



**WESTERN
MICHIGAN**
UNIVERSITY

The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare

Volume 21
Issue 1 *March*

Article 26

March 1994

Human Services in Contemporary America. Paul Scmolling Jr.,
Merrill Youkeles and William R. Burger.

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw>



Part of the Social Work Commons

Recommended Citation

(1994) "*Human Services in Contemporary America.* Paul Scmolling Jr., Merrill Youkeles and William R. Burger.," *The Journal of Sociology & Social Welfare*: Vol. 21: Iss. 1, Article 26.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15453/0191-5096.2129>

Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/jssw/vol21/iss1/26>

This Book Note is brought to you by the Western Michigan University School of Social Work. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.



and private programs. As the editors of this book reveal, the United States Federal government administers no less than seventy five programs that provide assistance to poor people. These programs include both monetary and non-cash benefits such as food stamps, housing and medical care and account for more than \$200 billion in annual expenditures. While these programs may be intelligible to those in legislative and administrative authority, the editors contend that they are wasteful, duplicative and friendly to their users.

Jennings and Zank argue that the current vogue for welfare reform, should be accompanied by a major reform of the system itself. Coordination is a cardinal problem that needs to be urgently addressed. Exploring various aspects of this issue, the contributors to this book examine coordination at the federal, state and local levels and discuss issues as diverse as the role of the presidency and Congress in coordination, strategies for local level service coordination, planning human service delivery systems in the states and efforts on the part of the states to facilitate better coordination of federal programs. The book makes a significant contribution to enhancing service coordination and increasing the efficiency of the human services in a increasingly fragmented welfare state.

Paul Scmolling Jr., Merrill Youkeles and William R. Burger.
Human Services in Contemporary America. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks-Cole Publishing Co., 1993. \$42.75 hardcover.

Although enrollments in schools of social work and human services programs declined significantly during the early 1980s, there has been a significant resurgence of interest in these fields. Today, enrollments at schools of social work are buoyant, and many more undergraduates who do not intend to pursue a career in social work are taking elective courses in the human services.

There is an obvious need for good textbooks which not only orient students towards the field but which inform and engender a better understanding of the subject. Scmolling, Youkeles and Burger have succeeded in writing a good introductory text which covers a very wide subject matter and manages to summarize the salient topics of the field. Some instructors will view the brevity of some of the chapters as an disadvantage but

others will welcome the authors' ability to condense a huge subject within a limited space. In addition, the book contains some useful chapters that deal with neglected issues. The chapter on prevention is particularly innovative and helpful. The book is recommended as an introductory first year text particularly for students who are majoring in subjects other than social work.