Book Reviews

DOI: 10.1017/S0047279403217190

This book addresses a key and undocumented element in the migration literature, the question of irregular migration. Drawing on data from three different studies this book presents to the reader a wealth of qualitative material that describes in great detail the motivations, experiences and strategies of irregular migrants from Brazil, Poland and Turkey. The book provides a fascinating insight into aspects of the lives of irregular migrants who are often living on the margins of society and living in fear of being questioned or caught by the authorities.

The introduction, which highlights the economic approach that provides the framework for the book, is followed by ten chapters broken down into three parts. Part 1 ‘Mobility and its Regulation’ consists of three chapters. Chapter 1 provides the economic theoretical framework from which irregular migration and migration control systems are analysed and includes a case study of China and Hong Kong that sets out to illustrate the complexities of mobility of both labour and markets. Chapter 2 locates the work within the context of the European Union especially the free movement of people within the EU zone and the increased emphasis on controlling entry from those outside of the zone and in so doing increasing the number of border crossings that became classified as illegal. There are still legal channels of entry to the EU, such as through the asylum system and this has become a focus of more restrictions both at the EU level but also among individual receiving countries. Jordan and Dûvell note a correlation between restrictive measures by receiving countries to limit access to welfare provision and housing and the numbers of asylum seekers entering the country. Such an assertion is not, however, empirically grounded and in the case of the UK is just not in evidence but is nevertheless a key assumption informing asylum policy in the UK and elsewhere. The final chapter in this part of the book explores the way in which labour markets interact with social exclusion and poverty including undocumented work in the shadow economy.

Part 2 of the book is what is unique and enlightening as it presents a case study of the UK. It explores why people from Brazil, Poland and Turkey come to the UK, strategies for entering the country and how people gain access to housing and employment and the role of support organisations. In this part of the book, the way in which some people move in and out of different immigration statuses in an attempt to regularise their immigration status while others do not attempt to regularise their status once their visas have expired is demonstrated through detailed case studies. Strategies for regularising status included entering as tourists and then obtaining student visas, getting married to an EU national, and in the case of Turkish interviewees some also applied for asylum. A central theme of this part of the book was undocumented work, which supplied the motivation for entering the UK in the first place. Employment was overwhelmingly in textiles, building, cleaning and catering. The industries where people were working were those associated with low pay and those who mentioned levels of pay were for the most part earning well below the minimum wage.
Part 3 ‘The response of the receiving country’ is divided into four chapters. Chapter 7 provides a unique insight into the workings of the Immigration Service Enforcement Directorate including the observation of four workplace raids. Chapter 8 reports on access to and use of public services while Chapter 9 explores the recruitment of labour from abroad. In this chapter data are introduced from a study of people from India and Poland who have come under the work permit scheme in an attempt to compare and contrast their experiences with undocumented workers and to explore the issues of transnational mobility. This chapter did not fit well with the rest of the book as introducing these data so late in the book interrupted the continuity of the sources of data and the key thematic concerns which until this point had been focused on irregular migrants and undocumented workers. Finally, Chapter 10 emphasises notions of justice and its incompatibility with the current system of border controls.

This book should be read by a diverse range of audiences. It provides both a useful summary of theoretical ideas and insights into the experiences of undocumented migrants living in the UK, a group about which so little is known.

ALICE BLOCH
Goldsmith’s College

DOI: 10.1017/S0047279403227197

During the second half of the 1990s, Barnardo’s began an initiative to promote evidence-based practice in social care in a series of publications – ‘What Works . . .’. Since then, the phrase has entered into the vocabulary of politicians and policy makers as a tenet of belief that investment in social policies must be accompanied by an assurance that it will be wedded to professional practice which has been tried and tested with full scientific rigour. This excellent collection brings together in one volume a dozen accounts of ‘What works . . .’ in a range of services for children. Not all the chapters have been published before and all those previously published have been significantly revised in the light of the shifting policy and practice agenda.

The twelve main chapters of this book constitute a wide-ranging, but by no means comprehensive, coverage of services or interventions for children. There is, for instance, no specific chapter on many of the (evidence based?) fads of the moment; no reviews of ‘mentoring’ or ‘personal advisors’, Sure Start or multi-agency partnership working. But this does not really detract from the value of the book as a thorough, in-depth, balanced and mature review of interventions promoting the welfare of children and young people. Much of its value is in provoking more careful thought rather than providing a catalogue of ‘proven’ effective interventions.

The main chapters are grouped under three main themes: services for adopted and looked after children (four chapters); preventing the social exclusion of children and young people (five chapters); and promoting and protecting children’s health (three chapters). The final chapter reports on ‘final words’ from about a hundred 12–18 year olds who have been service users with Barnado’s projects. This chapter summarises how they see policy and practice priorities. Indeed, the opening chapter makes clear that one of the criteria against which interventions may be deemed to have worked is that they provide ‘outcomes most wanted by children and families’. Yet there is much more to evaluating good practice than consumer satisfaction; the chapter points out that on this basis Dr Shipman would still be murdering patients – he was a popular GP!

The collection is timely and valuable not only because it brings together such a wealth of expertise and research summaries in one place, but also because it serves to remind the
reader of the aims, ambitions and limitations of evaluative social research. The preface and the first chapter are refreshingly honest about the fact that establishing ‘what works’ is by no means an exact science. The main review chapters, it claims, are not ‘systematic reviews’ but ‘summaries . . . of incomplete and often contradictory bodies of evidence’ intended to ‘guide social care practitioners’ rather than instruct them in strategies that are guaranteed to provide the outcomes policy makers and client groups want. Again, we are honestly warned that in most fields of activity ‘there is no single best way’; ‘no intervention works equally well for all people, in all communities, in all circumstances, all of the time’. Rather, it claims, that what the ‘What works . . . ’ series hoped to do was to steer a middle path between the ‘prescriptive certainties’ of social pseudo-science and the anti-scientific ‘do whatever works best for you’ approaches.

Despite this, some chapters make strong claims. In her chapter on child protection, Geraldine Macdonald begins by making it clear that ‘randomised control trials are the most reliable source of evidence’ and again that ‘robust and replicable research designs are necessary to make confident statements about cause and effect’. Her chapter covers: primary prevention (interventions aimed at whole populations irrespective of risk); secondary preventions (interventions aimed at those identified as being at high risk); and tertiary prevention (aimed at preventing abuse from re-occurring). The review involves an assessment of US and UK evidence. Where there is a claim for a more established tradition of evaluative research and systematic review (as in the case of the health inequalities chapter by Helen Roberts) much more concentration is given to UK material. But here, despite similar exhortation to MacDonald, about the importance of ‘strong evaluation’ (rather than evaluation as justification), there are occasional lapses into policy recommendations on the basis of the comments of a single young person.

The importance and impact of the policy context of interventions is made in a number of the chapters. Given the huge changes in policy for ‘looked after’ children this is most important, and might render the implications of some of research from the 1980s and even the 1990s dangerously dated. Alan Dyson, in an excellent chapter, also illustrates the ways in which the very meaning of ‘inclusive education’ has changed markedly over the past three decades, influenced not only by shifts in policy on special educational needs but by the politicisation of disability issues, a developing emphasis on participation rather than simply presence of special needs groups and, more recently, a linkage with a more general social inclusion agenda. This means that much care has to be taken about the interpretation of evidence about what works in what sorts of contexts. Indeed Dyson argues for the fundamental importance of the effective ‘alignment’ of interventions and contexts – between teachers’ classroom practice, through school organisation and local authority support, to national policy. This serves to remind the reader that there is much more to the ‘What works . . . ’ agenda than simply ‘buying-in’ to ‘kite marked’ solutions without careful conceptual thought. Rather we need continued and reflexive reviews of what works, for who, and in what circumstances.

BOB COLES
University of York


The study of social policy and sociology has had a place in the education of health and social care professionals for many years, although the practical turn of recent curriculum developments has increased pressure on those who see a crucial role for what is sometimes regarded as ‘abstract theorising’. It has at times been a struggle for academics to attract those who see themselves
primarily as health and social care practitioners to a consideration of the theoretical issues and political debates which provide the background to framing health and social policies. This is precisely what Key Concepts and Debates in Health and Social Policy attempts to do. It is directed particularly at students and practitioners in nursing, social work and the allied health professions. The aim of the book is to provide an exploration of different ways of defining social and health policy and the tensions between them. The authors hope that professionals will be able to understand and analyse the strategic choices which have been made in contemporary policy. The book enters this terrain with an explicit ‘ideologies of welfare’ approach, rejecting the more traditional approach of documenting and analysing distinct policy areas.

The first chapter discusses the idea of a ‘Third Way’ in politics and social provision, providing a succinct and useful introduction to these ideas that will enable practitioners to contextualise the current penchant for ‘modernisation’ — a prominent feature of the working lives of many health and social care professionals. Chapter 2 examines the concept of ‘risk’ and the relationship between risk and social policy. This too has a contemporary relevance for many professionals and is appropriately discussed around four examples: child protection, environmental policy, new genetics and accidents. Health and social care reforms in the Thatcher era and under New Labour are analysed through a discussion of concepts of responsibility and solidarity in Chapter 3 and central planning and market competition in Chapter 5. ‘User participation’ is examined in the context of a debate about empowerment, consumerism and choice in Chapter 4, and the professionalism versus managerialism debate is considered in a discussion of ‘controlling service delivery’ in Chapter 6. Other chapters examine community care and family policy, the development of quality assurance and there is a very helpful exposition of the concepts of rationing and prioritising.

The style of the book is accessible and although it is clearly concerned with conceptual debates, it is orientated to issues which are significant themes in the working lives of many in health and welfare provision. Dealing with complex debates and tracing the interplay of ideas and policy events in a chapter of just a few thousand words is no easy task. A more explicit acknowledgement of this and a guide to further reading for each chapter would have been a helpful addition. It is also inevitable, in the rapidly changing world of health policy in particular, that some important contemporary issues receive fairly cursory attention – the rise of Public Private Partnerships is a case in point. The ideological background to performance management and target setting in health and social care which have become important drivers of current professional and managerial practice is a further area which could have been usefully developed.

The authors say that their book is organised in terms of what are described as ‘doctrinal contests’. In the introduction they set out to justify this approach in terms of the relevance and significance of the dialectic in thinking about contemporary concepts and debates. I found this unconvincing and not especially descriptive of the way in which the material is actually discussed in the subsequent chapters. Although several chapters do set up a discussion of ‘principles’ it is not at all clear that these should necessarily be seen as oppositional and indeed the discussion often illustrates how welfare debates have become more complex and reflexive in recent times.

Despite these criticisms, the book is a very welcome addition to the corpus of work which has been developed by those who insist on the relevance of conceptual debate in professional education. It covers many key issues, and traces the ways in which academic concepts and theories impact on current reforms in health and social care policy in the UK. As such it will be useful reading for all health and social care practitioners and students.

LORRAINE CULLEY
De Montfort University

The UK has experienced successive instalments of the ‘reform’ of the management of public sector services and the object of *Evaluating Public Management Reform* is to assess this experience. As the authors suggest (p. 2) the focus on the UK is not parochial but is appropriate on the grounds of both the period over which (effectively new) public management reforms have operated (two decades) and the fact that such changes have been exported to other jurisdictions. ‘Reform’ is defined as ‘deliberate change in the arrangements for the design and delivery of public services’ (p. 3) and the need for a text on evaluation is seen by the authors as correcting a bias in the existing literature which, they argue, has been disproportionately concerned with ‘antecedents’ rather than ‘consequences’ (p. 2).

Crucial to the concept of evaluation used in the text is that not only should it be possible to analyse whether public management reform has generated positive effects but also why such effects have occurred. This means that evaluation should be ‘theory driven’, i.e. ‘based on assumptions concerning the relationship between a reform and its effects’ (p. 5). The theoretical framework used is public choice theory. This does not reflect any commitment to this body of theory *per se* but rather to its influence on public management reforms in the UK (pp. 5–6). Public choice theory is seen as prescribing more competition in and an increase in the range of performance information on public sector bodies to discipline producers; and a disaggregation of the public sector into smaller units with devolved powers to improve responsiveness. This is expected to generate two major positive outcomes: improvements in efficiency and in responsiveness (p. 15).

However, the authors argue that to limit evaluation to these criteria is insufficient because there may be unintended consequences of reforms, which may be negative. In this respect they present a case for including equity as an evaluative criteria on the basis that perceived adverse effects have been a central element in critiques of public management reforms (p. 16). Consequently the evaluative framework involves two broad dimensions: the extent to which the programme enjoined by public choice theory has been implemented; and an attempt to assess impact in terms of the three key criteria discussed above. Following an introductory chapter, Chapters 2 and 3 discuss, respectively, criteria and methods of evaluation, Chapters 4–6 apply the evaluative criteria to health, housing and education and a short conclusion draws the argument together.

The current review cannot do justice to the richness and range of material analysed in the chapters devoted to particular services. However, a key theme in the book is the complexity of evaluation. This involves, for example, the limited extent to which public choice approaches were implemented (for example, on limits on the extent of competition in health see p. 59 and on education p. 123); the problems of developing operational measures for key concepts (for example, for an excellent discussion of the evidence on equity in social housing see pp. 107–12); and the impact of the diversity of the three key evaluative dimensions. With respect to the latter the book provides a crucial corrective to the current fad for ‘evidence based’ policy. Thus the authors argue that even if more reliable evidence was available on changes in the three key evaluative dimensions how these are assessed is ‘inherently and inescapably political’ (p. 157).

An important dimension of the evaluation given in the book refers to the limited extent to which public choice approach was implemented in the UK. There is little discussion of the reasons for this in the book and perhaps this reflects the desire to focus on the impacts of the changes which did occur. Nevertheless it could be argued that this issue could have been encompassed within the book’s remit, given that it implicitly relates to a counterfactual.
Advocates of public choice would no doubt argue that the limited change observed by the authors reflected an unwillingness to fully embrace the neo-liberal project. In this respect one literature not discussed in the book is the application of stakeholder accounting to public sector management. Such work has pointed to key differences in operating characteristics between utilities such as BT, which were privatised, and social services, which were not, notably in their capacity to generate surpluses to deliver an income stream to a new post-privatisation stakeholder, the shareholder (see, for example, J. Froud et al. ‘Stakeholder Economy? From Utility Privatisation to New Labour’, Capital and Class, 60, 1996, 119–34).

Overall this is a book which can be recommended unequivocally. The complex methodological issues involved in evaluation are explained with admirable lucidity and the literature reviewed on specific services is comprehensive and up to date. Evaluating Public Management Reforms is, what all publishers love to hear, essential reading for those looking for an assessment of the successive installments of public sector managerialism in the UK.

TONY CUTLER
Royal Holloway, University of London

DOI: 10.1017/S0047279403257196

It is something of an irony that as the numbers of Social Policy undergraduates are (for the moment, at least) declining the number of new and interesting Social Policy textbooks would seem to be proliferating. While the former trend signals a need for ever-more attractive approaches to teaching Social Policy, the latter has been driven by the sheer scale and pace of the changes that have occurred in welfare systems within the past 30 years. Social Policy academics and commentators make their living endeavouring to explain such changes and the recent book by the two Martins (Powell and Hewitt) attempts an overview and synthesis of competing accounts of change. It is a clever and tightly structured book that aims to integrate the descriptive, analytical and explanatory dimensions of such accounts. The authors’ claim is that they draw attention to the ‘what?’, ‘when?’ and ‘why?’ of welfare change, though they themselves admit that ‘[i]t will be obvious that we have sacrificed depth for breadth and that at times our arguments may be oversimplified’ (p. 167).

None the less, this book represents a valuable contribution and provides, with critical aplomb, some really useful ideas about how to (re-) formulate and perhaps even re-invigorate basic or introductory Social Policy courses and modules. The substance of the book falls roughly into two main halves (and one can see some evidence of separate authorship, not least in occasional overlaps between the ‘halves’). After an introductory chapter, Chapters 2, 3 and 4 delineate, respectively, the classic (1945 to 1974/6), re-structured (1974/6 to 1997) and ‘modern’ (1997 onwards) welfare states. Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8, respectively, discuss economic, political, organisational and social explanations of change, and are followed by a (disappointingly equivocal) concluding chapter. Combined within a single volume we have a contemporary potted history of the welfare state and an introduction to most of the key debates about its provenance, functioning and future.

However, the book functions at a high level of generality and abstraction, with few, if any, substantive illustrations or references, for example to current data or research findings. It is the kind of book that students might find extremely useful for exam revision, but I wonder
whether it is a book that will be read more by teachers than by students, since its main value lies in the suggestions it contains for linking, structuring and communicating key issues. Though it endeavours to situate the UK in comparative context, the book is primarily focused on the UK. Inevitably, the authors have had to be selective and I have my reservations that they should have chosen certain sources while ignoring others. Despite this, one of the book’s greatest strengths is that it helpfully outlines and draws upon the approaches offered in several other very recent Social Policy textbooks.

Although the book is by and large clearly written, the substantive argument is often dense and sometimes verges on the cryptic. Occasionally it is quite cavalier in its passing references to other commentators. I am myself a victim of the latter tendency: an obscurely incidental swipe at my alleged characterisation of ‘New Labour welfarism’ (p. 163) is somewhat undermined when one discovers from the source referenced by the authors that what I had actually written about was ‘New Labour workfarism’!

I would not, however, wish to detract from the merits of a book that manages within 200 pages to start with the transition from Poor Law to welfare state and to end with speculative debates about the future of welfare under the Third Way; that seeks to account not only for the impact of economic, political and socio-demographic processes, but for the subtler influences of ideological, managerial and cultural shifts. It is a contribution to the literature that brings not so much new thinking as a fresh degree of clarity to debates that have lately become too tired or too complex to sustain the interest of undergraduates. Certainly, anyone who teaches Social Policy should find it a worthwhile read.

HARTLEY DEAN
London School of Economics

DOI: 10.1017/S0047279403267192

At the time of writing this review Britain is once again at war. It seems timely then to look at how we civilians behaved in the big one against Nazi Germany. But we all know how we behaved, don’t we? Remember ‘Britain can take it’? And who could forget Dunkirk? We endured everything that total war threw at us with fortitude, unwavering resolve to see it through and cheerful good humour.

Or did we? As with all such self-evident myths, you can bet that some smart Alec academic will come along and knock down all our cherished beliefs. In this case, Clive Ponting for one and Harold Smith for another have presented a very different view of the home front. In their versions Britain was peopled by lazy, unpatriotic, selfish, petty criminals, less like Mrs Miniver and more like Private Walker in Dad’s Army.

So what is one to think? Enter Robert Mackay to the rescue. He re-examines the state of civilian morale in the war against the background of these competing views using evidence from three main sources: the Home Intelligence Division of the Ministry of Information, the wonderful Mass-Observation archive at Sussex University and contemporary letters and diaries.

He divides the war into four periods, each with its own different challenges to morale. As soon as war was declared we prepared ourselves for the worst that Jerry could throw at us. We got our blackout curtains up, sorted out our shelters, organised the ARP and waited. And waited. For the first nine months nothing happened. Perversely, instead of being thankful, we
got fretful and irritated at all the petty restrictions, and the longer nothing happened the more pointless they seemed.

When things did start to happen in the summer of 1940 they went badly wrong. First there was Dunkirk, then the unstoppable march of the Nazis through western Europe, culminating in the fall of France and the ever-present threat of invasion. Faced with this series of major setbacks how did we at home respond? Perversely. During all these disasters Mackay reports that ‘the overall picture is of a nation apparently undismayed by setback and committed to resistance in a spirit of optimism about ultimate victory’.

Next came the big blitz. From 7 September 1940 for 76 consecutive nights massive fleets of bombers rained down high explosives and incendiaries on London’s docklands before meting out similar punishment to other cities. The result, as you will have guessed by now, was that people generally behaved not with panic and defeatism but with ‘a high degree of popular resilience, endurance and resolution’.

Finally things started to go better for us; fear of invasion receded and in June 1941 Russia entered the war on our side. The rest, as they say, is history. But the problem of maintaining civilian morale continued; this time the problem was war weariness as there seemed to be no end in sight. Just when the end did seem at hand Hitler unleashed his V1 flying bombs and the V2 rockets. But even these terrible weapons failed to break the morale of those living in the target area of London and the South East. In Mackay’s words, ‘The final trial of the war thus served to confirm the broader story of wartime civilian morale.’ And I for one am pleased about that because this is my war he’s talking about and it’s a much better story to think we all endured it with fortitude and bravery than mean-spirited defeatism.

In the second half of the book he attempts to explain how morale remained intact despite all. He examines the measures the Government took to ensure that the worst of war’s alarms were mitigated by such things as the provision of air raid precautions, shelters, food rationing, anti-aircraft batteries, ITMA and so on. Each of these had its own set of problems and dilemmas which had to be faced, but by and large the Government seemed willing to learn from its mistakes and to try to get things in tune with what people wanted. And he is careful to make the point that morale is influenced by many more things than Government actions. (Some things never change; when there was a scare about aliens the Daily Mail’s headline was ‘INTERN THE LOT’.)

I enjoyed the book a lot, often because it reminded me of me and my family’s part in Hitler’s downfall. I was there as a baby in Bermondsey during the big blitz on London and I want it on record that my morale never even started to crack. My father was on the Bofors anti-aircraft guns. He used to tell me ruefully that he had never knowingly hit a single aeroplane. He was greatly cheered when I told him that I had seen a sign at Duxford which claimed that the Bofors gun hit its target on average once every 88,000 times. He would have been even more cheered to know that, according to Mackay, the whole point of the guns was not to hit anything but to keep civilian morale up by letting people think that we were hitting back.

And I used to live in Hackney too, so in the next edition of the book Robert, can you please note that Hackney isn’t on the Thames; I think the regatta you refer to must have been at Henley.

Notes
1 C. Ponting (1990), 1940, Myth and Reality, Hamish Hamilton.

John Jacobs
University of Sussex
Over the last two decades debates on democratic and participatory governance and human rights have been revitalised. Yet human rights, in general, and women’s rights, in particular, have been constrained, in practice, as the ascendance of neo-liberal agendas has been accompanied by regressive economic and social consequences. This timely volume on *Gender Justice, Development and Rights* explores these paradoxes, both in theory and in the contexts of country-specific case studies.

The essays have grown from a two-year research project at the United Nations Research Institute of Social Development (UNRISD). Some of the commissioned papers were presented to the UNRISD Workshop in New York to coincide with the Beijing Plus Five Review in 2000, bringing together feminist research from a range of related academic disciplines to contribute to international policy development. How might the application of a ‘gender lens’ contribute to a critical understanding of the ways in which liberal democratic rights have been taken on board with the collapse of ‘actually existing socialism’ in Eastern and Central Europe and authoritarian governments in Latin America and other parts of the world? How far have women — and men — gained in terms of political rights and how far have these gains been offset as a result of the impact of neo-liberal economic policies? How have these processes varied cross-culturally? And how have the politics of gender related to the politics of multiculturalism?

Molyneux and Razavi’s Introduction sets the scene, posing the central questions. Does the ‘much-heralded global turn to democracy and human rights’ represent a ‘new form of Western hegemony, the sweetener for the bitter pill of neo-liberal adjustment and rising inequality’? (Molyneux and Razavi, 2002: 3—4). The Introduction provides a cogent guide to the theoretical chapters that explore differing ways of approaching this question and the empirical chapters that explore the implications in terms of social sector restructuring and social rights, democratization and the politics of gender and multiculturalisms in practice.

The chapter by Nussbaum distinguishes between two differing strands within liberal political thought, the ‘negative’ approach epitomised in neo-liberal critiques of state interventions as infringements of individual freedom of choice and the more ‘positive’ strand, building upon the work of John Stuart Mill, T. H. Green and T. H. Marshall, emphasising the potential contributions of the state. Drawing upon Amartya Sen’s work, Nussbaum develops the notion of capabilities, what people are actually able to do. For women to achieve gender justice they need the capabilities to benefit from economic and social development, including, for example, capabilities such as ‘those related to health and education that markets do not deliver well to people’ concluding that ‘other forms of state action are required’ (Nussbaum, 2002: 71).

Elson develops the arguments in relation to neo-liberal economic policies, exploring the contradictions in terms of human rights and gender equalities. Whilst recognising that market-led economic development has increased opportunities for paid employment for many women, she also points to the negative effects, including the loss of jobs for women as a result of the vicissitudes of the market. As Elson also points out, markets need to be complemented by other kinds of entitlement, if women’s welfare needs are to be met, concluding by arguing the case for universal state entitlement to key services such as health and education.

Phillips concludes the theoretical section by engaging with debates on multiculturalism and feminism, exploring the tensions and complexities as well as the potential for alliances between the two. Whilst addressing critiques of universalism, Phillips challenges ‘the paralysis that sometimes sets in when we are confronted with cultural claims’ and cultural relativism (Phillips, 2002: 129). The final section of this collection examines some of these tensions and
complexities in practice, including case studies of women’s challenges to customs and cultural practices that reinforce traditional inequalities.

The key themes set out in the first section are developed in the following sections, drawing upon case studies to explore ‘Social Sector Restructuring and Social Rights’, ‘Democratization and the Politics of Gender’ and ‘Multiculturalisms in Practice’.

The second section on ‘Social Sector Restructuring and Social Rights’ has particular relevance for Journal of Social Policy readers, although there are powerful resonances with social policy debates in other essays too, across these sections. In addition to exploring changing approaches to the role of the state and increasingly targeted — rather than more universalist — forms of welfare provision, these sections include critical reflections on the varying impact of policies to promote citizen participation. ‘Partnerships’ between the state and civil society too often rely on what Elson refers to as the unspoken and invisible safety net of women’s unpaid work and grass-roots organisations can be demobilised and incorporated, a danger which was identified in a number of chapters from different national contexts.

The chapters refer to each others’ arguments, reinforcing the coherence of the collection as an entity. The case for a holistic approach to women’s rights is powerfully argued, and empirically evidenced, together with the case for universal state provision to guarantee key social rights. Gender Justice, Development and Rights is an extremely relevant contribution to social policy debates internationally as well as more locally, in the British context.

MARJORIE MAYO
Goldsmith’s College

DOI: 10.1017/S0047279403287195

Nigel Thomas’s discussion on the relationship between the child the family and the state is interesting – although what has actually been produced is three shorter books rather than, necessarily, a coherent whole.

In the opening sections the author explores the contested nature of the concept of childhood. He provides a useful overview of the debates on child psychology and, from an historical perspective, the changing social and economic significance of childhood. He then goes on to summarise the legal status of children – with a particular emphasis on the tensions between the ideas of children’s rights and the role of the state in intervening to protect children at risk. This leads into an excellent chapter outlining the history of services for children ‘looked after by the state’ which also examines the impact of key child protection legislation (in particular, the Children Act 1989).

The final, and longest, section of the book then discusses ‘the important and problematical’ (p. 101) nature of research with children and children’s participation in that process. Thomas is particularly good on highlighting the gap between what children actually say and how this is interpreted by adults in general and professionals in particular.

His plea, that if we are to better understand a child’s place in the world, the role of the family and inform both policy and practice ‘we need theories and research that are based on respect for what children themselves might have to say’, is timely. Recent developments have marked a ‘demonisation’ of children and young people – with some strands of family policy being almost exclusively located within a criminal justice context – with exclusion orders, child curfews, etc. – issues referred to by the author, but never ‘over-played’. Although the research Thomas describes focuses on ‘looked after’ children, his consistent agenda of taking what
children say seriously can, hopefully, inform both research and practice in wider preventative programmes – such as Sure Start and the Children’s Fund.

There are some strange omissions in this book. For example, there are relatively few references to publications and other research post-1990. Early sections on the social construction of childhood draw, for example, on Piaget, Aries and Margaret Mead – but make no mention on the literature on children’s play and its role in both child development and understanding ‘children’s place in the world’. In the excellent summary of services for looked after children, no reference is made to ‘Case-Con’ and some of the more radical movements of ‘looked after’ children and young people in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Whilst good use is made of direct quotations from Thomas’s interviews with children – these occasionally fail to recognise that children do have a sense of humour which can subvert the traditional power of adults and, in this case, the researcher (p. 105). Equally, the author is clearly right in arguing that new and inventive ways of undertaking research with children are needed – other than meetings and formal interviews – but does not fully acknowledge the contribution already made by community artists and storytellers in child-centred research and evaluation.

Just as the book is in three sections, so the style of writing changes throughout. Those chapters exploring theories of childhood have a rather dry academic feel to them. This compares with the much more lucid and engaged style of those sections offering an overview of child protection legislation and a history of services for ‘looked after’ children. What is, however, consistent, is the quality of referencing and the interest of the material included as ‘footnotes’ at the end of the publication.

Because of the rather fragmented structure of the publication and its style, it is at times unclear who the intended audience is. There are powerful messages here for policy makers, for social work practitioners and academic researchers. But these messages are in different parts of the book – and are sometimes difficult to access in terms of the language used and, as Thomas himself acknowledges, because the arguments are built on work with ‘looked after’ children may lack a wider relevance.

Perhaps it is the title that is misleading. This is not a generalist book about children, the family and the state. Rather, it has a specific, child protection context. This should not, however, detract from the central message of the book. Namely, whatever the difficulties, we need to actually listen to children, if policy and practice in this field is to genuinely respond to their needs in an increasingly complex environment. This, in turn, throws down challenges to researchers – how to engage creatively with children and young people in ways which give them a voice or ‘a place in the world’.

ANGUS J. McCABE
University of Birmingham

DOI: 10.1017/S00472794013297191

It is an understatement to suggest that the concept of globalisation is hotly debated in social policy. The battle lines have been drawn often across two opposed camps occupying little common ground. The arguments divide between those who vociferously support the concept and therefore analyse the consequences that a global world order has, for example, in limiting individual state action; whilst those who caution against an acceptance of this thesis suggest, for example, that nation states still have many options available to control their own destinies.
Both of the books under review enter this discussion trying to do different things, but reflect this divide in perspective. Yeates account is primarily an introductory text seeking to set out the key issues confronting any student wishing to make sense of the whole globalisation debate. In essence, she is highly sceptical of the claims of the globalisation thesis, whilst Tsukada jumps straight into the maelstrom accepting the globalisation thesis by analysing what he argues are the baleful consequences of economic globalisation upon the welfare states of Sweden, the UK, Japan and the USA.

Yeates takes a refreshingly critical approach to the subject, successfully describing the different conceptual nuances of globalisation with great clarity. In particular, she critically engages with those more deterministic accounts of economic globalisation, which encourage an air of paralysis in which social policy becomes overly determined by the vagaries of global markets. Consequently, she argues that strong notions of the hegemony of economic globalisation miss the point in proposing an overly deterministic view at the expense of political agency. Thus political globalisation, for example, the action of nation states to act transglobally, or the successful struggle of anti-global social movement mean that political action must be accounted for in any consideration of the omnipotence of the globalisation thesis.

By contrast, Tsukada’s book is more problematic. The author’s intention is to study the impact of economic globalisation upon Sweden, the UK, Japan and the USA, therefore explicitly accepting that which Yeates questions. Existing empirical material is garnered to develop a familiar and well-charted history of welfare state growth and decline. For this author the development of the welfare state is set within a social democratic discourse in which welfare is accounted for by relatively generous social policies, which meet basic human needs. The analysis not surprisingly identifies the rise of neo-liberal policy as the cause of such decline, leading to the fracturing of the Keynesian Welfare State. In contrast to Yeates, who challenges the problematic of a mono-causal explanation of economic globalisation, Tsukada assumes the processes of neo-liberalism inevitably leads to globalisation and the social pathologies (violent crime, increased drug use, depression) which, he argues, accrue from such developments. This analysis is empirically shaky. For example, he uses figures identifying the rise of violent crime and youth crime as evidence of this pathology without adequately accounting for the overall fall in the crime rate in countries which have embraced the globalisation thesis.

The author’s key argument however contends that successful welfare states need a balance between economy and society, meaning in particular the institutions of civil society. Consequently, this delicate equilibrium has been thrown off kilter by the totalising effects of neo-liberal policy by the relentless quest for greater market efficiency, destroying the trust and social connectedness required for civil society and human fellowship. The restoration of balance is therefore concerned to revive the necessary social equilibrium, which can repair the fractured social contract of the Keynesian welfare state. This analysis reflects more Confucian notions of social policy (see Goodman and Peng, 1996) rather than Western structural functionalist accounts and is one which the author consistently returns to throughout the book.

The assumption that the Keynesian welfare states achieved some relative balance between economy and society, as the author implies, is a highly contested one and is in effect assumed rather than investigated. As a result the onset of economic liberalisation and its subsequent global dominance is seen as the prime cause of major disruption in welfare states from the late 1970s rather than a symptom of more deep-seated problems. Thus, many of the subsequent critiques of those welfare states, which deal with their more profound structural problems, for example, neo-marxist, feminist and green perspectives are largely ignored in the text.

The author is, however, remarkably upbeat about the future, predicting that as low-wage frontiers disappear, when all the avenues for cheap labour are exploited, so a new corporate era of global capitalism will emerge. The result will be to increase opportunities for more effective
wage bargaining and new investment in welfare states. However, given the deterministic analysis that preceded this conclusion it is hard to see where the rebalancing of these welfare states will come from. Thus, as the political sphere is swamped by the economics of globalisation where will the alternative power bases come from? Will governments have the necessary capacity, power and commitment to reassert the social equilibrium of the Keynesian welfare states once the political and civil institutions have been eroded? The notion that the economic contradictions of globalisation will eventually cause its own demise is an interesting if not new idea. However, I would have expected more discussion here given the importance of this argument for the author’s analysis rather than the fragile assertions contained within the concluding chapter.

Although Tsukada does not explicitly discuss the issue of convergence, his analysis regularly reinforces the impact of globalisation as having similar effects across all the countries he studies. For Yeates these effects are not clear-cut and she argues very effectively that many of the policies seen as emanating from globalisation are clearly determined by national domestic concerns. In addition, she forcefully identifies international institutions (the work of NGO’s and citizen groups) as providing potentially effective opposition to the activities of the economic globalisers such as the World Trade Organisation. Those groups when joined in alliance with those countries opposing the rapaciousness of economic globalisation have won important victories, which cast doubt on the inevitability of some of Tsukada’s analysis. Yeates account is therefore more compelling in which the dialectic of agency is not prefigured by any determined outcomes, which promote explanatory frameworks based upon, in my view, economic determinism. For Yeates the certainties contained in Tsukadas’ analysis are thankfully turned into problems which require careful analysis. Thus, students would be better employed considering Yeates healthy questioning of the globalisation thesis first before venturing to assess Tsukada’s work.

I would like to conclude by passing some judgment on the editorial process in relation to Tsukada’s book. I am assuming that the author has written in his second language, this required in my judgement for a more rigorous and supportive editorial process to enable his argument to be heard effectively in English. Unfortunately, there appears to be limited editorial input resulting in, for example, sometimes grammatically flawed and lengthy sentences, one sentence consisting of 124 words (p. 213). This detracts from the effort and serious argument that the author pursued and does the editor and publishers no credit.


LESTER PARROTT
N.E. Wales Institute of Higher Education


The study of biography has been growing in the social sciences and in social policy areas such as health and education. This collection of articles is taken from a seven-country investigation ‘Social strategies in risk society’ (Sostris) carried out between 1996 and 1999 as part of the EU Targeted Socio-Economic Research Programme 4 on social exclusion. The aim of the
investigation was to study the experience of excluded individuals or those at risk of exclusion from significant parts of life in Britain, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Spain and Sweden.

Due to the involvement in a common research effort, unlike some edited books, there are a number of key unifying elements. The Sostris researchers employ the ‘Biographical-Narrative Interpretive Method’ (BNIM) of interview characterised by ‘openness’ and an assumption that every individual’s story has a ‘gestalt’, which can be used to understand how individuals construct life meanings. The national research groups carried out investigations on a number of areas of risk. Some areas concerned the labour market: early retirement, loss of work for traditional industrial workers, unemployment among graduates, and unemployment among unqualified young adults; other areas explored were civic status, gender and race, as well as single parenthood, membership of an ethnic minority and migration. Biographical interviews and other methods were used according to ‘agreed protocols’ and by regular meetings to exchange theoretical knowledge and analytical reflections. In its final year the research concentrated on ‘flagship social agencies’ within each country pioneering new practices with individuals socially excluded. The introductory chapter states that the biographies collected show that the ‘scope’ of social policy requires expansion:

They indicate a need for a greater ‘depth’, by pointing to the social and personal energy involved in daily individual accommodations to processes of social transformation. They suggest a greater ‘breadth’ in the approach by pointing to the wealth of human and civic resources that could be more fully used by an enabling state. They also point vividly upwards to the absence of supportive political scripts amid ruthless, market-driven processes of global social change. (p. 12)

The book consists of fifteen chapters and two appendices – including research on social exclusion in France, gender and family in Greece, class differences in Britain, unemployment in France and Britain, immigrant groups in Sweden, female identities in Italy, and the effects on biographies of social transformations in Spain and Eastern Germany. The discussion of the necessity of biographical case studies is placed in the introduction and elsewhere in the context of a number of social policy debates, such as, ‘Social Europe’ and ‘active citizenship’; the effects of neo-liberal economics; globalisation and risk society. The introduction states that the individual case studies showed the ‘extraordinary pace and extent of change’ brought by economic restructuring and the amount of biographical work needed by individuals, but also revealed new opportunities for ‘more dialogical forms of solidarity, in which individuality is enhanced by mutuality’. While individuals were left to confront risks themselves in society rather than rely on welfare institutions, it is pointed out that such personal experiences are also collectively produced. The editors argue that it is this ‘more holistic view which is missing from both politics and social policy’ (p. 12).

Some readers would want more detail on methodological procedures and be sceptical regarding generalisations drawn from individual cases or comparison between small numbers (and in different contexts). Also, as Breckner and Rupp caution, in their appendix, ‘a case-oriented concept of social policy has to deal with the risk of apparently advocating and accelerating the general tendency of “individualisation” with individuals shouldering the blame and responsibility for their problems (p. 302). It can be argued that we are in a society of the multi-form interview, the professional development review, and the c.v. – we are audited and self-monitored according to life scripts set by TV, health and life-style magazines, and work, welfare and other practices. Biographical intervention and mentoring may both open possibilities and ‘normalise’ aspirations. However, the cases outlined clearly show the important interface between individual struggles, strategies and hopes and social circumstances, including social policy provision.
A wider comparison with various forms of biographical intervention and construction would have helped in assessing the extent that the biographical approach offered is a radical departure. While the connection to broader political discourse and movements is raised the discussion could have been situated rather more reflexively within the history and politics of ‘biographical construction’ in welfare and wider afield (e.g. the history of casework or the politics of the socially excluded organising their own testimonies as victims or for rights). However, in pursuing a biographical dimension and method, the authors make a strong case for the direct consideration of the experience, situation and talents of the socially excluded in social policy formation and practice.

BRIAN ROBERTS
The University of Huddersfield

DOI: 10.1017/S0047279403317192

This book is a mine of information for those who want a great deal of data on long-term care insurance and public pensions in Japan and Germany. But even then the mine has to be trawled carefully in order to extract it. Based on a symposium in 1997 the authors were asked to update their material and more recent essays were included. There is a disproportionate amount of material on Japan in the book. Japan is the focus of seven chapters, Germany five and comparisons three.

The first question anyone would want to pose is why should it be interesting to compare these two countries? An obvious answer is that they were the defeated nations at the end of World War 2 and subsequently became powerful economically and in other ways. This is scarcely mentioned. One of the main reasons is stated as: ‘In recent years, Japan and Germany have been facing similar challenges: ageing populations, changing employment structures, long-lasting economic stagnation and globalisation, all of which threaten existing social security arrangements.’ Yet, these surely face many other nations. A little more convincing is the next point: ‘Both countries are in a number of respects more socially and politically regulated, and in this sense less liberal, than the Anglo-American economies.’

After an interesting first chapter, giving an overview of Japanese and German social policy, the book is divided into three parts. The first is the demographic and policy implications. This contains two chapters on the Japanese situation and one on the German. One on Japan gives interesting data on the changing living arrangements of families showing a dramatic decline in intergenerational living. For example 87 per cent of people aged 65 and over lived with relatives in 1960 and this had dropped to 51 per cent in 2000.

Part two contains chapters on long-term care and pension insurance schemes. I found the most useful part of the book the chapter in this part by John Creighton Campbell in which he claims that Japan and Germany are the only countries in the world with ‘“pure”, large scale, public long-term care insurance systems’. The differences he highlights as: The German model applies to disabled people of all ages but the Japanese only to older people. The Japanese programme is bigger — in the proportion of elderly people covered, and in the size of the programme — than the German. The German programme is ‘capped’ to prevent expansion, at both the micro and macro level, while the Japanese is more open-ended. Germany offers a cash allowance to encourage ‘informal’ care giving by family members
while Japan provides only formal services. He then gives some reasons why this may be the
case.

The final part is rather a mixed bag and is called ‘Specific aspects of long-term care in
Germany and Japan’. These chapters seem to follow the individual interests of the authors
with little attempt at comparison. For example the one on institutionalisation in Japan relates
almost exclusively to nursing homes (and confusingly has a section on community care) with
no similar one on the German situation.

Most of the chapters are densely written and the small type does not make this an easy
book to read. Some of the English is somewhat stilted too which takes ones attention away
from the argument. It could also have done with closer editing (or cross referencing), as there is
some repetition, for example over demographic data. The best chapters were those with a clear
conclusion and summary.

ANTHEA TINKER
King’s College London

Britain and Japan, Bristol: The Policy Press, xi + 258 pp. £47.50 hbk., ISBN 1 861 34 3663,
£18.99 pbk.
DOI: 10.1017/S0047279403327199

This new essay collection starts on an encouraging note. Misa Izuhara spares her readers
the now mandatory voyage round the typological geography of welfare state ‘regimes’. She is
content to note their shortcomings and quickly gets down to outlining the main concerns of
her contributors.

The collection starts with general policy reviews by Hilary Land on the United Kingdom
and Kingo Tamai on Japan. They are followed by five paired essays on specific policy issues −
ageing and intergenerational relations, domestic violence, housing and social inequality,
homelessness and the politics of women’s health care. The focus of these essays is country-
specific, but they all provide a wealth of cogent insights and data that readers can use in making
their own comparisons and reaching their own conclusions.

Hilary Land addresses the policy choices facing Britain today − either the restoration of
a universalist infrastructure of social services or the development of new welfare structures
capable of sustaining and extending new forms of solidarity across the generations. She draws
particular attention to the causal processes that bring about change in the relationship between
working life and family life and their different effects on lone parent and two parent households.
She rightly identifies control over one’s own time as a key determinant of one’s quality of life
and welfare. The truth of this axiom grows more evident as working days get longer, working
lives get shorter and retirement lives extend further and further into ‘the sear, the yellow leaf’
of our extreme old age.

Kingo Tamai charts the complex processes by which the relationships between the Japanese
family and the institutions of state social security and company welfare have changed over the
past fifty years. He discusses the extent to which the impact of economic recession has weakened
the viability of the company schemes and created a new climate of uncertainty.

Alan Walker and Kristiina Martimo explore the impact of demographic change in the
United Kingdom on the intergenerational networks of mutual aid. They note that unpaid family
and friends continue to be the primary source of care for the infirm elderly. They argue, however,
that declining fertility, increasing longevity, an escalating divorce rate and changes in the
patterns of women’s employment are weakening these bonds of social solidarity. Fewer elderly people want to be dependent on their children. Fewer children want to be care providers — or expect the state to care for them in the infirmities of their old age.

In her companion essay on Japan, Misa Izuhara describes a rather different welfare scenario with regard to the elderly. Demographic trends are generally similar to those of the United Kingdom but Japan is the fastest ageing society in the industrial world. Nevertheless, attachment to the idea of the family as the primary unit of care persists. Co-residency is still a key feature of Japanese family life as are two-generational housing loan schemes. More people, however, are beginning to plan for their own care in advanced old age and new schemes of social care insurance will help all but the poor to do so.

The paired essays on housing policy and homelessness demonstrate the extent to which home ownership is a key determinant of life chances and quality of life in both countries. There are, however, important differences in the composition of their housing markets. In the United Kingdom, as Mark Kleinman shows, a substantial sector of the public housing market has been privatised. Despite the consequent increase in housing inequality, few voters outside London consider public housing issues to be of paramount importance and what matters most to ordinary people is the high cost of house purchase.

By contrast, as Yosuke Hirayama reminds us, there has never been much public housing in Japan. Policy priority has always been given to the expansion of ‘social mainstream housing’ through a combination of governmental and private sector loan schemes — complemented by a small company housing sector and a substantial private rented sector. In recent years, changes in household composition and the onset of economic recession have created a new climate of uncertainty and caused a loss of public confidence in the idea of ‘social mainstream housing’. The paired essays on homelessness by Patricia Kennett and Masami Iwata illustrate the failure of both societies to respond effectively in helping those in greatest housing need.

Lesley Doyal and Miyako Takahashi discuss the persistence of gender inequalities. Doyal reviews the causes and consequences of gender-based health care inequalities in both societies. Takahashi focuses on the issue of women’s sexuality after breast cancer in Japan. Finally, Ellen Malos and Yoki Shoji review the changes in public policy and public attitudes towards the phenomenon of domestic violence in their respective countries.

I warmly recommend this concise, lucid and authoritative essay collection to students of comparative social policy. It doesn’t try to do everything, but what it sets out to do, it does very well.

ROBERT PINKER
London School of Economics and Political Science

DOI: 10.1017/S0047279403337195

Controversial Issues in a Disabling Society offers an introduction to a wide range of disability issues, many of direct relevance to contemporary social policy. The book is a part edited collection and part co-authored text, bringing together a combination of commissioned chapters and contributions written jointly by the editors and colleagues. Its aim is to guide students and other interested readers through a range of contemporary disability issues by focusing on material for active learning and debate. In this sense, much of the material would be easily translated into a classroom context. More specifically, it draws extensively on curriculum
material developed for the undergraduate part-degree route in disability studies offered by the University of Northumbria (including case studies developed by students taking the courses).

The book includes 14 chapters covering a wide range of contemporary disability debates in three sections. Part one deals with some foundational material, examining the use of disability terminology, theoretical modelling in disability studies, and the scope of the discipline. These three chapters provide a useful introduction to those who might be unfamiliar with the area, and prompt learners to examine some of their own preconceptions about disability and disabled people. Part two moves into more substantive debates under the heading of ‘values and ideologies’. Here, there are some important engagements with the contested territory of disabled people’s position in culture and society, such as issues concerned with the right to life, multiple oppression and identities, a critique of the concept of independence, and the ideological conflict between approaches to disability based on charity and rights. Part three deals more explicitly with debates concerning policy and practice. Here, the key areas for discussion deal with issues such as inclusive and special education, professional power, relationships of care and control, and the claims arising from the disabled people’s movement.

Any introductory text will inevitably have its strengths and weaknesses. A novel aspect of the approach in this book is the inclusion of case study material in the individual chapters, and this has both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, the use of extensive examples, often drawn from the personal experience of a single disabled person, help to ground the issues under discussion and provide accessible source material for student discussion. On the other hand, the emphasis on a unique perspective sometimes detracts from a wider consideration of the topic and sometimes runs the risk of becoming more anecdotal than analytical. Consequently, there are points in the book where a more comprehensive discussion would assist learning about the issues in question.

As a reader, and a teacher of disability studies, there is much here that would be useful in the classroom or as supporting material for students. As an introductory text, *Controversial Issues* may well prove useful for courses addressing social divisions and particularly disability studies. It is important however to note that the scope and focus of the ‘disabling society’ referred to in the title is very much a British perspective. This is reflected in the content of the chapters, in the supporting references, in the focus on policies and also in the examples used for illustration. Thus, the book is very helpful in highlighting specific disability debates in contemporary Britain but does require some prior knowledge of national context and policies. This, in turn, means that there is very little material dealing with disability in a comparative or global context, which might suggest some limitations in its use on disability studies courses more generally. The concluding chapter does seek to address this imbalance by considering disability in the context of globalisation although, for my part, a wider incorporation of these themes in the other chapters would have strengthened the text considerably, and widened its potential appeal.

It is fair to say that there has been something of an explosion in publishing within the emergent discipline of disability studies, including an increasing number of introductory and course texts. This book forms part of the Disability, Human Rights & Society series from Open University Press, which includes an increasing range of usable texts dealing with both general overviews and more specific topic-based titles. *Controversial Issues* offers a welcome and very accessible addition to reading within the discipline and, although it does not offer a comprehensive grounding, it will be useful in promoting active learning on issues of contemporary policy debate for disabled people in Britain.

MARK PRIESTLEY
Centre for Disability Studies
University of Leeds

Peter Edelman writes this book from the perspective of liberal social policy. He speaks from an extensive involvement in politics, particularly from his work on the staff of Robert Kennedy. He also reflects a long involvement in poverty policy at Georgetown University.

RFK is Edelman’s model for effective and responsible social policy, a policy designed to help the poor as well as American society, and at the same time to assist them in being continually involved in effective citizenship for the implementation of such policy, rather than only for those more fortunate. Edelman sees Kennedy as having a deep passion for social justice and civil rights, coupled with a genuine love for children, along with concern for numerous topics: schools, the social safety net, minimum wage, Medicare, civil rights law, and the protection of labor unions attempting to organize workers. These concerns were tied closely in his thinking with the prosecution of organized crime and labor racketeering. RFK, while stressing the need for a strong federal government to accomplish these goals, stressed the view that those less fortunate should be aided in becoming responsible citizens, that assistance was temporary, except for those physically and mentally unable to cope. His focus linked an extensive social concern with conservative personal values.

Edelman sees the trend from 1968 as one of declining emphasis on the reduction of poverty. While Nixon initially improved social security by indexing, expanded food stamp programs, and a job program, in his second term he tried to dismantle the War on Poverty program, and abandoned his potentially valuable welfare program. No attention was paid to the problem of inner cities. Carter, generally ineffective in his dealings with Congress, moved to decrease federal social policy designed to aid the unfortunate. Reagan’s administration wanted to significantly decrease the role of the federal government. He pressed for deep cuts in federal spending, e.g. for food stamps and for legal aid to the poor. There was a decrease in affordable housing, while nothing was done to assist the working poor in the areas of child-care, literacy training, and transportation to work. Edelman was heavily involved in attempts to improve social policy during the first Clinton administration. While at first it appeared that much of Kennedy’s social policy agenda would be implemented, his apparent concern for the poor evaporated. Clinton’s concern for his political survival dominated his activity. He actually had a pattern of hurting people without power who did not work. This tendency was especially evident in his signing of the 1996 Welfare Reform bill, which ended the safety net. Clinton also signed legislation significantly decreasing and curtailing civil liberties. Edelman sees George W. Bush as cutting back drastically the remaining programs designed to aid the poor. Tax cuts are used to decrease funds, so ultimately there will be no funds available for meeting pressing national needs, such as health coverage, social security, education, and health care.

What does Edelman think could be done to bring about the social policy envisioned by Robert F. Kennedy? The 1996 welfare to work law must be scrapped. There must be serious, in-depth efforts to attack structural as well as individual problems, including those of poor neighborhoods, inadequate education, the inner city, housing, and inappropriate law enforcement. To get the political power to bring this about (election of a Congress and a president committed to Kennedy’s approach) a solid and effective organizing effort must occur, effective and well-planned.

Edelman’s approach reflects a strong commitment to the general welfare clause of the Constitution. What are the limitations of this approach? Kennedy’s approach involved a very strong and even coercive use of political power to get his program across. How then are the programs to be effectively implemented and sustained? And how can one build political consensus from the poor, let alone keep it going? Edelman shares the idealism of RFK, but
both men fail to deal with the need to evaluate, revise, and update the programs, once they are implemented. And, what is to be done, when those in charge of the new social policy become complacent, defensive, and out of touch with their constituencies? The social policy proposed by RFK, and so strongly supported by Edelman, is commendable, but how can it be effectively and continually updated and sustained?

WILLIAM CROSS
Illinois College
Jacksonville

DOI: 10.1017/S0047279403357198

Recently, at a conference, I spoke with newly qualified social workers. None had heard of the seminal Children Act (1948) or of the former local authority Children’s Departments. Yet present child welfare policy and practice cannot be fully understood without some knowledge of what happened in the past. Fortunately, there are signs of change. A Social Work History Network has been established by Keith Bilton. Henry Hendrick's welcome new book is another indication that the antecedents of childcare are being studied.

In *Child Welfare: Historical Dimensions, Contemporary Debate*, Hendrick does more than trace the development of child welfare from the 1880s to the present. He uses this development to identify major themes, concepts and debates. He rightly stresses that the story of childcare is not just about children deprived of their parents but must also cover children’s health, poverty and education.

The Children Act (1948) was a turning point in that it created the first specialist local authority children’s services. The legislation did not happen just because some MPs thought it would be nice to treat deprived children in a better fashion. Hendrick shows that the forces which promoted the act owed something to the rise of child guidance clinics before the war and even more to the evacuation of children during the war, which highlighted the plight of children when separated from their parents. He argues that the act and subsequent social work practice was about ‘the creation of the new relationship between the state and the family’ (p. 139) in that it emphasised the keeping of families together. In a helpful discussion, he attributes this new trend to a growing concern about the decreasing reproduction rate of the population and to psychological studies which demonstrated that children required personal rather than institutional care. Oddly enough for a historian, Hendrick does not give attention to Lady Marjory Allen who was the major influence on childcare policy in the 1940s.

Hendrick skilfully threads his account through the intricacies of juvenile justice policies and legislation. He highlights the paradox that ‘at a time when Thatcherism was at its most commanding’ something of a consensus emerged in which the principles of ‘diversion, decriminalisation and decarceration’ were promoted (p. 188). Yet the subsequent appointment of Michael Howard as the Conservative home secretary followed by a New Labour government with a promise to be ‘tough on crime and the causes of crime’ reversed the tone of the agenda again.

But whatever the social agenda and whatever the legislation, Hendrick makes clear that institutions do not necessarily change. The regimes of approved schools, for instance, remained much the same for decades. Positive reform requires changes in managerial approaches, social
work practice and childcare values so that all put the well-being of children — rather than the convenience and careers of professionals — at the centre of the welfare world.

Throughout his study, Hendrick insists that the care of deprived and vulnerable children cannot be separated from the issue of poverty. Spin about poverty is not a New Labour invention. In the inter-war years, government documents deliberately played down the extent of and the effects of child poverty. Poverty increased markedly during the Thatcher years yet the important Children Act (1989), which was welcomed by all political parties and professional bodies, came at a time when child benefit was frozen and when social deprivation made it harder for families to cope.

New Labour, to its credit, has attempted to reduce child poverty and Hendrick praises its increase in welfare benefits and the creation of Sure Start. However, he does not dwell on the matter of growing inequality. If the research of Professor Richard Wilkinson is correct then it is inequality as much as poverty which harms children and their families.¹

This weighty study draws strongly on official reports, which are the analysis of those at the top. It could have been enlivened by references to the biographies of those who had experience of life at the bottom. For instance, in his discussion of the poor law, Hendricks could have called upon the story of Will Crooks, an MP who was brought up in the work-house.² The inter-war period also saw a number of autobiographies by former children who spent their childhoods in residential care. More attention should have been given to Eleanor Rathbone who pioneered family allowances. The one mention of her spells her name as ‘Rather’ (p. 209).

New social work courses are being initiated. Hopefully they will give students a grounding in welfare history. Hendrick’s book should be high on their reading list.

**Notes**


**Bob Holman**

Visiting professor in social policy at the universities of Glasgow and Swansea