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BOOK NOTES

Michael B. Fabricant and Steve Burghardt. *The Welfare State Crisis and the Transformation of Social Service Work*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1992. \$42.50 hardcover, \$16.50 papercover.

The damaging impact of the Reagan era and its policies on the human services has been well documented. Numerous studies have shown how budget cuts, the increased privatization and commercialization of programs, and the greater use of purchase of services contracting have limited the ability of public agencies to serve those in need. Introduced ostensibly to promote greater efficiency and to enhance "value for money", there is little evidence that these changes have met their intended objectives. Today, the problems of poverty are greater than ever before, and few social policy analysts believe that the retrenched welfare state has responded effectively to social need.

While research into the impact of the radical right's policies on the poor and deprived abound, the affects of these changes on the providers of the social services has been neglected. By focusing on this issue, Fabricant and Burghardt have made a major and novel contribution to the literature. They show, often in poignant detail, how dedicated professionals, civil servants, voluntary workers and managers in both the public and not-for-profit sectors have struggled to protect their clients in the face of severe budgetary reductions and other resource constraints. Their findings contrast sharply with the currently fashionable belief that those in public service are motivated exclusively by self-interest. Not only do they provide an alternative to Public Choice's ungenerous view of human nature, but shed important light on the way the social services have attempted to cope with unimaginable fiscal and managerial difficulties. This is an important book which addresses a neglected topic of significance for the study of social policy.

F. Ellen Netting, Peter M. Kettner and Steven L. McMurtry. *Social Work Macro Practice*. New York: Longman, 1993. \$35.50 hardcover.

The term 'macro-practice' has been bandied about in social work circles for some years but it has not been satisfactorily