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The Welfare of Children. Duncan Lindsey.

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politicians are not only reluctant to provide resources to fund the social services but are becoming insistent that social expenditures be justified in terms of efficiency criteria. Although many social workers and social service personnel are suspicious about the motives of those who call for accountability, it offers an opportunity to rigorously determine which interventions work and do in fact meet their stated objectives. As the editors of this book demonstrate, evaluation research can be used effectively by policy makers and administrators to test and identify effective solutions to current social ills.

Connor and Black have produced a useful collection of articles dealing with performance evaluation in the British social services such as the National Health Services, the Local Authority Social Services Departments and the central government agencies. Although the book focuses on Britain, its message has relevance to the United States where similar demands for accountability are being made. The book will, therefore, be of value not only to readers who have an interest in comparative social welfare but to those who are involved in evaluation research and quality assurance in the social services. The book contains a particularly useful section on consumer involvement in outcome research. Other topics include staff appraisal, the role of inspection in the social services, personal supervision, and responses to consumer complaints. The book shows that there are many issues, in evaluation research in both Britain and the United States that require extensive discussion and further analysis.

Duncan Lindsey, *The Welfare of Children*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1994. \$29.95 hardcover.

Duncan Lindsey's book makes a major contribution to current discussions on child welfare. It not only provides a thorough survey of the field, but offers an incisive critique of the way the system currently fails to meet its declared objective of enhancing the welfare of children.

Lindsey's thesis is a simple but important one. He argues that the current child welfare system has focused excessively on the problem of child abuse and ignored the far more widespread

problem of child poverty and social deprivation. Child welfare's focus on child abuse has not only resulted in the deployment of resources to deal with a relatively small proportion of children in need but there is little evidence to show that these services have been effective in reducing the incidence of abuse. While large sums of money have been spent on child protective services, little is done to meet the needs of those who are not abused but who grow up in poverty, who have inadequate access to health care, whose educational opportunities are limited and who live in unsatisfactory housing. This larger group, Lindsey argues, is equally deserving of help. While poor children may not be neglected or abused by their parents, the social conditions under which they live are tantamount to societal abuse and neglect.

The book contains several important policy proposals. Like many other commentators on current social conditions in the United States, the author believes that concerted action is needed to address the pressing problems of poverty and deprivation which afflict many children and their families today. This requires economic and social policies that create jobs among the poor, foster improved housing and promote better education and health care. Lindsey argues for a re-orientation of the child welfare system. Problems of abuse and neglect should, he believes, be dealt with by the criminal justice rather than child welfare system. The author also recommends the introduction of a new system of income support for children in the form of an individualized social savings account which can be used to pay for education and other needs. Based on the 'asset' approach, it offers a useful means of addressing the problem of child poverty. Like the other policy proposals contained in this important book, this one deserves to be widely discussed. The book itself should be widely read and debated.

Martin Davies (Ed.), *The Sociology of Social Work*. New York: Routledge, 1994. \$17.95 papercover, \$23.95 hardcover.

In the profession's early days, social work enjoyed a close association with sociology. Social work drew theoretical sustenance from sociology and social work research was substantially