making a contribution to the women's movement is Feminist Webs; a UK wide online and real world 'women and girls work space' that acts as an archive and a resource for practitioners, volunteers and young women involved in youth work with young women.¹⁸² The organisation promotes women's rights and focuses on women's experiences.

Crucially, it puts intersectionality at the core of its purpose and works with people from all generations, communities, races, sexualities, classes and faiths.¹⁸³

Finally, the Scottish Youth Parliament (SYP) is another excellent example of youth work's contribution to the women's movement.¹⁸⁴ The SYP is the democratically elected voice of Scotland's young people. There are many girls who are politically active in this organisation and campaign on important issues young people feel strongly about. For example, the 'Love Equally' campaign, SYP's campaign for marriage equality, won campaign of the Year at the Scottish Charity of the Year Awards, and proudly contributed to the Scottish Government's historic decision to legalise same-sex marriage in Scotland.¹⁸⁵

CASE STUDY

Girl Guides

The Girl Guides have continued to successfully adapt to the times and put girls and young women at the heart of what they do. In 1999, the Girl Guides updated their programme, which had not been revised since 1968, as they realised it ceased to be relevant. In 2000, the Girl Guides invested in extensive research to try to understand what girls were like in current times.¹⁸⁶ The research was a major study of girls aged 11-17 across the UK, looking at aspirations, career choices, role models, relationships, personal safety, body image, lifestyle today and technology. It found that teenage girls at the turn of the millennium were confident in their abilities, but were concerned about their financial future and their bodies. It also found a high degree of fear around sexual violence. Their work helped to obtain a further understanding on girls and young women and develop a new generation of active women citizens, which can be seen as a substantial contribution to the women's movement.

“A really positive example of youth work’s contribution to the women’s movement is the Girl Guides because it was about campfires, going away on residentials, women being empowered to decide things such as what they were going to do, what badges they were going to go for. And actually, to take action that promoted voice or helped to develop skills.”

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For example, the Girl Guides have been putting young women’s voices at the heart of what they do, particularly since the early 2000s, through the direction of Liz Pitcairn, the Scottish Chief Commissioner from 2002 to 2007. Through their research and peer educator system, the experiences and views of young women are central to the organisation’s continued success and relevance.

In 2016, Girlguiding Scotland introduced a campaign called ‘WOWwoman’ to encourage girls and young women to share who makes them say, ‘wow’, and explore what it means to be a role model.¹⁸⁷ Further research they had conducted found that less than half of girls aged 11-16 felt inspired by a women role model. It also found that only 35% of girls and young women

“The Guides have been the largest organisation for girls in Scotland and always has been. We’ve had to evolve and move with the times and listen to the girls. I passionately believed that our girls should have a voice. That’s why we set up our peer educator system where we have a woman under 30 at every committee meeting and we have two representatives at the Scottish Youth Parliament.”

Former Chief Commissioner for Scotland, Girl Guides

aged 17-21 believed men and women had the same chance of succeeding in their chosen jobs. Backed by First Minister Nicola Sturgeon, the campaign aimed to tackle concerns around a lack of role models and gender equality. It also aimed to encourage girls to see themselves as the leaders of tomorrow and proved that once again youth work is making a huge contribution to the women’s movement.¹⁸⁸

The advances gained through the women’s movement had an impact

on the free time of women volunteers, as women were working more but still undertaking the domestic work at home, to fulfil the stereotypical role of a wife and mother, there was very little time for leisure and to participate in youth work. For example, the Girl Guides began to notice that there were fewer Guide Leaders volunteering their time and, as a result, participation in the Guides decreased somewhat, largely due to the shrinking pool of women leaders available. This is also true of informal youth work and the wider voluntary sector.

“There are waiting lists for girls who want to get into Guiding and we can't take them because we haven't got the volunteers and that's down to the changing role of women I think. Women are kind of squeezed at both ends, they've got to be mothers, they've got to go back to work, they've got to run their families and therefore their time is heavily pressured. How do you find 2-3 hours to go out and do guiding? And it's not 2-3 hours. If you run a unit you have preparation, you might be taking them away to camp, which is the whole weekend. So, it's getting harder for women to be able to volunteer. It's not maybe that they don't want to do it.”

Former Chief Commissioner of Scotland, Girl Guides

CASE STUDY



GirlGuiding Scotland in Ghana

Pioneering Girl Guide Morna Ferguson blazed a trail for the Guides in Scotland to travel to Ghana, in order to volunteer and help with local communities. This initiative was very successful as dozens of expeditions were undertaken to Ghana over the subsequent 25 years. The girls who went on these trips gained invaluable life experience and confidence, for example, in one project the Guides helped build a school and, therefore, learned practical building skills. Many of these girls have gone onto be successful such as Claire Cameron, who having seen the impact of malaria in Ghana, is now a leading specialist in Tropical Diseases. Liz Pitcairn, former Chief Commissioner of Scotland's daughter also went to Ghana and spoke of incredible life changing experiences that helped to shape the person she is. Morna herself went onto become a Head Teacher and paid tribute to her success in life to her experiences as a Guide.

*"Women were nothing
were they...now you see
them up beside the
men, quite capable."*

**Former Senior Member of
Girl Guides**

Sport, Girls and Youth Work

Sport has always been a contested ground for girls and young women in the UK. Traditionally, boys would be encouraged to play football and girls would be encouraged to do dancing. Feminist youth workers in the 1980s sought to address these gendered stereotypes and offer girls a choice of different activities in girls only sessions. For example, LGBT Youth Scotland organised a girls' football team in Glasgow at the request of the girls themselves. Indeed, girls' and women's football has grown significantly in the last 20-25 years. The Scottish Women's Football Association organised girls' leagues all across Scotland and is now part of the Scottish Football Association. This grassroots youth work took place in the form of local teams and volunteers giving up their time and encouraging girls and young women to participate in football.

Youth Scotland, through its hugely popular 'Girls On The Move' programme, has been funding and supporting projects that provide opportunities for young women to participate in sport and physical activity, and enable young women to gain the skills and experiences needed to lead activities within their own communities.¹⁸⁹ Varied in its reach, 'Girls On the Move' is an excellent example of the widespread nature of feminist youth work practice and how it influences decision makers in present day youth work.



Girls' Work in 2017



Whilst youth work is now predominantly done in a mixed sex setting, there is also widespread acceptance of girls and young women only activities as and when they take place, as they have become part of the mainstream service. Youth work has become more inclusive, better equipped on equality issues and no longer as obviously about boys and young men only. However, as society has not progressed far enough in terms of gender roles, it is still the case that boys and young men will dominate youth club settings and girls will stand by and watch.

“If you walk into any youth club today you’ll still get boys taking over the place, be it on the computer games or on the pool tables. They just assume the space is for them or maybe that’s just what they think they have to do as boys.”

Senior Youth Development Worker

“I feel now that attitudes have taken a step back and we could almost go back again and start girls’ groups once more because of the attitudes of the young men towards young women. They seem to be getting worse. If you don’t behave and look in a certain way for you there’s no hope for you; it’s all about how you look, the body image thing.”

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

“Every time we had the girls’ groups at the school the boys would come in and bang on the doors.”

**YWCA Scotland
The Young Women’s Movement**



It may be the case that there is a need once more to create more girls and young women spaces to better meet the needs of young women in light of the issues they face today.

“I think we have gone full circle. We don’t do a lot of dedicated girls’ work anymore, maybe it was of its time in the sense that there was a strong feminist movement, feminist discourse, and now it doesn’t exist. But in a way, it does still exist because a lot of young women are expressing feminist views, in different ways, on social media, and maybe through other stuff that they are involved in. I mean, youth clubs are not run in the same way as they were before. I think the need is still there.”

**Mini Focus Group
with Former Youth Workers**

“If we could recreate, reinvigorate the feminist conversation then I think a lot of good things would come from that.”

Academic, Community Education

Indeed, there is more openness than ever now towards the exploration of masculinity and separate youth work with boys in the statutory sector, going further than just football. It is also possible that the new concern for boys, especially in relation to mental health and suicide, and the renewed crime and disorder agenda, which affects boys disproportionately, can be seen as an opportunity to press once again for a vision of work with young people that takes gender dynamics seriously, treating boys and girls, young women and young men, equally.¹⁹⁰

Summary

Youth work has made a substantial contribution to the women's movement over the course of its history, for example, by empowering girls and young women, challenging the status quo, and ultimately changing lives for the better.

Youth work has offered girls and young women with spaces to be, for example, to have fun, to learn new skills, and to grow in confidence. These spaces have provided an outlet for girls and young women to explore their interests and to enhance their skills and employability. In short, during the course of the history of youth work there was a movement known as the Working with Girls and Young Women Movement or the Girls Work Movement.

Beginning with informal education and the rise of single sex clubs of the early 20th century, youth work was a mass movement that contributed to the development of the skills and abilities of thousands of girls and young women across Britain. With the introduction of mixed sex youth work, the Girls Work Movement declined. Society had become entrenched in sexism and this permeated into youth work. In some ways, youth work was guilty of reproducing sexist patterns that did not serve girls and young women. As a result, girls shrank back from activities in the youth clubs or left altogether.

In the late 1970s a feminist approach to youth work emerged largely as a result of the wider Women's Liberation Movement and it precipitated a resurgence of the Work with Girls and Young Women Movement. It reflected a feminist revolution in society at

the time with elements of punk anti-establishment culture being of influence. Importantly, it interpreted the women's movement practically for the benefit of working class girls and young women.

The rise of feminist youth work in the late 1970s helped to kick start youth work into being a positive source of opportunity for girls and young women once more. Feminist youth work helped to provide youth work services in a time where a generation of girls in the 1970s and 1980s were coming up against barriers and sexist discrimination.

During this time there were two opposing elements; gender blind youth work which really meant youth work for boys and was taken to be 'real' youth work, and the inspiring and ground-breaking feminist youth work movement, which strove to improve the youth service for girls and young women in the face of adversity, making a significant contribution to the women's movement. However, much of this work was lost in the face of new ways of managing the youth service and due to the new equal opportunities discourse.

In recent years, youth work has become mixed once again within the statutory sector. Feminism is no longer a key driver of practice and funding schemes have moved away from feminist approaches. Whilst there is no longer a dedicated feminist youth work movement, and youth

work itself has changed, the voluntary sector continues to champion girls and young women only spaces and there has been some very positive activity going on for girls and young women in youth work. For example, in the work undertaken by GirlGuiding Scotland, YWCA: The Young Women's Movement, LGBT Youth Scotland, Scottish Youth Parliament and Youth Scotland. All of which have made positive contributions to the position of girls and women in Scotland.

That being said, there are still challenges that need to be addressed, some old and some new. For example:

The continued domination of boys and young men over youth work spaces.

The perpetuation of gender stereotypes and the resurgence in sexism.

Poor attitudes towards girls and young women.

Impact of modern technology on young people.

Increased sexualisation of young women, particularly in online spaces.

Young women continuing to experience significant body image issues.

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The theme of separate work has been prevalent in youth work since 1850. Historically, youth work was single sex (1850-1920s) and then girls' clubs began to accept boys. This story is told through the history of the National Organisation of Girls Clubs (1911) which began as an organisation supporting girls only clubs, specifically for girls and young women working in factories, and then it became the National Association of Youth Clubs (1961). It is now known as UK Youth, the largest national body for the youth work sector in the UK.

It may be the case that youth work provision for young people that offers single sex spaces, operating from a feminist perspective, is necessary once again and that a feminist approach to youth work is revisited. Further, youth work is in an ideal position to lead the way in challenging gender stereotypes and supporting young people to consider how gender influences their actions. Work

could be done here to increase awareness and to encourage debate among young people on the topic of gender. In future, this may also evolve into sessions that explore the ways in which gender is constructed and the subject of non-binary gender identities, such as in the work carried out by LGBT Youth Scotland.

“The Women’s Movement in Scotland is really exciting. We’re on an upswing in achieving gender equality. Many young women cite Nicola Sturgeon or Mhairi Black as role models. In the past 2 or 3 years, it’s become cool to be part of feminism. Also, we’re being challenged in new ways politically so that’s only going to add fuel to the fire.”

YWCA Scotland

The Young Women’s Movement

Appendix

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The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every receipt, invoice, and bill should be properly filed and indexed for easy retrieval. This not only helps in tracking expenses but also ensures compliance with tax regulations.

In the second section, the author provides a detailed breakdown of the company's financial performance over the last quarter. This includes a comparison of actual results against budgeted figures, highlighting areas of both strength and weakness. The analysis shows that while revenue has increased, operating costs have also risen, leading to a narrower profit margin.

The third section focuses on the company's strategic initiatives and their impact on the bottom line. It details the implementation of new marketing campaigns and the launch of several key products. The author notes that these efforts have resulted in a significant increase in market share and customer loyalty, which is a positive indicator for long-term growth.

Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the overall financial health and a set of recommendations for the upcoming period. The author suggests that the company should continue to invest in research and development while also seeking ways to optimize operational efficiency. Regular financial reviews and transparent reporting are also recommended to ensure continued success.



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