



Sebastian Weinert. *100 Jahre Fürst Donnersmarck-Stiftung 1916–2016.* Berlin: Selbstverlag, 2016. 288 pp. EUR. 10.00, cloth, ISBN 978-3-00-052484-4.

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Alongside state-supported welfare, trusts and charities have been an essential pillar in the landscape of institutions, care, and services for individuals with disabilities. Disability historians have pointed to the problematic sides of this charity model of disability, ranging from paternalistic attitudes to the belief in the power of money, science, and medicine to fix disabled bodies.[1] For Germany, the historiography of such charitable organizations is still fragmented, and focuses mostly on the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In his *100 Jahre Fürst Donnersmarck-Stiftung 1916-2016*, historian Sebastian Weinert provides a detailed history of the work and paradigms of one such charitable trust, located in Berlin, throughout the twentieth century.

The first chapter traces the foundations of the Fürst Donnersmarck trust. Weinert introduces the reader to Guido Graf Henckel Fürst von Donnersmarck (1830-1916), a member of the Prussian landed aristocracy who, like many of his generation and background, made a fortune in the rapidly industrializing German economy. In early August 1914, only a few days after the outbreak of World War I, Donnersmarck established a field hospital for wounded soldiers in Berlin Frohnau. As was typical for the time, Donnersmarck emphasized the importance of work therapy to reintegrate disabled veterans into society and to re-establish

their economic functionality and independence. As Weinert points out, this emphasis granted disabled soldiers better access to rehabilitation than disabled individuals in society at large, yet also excluded those who could not fulfill the demands of modern working life. Unlike most donors whose engagement ended after the war, Donnersmarck established, in 1916, a trust for the long-term rehabilitation and care of disabled soldiers. The Donnersmarck trust's operational business, however, was delayed and hindered by the political and financial insecurities throughout the Weimar Republic and the Nazi years. Weinert thus describes the trust's early years mainly as an institutional nonhistory, which might be enlightening for local historians, but leaves the reader whose interests are in disability or economic history rather lost.

The subsequent chapters address the trust's changing work and identity in the years of rebuilding and economic boom from 1945 to 1970. In particular, Weinert points to the shift from the early focus on disabled veterans to people with disabilities generally. By the early 1950s, the trust began operating several homes for disabled people that provided innovative care inspired by the principles of group therapy and rehabilitation toward self-care.

The 1970s and 1980s were marked by the expansion and reorganization of the trust's rehabilitation services. This mirrored larger changes in approaches to disability, from traditional, paternalistic care to partnership between care-givers and people with disabilities. This shift in paradigms emerged from a clash between an older generation of staff members operating with a traditional, more paternalistic, and clerical notion of charity, and the upcoming generation of academically trained professionals who introduced the ideals of self-determination and self-care into the trust's homes and institutions. Here, Weinert mentions in passing the influence of the German disability movement, a topic that would have merited much more attention, both at this point and throughout the book. Weinert also explores the trend toward deinstitutionalization and ambulant systems of care, tying these developments to the contemporary criticism of institutions for disabled and mentally ill individuals, and to the growing economic pressure toward establishing cheaper forms of care. This economization also enticed the Donnersmarck trust to involve itself in a number of business venues that provided employment to individuals with disabilities.

In the final two chapters, covering the 1990s and early 2000s, Weinert describes the effects of the neoliberalization of German social welfare on the availability of care and support. He begins exploring the delay between changes in disability policies and their institutional realization, yet here as elsewhere, his analysis is lost in the operational details of the Donnersmarck trust.

In the introduction, Weinert began to sketch out an analytical framework drawing from disability history, entrepreneurial history, and the history of charitable trusts. He briefly picks up these themes in the conclusion, yet in the chapters in between, this framework is sacrificed for the sake of an overly detailed and strictly chronological retelling of the trust's history. Perhaps these were the specifications Weinert had to meet. Yet

as a classical chronology much more than analytic historiographic work, *100 Jahre Fürst Donnersmarck-Stiftung* remains of limited use to the reader interested in gaining a better understanding of German disability history and policy. One may hope that the author will have a chance to offer a deeper analysis through other outlets and publications.

Note

[1]. For example, see Allison C Carey, *On the Margins of Citizenship: Intellectual Disability and Civil Rights in Twentieth-Century America* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009); Sheila C Moeschen, "Suffering Silences, Woeful Afflictions: Physical Disability, Melodrama, and the American Charity Movement," *Comparative Drama* 40, no. 4 (2011): 433-454; and Theresa R Richardson, *The Century of the Child: The Mental Hygiene Movement and Social Policy in the United States and Canada* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989).

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