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## *Poverty and the Underclass: Changing Perceptions of the Poor in America.* William A. Kelso.

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be widely read. Hopefully it will stimulate further analyses based on the subjectivist tradition.

William A. Kelso, *Poverty and the Underclass: Changing Perceptions of the Poor in America*. New York: New York University Press, 1994. \$34.95 hardcover.

Countless books and academic papers have been written on the subject of poverty in the United States. Most experts agree that poverty is a huge and apparently intractable problem. Many also believe that compared to the other advanced industrial nations, America has a higher incidence of poverty, its consequences are more severe and it has been singularly unresponsive to policy solutions.

William Kelso offers one of the most wide-ranging analyses of poverty in America to date. This prodigious work provides information on nearly all aspects of the problem. It provides a current statistical profile of the poor; examines theories of the nature and origins of poverty; and analyzes policy approaches for its amelioration. The comprehensiveness of the book will be appealing, particularly to students, who will thank the author for squeezing so much useful information into a single volume.

However, Kelso is not only concerned with summarizing the vast literature on the subject but seeks to make his own contribution to the poverty debate. He contends that the problem of poverty has mistakenly been attributed to single causes and that this simplistic analysis has effectively stymied the formulation of workable policy solutions. He also contends that ideologically determined views of poverty have provided an ineffective basis for action. To make matters worse, these perspectives have been reversed over the years. The traditional liberal view that poverty can be eradicated through employment and upward mobility has been replaced by a subsidization approach which seeks to mitigate its worse excesses. On the other hand, the conservative view that poverty cannot be solved has been replaced with a belief that employment and increased opportunities can abolish want. These shifting ideological perspectives have confused efforts to reduce poverty and need to be addressed if the poverty problem is to be effectively addressed.

Although some will question the validity of Kelso's own analytical contribution, this book provides a helpful overview of the subject of poverty and should be widely read not only in academic but policy circles as well.

Lester M. Salamon, *Partners in Public Service: Government-Nonprofit Relations in the Modern Welfare State*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995. \$55.00 hardcover, \$16.95 papercover.

The nonprofit sector has not received as much attention in social policy research as it deserves. Despite its importance, social policy analysts are still primarily concerned with public provision and the role of the state in promoting human welfare. The neglect of the so-called 'Third Sector' by academic investigators is, as Salamon points out, one of the reasons that popular beliefs about voluntary action remain inaccurate. For example, it is widely assumed that with the expansion of the modern welfare state, voluntary social services have shrunk in size and importance. However, as Salamon demonstrates, the growth of the public sector has been matched by a proportionate increase in the size and importance of the nonprofit sector. The reason for this is the close integration of the two. The public sector makes extensive use of the nonprofit sector to deliver services, and it finances a great deal of voluntary effort.

Salamon argues persuasively for a better understanding of the way the nonprofit and public social services sectors are integrated and how they cooperate to enhance people's welfare. His book makes a major contribution to this task. It documents the nature and size of the nonprofit sector in the United States, reviews the extent of the services it provides, and examines its relationship with public provision in considerable depth. Despite the fact that much of the material has been published previously in the form of separate articles, the book is well structured, coherent and comprehensive. In addition, the book contains an informative chapter dealing with international developments. This is one of the best books on voluntary social welfare. It may become the definitive work on the subject and should be widely consulted.