
This is an impressive book, definitely worth reading for three reasons: it brings together and builds on the work of the authors from a period extending over two and a half decades; it combines quantitative and qualitative approaches in a sophisticated way to test and extend theories about welfare state development; and it advances a particular thesis about what drives welfare state change: ‘it is the distribution of class power that is most influential in determining policy outcomes, particularly those with distributive implications’ (p. 341). In effect this is the influential ‘power resources’ model of the welfare state, developed earlier by Korpi (1978) and refined by John Stephens (1979) at a time of welfare state expansion, suitably modified and extended to analyse the current period of reform and retrenchment. The book is an ambitious piece of work both in method and in substantive conclusions. It is hardly surprising that it is not entirely successful in realising its ambitions, but it approaches them sufficiently closely to merit very serious study and to provoke major debates.

In relation to method, the authors understand welfare states in terms of a ‘mutually enabling fit’ between production and welfare regimes. This enables them to combine together the accounts of political economists such as Soskice (1999), which distinguish between regulatory and liberal stances of government to relations with actors such as business, banking and trade unions in labour market management, and those of welfare state analysts such as Esping-Andersen (1999), which categorise welfare states in terms of social impacts such as decommodification, defamilialisation and contribution to the maintenance of stratification systems. They also take seriously the work of political scientists who analyse the way in which the different constitutional and institutional make-up of different countries enables or obstructs various social actors in influencing policy developments. This produces a broad-brush categorisation of liberal, social democrat, christian democrat and wage-earner welfare states, similar to that advanced by many others, but crucially allows the authors to incorporate the full range of recent theoretical developments in this field and to link differences in outcomes (the preserve of regime theory) to differences in political structure and political actions.

The empirical evidence is tackled from two directions. First, a statistical analysis of welfare outcomes in 18 countries is carried out for two periods: the ‘Golden Age’ of the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s, and the period of crisis and possible retrenchment of the 1980s and 1990s. This analysis is particularly impressive. It draws on the data assembled by the authors from a range of sources (much of it helpfully tabulated in an appendix, which will be of considerable use to other scholars) covering welfare state expenditure, transfers to different groups, poverty and political and economic differences. A particular feature of this analysis is the attention given to poverty among different social groups, distinguishing older people, those of working age and single mothers. This enables conclusions to be drawn about the role of different kinds of welfare state in relation to gender inequality.
The second aspect of the analysis is a complementary account of the politics of welfare policy-making in nine countries, chosen as tracers to represent the four groupings. This analysis allows the authors to present a detailed account of different political processes which substantiates arguments about the way in which political obstacles and opportunities and the relative strength of different political actors influences national patterns of social policy making. It is this feature of the book which gives it its peculiar strength. It reinforces statistical analysis with accounts of the detail of policy-making processes that show how the actions of political actors constrained in particular contexts that produce these outcomes.

The book develops many insights in the course of its analysis, most importantly to do with the processes whereby the entry of more women into the labour market increases the demand for women’s work and expands job opportunities in traditionally female-dominated areas (p. 315). It is really about power and argues that it is political choice which is the most important factor in determining the direction and development of welfare states. ‘The relative strength of different political tendencies with different power bases in society fundamentally shaped the character of welfare states . . . in the post-World War II period’ (p. 312). Social and Christian democracy were seen as most important in creating generous welfare states. This argument and the implications that left and centre-left parties are best at defending welfare in the present context is one with which many policy analysts (including the reviewer) will have a great deal of sympathy.

This argument is based on two kinds of evidence: first, regression models (for example Tables 3.2 and 3.3) that show that left and Christian democrat majorities in cabinets tend to be associated with an expansion of government spending when all other factors (and most importantly the veto points available in the constitutional structure) are taken into account, and that such governments are more likely to be significantly associated with increased welfare effort than any other party in government (Tables 6.1 to 6.3). Tables 6.1 to 6.2 include eight measures of welfare effort and four time periods, in other words, 32 separate equations. The authors are thus able to show that social and Christian democratic cabinets tended to be significantly associated with expansion of welfare activity in the 1960s and to some extent the 1970s, the relation became weaker and less likely to be significant in the 1980s and 1990s. This throws extra weight on the second kind of evidence, that derived from the analyses of political process, which show how the left and centre-left opposed and mitigated retrenchment. In other words, the left and centre-left were good at building welfare states, and are also better at defending them in hard times.

It is always possible for critics to attack this position in two ways. First, it would be good to have an analysis of party of government and welfare outcomes (rather than welfare inputs), using the data from Tables 6.1 and 4.4 to show that the left produced better outputs even when they were unable to continue to increase spending provision in the way that they had during the Golden Age. Table 4.4 shows better outputs in the regimes most associated with social and Christian democrat cabinets, but the point could be sharpened. Secondly, many commentators (for example, Peter Baldwin 1990) have argued that bourgeois group have an interest in the development of welfare states and also respond to pressures from groups that wish to retain benefits in times of retrenchment. These writers will tell the story of the politics of welfare policy-making in a way that will throw more emphasis on the role of the right and centre-right. They will also argue that the link between class power and party representation in cabinet is more complex than that operationalised in this study.

It is much easier to make these points than it is to produce original analysis. The book demonstrates how the combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis opens up possibilities for advancing both empirical knowledge and theory of the welfare state in the current context of pressure reform and restructuring. It will undoubtedly find a prominent place
among the texts consulted by those studying the development of the welfare state and will be an important reference point in the debate about how work in this area is to be taken forward.


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As might be expected from the title, this book is concerned with the impact of ‘globalisation’ on human welfare. It unpacks the term ‘globalisation’, explores the various ways in which it is said to impact on socio-economic welfare and discusses the role of international institutions in dealing with its undesirable effects. The authors pick out a number of issues through which to explore this impact – poverty, education, health, care and the environment – and they also include a consideration of gender (or more accurately, women) and ethnicity (again, more accurately ethnic minorities) in separate chapters. The authors’ inclusion of industrially developing countries as well as advanced industrialised countries is particularly welcome.

In short, this is a pleasing introduction to the study of ‘globalisation’ as it relates to social policy and human welfare concerns. It is presented in a format and style that undergraduate students will appreciate. The authors set out their material clearly and regularly summarise it in box form. Key questions are identified. Sources for further reading are included at the end of each chapter. The index is comprehensive and accurate. In a manner characteristic of the authors’ previous work, approaches to ‘globalisation’ are categorised into four groups – ‘technological enthusiasts’, ‘marxisant pessimists’, ‘pluralist pragmatists’ and ‘sceptic internationalists’. Though the authors note that this risks oversimplification, it has its merits in at least making accessible to an undergraduate audience a wide variety of positions from a range of disciplines in a format that they will like. This tendency, however, to oversimplify complex and contradictory processes is evident throughout the book. One quibble in particular is that the various processes and phenomena they include are ultimately attributed to and reduced to this vast thing called ‘globalisation’. To take one example, the increased need for caring in society, the reduction of the supply of women to provide care, the increased burden of caring on women and the need for changes in government caring policies (pp. 121–22) are all attributed to globalisation. The message of the book that most if not all socio-economic phenomena can be explained by ‘globalisation’ and ‘globalisation’ alone is a difficult one to swallow.

This book is more than a descriptive review of globalisation and its implications for human welfare, as the authors are writing from a particular standpoint. Their position, to crudely summarise it, is that globalisation is here to stay; it has both positive and negative effects, and the task for governments is to mitigate its undesirable aspects and to make it work
for the poor as well as for the rich. To do this, they argue, there is a need for more and better global social policy, notably in the form of more supranational institutions, better coordinated policies – both between national and supranational institutions and amongst supranational institutions – new policy instruments and greater democratic accountability. This global social reformist position is gaining ground in international policy circles and no doubt it finds many supporters at national and international levels. On a somewhat critical note, though, it would have been useful to include a consideration of other positions than the agenda to build bigger and ‘better’ statist institutions with an enhanced social dimension. There are many interesting alternatives that the authors could have included in their discussion, such as self-reliant trade, New Protectionism and subsistence agendas. The non-inclusion of these policy alternatives for social and economic development was a disappointing end to an otherwise commendable book.

**Nicola Yeates**
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In these publications, two of the leading protagonists in the New Labour project – Peter Mandelson and Anthony Giddens – reflect on the achievements of the first Blair government and consider the way ahead. *The Blair Revolution Revisited* contains a new introductory chapter (Mandelson) as well as a reprint of Mandelson and Liddle’s (1996) earlier publication *The Blair Revolution*, which attracted limited critical attention despite the fact that it provided a clear indication of the direction in which New Labour was travelling. Mandelson and Liddle stress the importance of embracing the market and global economic change as well as the desirability of controlling public expenditure. The need to improve education and training is highlighted as is the case for welfare reform, modernised devolved governance and an arms length relationship with the trade unions. A shift from a providing to an enabling state is recommended as are policies that will help to enhance individual opportunities as well as strengthen familial and community ties.

Mandelson’s assessment of New Labour’s first term record is generally upbeat. He contends that the party has regained the trust of the public not least because of its willingness to adopt ‘tough and disciplined measures to ensure financial prudence and economic stability’ (p. xv). In addition, he is impressed by the progress New Labour has made in ‘revitalising’ public services by means of substantial investment in key areas such as education and health and by the pursuit of reforms which ‘put the consumer at the heart of each service’ (p. xxi). New Labour is also commended for its attack on poverty and social exclusion. For Mandelson, New Labour’s proactive welfare strategy, with its greater reliance on ‘targeting and conditionality,’ has won over middle England welfare sceptics thereby creating the possibility of ‘a lasting consensus for a redistributive levelling up in British society’ (p. xxii). Finally, Mandelson praises New Labour’s positive approach towards Europe and constitutional reform.

In terms of the future, Mandelson rejects the ‘consolidationist’ strategy favoured by his grandfather Herbert Morrison. Permanent revisionism is now the order of the day. For Mandelson the long-term aim of ‘new’ New Labour should be the ‘transformation of Britain into a modern, self-confident social democratic European country with equal opportunities for all, high-quality public services, the abolition of poverty – except for those who refuse
available work – and greater personal freedom combined with responsibility to the community’ (pp. xxvii–xxviii).

To achieve this outcome, Mandelson believes New Labour must counter its centrist image and demonstrate how its modernised social democratic approach builds upon previous revisionist strategies such as the one developed by Crosland in the 1950s. To this end, he contends that the deficiencies of Thatcherism, such as the denigration of the public sector and the failure to tackle poverty, need to be acknowledged more explicitly. Moreover, he believes that New Labour’s commitment to equality of opportunity should be promoted more vigorously. According to Mandelson, a much more resolute attack on the old establishment is required so that ‘the daughter of a Hartlepool shop assistant has as much chance of becoming a High Court judge as the daughter of a Harley Street doctor’ (p. xxv). The need to transform the education system is seen as vital if this task is to be achieved. This will necessitate ‘a spread of good schools across all social neighbourhoods, high-class vocational education, expansion of higher education, and a proper system of lifelong learning’ (p. xxxi).

Mandelson welcomes the more robust form of policy making which he contends has come to the fore in New Labour’s second term. The greater emphasis on decentralisation and diversity coupled with increased private sector involvement in areas such as education and health will, he believes, lead to the emergence of the world class social services now demanded by citizens.

In a number of influential publications, Anthony Giddens (1998, 2000) has also described, explained and promoted New Labour’s ‘Third Way’ approach to economic and social policy. In the first two chapters of Where Now for New Labour? Giddens resumes his dialogue with left wing opponents, reserving his most trenchant comments for those whom he disparagingly refers to as Groucho Marxists. According to Giddens, these critics have paid insufficient attention to the fact that New Labour’s policy reformulations have been mirrored elsewhere in Europe. A broader review of policy shifts in countries such as the Netherlands and Sweden would, he argues, confirm that New Labour ‘is not arbitrarily discarding leftist traditions, but reacting to structural change that every country faces’ (pp. 5–6). Moreover, New Labour’s critics are reminded that such re-positioning did in fact lead to a recovery, albeit modest, in the electoral fortunes of a number of European social democratic parties. Giddens also insists that New Labour’s emphasis on equality of opportunity and social exclusion is not indicative of a desire to minimise the importance of redistribution or to deny the existence of poverty, but rather a concerted attempt to find a more effective means of combating diverse forms of disadvantage in the light of changing circumstances.

Giddens rejects the suggestion that New Labour’s ‘Third Way’ lacks substance, arguing that the key elements of this modernised social democratic approach such as equality of opportunity, a Work First welfare policy, a commitment to economic stability, a strong law and order strategy, and the embrace of globalisation and ecological sensitivity are not only coherent but also in tune with contemporary economic and social trends.

In reviewing New Labour’s first term in government, Giddens identifies a number of successes: economic competence, welfare reform, low levels of unemployment, redistribution and educational improvements. More modest progress is detected in areas such as constitutional reform, the NHS, crime and punishment, relations with the EU and environmental policy. Policy deficiencies are identified as the Dome, public relations and the failure to promote corporate responsibility.

In looking forward, Giddens stresses the importance of reviving public services. Whilst acknowledging that underfunding can lead to poor standards of public service, he believes that ‘inertia, poor management, overmanning and bureaucratic sloth’ (p.56) have also played a contributory role. Ruling out a return to ‘statism’, Giddens stresses the benefits of partnership
working for both public and private sector providers. He also highlights how the public interest can be served by the increased involvement of ‘mutuals, social enterprises, not-for-profit trusts and public benefit corporations’ (p. 65) in service delivery. He also advocates greater decentralisation and devolution, albeit within a unitary nation, and a greater commitment towards environmental protection.

Both Mandelson and Giddens can be characterised as ‘sociological determinists’ in the sense that both believe that the task of a modern political party is to develop ideas and policies on the basis of observable economic and social conditions rather than on an abstract set of beliefs (Finlayson, 1999). In the current climate, both authors are convinced that New Labour must become the party of merit as well as of equality. Accepting that it is difficult to close the gap between rich and poor in a modern market economy, the task therefore becomes one of ensuring that all citizens enjoy equality of respect and opportunity and a reasonable social minimum. However, as Collins (2001) points out, there is ‘both a strong and weak version of the politics of meritocracy’ (p. 32). The strong version requires concerted attempts to narrow the income gap and limit the possibility of passing on advantages to one’s children, whilst the weaker alternative permits a higher level of inequality and the transfer of privilege. The policy proposals of both Giddens and Mandelson, which exclude any significant redistribution of income or the radical overhaul of private education, is suggestive of a preference for the weaker form of meritocracy. While the egalitarian-meritocratic strategy favoured by Giddens and Mandelson may result in modest improvements in the economic and social well being of some disadvantaged citizens, it is unlikely to lead to the broader transformation of society that others on the centre-left aspire to. The aspiring shop assistant’s daughter from Hartlepool may have to console herself with a rendition of ‘Always Look on the Bright Side of Life’ for a while yet.


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Margaret Jones and Rodney Lowe (2002), From Beveridge to Blair: The First Fifty Years of Britain’s Welfare State, Manchester: Manchester University Press, xi + 232 pp., £47.50, £13.99 pbk. JSP, 32, 2003,
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This volume is a recent addition to the useful ‘Documents in Contemporary History’ series published by Manchester University Press. Following the format of other books in the series, Jones and Lowe provide contextual commentary to a selection of extracts from key primary sources in post-Second World War British welfare history. After a short, provocative, and informative ‘Introduction’, there are chapters on ‘The Political Debate’; ‘Social Security’; ‘Health Care’; ‘Education’; ‘Housing’; and ‘The Personal Social Services’. These last five thus cover what the authors describe as the ‘core’ services of the welfare state. A useful chronology of major policy developments is also included along with a brief guide to other general and specialist works. Again in common with the rest of the series the book is aimed at a sixth form and undergraduate audience and there can be little doubt that it will indeed prove an invaluable teaching tool, especially when used in conjunction with
textbooks such as Lowe’s own *The Welfare State in Britain since 1945* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2nd ed. 1999).

For the most part the extracts have been well chosen as illustrating particular policy fields or debates. They encompass government documents, politicians’ memoirs, newspaper commentary, and the theoretical and the applied social sciences. Readers are thus confronted with, for example, Enoch Powell’s caustic, but insightful, comments on the apparently infinite demand for health care; Brian Abel-Smith’s defence of universalism and, by contrast, Treasury arguments for targeting; and Anthony Giddens on the ‘third way’. As with the other selections, these will provide ample material for debate and discussion over the aims and methods of post-war social policy. Of course it is always possible to quibble with or question any selection of primary sources both from a methodological viewpoint – the act of selection in itself might be seen as an interpretative process – and from the point of view of coverage. On the latter, for example, although the authors allude in their contextual passages to the Hospital Plan of the early 1960s and to Scotland’s Kilbrandon Report of the same era, we are not actually given extracts from either. Nonetheless, overall Jones and Lowe are to be congratulated on the care they have clearly taken in selecting these sources which, as suggested, come from an impressively wide range of authors and institutions.

As for the commentary and introductory chapter provided by the authors, once again this text is, for the most part, judicious, scholarly, and (very importantly) clearly written. As an introduction to the almost bewildering complexity of post-war welfare, this book is to be highly recommended. Once again, however, a number of points might be considered for any future edition. First, as the omission of Kilbrandon might imply, this is a volume which does not devote much attention to post-war social policy outside England. This is indeed recognised by the authors and, of course, in areas such as social security we are looking at a fairly ‘national’ system. But in other areas, the issue is more problematic. Is it enough, for example, to simply acknowledge, as Jones and Lowe do, that educational provision is different in Northern Ireland and Scotland without saying how or why? Similarly, health service reform in 1974 took a different path in Scotland than in England and Wales, and with rather different outcomes. Devolution to Wales and Scotland has opened up enormous social policy issues for the future; and should alert historians to possible forms of difference in the past. Second, for the most part the breakdown into the ‘core’ services works well, but perhaps more explicit attention could be paid to the centrality of the family in social policy formation. This is to some extent dealt with in the chapter on the personal social services. But given New Labour’s obsession with the issue, and the way in which ideas (and changing ideas) about the family have impinging to varying degrees in virtually all areas of welfare policy, then this could be drawn attention to more explicitly in the introductory chapter.

Overall, though, this is a volume to be warmly welcomed by those studying and teaching modern history and social policy and it deserves to be a success.

JOHN STEWART
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Alan Deacon’s text arrives at a time when changes in academic publishing place new demands on authors. Textbooks are now designed to address new issues, themes and research in ways
that are accessible to first-year students whilst at the same time exposing advanced students to the intellectual challenges of new research – producing a broader market than previously. These requirements can produce creative approaches to introducing students to the new debates, policies and practices characterising twenty-first century welfare. At the same time, the constraints of packaging so much in one slim volume inhibit authors from addressing more complex issues.

Deacon meets these challenges head on. He sets out to communicate ‘the compelling and absorbing nature of the moral debates that underpin the formulation’ of social policy (p. 4) – a clear test by which to judge the book. He does this by discussing the normative perspectives that now shape social policy by reference to a range of different assumptions about human nature. As Deacon explains, there are sound reasons for producing a text identifying the differing perspectives in social policy in the new century. First, these perspectives are no longer deeply entrenched and proclaimed from different sides of the ideological divide that once separated the left and right. Secondly, throughout the late eighties and nineties welfare debates became more complex and reflective as intellectual polarisation gave way to fragmentation and fluidity with different proponents appearing to take more seriously the arguments of their opponents. What was once a series of analytically distinct premises is now a range of overlapping value positions.

Following the introduction, the book divides into five chapters that describe each of the key positions shaping welfare debates since the 1960s. Chapter One examines Titmuss’ view that welfare is the principal institutional means for encouraging the altruistic impulse in human behaviour by which inequalities and diswelfares are redressed. The chapter also covers different strands of egalitarian social policy in a rapid overview of Marxist political economy, Crosland technocratic policy-making and American egalitarianism. The point about the Titmuss and egalitarian schools is that they exercised a dominant influence over academic – but not governmental – social policy for most of the second half of the last century, to the extent, Deacon claims, of censuring considerations of self-agency and responsibility.

Chapter Two discusses the rational self-interest school typified by the US conservative Charles Murray and the New Labourite and former Minister for Welfare Reform Frank Field – a juxtaposition that Deacon brings off convincingly. Whilst one holds a minimalist and the other an activist stance towards welfare reform, they both share a belief in the power of individual self-interest in animating rational behaviour. Field, however, differs decisively from Murray in believing that public policy can and should shape human behaviour. Deacon credits Murray with redefining the parameters of what counts as politically feasible reform – in a way that made Field’s interventions possible. The next chapter introduces the ‘new paternalism’ of Lawrence Mead and others who, in rejecting the incentivisation approach of Murray, press for more conditional forms of welfare that compel the poor to adopt behaviour, especially paid work, that in the long run is in their best interest. Chapter Four examines the communitarianism of Etzioni and others as a moral prescription that appeals to the sense of collective commitment and obligation in human nature. These writers argue for reforms that appeal to a rational sentiment in human behaviour that is socially motivated and predisposed to accept policies promoting the common good over private interest. Here rights to welfare are to be matched by the duties individuals owe each other; support for welfare is grounded in a genuine public conviction that social programmes support the greater good; and moralistic judgements of infractions from the norm are accepted as necessary (against what is seen as the permissiveness of postmodern moral relativism).

Chapter Five is devoted to the ideas of David Ellwood, who represents less a particular viewpoint on human nature and more a combination of proposals that seeks to reconcile the
social policy dilemmas addressed in the previous four chapters. For Ellwood’s cash benefits can only provide temporary relief and a lasting solution must lie in providing permanent work at reasonable and, if necessary, benefit-enhanced rates of pay. This approach demands that citizens fulfil their obligation to work and that government fulfils its obligation to find work and make it pay.

The penultimate two chapters examine the impact of these debates on current social policy in Britain and America, specifically on social security and labour market policies. They provide informed discussions of the impact of the Clinton Government’s Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 and New Labour’s third way in modernising welfare. Both developments were auspiciously blessed in the 1990s by the good fortune of economic stability, but now face the less favourable climate of the early 2000s. Finally, the concluding chapter provides a flow chart demarcating the different assumptions about human nature held by the book’s proponent authors – an instructive route-map across a conceptually complex terrain.

However enlivening the content, the book is in part inhibited by the constraints of its packaging. The second term of the book’s sub-title: ‘ideas, ideology and policy debates’ receives cursory treatment. The book dissects contrasting views of human nature and its contribution to shaping policy to show that these differences are shaped by ideology. However the definition of human nature taken as an exemplar of the different viewpoints examined comes from the American conservative, James Q Wilson, and is itself ideological, namely, ‘a set of traits and predispositions that limits what we may do and suggests guides to what we must do’ (quoted on p. 119, stressed added). Whilst one might claim that the moral debate on welfare has indeed become narrow, this view of human nature provides little scope for the human capacity for self-determination and agency – one of the book’s key themes. A weakness of many of the welfare debates that currently influence official policy-making is a failure to recognise that agency operates in collective as well as individual ways, as social movements that challenge government policy have shown.

In its main aims, the book succeeds in shifting the analysis of welfare into the twenty-first century by offering well-focused discussions of the moral debates of the new social policy and the prescriptive ways in which governments now seek to achieve compliance to their new designs.

MARTIN HEWITT
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In this accessible introductory text for social policy students, Tony Fitzpatrick has set himself two main aims. Firstly, ‘to map the historical genesis of welfare theory and reclaim for it ideas and thinkers that are too often confined to social and political thought’ (page xiii). While acknowledging that welfare theory is necessarily intertwined with – and even dependent upon – such wider social thought and that there can be no distinct school of welfare theory, nevertheless he insists that welfare systems and welfare theory can no longer be relegated to footnotes or parentheses ‘without omitting what is crucial about the modern world of the last 500 years:
the pursuit of social progress has been a collective effort which has taken improvements in well-being as one of its main criteria’ (page xiii).

His second aim is to demonstrate the relevance of an ideological spectrum – in other words, Left/Right categories – as a basis for analysing and evaluating these theories. Until fairly recently such a project would probably have been dismissed as being at best old-fashioned, at worst naïve. For much of the 1990s, factors such as the apparent triumph of the market economy on a global basis, the growth of ‘Third Way’ perspectives (as popularised by thinkers such as Tony Giddens) and the seemingly irresistible rise of postmodern theorising made ‘end of ideology’ theses fashionable again. Now, however, with markets in crisis from Buenos Aires to Wall Street, postmodernism on the decline and a growing political polarisation throughout Western European societies, Fitzpatrick’s curt comment that ‘in truth, I have little time for those who argue that the spectrum is redundant’ (ibid.) now seems no more than common sense.

So how well does he succeed in achieving these aims? Given that, broadly defined, the notion of ‘welfare’ figures in the thought of just about every political or social theorist who has ever put pen to paper, the first aim is clearly an ambitious one. To his credit, however, in general Fitzpatrick manages to summarise key themes in an accurate and accessible fashion and the book contains some very useful overviews of an incredibly wide range of key thinkers and concepts. This is particularly the case in the second half of the book (chapter 5 onwards) where there is an opportunity to explore specific ideologies and recent welfare developments in some depth. The first four chapters, which address the ‘foundation’ concepts of welfare, equality, liberty and citizenship, show impressive erudition (the bibliography is excellent) but are more uneven and occasionally suffer from trying to achieve too much. In the chapter on liberty, for example, the ideas of freedom espoused by Kierkegaard, Sartre, Bauman, Levinas and Giddens are covered in less than two pages in total (pages 54–55)! Not surprisingly, this attempt to cover everything can (very occasionally) result in a discussion of complex ideas, which is at best highly compressed, at worst superficial and/or incomprehensible. In the words of Mies van der Rohe (one thinker not discussed in the book), sometimes less is more.

In terms of the second aim, Fitzpatrick locates the subject of social policy as lying between two extreme parameters, two ‘dreams of perfection’: ‘On the one hand there is an ‘environmental’ utopia where social problems are explained in terms of social conditions; on the other, there is a pathological utopia where social problems are attributed to the supposed failings and immorality of individuals’ (page 2). Or more pithily, there are those who want to eliminate the conditions which create poverty and there are those who want to eliminate the poor. Within these parameters, he argues, the essential theme of social policy is the focus on deliberate social change. He is able to apply this broad yardstick in a sophisticated and perceptive manner to a very wide range of concepts, theories and ideologies and while his own values and commitments are seldom in doubt, his discussion of theories with which he clearly disagrees is invariably fair and balanced.

Inevitably, given the wide range of thinkers covered, some areas are dealt with more satisfactorily than others. In the chapter on welfare ideologies, for example, I felt that the choice of two (rather discredited) 1970s figures, Althusser and Marcuse, to represent Marxist thought seemed rather bizarre, especially when reference is made elsewhere in the text to such important and interesting contemporary Marxist thinkers as Ellen Meiksins-Wood and Alex Callinicos. Such quibbles aside, however, it has to be said that in seeking to synthesise a very wide range of social and political thought into a body of ‘welfare theory’ and present it in a manner which is accessible to undergraduate students, Fitzpatrick has set himself (or been set) a fairly daunting task. It is a measure of his success, as well as a reflection of his erudition and evident enthusiasm
for the subject, that he has managed to produce a text which is readable, accessible and will provide students with a good map of the theoretical terrain of the subject for some time to come.

IAIN FERGUSON
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This book is a valuable addition to the growing volume of literature on country-based comparative social policy. In particular, it strengthens the relatively sparse range of case studies on Southern Europe and it is the first book published in English which offers a strong analysis of the Spanish welfare state regime. Mangen emphasises political factors in his analysis so the book should also appeal to readers of comparative politics. In terms of structure, Part I of the book follows a historical framework for study of the Spanish welfare state while Part II features different contemporary dimensions of Spanish social policy covering secularization, devolution, gender/family issues and the transition from poverty to social exclusion. Mangen also includes a most interesting final chapter that places the changing Spanish welfare state in the context of comparative regime analysis.

The historical framework for Part I includes broad political analysis, followed by specific study of social policies. Mangen’s analytical approach is attractive as he identifies the different factors which explain the regime transition indicated in the sub-title to the book. Although Ferrera (1996) is not mentioned specifically until the final chapter of Part II, readers who are familiar with his Southern Model of Welfare will appreciate the rich collection of illustrative material on Spain found throughout the book. At the same time, Mangen highlights the distinctive characteristics of Spain which set the country apart from its Mediterranean neighbours; a good example here is pactism which has been most important in stabilising Spanish society after Franco.

The choice of dimensions for Part II includes some content which is very much in tune with recent developments in social policy. Chapter 8 is entitled ‘Welfare, Gender and the Family’ and here Mangen manages to cover a wide range of issues. Evidence is presented on the restrictions for women under the Franco regime and the changes since. While incremental reform has made some progress the current situation still reflects continuing inequalities. Chapter 9 considers how far Spain has followed the familiar transition from poverty to social exclusion. The emphasis here is upon employment; while some aspects such as precarious employment and the submerged economy are typical of Southern Europe, the special problems of high unemployment are analysed.

Two other topics covered in Part II are secularization and devolution. A chapter on secularization is welcome and Mangen provides considerable detailed material on the tensions between church and state during the process of secularization. He demonstrates that the Spanish case conforms to a general decline of religion but that it also reveals the continuing power of Catholicism. The second topic of devolution presents a particular challenge since the complexities of the Spanish system are confusing. Mangen carefully analyses the changing situation of regions and autonomies, adding detailed explanations in an appendix. Moreover, on a difficult topic, he is successful in locating the developments in a conceptual context, highlighting the clash of relevant principles.
The final chapter of the book examines the Spanish welfare state in terms of comparative regime analysis. After a brief review of the literature, this chapter attempts to link the analysis with considerable evidence given in a statistical appendix. One interesting outcome of this analysis is the conclusion that state-centred welfare in Spain seems to be more important than expected and hence ‘civil society’ is less significant than in other Southern European countries.

Overall the book provides a combination of interesting and valuable insights on Spanish social policy. The single critical comment relates to the balance between social policy content and the necessary broader context of Spanish society. While the author concentrates well on analysis of this material, readers who are unfamiliar with Spain might appreciate a historical guide to names and dates in Spanish history. Especially in the first chapter, it is difficult to follow the timing and party affiliation of such leaders as Maura and Canalejas. To a lesser degree this problem continues in the later chapters so a further appendix with extra information would help. Finally, for a reader who has been researching the same field on Spain’s Iberian neighbour for many years, the book was a real pleasure to review. It was fascinating to make numerous comparisons of the similarities and differences between Portugal and Spain.


Jack Hampson
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This small book takes on a huge topic: the ‘impact a shift to market principles in very many spheres of Chinese public life has had on the critical sector of social policy’ (p. 2). Five chapters each cover a separate aspect of China’s social policy: labour, welfare, health, education and housing. A short introduction and conclusion set the book’s agenda, summarise the findings, and briefly assess changes in China from a comparative perspective. Most of the chapters, where they refer to local experiences of reform, focus on Shanghai and the southern province of Guangdong. The most useful contributions are those by Cheung on health, and Lau and Lee on housing policy, both of which give a good, clear picture of how policy has evolved over the post-Mao period of market-oriented reform. Lee’s chapter on labour policy would have benefited from some data on the extent of labour mobility. Similarly, Wong’s chapter on welfare would have been aided by more data on spending trends (and on GDP growth rates as context for her figures on welfare spending) and the proportion (as well as absolute numbers) of the population receiving social assistance. Mok might have differentiated primary, secondary and tertiary education policies more clearly and provided data on trends in funding and student enrolment.

Based mainly on secondary sources, the chapters of this book do not offer new data for specialists in the field of Chinese social policy. The best of them will be useful for those wishing to gain an overview of developments in China’s social policy up to about 1997. However, since Chinese social policy has moved on significantly in the late 1990s, they should not be taken as an up-to-date account of the situation in China today. Moreover, some of the authors do not explain Chinese terms such as (‘danwei’), ‘household registration’ and ‘street committees’ for
Readers unfamiliar with China. A chapter on pensions, the furthest advanced of China’s social insurance reforms, would have been useful.

Many of the chapters focus on the question of whether there has been a process of ‘privatisation’ in post-Mao Chinese social policy, with Wong making the strongest case for a significant trend in this direction. The Chinese state is certainly seeking to contain its social security fiscal commitments. But Wong is wrong to interpret all efforts at ‘socialisation’ (shehuihuá, translated as ‘societalisation’ by Cheung) as privatisation. This term is used in a number of different ways in China, and in the area of social insurance it refers to the transfer of responsibilities from enterprises to local governments or their agencies.

Deacon, Holliday and Wong make some perceptive comments in their conclusion. And their overall summary – that in China ‘individuals are moving away from the old “iron rice bowl” system of social protection to greater and lesser extents’ (p. 141) and that there is now inequality in access to social security – is uncontroversial. But their claim that China’s human development record ‘continues’ to outperform its post-socialist counterparts today’ (p. 143) is surprising. China outperforms very few countries of post-Communist Europe on most human development indicators and this was the case even during the early 1990s when most Central and Eastern European economies shrank. As the contributions to this volume show, market-oriented reform in China has been accompanied by a collapse in rural commune-provided safety nets and an erosion of urban enterprise-based social security. Social policies there have only just begun the massive task of building for all citizens a social security system that is appropriate to the emergent market economy.

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Writing a text, which attempts to link social work with social policy, is a formidable and daunting task, given the scope and complexity of both areas. An added problem is presented in considering the impact of ideas on what has increasingly become a contested social practice.

Adams, although acknowledging these difficulties, is led immediately in the first contextually based section of his book to grapple with such wide-ranging topics as globalisation, devolution, Europe, the USA and the UN on social work. In part II of the book, Adams examines more discrete areas of policy development including social security, poverty, housing, health, community care, the family, child care and criminal justice. He does this concisely in 111 densely packed pages. The third section of the book examines specific salient issues, including inequality, the organisation, delivery and financing of social services. Future policy trends in relation to the personal social services are also considered.

Throughout the text Adams provides a perceptive and critical view of social policy developments with respect to social work practice, although there is no suggestion that the book provides any in depth analysis. He acknowledges at the outset that he aims only to provide a ‘core of discussion’ with respect to these enormous and complex issues. Each section is clearly written and provides an up-to-date resume of major policy issues, which impinge on the day to day practices of social workers. The book triggers important linkages between policy and practice for the student. However, given that the work is described by the publishers as an engaging
introduction, it might well have been the case that Adams could have assisted students new to the area more by considering some of the most contentious issues more fully. The relationship between the development of social policy and what can be loosely called ‘social work theory’ would have been useful for students who intend to be practitioners. A discussion of the intended and unintended consequences of social policies would also have provided the basis for more structured discussion in some areas of policy development. The chapter on ‘Who controls social services?’ was extremely useful, but as in the previous chapter some slight expansion of the arguments in relation to Marxist, anarchist, ecological and anti-discriminatory policies would have greatly assisted readers who are new to the area. The disability movement also needed more coverage here. Similarly the implications for social work practice of possible future trends in social work could have been expanded in order to assist potential readers of this book. The significance of the transformation from ‘needs led’ to ‘risk assessment’ and the development of a contract culture seem to be pivotal areas and could have benefited from more specific development. A section on the ideas relating to the impact of the so called ‘risk society’ would have seemed timely (Beck, 1992). These ideas have recently added an important dimension to debates about the relationship between policy and practice (Manning and Shaw, 2000). The book also seems to end rather abruptly. Some overall concluding observations, which bring ideas contained in the book together, would have helped students make sense of a bewildering amount of factual material.

It is all too easy to find areas in which some kind of expanded argument was needed in a book, which covers such a wide area in relatively few pages. Notwithstanding the points made above, the book is presented in a usable manner. Particularly useful is the list of internet addresses and key pieces of legislation included in the appendices. There were some notable absences from the list of relevant legislation e.g. Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. The inclusion of case summaries, chapter summaries, and further reading at the conclusion of chapters made the work particularly accessible.

Despite the concise nature of the book it is well written providing the reader with an up-to-date extensive and relevant bibliography. The book is also infused with useful historical and current examples of government led initiatives, which illustrate the way in which social policy and social work have developed. Overall, Adams has produced a text, which will prove invaluable to social work, social policy, and probation students.


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As with other aspects of social policy, the contemporary literature on housing and homelessness has sometimes been criticised for an over-emphasis on the urban, to the exclusion
of the rural experience. This book seeks to fill some of the gaps in our knowledge and understanding of to what extent homelessness is experienced differently in rural areas, compared to urban. The contribution is important in that it takes a comprehensive look at rural housing and homelessness issues within the wider context of housing and rural policy developments, as well as presenting empirical research on rural homelessness and offering some policy prescriptions.

In their introduction, the authors set out the main thrust of their argument throughout the book – that the portrayal of the British countryside as a ‘rural idyll’ often serves to deny the existence of social problems such as homelessness. Consequently homelessness in rural areas tends to be less well quantified and understood, with relatively fewer resources allocated in comparison to London and other major cities. The introduction is followed by a thoughtful, and quite personal chapter on research methods and the ethical dilemmas which the authors faced in conducting their research.

In chapter three, the authors elaborate on their critique of the rural idyll and socio-cultural issues which might influence the identification of, and experience of, homelessness in the countryside. The policy context for rural homelessness is then considered. In a comprehensive overview, the authors detail contemporary housing and homeless policy and the key gaps with respect to ‘rurality’. They also provide a review of rural policy and the extent to which issues of housing and homelessness have been embraced in contemporary discussions.

Chapters five to seven present the main empirical material on homelessness in rural areas. Chapter five presents an analysis of local authority homelessness statistics for England, emphasising the spatial unevenness of reported homelessness in rural areas. It also introduces some case study material from the empirical study areas in rural Gloucestershire. In chapter six the authors report on local authority and voluntary sector responses to homelessness in rural areas. There is an interesting case note on the business community’s response to begging in Taunton and some of the conflicts which arose in attempting to build a ‘partnership’ approach to the issue. The experiences and views of homeless people interviewed for the study are reported in chapter seven.

The final chapter sets out a series of recommendations for housing, homelessness and rural policy, to tackle rural homelessness. An identical list could equally be put forward for tackling homelessness in cities, market towns and mixed urban/rural areas. Essentially, the issues are around poverty, inequality, access to economic opportunities, access to reasonable quality affordable housing and other aspects of welfare, and the provision of adequate support for vulnerable groups who may struggle to maintain an independent home of their own.

I was keen to review this book. In Scotland, a similar set of issues have been identified around the ‘neglect’ of both research and policy development with respect to rural housing and rural homelessness. Further, I read much of the book while journeying to and from the rural idyll of Nether Broughton in Leicestershire, England, and it sparked a lively discussion with my sister and brother-in-law as to the possible extent of destitution in their delightful village. Needless to say, our conclusions were not sufficiently robust to report. However, the journey from Newark station to Nether Broughton took us past one of the UK Government’s proposed ‘detention centres’ for asylum seekers. The huge banners on display vehemently opposing such a development were a very poignant example of how conflict over a difficult social issue can be highly visible in a rural community.

On the whole, I have no hesitation in recommending Rural Homelessness to a wider readership. It made me think – and I would like to suggest some counter-perspectives to the main arguments. First, the ‘challenging the myth of the rural idyll’ argument, is at times overplayed, to the point that idyllic rural life is put forward as virtually the only interpretation for discussion. There may have been scope for a more balanced appraisal of diverse images of
town and country. A second limitation lies in the empirical evidence set out to substantiate the key arguments. The authors certainly demonstrate that homelessness is an issue in many rural areas, and that specific policy programmes in England, to date, have been heavily focused on central London and a few other English cities. But the evidence is not dramatic and does not detract from the very serious problems of homelessness experienced in many English cities. There is no evidence or suggestion, for example, that homelessness is ‘worse’ in the countryside, than in the city. Thirdly, I wasn’t entirely convinced that the book demonstrated that the nature of homelessness is really substantially different in rural areas compared to urban/mixed localities. Yes, there are issues around definitions, hidden homelessness, dispersal and lack of service provision. But, as the authors themselves point out, there is tremendous diversity across rural areas – as there is across urban areas. Moreover, the underlying structural causes and explanations for homelessness (and hence policy solutions) appear similar in both rural and urban environments. Other readers must, of course, make up their own minds.

The book made me wonder whether there is a need for a more explicitly comparative study of homelessness in urban/rural/mixed areas and of the linkages in housing processes between different localities. But surely the point is that it’s not a competition. Homelessness is unpleasant wherever it is experienced and there should be equity in terms of local and central government responses to the problem. A book such as Rural Homelessness was needed as an element in the process of recognising rural housing needs. Current moves towards compulsory assessment of the extent of homelessness and the production of homelessness strategies by local housing authorities across the UK may already be a valuable step forward. However, it will remain essential that the experience of homelessness in all types of residential environments and geographical areas is appropriately represented in research and academic literature as well as in policy review and practice.

Rural Homelessness is an authoritative book which has been well researched and well written. It serves a valuable purpose in filling key research gaps on the rural dimensions of homelessness. It also does a good job in integrating the research material with international scholarly debates on contemporary rurality and with evolving policy debates. Given the lack of comprehensive, up to date, texts on rural homelessness, this one will undoubtedly be widely read and cited for some time to come.

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Nicholas Mays, Sally Wyke, Gill Malbon and Nick Goodwin (eds.) (2001),
The Purchasing of Health Care by Primary Care Organisations: an evaluation and guide to future policy, Buckingham: Open University Press, xxi + 320 pp., £25.00 pbk., ISBN 0 335 20900 9, 0 335 20901 7 (hb). JSP, 32, 2003, DOI: 10.1017/S0047279402316933

This book presents findings from a series of studies of the GP Total Purchasing Pilots (TTPs), one of a number of alternatives to standard fundholding that emerged in the twilight years of the last Conservative Government. The research deals mainly with the 53 ‘first wave’ TTPs that operated between 1996 and 1998, examining their characteristics, achievements and shortcomings. Despite the appellation of ‘total’ and the original intention to extend fundholders’ purchasing responsibilities to the full range of hospital and community health services, the majority of TTPs purchased extra services only in chosen areas. The reported projects look at purchasing of services such as maternity care, mental health services and emergency work, and
at more generic issues like transaction costs, budget setting, the management of economic risk and changed structures of accountability.

The big question, given the brief life span of the TTPs and the demise of fundholding after the Labour Party’s 1997 election victory, is whether these researchers found themselves stuck down a blind alley or produced results that are generalisable to other forms of primary care-led purchasing. It should come as no surprise, given that these studies were judged to warrant publication as a book, that the authors make the case for the continued relevance of their findings. They construct a narrative in which TPPs are shown to be a close cousin of locality commissioning and primary care groups. In the introduction we are told that fundholding and non-fundholding were converging and, with the ‘ideological heat . . . ebbing away’, there was a more general acceptance of the benefits of devolved purchasing. The editors argue that, like PGCs, TPPs involved groups of practices working together as sub-committees of the health authorities and list a number of common problems and issues with continuing policy relevance.

The problem, as I see it, is that this version of events is more hypothesis than established fact. It would sit better in the context of a new research programme on PCGs than a programme on TPPs that ended three years ago. At face value, there are differences in scale, personnel, regulatory frameworks and – dare I say it – ideology, which might make one hesitate to accept the linkage between TPPs and PCGs mapped out here. The extent of cross-over, including the continuing involvement of former fundholders, relationships with health authorities and technical borrowings affecting commissioning practices, remains a largely-answered empirical question.

Arguably this book’s real contribution is to tell us something about the dynamics of the NHS reform process in recent years. As one reflects back on about 20 years of continuous change it does not seem over fanciful to talk of reforms for a post-modern age. It is not so much that reforms have become routine, as that they have come to be seen as transient and non-cumulative. There is a sense of constant turbulence, fragmentation and loss of organisational memory that seems to me to make recent re-organisations different from those of 1974 and 1982. Thus, to take the example of my home country of Wales, the period since the end of fundholding has seen the fortunes of local health groups ebb and flow, as first they were denied the devolved powers given to primary care groups, then elevated into prominence by the abolition of the health authorities, and more recently told that they will be replaced by (larger) local health boards, incorporating some of the functions of the HAs. Inevitably the nature of research is affected, so that studies with conventional fixed designs often find that the structures being evaluated disappear before the research is completed. This book makes the case for coherent policy evolution and a thread of continuity, but in its detail provides support for the opposite thesis. It is valuable not for its story line, which I think is flawed, but as a fragment of evidence in a bigger picture.

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In a welcome addition to the burgeoning literature charting the historical development of Britain’s welfare state, From Community Care to Market Care? explores key elements of recent
debates about the provision of welfare services to older people. The book significantly extends the previous work of two of the authors. In their earlier study, Robin Means and Randall Smith (1998) focused on the period from the end of the Poor Law to 1971, when local authorities assumed statutory responsibility for meeting the welfare needs of older people. Here, with the addition to the writing team of Hazel Morbey, the analysis addressed the years between 1971 and 1993. While the endpoint of the historical analysis coincides with the implementation of reforms following the 1990 NHS and Community Care Act, the authors also have much to say about the implications of their study for the modernisation agenda of the current Labour administration.

The period 1973–1991 was one of major social policy change in Britain, driven by shifts in economic conditions and political ideology. This study sets out to show how national policy decisions were subsequently translated into developments at the level of individual local authorities in England. The book is based upon an empirical analysis of documentary sources and interviews with key individuals undertaken in four case study authorities. The case studies – a London Borough, a Metropolitan Authority and two county councils – were selected to reflect the range of local level variation that exists in England in terms of geographic scale and political culture. Reports of social service committee meetings represented the main documentary source used, while leading players in social service management, the NHS and the local voluntary sector were the principal interview partners. That the authors have managed to bring together such a varied range of sources represents a substantial achievement. The managerial bias that is reflected in the sources is acknowledged as an unavoidable consequence of the research strategy. Inevitably absent is the perspective of older people themselves as users of welfare services. This underlines the importance of collecting and archiving contemporary accounts of individuals’ experiences of different types of service.

*From Community Care to Market Care?* is organised thematically. The first substantive chapter reviews the current modernisation agenda. While this represents something of a shift from the thinking of the New Right, it is argued that many of the key issues it raises have a very lengthy history, and that contemporary policy makers might be well advised to consider the lessons of that history. Subsequent chapters highlight the key issues, showing how particular local authorities responded through the 1970s and 1980s to the changing priorities of central government in relation to meeting older people’s welfare needs. Each chapter begins with a useful outline of the major developments in national policy relating to the topic in question before presenting material from the case studies to illustrate its impact at local level.

The case studies are used effectively to argue for a reconsideration of commonplace views about the shift from community care to market care. For example, the analysis of policies relating to targeting, rationing and charging for home care services reveals that local authorities were gradually changing their approach to these questions through the period in question. However, greater targeting of home care on those older people deemed to be in most need was a feature in many authorities well before the Griffiths Report, let alone the Community Care White Paper and the subsequent legislation. In this respect, the economic imperatives of managing a limited budget were more important than any shift in political ideology. Other chapters examine the changing role of local authority residential care, the shifting boundaries and ensuing tensions between health and social care, the mixed economy of social care, and the movement towards quasi-markets in community care. At every stage, the authors draw upon the empirical data with great care to emphasise the need to take a more balanced approach when interpreting the impact of political factors at national level on local-level policy making. In particular, the authors show that the perceived ‘golden age’ of community care in the 1970s was something of a myth. Also, the welfare services provided to older people were not quite as poor as is often claimed by the New Right.
The book concludes with an excellent discussion of the lessons that can be drawn from the historical analysis for contemporary social policy. Thus, the recently adopted National Service Framework for Older People is perceived as masking the absence of a comprehensive policy relating to older people (and paralleling that concerning the welfare needs of children): ‘the national service framework may offer a new vision, but it is a vision rooted in many of the same assumptions that can be traced back at least to the reconstruction debates at the end of the Second World War’ (p. 174). This is a book that deserves to be widely read, not least because of the way that it seeks to challenge some of the assumptions that are held about such a key period in Britain’s recent social policy.


THOMAS SCARF
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Like many serious students of recent and contemporary UK health policy, I possess a schematic but sketchy knowledge of pre-NHS health institutions and of the austerity NHS of the 1950s and early 1960s. Moreover, although hospitals have long been central to health care (and remain so even in the contemporary context of emphasis on primary care) there are few books that treat their conceptualisation and location to any great extent. I therefore found it profitable to fill out my knowledge from this apparently thoroughly-researched account of the development of English hospitals and their political and organisational context over the last 80 years or so. The central account is, quite reasonably, periodised into pre-war, wartime, 1948 to the appearance of the 1962 Hospital Plan, 1962 to 1973, 1973 to 1991, and 1991 and afterwards. In the latter period, the author (rightly in my opinion) makes little of the election of New Labour in 1997. The book employs an effective combination of national archival material (England, with occasional Scottish comparisons) with more detailed local material related to the former Newcastle Region of the NHS (roughly speaking, Cumberland, Northumberland, Tyneside, Wearside, Durham, Teeside and North Yorkshire). In the latter case, the author has had access to archives in advance of the usual release dates.

This is a dense and detailed, though clearly written volume, the strength of whose content is in its processual account rather than in any specific observation or analysis. It is not therefore a book that can be readily summarised, but three examples of general interest are as follows. All bear out the observation that a number of old problems are never solved. First, it becomes clear that the Treasury has had a longstanding fear of the NHS as a consumer of public finance, leading to a sterile and occasionally perverse obsession with ‘efficiency’ rather than with the quality of services. Thus there was little new about the notorious NHS ‘efficiency formula’ of the 1990s. Second, though it has been recognised at least since the 1960s that hospital and social care demands are interdependent, there have been few serious attempts to address this in organisational or planning terms. Third, pre-war aspirations that a mixed economy of hospital services could be persuaded to operate as what nowadays would be called a network were undermined by hospitals’ own unwillingness to co-operate. Indeed, consideration was apparently given to imposing a
duty to co-operate on the voluntary hospitals, so that the contemporary (1997 Act) duty is not a new idea.

Planning, Markets and Hospitals is a welcome book that will be of much value to postgraduate students and teachers and to researchers who need to contextualise their own work. My one niggle is that the author seems to be driven to provide overarching analyses of material where this is not really necessary and where his detailed research can stand on its own. Thus there are rather half-hearted (though sometimes strongly worded) critiques of historical accounts of the ‘inevitability’ of regionalisation, of representations of the 1962 Hospital Plan as a manifestation of modernity, and of hospital organisation as a simple progression from markets to hierarchy to network. All these are legitimate areas for theoretical analysis but require a more sustained treatment than is possible in a detailed historical text.

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Labour Market and Social Protection Reforms in International Perspective, an initiative of the International Social Security Association, takes a broad and interdisciplinary look at, as one may argue, the most challenging issue social policy makers face today: to harmonise labour market and social protection policies. Increasingly, policies are sought that provide strong incentives to work and at the same time guarantee adequate protection and income security. The book rightly observes that the challenge is not only to adapt systems to the widely acknowledged changes in the demographic, economic and work environment. New configurations arise while traditional patterns persist, and therefore quite different situations have to be handled and accommodated in parallel.

In the first part of the book the key issues are discussed, and in the second part telling country experiences are described in detail. One of the strengths of this volume is its broad geographical focus, covering the entire OECD area. Examples on policy performance include, for instance, the Danish model of “flexicurity”, the Dutch focus on work incentives, recent developments in countries in transition to market economies, and the deregulation and re-regulation experience in New Zealand. The chapters in the third part of the book have a focus on coherent policy mixes, looking at different issues in different countries (e.g. older workers in the United States) and also looking into the future of work and social protection.

The book gives a very good state-of-the-art description of the most pressing problems, including for instance the gender issue and the shifting line between employment and non-employment, and an excellent overview on relevant reform experiences. Most of the authors, leading labour market and social protection experts, are reasonably optimistic about possibilities to design employment and social protection systems in a mutually supportive way – even if there is still a long way to go and if many of the present policies fail to do so. In addition, encouraged by the recent fall in unemployment in many countries in Europe, several authors argue for a European way of job creation avoiding the expansion of low quality, low-paid jobs that partly explain the US job miracle.

While this volume is more than a loose collection of individual contributions, the link between those contributions is a bit weak. Also, despite a number of valuable recommendations
placed in different parts of the book, the overall assessment of the situation remains vague. A shortcoming is the absence of summaries for each of the book chapters, which makes it difficult for the reader to grasp the salient messages quickly. An appealing element is the existence of several so-called features, which highlight particular aspects on only a few pages, such as the resilience of the long duration employment relationship, taxation and labour market entry, or the issue of early and late retirement.

The book will be of particular interest to academics, policy makers and other social actors concerned with the design and implementation of consistent labour market and social protection reforms. It could also serve as a student textbook.

**CHRISTOPHER PRINZ**

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Criminology is flourishing. In part this is being driven by a renewed obsession with ‘what works’ and managerial outputs which have inevitably upped the demand for those forms of evaluative and evidence led research so beloved by administrative criminology. But criminology is also burgeoning in higher education. Whilst many teaching programmes are pulled towards ‘vocational relevance’, expansion has also provided the space and a forum for critical analysis (as all good social science should be).

This edited volume is essentially a series of reflections on the past, present and future of critical criminologies. It confidently, and rightly, asserts the necessity of critical analysis, in particular to counter the claims of conservatism and neo liberalism. Above all, critical criminology in its myriad forms can claim, in its ongoing project of theoretical innovation and interventionist politics, to be at the forefront of the discipline. Its opposition to those cultures of control, scientism, patriarchy, positivism and correctionalism associated with orthodox criminology remains vital in understanding and challenging how power is determined, knowledge legitimated and order maintained.

The book was first conceived at a small conference at the University of Western Sydney in February 2001. But it is truly international in scope. In Part 1 *Issues and Debates*, Julia and Herman Schwendinger from the USA, Dave Brown from Australia and Phil Scraton from the UK reflect on the origins of critical criminology in the 1960s the 1970s and its subsequent development in their respective countries. It is a history marked by theoretical innovation and the opening up of new agendas (for example in state crime, the political economy of justice, corporate crime, crimes against women and so on). It is also a history informed by conflict, resistance and struggle. Attempts to discredit this radicalism were, and continue to be, many fold. It is also a ‘movement’ that has endured more than its fair share of internal disputes and quarrels. Prominent amongst these, as the chapter by Kerry Carrington recalls, has been a series of tensions between feminist and left radical projects. Yet critical criminology remains alive and well – particularly when appreciating its own diversity and its ability to remain politically as well as intellectually relevant. As Pat Carlen puts it ‘it is never more worthy and capable of constant renewal than when it has as many enemies as it has today’ (p. 243).

Part 2 of the book, *New Directions and Challenges*, contains six chapters which seek to redirect or renew critical criminology in the 21st century. These visions include recognising
new forms of neo liberal governance (John Pratt); tracing the impact of globalisation and the expanding human rights culture (Russell Hogg); developing feminist and post foundationalist frameworks for critique and solidarity (Judith Bessant); and pursuing moral campaigns for social justice (Pat Carlen). In arguably the most challenging contribution (at least for those elements of critical criminology that refuse to engage with the ‘why’ question) Tony Jefferson argues for a realignment with psychology such that the import of the psychic and the social can be utilised in unravelling the motivations of the ‘psychosocial subject’. The book concludes with Jock Young’s incisive drawing together of the diverse elements of critical criminology, neatly captured in his notion of the ‘always unfinished’. It is a piece that lauds the multiple terrains around which future critical criminologies can be built. He also usefully reminds us that any such project should never lose sight of one of its earliest motivations: that is the fun and joy to be found in transgressing boundaries.

The editors of course do not claim that their work is, or could be, a comprehensive summation of critical criminology. There are other important sources/sites of critical criminology, such as in Scandinavia, which are not fully reflected here. Similarly there is little or no space in the future directions section for the emergent fields of cultural criminology, spatial governmentality or post-colonial criminology. Nevertheless this collection marks a certain maturity in critical criminology. Not only does it bring together some of the key scholars who have ensured that critical criminology has survived internal and external challenge, but, as Elliot Currie notes in the preface, their work reveals ‘a willingness to apply a critical lens not only to the work of their more conventional counterparts but their own as well’.

At a recent criminology conference in the UK of some 100 sessions only one entitled ‘the production of criminological knowledge’, explicitly (it seemed to me) entertained a critical and campaigning agenda (although I don’t doubt that critical criminologists were present in many others). Yet arguably it was one of the most well-attended. The point is that criminology will always attract those who recognise the harm and suffering endured by those struggling for social justice and then seek to turn this knowledge into various forms of political action. Carrington and Hogg’s volume is an essential reminder, to all who need it, that criminology is not simply a technocratic tool; it also seeks to open up new, radical and oppositional political possibilities.

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For the moment, child murder and paedophilia dominate national attention and the evil drug misuser has been displaced as the main source of fear and loathing among press and public. But still, the most common image of the drug addict is one suffused with notions of crime, excitement, drama and disgust. The book reviewed here powerfully undermines such stereotypes by ‘describing it as it is,’ through the words and experiences of drug users themselves. In relentless detail, in a series of chapters covering initiation and daily routines, violence and anti-social behaviour, housing and neighbourhoods, family and friends, police and prisons, health and drugs services, their lives are described as ones which are boring, repetitive, pathetic, and full of petty miseries. Any idea that drug taking for these users is fun is soon dispelled.
Joanne Neale is a Senior Research Fellow in the Centre for Drug Misuse Research at Glasgow University. This Centre has a distinguished track-record in conducting original social research on drugs misuse, especially on difficult or challenging topics like drug taking by very young people. Joanne Neale herself has published extensively, reporting on issues like use of injecting equipment, prescribed methadone, and illicit drug overdose. Her work has focused particularly on the views and experiences of drug users themselves, providing a much needed balance to a literature still very much dominated by the views of clinicians.

The data on which this book draws were collected from in-depth interviews with 200 opiate users living in Scotland, mainly in Glasgow and Dundee. These interviews were conducted as part of a larger research project funded by the Scottish Executive Health Department to investigate drug users' views and experiences of non-fatal illicit drug overdose. This research was carried out between May 1997 and October 1999. The main project was a team effort involving researchers from university departments and hospitals in Scotland and Wales. This book is a by-product of that larger study, drawing on a wealth of more general information collected in the course of the research and dealing with issues other than that of drug overdose. 77 individuals were recruited via A&E departments and these were all people who had overdosed on illegal drugs. 123 drug users were opportunistically sampled through drug agencies, pharmacies and by using snowballing techniques.

The people whose views and experiences are reported here had a mean age of 28 years with a range from 15–47; they were almost all white; two-thirds were male and one-third female; their mean length of drug use was 12 years with a range from 1–31. Almost one third were homeless. Three quarters had been in prison at some time and over a quarter reported that at some point they had experienced mental health problems. Three quarters had had experience of injecting a drug.

The detailed descriptions, which draw directly on data derived from interviews with these drug users, are usefully located within a comprehensive review of existing literature on many of the main questions on which drugs research tends to focus. So the book offers not just the view from this sample of drug misusers but also a solid introduction to the literature on drug taking (mainly British and American).

The main conclusion presented by the book is that drug misuse is a very complex phenomenon and simple explanations and simple solutions are misplaced. As ever, the expert researcher, along with practitioners and professionals, sees the problem in quite a different way from politicians and the press. No easy generalisations are possible. But Joanne Neale does not despair. In an interesting final chapter, she attempts to locate her discussion within consideration of sociological theories of contemporary life. She indicates a series of dilemmas that confront the analyst. These are issues of homogeneity and heterogeneity, structure and agency, public and private, different and ordinary, cause and effect, and dependence and independence. She concludes that there are commonalities among drug misusers but there are also differences. Some conclusions can usefully be drawn about what conditions are likely to encourage drugs misuse and what kinds of interventions might help. From this thoughtful presentation of her original research findings, Neale offers some advice on prevention, education, enforcement, treatment and rehabilitation. Drug use is increasing and becoming endemic. Most policy initiatives seem so far not to have solved the problem. Importantly, Neale advises that all discussions of what is to be done and designs for new initiatives would benefit from paying explicit attention to the knowledge and experience of drug misusers themselves. The material assembled in this book could assist.

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The UK’s New Labour government was elected in 1997, and subsequently re-elected in 2001 largely on a platform of their intention to modernise and revitalise public services. And, though the central planks of that platform were not always clear, one of their core beliefs was that the systems for devising, directing and delivering such services needed to be reconstructed in order to tackle social exclusion. The underlying assumptions of such a move – that social inequalities are rife and complex, that centrally-controlled social policy is the best instrument for addressing them, and that no individual agency can be expected to solve such interconnected problems – have led to consistent calls by Tony Blair and his key ministerial colleagues for “joined-up solutions to joined-up problems”. Consequently public services such as education, health, housing, employment, planning and environment are being brought more closely together in a range of formal and informal partnership arrangements. Not everyone is convinced of the efficacy of these moves, indeed there is growing evidence that the range and extent of such partnerships are beginning to cause their own problems for public service agencies. The limited capacity of the statutory and voluntary sectors to establish, run and contribute to scores of such partnerships is of serious concern. They appear to operate more easily at the grassroots than in the boardroom, and their ability to influence strategic planning and service delivery is far from proven.

This collection of original and detailed studies of inter-agency working within the field of education is therefore a timely review of policy and practice. The Introduction and the 15 individual chapters address a number of key questions including the political origins of the growth in joined-up policy, the ways in which this growth links to other aspects of the UK Government’s agenda, and the extent to which partnership working is proving to be effective, efficient, and equitable. Between them the contributors discuss formal UK-based educational programmes such as Education Action Zones (EAZs) and the New Deal for young unemployed people; community education; special educational needs initiatives; links between housing and schools; and the opportunities for training and employment for disabled people. The authors draw mainly on experiences in England and Scotland, but there are valuable perspectives from similar public policy initiatives in the USA, Australia, Europe and Japan. The editors have thus ensured that the collection has international breadth and comparison as well as local depth of analysis.

Selecting favourites from such a wide variety of work has to reflect personal professional and academic interests. Consequently I am most likely to return to this book to follow my own engagement with the discussions of EAZs and similar programmes, and with Governments’ attempts to link educational policy and urban regeneration. Sally Power’s detailed work on the first 25 EAZs to be established in England, for example, challenges the automatic assumption that joined-up policy will lead to joined-up thinking, and that this in turn will lead to joined-up solutions. Locating the roots of much current thinking in the paucity of Thatcherite strategies, Power also probes some of the weaknesses of New Labour dogma and illustrates that it is not a straight replication of Tory policy. Indeed she argues that it is precisely because they are claiming to be making advances in socially inclusive policies that their work has to be put to the test. She makes a convincing argument that the success of EAZs has been less than expected and, in the next Chapter, Hatcher and Leblond report similarly ambiguous results from the French Government’s Zones d’Education Prioritaires. Both chapters note a conflict between Government attempts to centralise and delegate power – a
theme with echoes in the accounts of similar partnerships by Semmens, Boyd and Crowson, and Baron.

Other readers will find equally satisfying routes through the different debates on offer. There is a similarly rich vein of evidence to be mined about the links between education and health, both as a responsibility of schools as they attempt to provide adequate services for pupils with special educational needs (discussed here by Morduant and by Lightfoot, Mukherjee and Sloper) and as a shared concern of educational and health professionals involved in the training of adults (explored through sensitive case study analysis by Riddel and Wilson). The book is clearly current, but it will remain relevant to anyone with an interest in inter-agency working. And that audience, given the continued expansion of academic as well as professional collaborations, can only continue to grow. A softback edition is surely required.

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