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The Origins of Social Work. Malcolm Payne.

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should be widely consulted.

Malcolm Payne, *The Origins of Social Work*. New York: Palgrave, 2005. \$ 75.00 hardcover, \$ 26.95 papercover.

A significant number of social work histories have now been published. Although these histories tend to cover the same chronological ground, each has a different slant offering varying interpretations of the factors that gave rise to the emergence of the profession or otherwise covering different aspects of the profession's development. However, most of these histories have focused on developments within particular countries and relatively few have paid attention to the evolution of social work on an international scale. Payne's new book is an important exception, and while it is primarily concerned with the development of social work in the United Kingdom, it reaches out internationally to cover the emergence of social work in other parts of the world. It also addresses a number of key issues that will be of concern to social workers in many different countries.

As the author points out, the book is primarily intended for students who sometimes struggle with historical questions and whose knowledge of international events may be limited. Accordingly, the book is written in a straightforward style that students will find helpful. However, this does not mean that the author avoids complex issues. In fact, much of the book is concerned with the differences of opinion that have characterized social work since its beginning. The author does an excellent job of explaining these controversies and in finding a healthy balance between articulating his own views and those of others who take a different position on key issues of relevance to social workers around the world.

The first three chapters of the book are primarily concerned with tracing social work's origins in the 19th century and its subsequent development up to the end of the 20th century. Payne draws on a wide range of literature to support this account including information from countries as diverse as Japan, Zimbabwe, India and the United States. The remaining chapters of the book deal with the key issues facing social work. These include perceptions of the social workers role, the values and philosophies that characterize professional

endeavor and the contribution of knowledge and research. It also includes an interesting chapter on professional social work education and the debates between universalists who believe that Western educational models are relevant to all countries and relativists who believe in the indigenization of the educational experience.

The author has produced an extremely valuable account of the history of social work and the many challenging issues the profession has dealt with over the years. His ability to summarize a huge amount of information in a relatively short book is astounding. In addition, the book is well written and the author's sensitivity to the complexities of the issues facing the profession is commendable. Although the book is primarily intended for social work students, it will be a useful resource for practitioners and academics alike. It deserves to be widely read.

Nancy Lohman and Roger A. Lohman, *Rural Social Work Practice*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.
\$ 65.00 hardcover.

The social work profession emerged in the 19th century in the context of rapid industrialization and urbanization. It was in the overcrowded and unsanitary slums of the rapidly expanding cities in of Europe and North America that the first social workers sought to meliorate the problems of poverty and deprivation either through direct casework intervention or the neighborhood-focused activities of the Settlement Houses. Since those early days, social work has been largely associated with urban needs and problems, and the majority of social workers today are employed in urban areas. This is to be expected since the majority of people in the industrial countries live in urban areas. The proportion engaged in agricultural pursuits has declined steadily over the last century.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the needs of rural people have historically been neglected by the social work profession. There is a serious shortage of social workers in the rural areas, and often highly skilled and demanding social work roles are filled by unqualified personnel. It was because of these