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*Social Policy Analysis and Practice.* Thomas M. Meenaghan, Keith M. Kilty, and John G. McNutt.

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sperm and eggs be used to create a child? Brashier also briefly addresses human cloning and takes a fatalistic but practical position. Human cloning, he believes, is inevitable, and states should, therefore, pass laws regulating cloning to protect the children produced.

Brashier addresses controversial issues in an informed, articulate, and thoughtful manner. His book raises issues which will undoubtedly confound legislatures for decades to come. It will be a useful starting point for legislators facing the daunting task of resolving those issues. But the book is also very accessible to those who work in the social services. It is fine addition to the library of anyone wishing to provide financially for their families.

*Karen Jones-Mason, University of California, Berkeley*

Thomas M. Meenaghan, Keith M. Kilty and John G. McNutt, *Social Policy Analysis and Practice*. Chicago, IL: Lyceum Books, 2004. \$32.95. [January 31, 2005].

Social work and social policy are often presented as disparate fields. Many commentaries stress their divergent focus, separate methodologies and different normative commitments. However, the two have close links which can be traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup>-century. Despite social work's individualistic focus and concern with treatment, the profession's founders were mindful of wider social problems and of the need for interventions that transcended casework and brought national resources to bear on these problems. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the link between social work and social policy strengthened as governments expanded the social services and provided an organizational and institutional framework within which social work practice could be pursued. Today, social policy is regarded as a key element of social work, and social work students are more exposed to social policy issues than before.

This book focuses on social policy practice which is a subfield of social policy concerned with the mechanics of policymaking, the implementation of policy decisions and the evaluation of outcomes. As such it comes closest to integrating the two fields, specifically linking social work's professional commitments with the demands of policymaking, administration and outcome as-

assessment. However, the book is not narrowly concerned with these issues and it presents policy practice in a wider social and political context. The first part of the book is designed to frame the discussion by examining the role of the helping professions in this wider context. The authors point out that social policy analysis takes place within a cultural and ideological climate and that the helping professions cannot ignore the broader societal forces that impinge on their work. On the other hand, they reject the idea that the helping professions are inevitably shaped by these wider forces and believe instead that a commitment to scientific inquiry can promote the formulation and implementation of objective and rational responses to social problems. Part II of the book is concerned with the concept of human need and with understanding populations at risk. Part III specifically addresses issues of policy analysis and practice focusing respectively on needs assessment and program evaluation methods. Two chapters are devoted to each topic and the authors are careful to explain the limitations of these methods as well as other issues that affect needs assessment and program evaluation activities.

The chapters in this book are wide-ranging and discursive and some readers may feel that too little attention is given to the technical aspects of policy analysis and practice. Part I of the book, which contains almost a half of the chapters, is particularly general and while it raises important issues, students may find that it detracts from a detailed explanation of what policy analysis and practice actually entails. Nevertheless there is much in the book that will be of interest to students, educators and practitioners. It is well written and accessible and should be a helpful addition to the literature in the field.