

# THE SOCIAL SERVICES

AN INTRODUCTION • 3rd edition

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**H. Wayne Johnson**  
and contributors



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Third edition

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# The Social Services

## An Introduction

H. Wayne Johnson *University of Iowa*  
and contributors



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About the

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# Preface

The theme of this text as we move now into a third edition continues to be *change*. As a pervasive fact of modern life change is clearly seen both in our social problems and in the services/programs designed as responses to such problems. Many have expanded or emerged just in the last three and a half years since we prepared the second edition. When change occurs at such a rapid pace, academic tools such as textbooks for describing and analyzing the phenomena cannot stand still. They too must evolve. Hence this new edition.

Like the two previous editions, this revised text is intended for the first course in an undergraduate social work program, whether in a four-year program or a two-year community or junior college. In some institutions, this will be the only social work course available to students, and it will most likely be offered within a sociology department or other social or behavioral science area. In other schools, this will be the first in a series of courses constituting a program, and it will probably come at the freshman/sophomore level. Some of these courses enroll students of various levels, most of whom are taking the course as an elective, whereas in others a majority are taking the first course required for a major in social work, the human services, or some similar designation.



Some schools have a two-semester or three-quarter introductory course. Patterns vary, but in such cases, one term is often devoted essentially to social welfare as a social institution and another to social work as a profession. This text could be used for either or both, but it is designed more for the institutions approach. Instructors and students will need to decide how to make best use of the book given particular needs, objectives, and patterns.

Why produce a text revision when books already exist? The fields of social work and social work education are in infinitely better shape today than fifteen years ago relative to available texts for the introductory course. Although several options exist now for instructors of this course, and some are of good quality, there remain deficiencies that many perceive to be important and that I attempted to remedy in the first two editions and do so now again. For example, the issue of substance abuse, a major contemporary problem, is updated and retained, and is not ignored as it has been in some other texts. Social work in business and industry, an emerging field, continues to be given a chapter, and there is also new content on other nontraditional settings and innovative services. Examples of totally new content are the material on social justice in Chapter 1, AIDS in Chapter 8 and elsewhere, prevention in Chapter 9, and generalist practice, case management, networking, and information and referral in Chapter 15. Material on refugees and homelessness has been expanded considerably. Rural content has been retained. The chapters in Part Three on social work practice have been rearranged, starting with a chapter on newer approaches in practice that emphasizes the generalist. Entire chapters are again devoted to social work research and administration, and housing and social development. Minorities, an extremely important subject in this era, are separated from women/sexism and are conceptualized as human diversity to include racism, ageism, handicaps, and so forth. New content on sexual orientation has been added to this part of the book. There are other new thrusts along with a real concern for trends and the future.

At the same time that we are careful to include contemporary concerns, in an introductory text we have the responsibility to cover thoroughly the large, traditional, commonplace social services, and we have done so. In fact, the only field allowed more than one chapter is services to families and children, the core of social work for decades. Similarly, social services are examined in the context of public welfare, schools, health, mental health, criminal justice, and the elderly.

Virtually every chapter could be a book in itself in view of the scope of the topics. Obviously there is much that must be omitted in each chapter in order to prevent the book as a totality from being a tome of thousands of pages. This necessitates making judgments, setting prior-

ities, emphasizing the important (recognizing that notions of what is important vary from person to person), and at the same time including material for breadth and balance. An ever-present challenge in the introductory course is the vast territory to be covered. Hence, a text for the course is faced with the same challenge.

The chapters individually can be read as independent entities, if the reader wishes, because each can stand alone at the same time that each is an integral part of the whole. Although the order and sequence of chapters and parts is always arbitrary, there is a logical flow. Content does not have to be read in the order presented, and instructors may desire to assign reading in a different pattern. This is particularly true with regard to Parts Two and Three, which are often reversed in other books and can easily be shifted here. Clearly this book should be adapted to one's own uses, preferences, and style.

A suggestion about supplementing the text may be called for. Each instructor and many students will have ideas from their own reading and experience on appropriate supplementation. Examples I find useful are a book(s) on history of social welfare/social work and such writings as *Welfare Mother*, *Blaming the Victim*, and *The Color Purple*. Over the years I have also used Michael Harrington's books, most recently *The New American Poverty*.

A word about the title is in order. The title is different from that of most more-or-less comparable texts in its use of "social services" rather than "welfare" or "social work," all terms defined in Chapter 2. Most such books end up dealing with both social welfare and social work but do not reflect this fact in their titles. Hence, there is a degree of inaccuracy in many titles. This is one reason to use other phraseology. I see social services as relating to both welfare and social work, and therefore it is an acceptable term. Second, "welfare" is an emotion-laden term in the United States, and there may be value in promoting a more neutral concept. In addition, "social work" is an awkward term; physicians are not medical workers nor are attorneys legal workers. The terms "work" and "worker" are not generally used in occupational labels except for social work/er, and therefore it may be preferable to cultivate another way of thinking, at least in the title. The traditional terms are used frequently throughout the book, but the title carries a different one.

More vignettes are included in this edition for purposes of illustration. A major effort has been made to use realistic portrayals. Therefore, not all persons or situations described in the vignettes change in desired directions; not all consumers of social services are transformed and "live happily ever after." Such is life in the human services and in the real world.

We continue to place at the end of each chapter the "selected refer-

ences and notes” including citations, comments, and various pieces of hopefully pertinent information that we did not want to include in the body of the chapter. These and the following “additional suggested readings” have all been updated. The latter are for the reader who would like to pursue a particular subject further. The two listings do not duplicate each other, so readers should consult both lists in determining what one might wish to read.

A genuine effort has again been made throughout to avoid sexist language. In spite of such endeavors, the reader may find that occasionally we still say “he” or “she” when there is no intention to refer to one sex more than the other. It is sometimes awkward to use language that is not sexist, but a serious attempt has been made.

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# Acknowledgments

It is humbling to consider how much is owed to so many. As was true of the first two editions, this book would, in all probability, not exist were it not for the generous and thoughtful contributions of chapter authors. Their interest continues, and their revised work appears again in this new version. Each author is an expert on the respective topics and each continues to be willing to subject her or his work to my editing, so that the final product is my responsibility.

Faculty from around the country were especially helpful with their constructive criticisms and suggestions. Some of these had used previous editions of the text extensively and others had not, but they took time to review the book and provide feedback. Their scholarly, penetrating observations and ideas are greatly appreciated, and some of these people will recognize their thoughts and comments incorporated into the new edition. Of course, it is not possible to be totally responsive to all suggestions, partly because there is no unanimity among them. But every idea was considered, and many were used.

A special word of thanks to the ultimate consumers, the students, who read and work with the book. It is gratifying to have feedback and reactions, both from our own students here at the University of Iowa and from others all around the country. These students are in colleges

and universities, large and small, public and private, in a wide range of situations. It is especially for them that I first became interested in undertaking this endeavor and it is still for them that I continue with another edition.

Typing is a large part of this task and not very exciting for those who do all of the tedious work. Always with efficiency and good humor, the job has been done so well by Jo Conroy and Carolyn Tappan. University of Iowa librarians have been most helpful. Publishers play a special role in producing a text book. I have found all of those associated with F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., with whom I have dealt to be consistently competent, cordial, and supportive. This is true from Ted Peacock through the entire staff.

Finally, as always, the person who is my greatest source of assistance, inspiration, and support is my wife, Donna. It is to her and to all of my students—past, present, and future—that the book is dedicated.

H. Wayne Johnson  
Iowa City, January 1989

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