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## *The Economic Impact of the Welfare State and Social Wage: The British Experience.* Rafat Fazeli.

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should be consulted by anyone concerned with issues of aging and retirement today.

Pranab Chatterjee, *Approaches to the Welfare State*. Washington DC: NASW Press, 1996. \$34.95 papercover.

The literature on the welfare state is now extensive. Numerous historical studies, commentaries and expositions concerning the reasons for the proliferation of state involvement in social welfare have been published. However, despite this plethora of information, much of the available literature is narrowly focused on Europe and North America. Studies of social policy in the welfare state have not paid adequate attention to other countries.

In this useful book, Pranab Chatterjee seeks to fill the gap by discussing social policy issues with reference to other countries. In the first part of the book, the author explores the dimensions of the welfare state internationally, specifically referencing the experiences of the First World, Second World and Third World. Here he defines key concepts, outlines opposing viewpoints of scholars on the development of state welfare, and discusses the infrastructure of the welfare state in the world system. In the second part of the book, he discusses opposing theses about the welfare state in some detail, linking interdisciplinary theory and research to the practical application of social policy. In the final part of the book, Chatterjee discusses debates regarding the welfare state in terms of moral, legal, political and scientific foundations. In conclusion he offers his own resolution of these issues.

This book offers a broad view of the complexities involved in determining the development of welfare states. It presents a variety of opposing theoretical frameworks that shape the field. It provides an insightful analysis of these frameworks in terms of moral, legal, political and scientific criteria. This book offers a synopsis of the field that will not only serve as a useful text but broaden scholarly horizons as social policy seeks greater international relevance.

Rafat Fazeli, *The Economic Impact of the Welfare State and Social Wage: The British Experience*. Brookfield, VT: Avebury, 1996. \$55.95 hardcover.

Economic considerations are now widely debated in social policy. Although social policy has traditionally neglected the

economy preferring to focus on issues of service delivery, it is clear that the economic dimension can no longer be ignored. It was previously assumed that steady economic growth and full employment would generate the resources needed to fund social programs for the small proportion of the labor force who could not work. Social policy, it was believed, would be concerned with identifying the best methods of caring for those in need. However, it has become apparent that the original assumptions on which social welfare were based are no longer valid. Economic performance has not been able to create full employment in most industrialized nations and, as populations have aged, larger numbers of people than previously anticipated have come to rely on governmental expenditures for their livelihoods. As these trends have become more marked over the years, it has been claimed that social programs have retarded economic performance. The welfare state, it is argued, is a major reason for the economic decline of the Western industrial nations.

Fazeli's book provides an excellent opportunity to examine this argument in detail. However, while its title suggests that the author will provide a definitive analysis of the subject, the book fails to meet expectations. Unfortunately, its discursive overview of diverse economic aspects does not adequately address the basic economic challenges facing the welfare state. The book does contain a short section on the neo-classical critique of the welfare state but it devotes far too much space to Marxist accounts, analysis of the British social budget, income distribution impacts and other matters. While the book contains much that will be of interest, particularly to those who wish to know more about social policy in Britain, an opportunity to comprehensively address the economic critique of state welfare has been missed. It is to be hoped that the author will find the time to produce another volume focusing specifically on this critical issue.

Gordana Rabrenovic, *Community Builders: A Tale of Neighborhood Mobilization in Two Cities*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1996. \$54.95 hardcover, \$22.95 papercover.

Throughout the United States, medium cities, like their larger metropolitan counterparts, suffer from a multitude of social problems. These include a deteriorating physical infrastructure, increased crime, abandoned homes and businesses and blatant