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Miles to Go: A Personal History of Social Policy. Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

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pose a major challenge to the profession's leadership to identify ways in which social work can renew its commitment to the most vulnerable groups in society. This useful book should be read by all social workers and by anyone else who is interested in the field of social work today.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Miles to Go: A Personal History of Social Policy*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996, \$22.95 hardcover.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan knows a great deal about social policy. He has been personally involved in the field as an academic, administrator and politician, and has served both as an architect of social policy innovations and a critic of unsound proposals. An opportunity to read his personal history and to gain insights into his experiences is thus an exciting one.

Unfortunately, the book disappoints largely because it does not meet the expectations of its title. Instead of providing a chronically structured account of the author's long involvement in social policy, it consists of a loosely organized collection of observations and reflections on a number of social policy issues. Some of the chapters read like speeches, others consist of peregrinating remarks, and some contain homilies which exhort social policy makers to engage more vigorously in systematic research into the effectiveness of social programs. Others are prophetic warning of the troubles that are likely to arise from the demolition of social safety nets such as AFDC.

This is not to deny that the book provides fascinating insights into Moynihan's personal views and experiences. His recurrent concern about the disintegration of the nuclear family is repeated in many places and his insistence on scientific evaluation is apposite. Perhaps the most intriguing section of the book deals with the recent struggle over welfare reform. With fervor, Moynihan persuades us that the transfer of responsibility for poor relief to the states will not result in greater programmatic flexibility, increased local control and improved services but in a dramatic increase in poverty and deprivation among the nation's children. However, very few members of his party voted with him against the Republican welfare reform bill. This is not the first time that Moynihan's prognostications have been ignored. But, as social

policy analysts know only too well, his predictions have proved to be correct before. For this reason alone, his book needs to be read and heeded.

Harry C. Boyte and Nancy N. Kari, *Building America: The Democratic Promise of Public Work*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1996. \$54.96 hardcover, \$18.95 papercover.

Despite corporate downsizing and the export of jobs to low income regions of the world, work remains central to the lives of the vast majority of the nation's citizens. Most of the population engages in regular employment and most find fulfillment in their careers. Having a job is a key element of modern life.

Despite the importance of work, the authors of this book claim that countless people today are dissatisfied with their jobs. Work has become a means to an end rather than a fulfilling life experience. Employment is the way income is generated to pay bills and meet the many other mundane demands of everyday life. Frustrated with their jobs, many people are alienated and disengage from those communal activities which are the essence of a vibrant democracy. No wonder that more and more people withdraw from civic affairs and fail to vote in elections.

To reinvigorate American democracy, Boyte and Kari urge that public work again be given the emphasis that it once enjoyed. When groups of citizens join together to improve their communities through communal labor, they become socially committed and responsive to the needs of others. Providing an interesting account of the history of public works in the United States, the authors claim that democratic institutions can be improved through civic engagement in public work and that society as a whole will benefit. This claim is further supported by positive accounts of people's involvement in a wide variety of public work activities today.

In addition to its interesting message, the book provides a useful account of the New Deal's job creation programs as well as many examples of current public work projects. However, it would have benefited from a more extensive discussion of the role of public work in social welfare. The so-called welfare reforms of recent years have placed great emphasis on moving needy people off government social programs and into productive work. In