

Fellows

Jill Lewis

Stadt Wien/IFK_Fellow

Duration of fellowship

01. March 2013 bis 30. June 2013

Jill Lewis

PROJECT TITLE

Connecting Women: The Life and Work of Käthe Leichter

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The daughter of a middle-class Viennese Jewish family, Käthe Leichter was active in the German and Austrian revolutions and worked with Max Weber, Otto Bauer, Joseph Schumpeter, Paul Lazarsfeld, Marie Jahoda and Otto Neurath. She founded the Women's Section of the Vienna Chamber of Labour, setting up a team of 160 female intellectuals and trade-unionists, who interviewed thousands of working-class women. Their findings constitute the first detailed analyses of the lives of working women. An active opponent of Austrian fascism, she was arrested by the Gestapo in May 1938 and was killed in the Bernburg "Euthanasia" Centre in 1942, an early victim of Nazi experiments in gassing. Much has been written about her death, but less about her life. The purpose of this research is to examine Leichter's life and work as a political activist, sociologist, economist and journalist, setting this in the intellectual and political turmoil of Europe in the First World War and the interwar decades.

CV

Jill Lewis's area of research specialization is twentieth-century Austrian history, in particular the political and social history of the First and Second Republics and the influence of socialism and fascism on Austrian political culture.

Publications

Selected Publications: *Workers and Politics in Occupied Austria*, Manchester 2007; *Fascism and the Working Class in Austria, 1918–1938: the Failure of Labour in the First Republic*, London 1991.