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## Book Reviews

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## Book Reviews

M.C. Hokenstad, S.K. Khinduka and James Midgley (Eds.) *Profiles in International Social Work*. Washington, DC: NASW Press, 1992. \$24.95 papercover.

Each evening as we sit by our television sets, our sense of sight is shocked by the social problems of the world—the starving in Somalia; racial injustice in South Africa; refugees of Bosnia, and the AIDS orphans of Uganda. Instant communication and easy travel have made the world “smaller”. We hear about the globalization of our economies and now three social work educators, Hokenstad, Khinduka, and Midgley, have edited a volume that speaks to the international nature of social problems and the social work profession.

The editors posit that social workers can learn from what our profession is doing in other countries. It is important that we examine and compare how human problems are understood and defined, how theories are developed, practice approaches strengthened, and professional development, in general, promoted.

*Profiles in International Social Work* addresses three themes: the commonality, diversity, and challenge of the social work profession throughout the world. First, social workers share much that is common: a concern for the human needs of others, humanistic values, knowledge, skill, and a striving for acceptance and legitimation. Second, the profession differs in its methodologies and approaches given unique social, economic, and cultural structures. And third, the profession faces the challenges of lack of status, complex problems, scarcity of resources, and the struggle for social justice.

Ten case studies are presented in this book, each following a similar format: historical and social context; development of social work; roles and functions; social work education; challenges and trends for the profession; and, suggested readings. We read how social workers in Chile and South Africa are in the vanguard of the fight for social justice. In Chile, the profession, weakened by the dictatorship but still a voice for

human rights, is now mediating the transition to democracy and from traditional culture to modernism. Social workers in South Africa are preoccupied with redefining their roles and priorities as they too are called upon to mediate the conflicts of moving from apartheid toward democracy.

The social work profession in all parts of the world is concerned with the condition and effects of poverty. In India, social workers traditionally have worked with governmental and non-governmental agencies dealing with labor welfare, personnel, and correctional services. Their interventive methods of choice have been casework and groupwork. Now there is a call to move away from the American model of social work practice toward a developmental perspective that integrates social work with the country's development efforts in dealing with poverty, health care, housing, and family breakdown.

The profession of social work in Uganda is challenged by the devastating effects of a civil war and the presence of 1.5 million persons with the AIDS virus. There are 25,000 children who have been orphaned because of AIDS. With limited resources, social workers meet these problems through a mixture of direct and indirect social services. In Hungary, we view an emerging profession that is reacting to the political and economic changes from a communist to a capitalist state. Social workers are struggling with ways to respond to unemployment, family breakdown, care of the elderly, and the plight of thousands of refugees and displaced persons as the old social programs and supports are abandoned.

The profession in Japan, Hong Kong, Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan are facing the consequences of rapid economic growth, the breakdown of the extended family, and the need for social policies to handle emerging social problems. Japan has one of the highest percentages of elderly in the world. Social work in these countries is reconceptualizing practice to fit their local cultures.

Finally authors write of social work in the developed nations of Great Britain, Sweden, and the United States. Conservative trends in recent years have greatly curtailed the welfare state in each of these countries. In Great Britain, the social work profession has been greatly weakened by the state's creation

of policies that emphasize regulation and control, and law and order. Similarly, the Swedish government has begun to means test and privatize services. And while the United States has a new government that promises to "put people first", major cutbacks in social programs have been made over the past dozen years. Meanwhile, the profession has become less and less influential in the development of social policy and more and more specialized in clinical practice. Social Work struggles with how to be simultaneously true to a mission of social justice and the amelioration of individual problems.

*Profiles in International Social Work* is a very informative and useful book. For teachers of policy and practice, the book contains a wealth of examples that could be used in their classes. By having policy and practice comparisons, students would be able to better understand various approaches the social problems and particular populations. The direct practitioner who works with refugees in the United States will glean from the book the importance of having practice strategies that are culturally relevant in a world that is becoming ethnically diverse.

The book raises a number of relevant issues concerning the future of social work internationally. Will the global trend of conservatism lead to a continued retreat of the welfare state? How will schools of social work adapt to the changes around them in training the next generation of practitioners? Will the search for new models of intervention be successful? And how can the generally low status of the profession be altered? Although there are few answers to these questions, the editors of this volume have performed a real service to the profession by providing the reader with an excellent theoretical basis to understand and compare social work in various countries and by identifying questions for a further exploration of international social work.

Frederick L. Ahearn, Jr.  
Catholic University of America

Richard J. Estes (Ed.): *Internationalizing Social Work Education: A Guide to Resources for a New Century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania School of Social Work, 1992. \$22.95 papercover.

International content is the Rip Van Winkle of social work education. Once lively and active, it fell into a long slumber some years ago. Memory of it was kept alive by various old-timers, but it was almost forgotten in the race to include in the curriculum every special interest group able to provoke feelings of guilt, fear or curiosity in the social work leadership. Recently, with the suddenness and urgency of the democracy movements around the globe, international content burst again into general social work consciousness. It has far to go to capture the momentum of the assorted politically correct content areas, but its prospects are improving. Those prospects have been helped significantly by the appearance in one short period of three useful curriculum guides and now, *Internationalizing Social Work Education*, edited by Richard J. Estes.

Everyone interested in this area is aware of Estes's unique and impressive contributions. Perhaps most influential has been his periodically-updated analyses of international social development, which have become the standard for such studies. In *Internationalizing Social Work Education*, Estes set himself a different task, described in the subtitle: "A Guide to Resources for a New Century". This 286-page volume is not the careful, scholarly analysis for which Estes is justly acclaimed; neither is it a curriculum guide. Rather, it is sourcebook; a reference, actually, but an unusual one. To those who associate Estes with thorough scholarship and a high order of erudition, it will offer both more and less than they are likely to expect.

The volume comprises seven sections, or "parts". Parts I, II, IV and V were written entirely or principally by Estes, with individual pieces contributed by Dorothy Van Soest and Lynne Healy. These sections consist of short essays on some aspect of the overall theme: general concepts, such as definitions, models, social policy, research, and so on; and specific topics, such as poverty, women, and hunger. Part VII is an essay by Ann Glusker, addressed to students. The rest of the collection

consists of bibliographies of books, journals and articles, along with the names (and usually addresses) of related organizations which could be fruitful sources for additional, up-to-the-minute information.

As with any edited book, the sections are uneven. Estes's essay on models of international social work education is particularly strong, an excellent demonstration of encapsulating great amounts of information in useful chart and graph form—a device used very successfully throughout the book by the other authors, as well. All the essays are followed by lists of references. Brief two or three-page commentaries introduce the special topics in Parts IV–VI, and serve as orientations to the topics. The lists of references in Part III cover 14 topics arranged alphabetically from “aging” to “substance abuse”, without introductions to any of them.

Since the book is intended as a guide to resources, the detail in the table of contents is welcome. There is no index. Following the identification of 51 “chapters” (really more like topical headings) is a directory to 28 charts and tables which cover a broad range of subjects. Yet, the detail, too, is uneven, once or twice bordering on the absurd, as in the listing of 9 “maps” which are no more than outlines of continents; rather like listing an edition of *Gulliver's Travels* which turns out to be the comic book version. Similarly, there is a full-page resume of the editor; brief lines about Van Soest and Healy, who have made distinguished contributions to the literature; and almost nothing about the many students, including Patricia Harding, a doctoral student who wrote or contributed to 14 chapters.

Obviously, there are shortcomings in this volume, but they should not be allowed to detract from its overall merit. Creativity is always risky and this book is very creative. It deals with substantive issues; with curriculum approaches; and with a wonderfully varied range of topics. It addresses problems (e.g., poverty, hunger, unemployment) and populations (e.g., women, children, political refugees) and social issues (e.g., development, privatization, human rights). It is not a text; it is a map: its use depends on where the user wants to go. Anyone with a reasonable sense of direction and even a vague notion of destination

will find this guide extremely helpful, with a place next to other valued references in one's professional library.

Charles Guzzetta  
Hunter College

Abraham Doron and Ralph Kramer. *The Welfare State in Israel: The Evolution of Social Policy and Practice*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991. \$35.50 papercover.

In writing *The Welfare State in Israel*, Abraham Doron and Ralph Kramer tell the story of one of the most overlooked features of Israeli society—the development of the social and political institutions that transformed Israel into a modern welfare state in only forty years. As such, this book is a case study designed to analyze the origins, processes, content, and consequences of social security policy in Israel.

*The Welfare State in Israel* is divided into eleven chapters. In the first chapter the authors create a contextual background by looking at Israel's size, its population, its economy, and its political structure. In the second chapter, they provide an historical overview of the Israeli welfare state. In particular, they identify five historical stages undergone by the Israeli welfare state: (1) the pre-state origins (1920–1948); (2) the second decade (1958–1967) in which the Israeli welfare state was institutionalized and formalized; (3) the third decade (1968–1977) in which there was an expansion of the welfare state in response to shifts in the distribution of power; (4) the fourth decade (1978–1990) which saw uncertainty and slowed growth in welfare functions; and (5) an overview of the social security system at the end of the 1980s.

Chapters three and four describe the changing nature of a social assistance program that served as the only form of income support in the early years of statehood. The fifth chapter discusses the establishment of a national insurance program and describes the political and legislative struggle that preceded the basic law adopted in 1953. Chapters six through nine examine the development of the major national insurance programs that

cover the elderly, children, and the unemployed. Chapter ten explores the social and economic impact of Israel's social security, including its effects on redistribution, the social structure, patterns of expenditure, and its impact on the Arab population. Chapter eleven concludes with a summary of major trends as well as some conclusions and generalizations regarding social policy in Israel.

The stated goal of Doron and Kramer's book is to provide the reader with a comprehensive understanding of the social choices made in Israel from 1948 to 1990. Specifically, the authors attempt to analyze the kinds of social policies adopted, how they evolved, how they were implemented, and the resulting changes for Israeli society. The authors were successful in this goal and the book provides a readable and interesting insight into the development of social security policy in Israel.

By using Israel as a case study, *The Welfare State in Israel* illustrates the interrelationship between economic growth and social security. This book also illustrates how a social security program is shaped in the course of a power struggle between conflicting social, political, and economic interests. On the other hand, by concentrating only on social security and related income maintenance programs the book limits itself to only one sector of the welfare state, thereby minimizing the importance of the private, voluntary social welfare sector, as well as in-kind social welfare programs such as transportation and food subsidies.

The authors begin with the question "How did the new, small, Jewish state in the Middle East succeed in developing a modern welfare state while also absorbing an unprecedented mass immigration that almost tripled its population in the first five years, develop a viable economy, and organize a defense establishment capable of fighting five wars?" While Doron and Kramer do a credible job in explaining the development of the Israeli welfare state, the complexity of Israeli society does not lend itself to easy explanations. Nor does this question allow itself to be answered within the cover of just one book. While *The Welfare State in Israel* provides an excellent examination of



Israel's social security system, it will hopefully be one of a long line of books that further explores the complex nature of Israeli social policy.

Howard Jacob Karger  
Louisiana State University

Glennerster, Howard, and Midgley, James (Eds.). *The Radical Right and the Welfare State: An International Assessment*. Savage, MD: Barnes & Noble, 1992. \$ 49.00 hardcover.

*The Radical Right and the Welfare State* is a study of radical right ideologies and political regimes of the 1980s, with particular attention to their effects on social welfare policies. The book is part of a series on international social policy and welfare edited by Stewart McPherson and James Midgley, and this volume is edited by Howard Glennerster and Midgley. Overall, it is clearly written and addresses an important and somewhat neglected topic. None of the chapters is weak; some are quite rich and informative; and the chapters generally work well as a whole.

Midgley's introductory chapter sets the stage by placing political and ideological events of the 1980s in broad theoretical perspective; and David Stoesz's and Midgley's chapter on the radical right and the welfare state brings the book's theme into focus.

Howard Glennerster's chapter on Britain reports that, despite strong anti-welfare state rhetoric, welfare spending has been resistant to major cuts. Similarly, Howard Karger's chapter on the United States finds a lack of deep impact on the social policy structure. Karger brings home the point that there has been much rhetoric and illusion, and little substance and reality in radical right politics (I am reminded of the "family values" theme of the 1992 Bush/Quayle campaign). Steen Mangen writes on the German welfare state, which he says has been cut, but without fundamental changes.

For those who are familiar with the social policy literature (where Britain, the United States, and Germany are frequently analyzed), the chapters on the somewhat less discussed

countries (Chile, Israel, and Canada) may be particularly welcome. Silvia Borzutzky's chapter on Chile offers a historical and political analysis that is highly informative. It is important to know, for example, that Chile had a long history of democracy and stable government prior to the 1973 coup and Pinochet regime. Borzutzky also provides a good discussion of the involvement of the "Chicago Boys" in Chilean economic and social policy. Karger and Menachem Monnickendam's chapter on Israel is also set in historical context. These authors report significant retrenchment of government spending for social welfare, but the roots of these changes are interpreted as more economic than ideological. Ernie Lightman's chapter on Canada emphasizes federal budget problems and federalism.

The final chapter by Glennerster concludes that the empirical record on social spending is mixed. Overall, programs for the poor have suffered most, while welfare policies for the middle class have coasted along such as before in many countries. It would be a stretch to argue that these findings indicate a dramatic departure, a new era, or even the ascendancy of a new ideology, and Glennerster does not make these claims. However, as Glennerster comments at one point, "the continuous revolution is still in process" (p. 62), and history may yet make a different judgement.

If there is a unifying theme in this volume, it is the fiscal crisis of the state in welfare capitalism. In one form or another, this shows up in five of the six cases in the book (Chile is a different situation), and it is a theme that has been pursued often in the past and across the political spectrum, from Buchanan (1977) on the right to O'Connor (1973) on the left. As Glennerster concludes in the final chapter, social policy change "had more to do with the fundamental economic changes of the time than it did with the particular set of policy prescriptions that the radical right was advancing" (p. 166).

Unfortunately, neither the underlying economic changes nor the process of radical right emergence receive as much theoretical interpretation as the reader might want. Economic strain is treated almost as an exogenous condition, when in reality a major portion of state spending in these countries has been for social policy. Also, the reader is left with questions about how

economic strain leads to radical right political emergence. The book is rich in data about this process, but it is not brought together in an interpretative framework at the end.

As Midgley says in the opening chapter, the issue is not whether the welfare state has been destroyed—clearly it has not been. But economic strain is likely to persist, and if it does, the issue is how the welfare state will evolve in the future. Karger and Monnickendam conclude with this intriguing close: “There is, of course, always the possibility that a more creative avenue will be found that increases economic productivity while ensuring the adequacy of welfare benefits. This is the task facing Israel and the rest of the industrialized world” (P. 140).

This line of thought is an intellectual departure from the commonly-accepted formulation of legitimation (through welfare spending) vs. capital accumulation (for economic growth). I too suspect that there are more creative ways to think, that is, that legitimation and accumulation need not always be in conflict. But very likely this would be a social policy structure that is quite different from Western welfare states as we have known them, and also very different from the no-social-policy-at-all prescriptions of the radical right. For those who would like to keep reading, Stoesz and Karger (1992) and Midgley (1992) begin to explore alternatives.

Michael Sherraden  
Washington University

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Bob Deacon (Ed). *The New Eastern Europe: Social Policy Past, Present and Future*. London: Sage, 1992. \$19.95 papercover.

Bob Deacon (Ed). *Social Policy, Social Justice and Citizenship in Eastern Europe*. Aldershot, England: Avebury, 1992. \$59.95 hardcover. (Distributed in the United States by Ashgate Publishing Co., Old Post Road, Brookfield, VT 05036).

Although the demise of communism in Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s will undoubtedly be remembered as an event of historical significance, its magnitude is not fully appreciated by people in the West. However, it is clear that the sudden collapse of an apparently stable political, social and economic system bolstered by enormous reserves of military power is historically momentous. The causes and consequences of the fall of communism are, of course, being thoroughly assessed by Western social scientists and the literature on the subject is growing rapidly. As more social science research focuses on the changes which have taken place, it may be possible to hazard informed guesses at the region's future. It may also be possible to formulate useful normative models which transcend the crass efforts currently underway to transfer Western economic and political approaches to societies that differ significantly in cultural and other respects from the United States.

Attempts by analysts such as Bob Deacon to examine the changes which have taken place in social policy in the region are commendable. Deacon's edited collections draw on the expertise of both Western and East European social scientists and contain useful information about the social welfare systems of the former Eastern European communist states, the changes they are currently experiencing and the future direction of their social policies.

The most interesting (and demanding) question raised in both books, concerns the future of welfare in the region. Although social scientists do not have a good record of making predictions, Deacon and his coauthors do not shrink from attempting an assessment of the changes which are likely to emerge. Generally, most of the commentators believe that a greater degree of welfare pluralism will evolve and that the previously centralized system will be replaced by greater voluntary

effort, the privatization of state provisions and the fragmentation of services.

While some of the contributors applaud this trend, Deacon offers a more cautious assessment of the disintegration of the socialist welfare system pointing out that despite its shortcomings, the system promoted ideals which progressives should seek to sustain. These ideals need to be accompanied by greater participation, accountability and the recognition of market realities, but they should not be abandoned in a headlong rush to 'Americanize' the social services. Deacon warns also of new problems which will need to be resolved. Unemployment, homelessness and similar ills will become more severe in the future. Although he does not adequately address the problem, Deacon suggests that the region's incipient nationalism and racism will affect the future welfare of the population. At the time these books were being compiled, the horrors of genocide in the former Yugoslavia were not anticipated. Indeed, one chapter dealing with Yugoslavia hardly mentions the issue. Clearly, future studies of social policy in the New Eastern Europe will have to deal more explicitly with the decomposition of these societies, and with the welfare implications of heightened ethnic tension and civil strife.

James Midgley  
Louisiana State University

John Dixon and David Macarov (Eds). *Social Welfare in Socialist Countries*. London: Routledge, 1992. \$67.50 hardcover.

For some years a number of comparative studies of social welfare in the developed market economies of the West and North have been available to social welfare analysts, social administrators, and students and practitioners of the social professions. Only more recently has there been a roughly equivalent effort at comparing and contrasting social welfare systems in other parts of the world. *Social Welfare in Socialist Countries* is one such recent effort; it focuses attention on analysis of social welfare systems and programs in the former Czechoslovakia, China, Cuba, Hungary, Poland, the former Yugoslavia, North

Korea and the former Soviet Union. This latest volume is the sixth in a series of comparative social welfare books that brings to a total fifty-five countries in Asia, The Middle East, Africa, Latin America and the Developed Market Economies that have been reviewed by John Dixon and collaborators under the Routledge label.

Following a brief preface and an introductory chapter by the editors, each of the contributors rather faithfully follows a standard format in addressing the underlying ideological environment; the historical evolution and social, political and economic context of the social welfare system; as well as the administrative structure and financing of the welfare system of the given country. Also, each chapter includes a review of the social security and personal social services programs for such groups as the aged, needy families, children, the unemployed, the handicapped and the sick and injured. Finally, each chapter concludes with an overall summary assessment of the country's social welfare system.

In the preface, Dixon and coeditor David Macarov, acknowledge the difficulties encountered in putting together this volume during a time of momentous and deep-rooted political changes in all but three of the eight countries—China, North Korea and Cuba. Consequently, most of the chapters needed to be dramatically revised and up-dated from the original. It is a credit to the authors and editors that the problems that were posed for them are not readily evident in the final publication. This reviewer found the material across the chapters to be much more even and consistent in style of presentation and readability than is often the case in such collections that draw from a dozen or so different contributors.

There are additional reasons that the system and substance of this volume makes for some easy cross-comparisons between countries. An appendix provides in outline form a chart of each country's social security and social welfare systems. Moreover, a well organized index facilitates finding information for country-to-country comparisons in the text of each chapter by page numbers. A further "plus" in the eyes of this reviewer is that most of the chapters include one or more comprehensive (and comprehensible) tables with statistical data available up to the

latter part of the 1980s in some instances. The tables contribute to the authors' abilities to compress and convey a great deal of valuable material within a relatively small space (260 pages total). In this latter regard, there is one unavoidable drawback. The rapidity with which change is taking place in many of these societies—e.g. economic reforms have contributed to at least five hundred percent inflation in the former Soviet Union in the past year—makes some of the data in the tables seriously out of date in today's terms.

The one just-mentioned shortcoming notwithstanding, this volume is a timely, carefully written, well-organized and extensively documented collaboration. It provides important baselines and insights into formal societal systems of human welfare about which most human service professionals have tended to know very little. Therefore, this book should be of value to almost anyone interested in being introduced to learning about the developments in human well-being taking place in any or all of the eight countries reviewed.

James O. Billups  
The Ohio State University

N. Ginsburg. *Divisions of Welfare: A Critical Introduction to Comparative Social Policy*. London: Sage, 1992. \$21.95 papercover.

*Divisions of Welfare* is a comparative study of modern social policy in four Western countries: Sweden, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States, and Britain. Specifically, Ginsburg examines social policy within these four countries using the categories of ideology and welfare expenditures, income maintenance policies and outcomes, racial inequalities (racism and the welfare state), women and family policies, and the health care system. Although these chapters cover the decades since World War U, they concentrate mainly on the present period. While each chapter contains a strong emphasis on factual data (gleaned largely from official government statistics), in deciding how to categorize the data the author has used his biases to illustrate themes about the origins, purposes, and outcomes of social policies, especially in the areas of class, race and gender.

Several themes emerge in *Divisions of Welfare*. First, Ginsburg approaches the comparative study of social policies in the four industrialized nations through a modified neo-Marxian lens. For example, while Ginsburg argues that a primary role of the welfare state is to resolve the economic and social consequences attendant with capitalism, he also veers away from strict Marxian dogma by emphasizing the role played by race and gender in welfare state programs.

While Ginsburg argues that the welfare state institutionalizes class, race and gender divisions, he also acknowledges that without the welfare state those inequalities would be even greater. Thus, one theme in *Divisions of Welfare* is the contradictory nature of the welfare state in both furthering and mitigating social inequalities. Another theme of this book is that social policy and welfare expenditures have been shaped by the crises, booms and slumps of capitalist economies. As such, Ginsburg contends that social policy emerges out of a continual conflict involving pressures from "above" (i.e., the established political and economic forces in power) and from "below" (i.e., the social movements that advocate for increased state services). In short, Ginsburg argues that while welfare states are shaped by the unique cultural, social and economic contexts in which they exist, they are also structured by common elements shared by all wealthy Western industrialized welfare states—a patriarchal and racially-based form of capitalism.

Any study of comparative social policy is problematic because it implicitly assumes that social scientists have developed objective measures for comparing and contrasting social policies in different nations. The variety of unique cultural, social and historical forces at work in the various nation states make such an objective analysis almost impossible, at least in strict scientific terms. Given that, most of the literature on comparative social policy fall into three camps. First is the data-based reports emanating from international organizations such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, etc. While these organizations have reworked national data and put them on a comparable basis, the reports generally contain little theory on the policy implications of the data. Another form of cross-national studies involve attempts



to develop quantitative indices and concepts for comparing welfare states. Using published and unpublished national data, researchers in these areas attempt to fashion comparative hypotheses around the performance of welfare states. These studies are limited by the extent and validity of the data as well as by the limitations of the formulations used in the analysis. The last category is qualitative analyses based on the uniqueness of each welfare state in terms of its specific evolution. *Divisions of Welfare* straddles the last two categories since it contains elements of a data-based universal welfare theory and a more or less qualitative approach.

*Division of Welfare* has several strengths. For one, it is well-written and accessible to the general reader interested in social policy. Jargon is kept within bounds, and when used it is often explained. Secondly, the four countries examined provide a good representation of the primary forms of welfare statism found in industrialized Western nations. But, the real strength of the book lies in the importance given by the author to the role played by race, class and gender in the development and implementation of welfare state programs. While feminist and anti-racist scholarship is well established within subdivisions of policy research, they still remain ghettoized in terms of mainstream social policy analysis. Ginsburg's work is one of the few attempts to take these important concerns and elevate them to a prominent position in the literature of comparative policy analysis.

While this book is well-researched and thought-provoking, it also contains certain weaknesses. For one, by focusing on class, race and gender the author has narrowed his focus too tightly, thereby overlooking other important factors that contribute to social inequality, such as the role of the New Right in redefining the social agenda. Secondly, one of the most interesting parts of the book was Ginsburg's discussion of the implications of the divisions of welfare on the past, present, and future of Western welfare states. Unfortunately, this important subject was discussed in the concluding chapter, which was only three and one-half pages in length.

*Divisions of Welfare* can be used as a secondary textbook for social policy classes that require a concise, comparative analysis of international welfare states. It is also highly recommended for the policy analyst and for the general interest reader.

Howard Jacob Karger  
Louisiana State University

