

## Poor Relief and Welfare in Germany from the Reformation to World War I

This account of poor relief, charity, and social welfare in Germany from the Reformation through World War I integrates historical narrative and the theoretical analysis of such issues as social discipline, governmentality, gender, religion, and state formation. It analyzes the changing cultural frameworks through which the poor came to be considered as needy; the institutions, strategies, and practices devised to assist, integrate, and discipline these populations; and the political alchemy through which the middle classes attempted to reconcile the needs of the individual with those of the community. While the Bismarckian social insurance programs have long been regarded as the origin of the German welfare state, this book shows how preventive social welfare programs – the second pillar of the welfare state – evolved out of traditional poor relief, and it emphasizes the role of Progressive reformers and local, voluntary initiative in this process and the impact of competing reform discourses on both the social domain and the public sphere.

Larry Frohman is assistant professor of history at State University of New York at Stony Brook. He received his Ph.D. from the University of California, Berkeley.

# Poor Relief and Welfare in Germany from the Reformation to World War I

LARRY FROHMAN

*State University of New York at Stony Brook*



**CAMBRIDGE**  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment

978-0-521-50603-8 — Poor Relief and Welfare in Germany from the Reformation to World War I

Larry Frohman

Frontmatter

[More Information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314-321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi - 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521506038](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521506038)

© Larry Frohman 2008

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2008

First paperback edition 2011

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication data*

Frohman, Larry.

Poor relief and welfare in Germany from the Reformation to World War I / Larry Frohman

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-50603-8 (hardback)

1. Public welfare – Germany – History. 2. Poor – Services for – Germany – History.

3. Poor – Germany – History. 4. Charities – Germany – History. I. Title.

HV4098.F76 2008

362.5'56209430903-dc22 2008021194

ISBN 978-0-521-50603-8 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-18885-2 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

## Contents

<i>List of Tables and Figure</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
Introduction	I
1 Discipline, Community, and the Sixteenth-Century Origins of Modern Poor Relief	11
<i>The Desacralization of Poverty and the New Discourse on Vagrancy</i>	12
<i>Work and the Reorganization of Public Assistance</i>	16
<i>Confessional Differences and the Role of Religion in the New     Poor Relief</i>	24
2 The Rise and Fall of the Workhouse: Poor Relief in the Age of Absolutism	32
<i>Rethinking the Disciplinary Telos</i>	32
<i>The Formation of the Classical Workhouse</i>	35
<i>Beyond the Workhouse: Industriousness, Education, and the     Prevention of Poverty in the Age of Enlightenment</i>	43
3 Pauperism, Moral Reform, and Visions of Civil Society, 1800–1870	53
<i>Voluntary Associations and the Problem of Social Governance</i>	53
<i>Pauperism, the Dangerous Classes, and the Social Question</i>	58
<i>Protestant Social Conservatism and the Founding of the Inner Mission</i>	64
<i>Mobility, Modernity, and the Liberal Response to the Social Question</i>	71
4 The State, the Market, and the Organization of Poor Relief, 1830–1870	80
<i>Reform Strategies in Prussia and Southern Germany</i>	81
<i>The Elberfeld System and the Formation of a Market Society,     1850–1870</i>	87
5 The Assistantial Double Helix: Poor Relief, Social Insurance, and the Political Economy of Poor Law Reform	99

	<i>Poor Law Reform by Another Name</i>	100
	<i>Old Conflicts and New Departures</i>	109
6	New Voices: Citizenship, Social Reform, and the Origins of Modern Social Work in Imperial Germany	112
	<i>The Inner Mission, 1870–1914</i>	115
	<i>The Bourgeois Women’s Movement, the Spiritualization of Motherhood, and Social Work as Social Reconciliation</i>	116
	<i>The Caritas Association and the Reluctant Modernization of Catholic Charity</i>	133
	<i>Social Democracy: The Demonization of the Capitalist System and Pragmatic Cooperation at the Local Level</i>	138
7	The Social Perspective on Poverty and the Origins of Modern Social Welfare	141
	<i>The Social Perspective on Poverty and the Logic of Social Citizenship</i>	141
	<i>Familial Subjects – The Archimedean Point of Social Reform</i>	152
8	From Fault to Risk: Changing Strategies of Assistance to the Jobless in Imperial Germany	158
	<i>Migrant Relief, Workhouses, and the Policing of the Residuum</i>	160
	<i>From the Margins to the Center: The War on Labor Market Risk</i>	172
9	Youth Welfare and the Political Alchemy of Juvenile Justice	179
	<i>Guardianship and the Public Interest in the Private Family</i>	180
	<i>Juvenile Delinquency and the Socialization of Juvenile Justice</i>	183
10	The Social Evolution of Poor Relief, the Crisis of Voluntarism, and the Limits of Progressive Social Reform	196
11	Family, Welfare, and (Dis)order on the Home Front	206
	<i>Total War and the Transformation of Social Politics</i>	206
	<i>Female Dependence, Female Citizenship, and the Wartime Challenge to Deterrent Poor Relief</i>	210
	<i>Kriegerfrauen and the Politics of National Obligation</i>	220
	<i>Motherhood, Work, and the Grounds of Citizenship</i>	224
	<i>Disabled Veterans and the Contradictions of Therapeutic Welfare</i>	230
12	Wartime Youth Welfare and the Progressive Refiguring of the Social Contract	233
	<i>From Prevention to Promotion: Rethinking the Political Rationality of Social Assistance</i>	233
	<i>State, Society, and the Corporatist Turn in the Social Sector</i>	238
	Conclusion: The End of Poor Relief and the Invention of Welfare	243
	<i>Sources and Abbreviations</i>	249
	<i>Index</i>	251

## List of Tables and Figure

### Tables

1	Adoption of the Elberfeld System, 1853–1900	<i>page</i> 97
2	Causes of Public Assistance Cases	106
3	Women's Participation in Municipal Poor Relief, 1907–16	130

### Figure

1	Von Bodelschwingh at the Bethel bei Bielefeld workstation	165
---	---	-----

## Acknowledgments

Writing books can be a long, lonely undertaking. Although this one has taken longer than most, it has not always been lonely. I have received valuable feedback not only from fellow panelists, commentators, and audience members at the conferences where I presented parts of this work, but also from encounters with other friends and colleagues, whose causal inquiries about my project led me on more than one occasion to think through issues that often proved to be important to the larger argument but that, until that point, had lain dormant around the margins of this work in process. Just as important as the formal presentations – and here I am sure that I am simply giving expression to an open secret – were the long, rambling, riotous dinners that were the real high point of many a conference.

Many thanks to the Ann Arbor crowd for copious quantities of intellectual stimulation, useful feedback, pointed wit, and general merry-making over the years. I owe special thanks to Geoff Eley for supporting this project. I benefited from the intellectual labors of Ann Taylor Allen and E. P. Hennock, who both read the manuscript for the Press, as well as from Marcus Gräser, who carefully read the manuscript as it neared completion. I would also like to thank Eric Crahan and all of the people at Cambridge University Press, who have shown admirable degrees of professionalism and speed in the production of this book.

Here at Stony Brook, I have had a number of different institutional homes, and I am indebted in a variety of ways to friends and colleagues – categories that display a far higher degree of overlap than is the case at virtually any other university – in both the History Department and the Professional Education Program. I owe a special debt to the staff of the interlibrary loan office here. Without their assistance, this project would have taken much longer than it did, and it would have been a much more onerous undertaking. In addition, as everyone working in the field is well aware, such a book could not have been completed without the generous assistance of the staffs of the many archives that have become the repository of the institutional memory of many of the actors in the story told here. I would like to especially thank the staffs of the Archiv des

Deutschen Caritasverbandes, the Archiv des Diakonischen Werkes der Evangelischen Kirche Deutschlands, the Bundesarchiv, and the Landesarchiv Berlin for allowing me to plunder their valuable resources.

But my deepest thanks go, of course, to Young-sun Hong. I have benefited from her knowledge of the topic, her refusal to tolerate lax formulations and overly long sentences, and her willingness to bring her expertise to bear on every part of the – many – successive versions of a manuscript that dealt with a subject that, despite her best efforts, she has been unable to put behind her until now. We've been through a lot together over the past twenty years; her support has made the whole project possible; and her affection has made it worthwhile. It is to her that this book is dedicated.