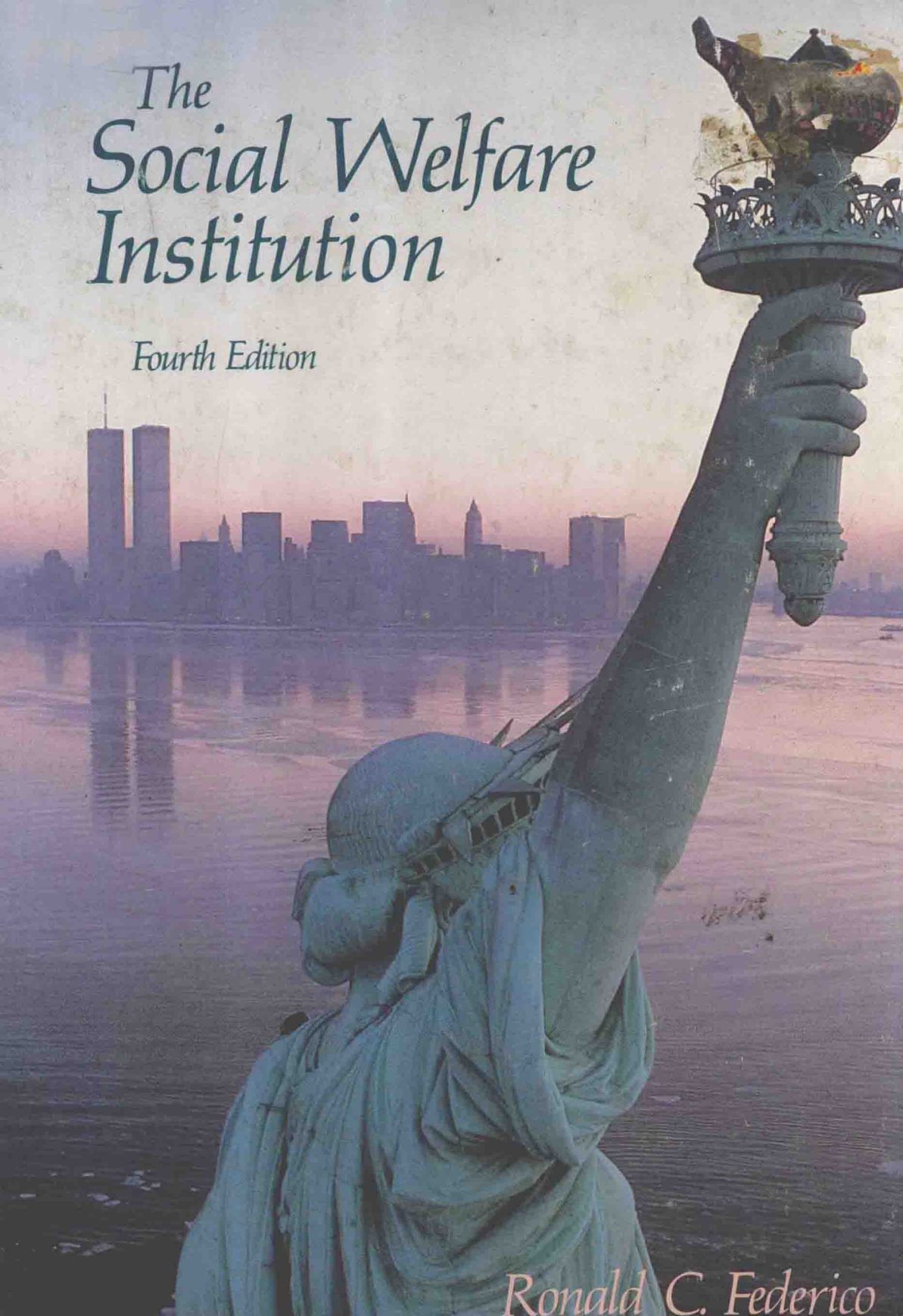


# *The Social Welfare Institution*

*Fourth Edition*

*Ronald C. Federico*



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# The Social Welfare Institution

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## AN INTRODUCTION

Fourth Edition

Ronald C. Federico

Iona College and the  
Westchester Social Work Education Consortium

D.C. Heath and Company  
Lexington, Massachusetts Toronto

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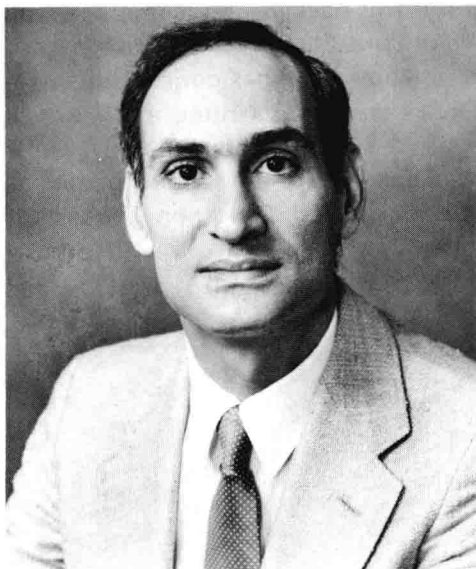
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TO Kathryn Wheatley  
who helped to lay the foundation that has made this book possible

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Ronald Federico received his Ph.D. in sociology from Northwestern University, where he studied under a fellowship from the National Institute of Mental Health. Prior to his doctoral studies, Dr. Federico earned his Master of Social Work degree at the University of Michigan in the program supported by the Russell Sage Foundation to combine social work education with study in the social sciences. He also graduated *magna cum laude* from Yale University with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Dr. Federico has been at the forefront of social work education for the past decade. He has served on major bodies of the Council on Social Work Education, including the Board of Directors and special committees formed to study the future of the organization. He has also been active in the National Association of Social Workers at the local, state, and national levels. He is a member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers, and has been a frequent guest speaker and workshop leader for professional and educational groups. Dr. Federico has been an active consultant for social work educational programs, and has worked extensively as an on-site evaluator of social work programs seeking accreditation.

As Administrative Assistant to Dr. Betty L. Baer while she directed

the nationally significant Undergraduate Social Work Curriculum Development Project, Dr. Federico was exposed to the thinking of social work educators around the country. This background, combined with his own experience as an educator, practitioner, and active participant in social work professional organizations, has enriched his writing. In addition to this book, Dr. Federico has written a number of books and articles in the fields of social work and sociology. He is currently on the faculty at Iona College, one of the schools participating in the innovative Westchester Social Work Education Consortium in Westchester County, New York.

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## PREFACE

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During the life of this text, the structure of educational programs in social welfare has changed substantially. The increasing importance of social welfare in American society has led to the development of specialized professions, each meeting needs in particular areas of human behavior. Medicine is a good example. As medical technology has developed, so have medical specialties. Many doctors now specialize in heart surgery, respiratory problems, specific forms of cancer, kidney diseases, cataracts, and so forth. Support staff have also become increasingly specialized, so that teams of nurses work with surgeons performing specific kinds of surgery, technicians carry out specific types of treatment or therapy, and other kinds of specialists do the complex laboratory work to identify diseases. Specialization has also occurred in the other social welfare professions. The rapidly developing field of gerontology (work with the elderly) has people trained to work in nursing homes, to provide recreational services geared to the needs and abilities of the elderly, and to respond to the special needs of the elderly for physical care and proper nutrition. At the same time that specialization has been taking place, people in the helping professions have been becoming increasingly concerned with the needs of the whole person. Particular problems or needs have to be integrated,

so that the person functions well in all areas of life. As a result, one hears about “holistic medicine” and self-help groups that seek to help people maintain their overall sense of well-being during specific kinds of crises, such as divorce or alcoholism. Sometimes it is difficult not to let our technology outstrip our ability to digest its meaningful contribution to our lives. As a result, maintaining a balance between the need for specialized and holistic treatment is often difficult.

These changes have profoundly affected career options in social welfare. The proliferation of social welfare professions, and the growth of specializations within specific professions, have created many exciting options for students thinking about a social welfare career. This fourth edition of *The Social Welfare Institution* consciously addresses this range of choices, to help students understand their options. At the same time, it continues to reinforce the perspective of previous editions that there is a base of knowledge about social welfare that anyone entering *any* of the social welfare professions must have. Understanding the structure of social welfare in our society is fundamental to understanding how any particular profession fits into social welfare as a whole. And because each profession contributes to the same overall goals, professionals in the many specific professions must know how to work together effectively.

This edition also responds to another development on college campuses. As higher education seeks to prepare its graduates to function effectively in a rapidly changing technological world, the need to understand social welfare has become apparent. No longer is social welfare relevant only for students wishing to enter one of the social welfare professions. Social welfare is increasingly responsible for ensuring an adequate quality of life for all members of our society. When change creates inevitable gaps and lags in people’s ability to understand and cope with what is happening in their lives, it is the social welfare system that helps them to adapt. No longer is social welfare something that affects only a few; now it is a part of everyone’s life throughout the entire life cycle. If social welfare is to continue to meet society’s needs, and if people are to know how to use it most effectively, they need to learn about it. As a result, one of this book’s goals is to provide the basic content that *everyone* should know in order to be an informed citizen.—

Meeting both the needs of students exploring specific career choices and the general-education needs of all students may at first seem an almost impossible task, but further thought suggests that these two types of needs may not be all that different. Students consid-



ering a social welfare career need to carry on a dialogue with those who may have a healthy skepticism about specific social welfare programs or even about social welfare in general. Similarly, students who have never seriously considered a social welfare career need to hear from their peers why social welfare work is worthy of a lifetime's career commitment. Such dialogues can help to create social welfare professionals attuned to efficiently and effectively delivering services in ways that people can best use them. They can also educate an electorate that will understand and support a meaningful social welfare structure.

### Objectives of This Edition

*The Social Welfare Institution*, Fourth Edition, has five major objectives:

1. *To help students understand social welfare as a social institution.* This perspective emphasizes the importance of the social welfare institution in the social structure and the way it reflects cultural values, existing knowledge, and political and economic processes. This approach provides the book's basic organization. Chapter 1 describes the functions of social welfare, whereas Chapters 2 and 3 focus on its structure. Chapters 4 and 5 examine the knowledge and value base of the social welfare institution. Chapter 6 helps readers relate the structural characteristics of social welfare to themselves, especially those considering a career in one of the helping professions. Chapter 7 integrates function, structure, and societal mandate by looking at contemporary issues facing our society and at how the social welfare institution can help address them.

2. *To help students examine their own value orientations, beliefs, behaviors, and potential for change.* Social welfare is heavily influenced by values at the individual, family, community, and societal levels. This book encourages students to explore how these levels of values differ, and how each influences social welfare. Their own personal values will strongly influence their behavior as social welfare professionals or as citizens who influence social welfare decision making.

3. *To help students develop logical, rational, knowledge-based approaches to analyzing social welfare.* This book encourages students to understand the interplay of knowledge and values. It will help them to think through their obligation, as educated people, to use knowledge in making decisions about their own behavior.

4. *To help students relate their knowledge about social welfare to that obtained in other courses and through life experiences.* This fourth edition focuses most directly on the knowledge foundations of social welfare derived from the biological, behavioral, and social sciences. It also explores the significance of social welfare within a broader, humanistic, liberal-arts perspective.

5. *To help students understand the demands and rewards of social welfare careers, including a reasonable estimate of future career opportunities.* A thorough analysis of all career opportunities is impossible, of course, but this book uses a diverse group of social welfare careers to illustrate the range of opportunities that exist.

### **Comparing this New Edition to the Previous One**

This fourth edition adopts a more integrative view than did the third edition, focusing more clearly on social welfare as a social institution, the organizing framework for the book. Chapter 1 includes information about professions in social welfare other than social work, although the latter is still strongly represented. Chapter 2 uses a more systematic and systemic approach to understanding the structure of social welfare services, so that the implications for a range of social welfare professions can be more easily understood. Chapter 3 reorganizes the history of the development of social welfare to emphasize major trends, updated to include the significant changes that occurred during the 1970s and 1980s. Chapter 4 includes content on the helping process, referred to in previous editions as practice methods. It examines the common elements in helping and some of the ways that these are adapted in a number of specific helping professions. Chapter 5 further integrates knowledge foundations around the general categories of biological, psychological, social structural, and cultural knowledge. Chapter 6 considers a broader range of social welfare professions than previous editions, examines the nature of social welfare careers, and assesses future opportunities in these various areas. Chapter 7 continues to identify contemporary issues but now emphasizes the role of social welfare in addressing them.

Popular and useful teaching/learning tools have been retained and improved; these include end-of-chapter summaries, study questions, and recommended readings. The exhibits have also been retained, but they have been revised to provide a better balance between data about service delivery, descriptions of programs, and case material. They are now also grouped at the end of each chapter in sections called “Reflec-

tions on Social Welfare.” The text refers to them by number, and their new location avoids interrupting the textual discussion. Most chapters now have tables, charts, and figures, providing illustrative data, in the body of the text. These are usually much briefer than exhibits.

This fourth edition retains an appendix, but it has been substantially modified. It consists of case material of several kinds, each of which is preceded by substantial discussion to help the reader relate the actual life events to conceptual content discussed in the body of the book. This new approach better integrates content about helping objectives, value systems, helping methods, and structural characteristics of the social welfare institution. The fourth edition also includes more photos, which were added for two reasons: They help to convey the substantive content of the book in a visual and affective manner, providing a valuable supplement to the conceptual and objective approach used in the text. They also help to make the book more visually interesting and attractive, inviting the reader into the text. Finally, the *Instructor's Guide* for the book has been completely rewritten to reflect the new organization and focus of the parent text.

My objective has always been to produce a book that students would find appealing, informative, and useful, and I believe that this edition is more effective in these respects than earlier ones. The text has been thoroughly revised to make the writing more lively and flow more smoothly. This is a basic textbook whose mission is to stimulate, help, and encourage. In this way students can understand as fully as possible the importance of the dynamic, but sometimes complex, social welfare system this nation has created. The book continues to be balanced and objective in its analysis of the social welfare institution, although the groundwork is laid for the further analysis of controversial issues through other assignments or other courses.

## Acknowledgments

I hope that every educator and student will always feel free to tell me whether the book accomplishes its goals and to suggest ways for it to do so more effectively. This latest edition is certainly much richer because of such input in the past. It is the result of a process of growth and development that began more than ten years ago. Everyone who contributed to any of the earlier editions has influenced this one. I am particularly grateful to the instructors and students who, over the years, have taken the trouble to share with me their experiences in using one of the earlier editions of this book. Comments and sugges-

tions by Dean Pierce, DSW, have also been of special help in my work on this revision. The enthusiasm and continued support of my publisher has also been significant in my having the opportunity to continue to improve the book. Nancy Osman, my current editor, has been especially helpful and supportive. In addition, the many people who have worked in various capacities during the actual production of this and earlier editions deserve my sincere gratitude for the many ways in which they have helped to make each book both attractive and accurate. I extend particular thanks to Bryan Woodhouse, production editor; Eve Mendelsohn, permissions; Sharon Donahue, photo researcher; and Mark Fowler, designer.

It would be nice to think that the various editions of this book have been mine exclusively. However, in spite of the work I have put into them, they are best understood as the joint product of many people, all working to help me produce instructional tools that will help improve the quality of this nation's social welfare system. To everyone who has participated in this process, thank you.

R.C.F.

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