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RADICAL SOCIAL WORK IN THE UNITED
STATES BY MICHAEL REISCH, JANICE
ANDREWS**



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Review

"In this detailed and thoroughly researched book, Reisch and Andrews trace the history of social work from the perspective of social workers who were (and still are) committed to a radical approach...this book should be essential reading for social workers everywhere. By tracing the history of activist and 'left' social work, the authors make an original and important contribution to the literature. Social work educators who teach the history of social work ought to prescribe this book and ensure that students understand that the Charity Organization Society and the Settlements were not the only pioneers of the social work profession. The book's attempts to recognize the contribution of social work colleagues who, over the years, have thought of themselves as radical, is important and timely.."

-*Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, Vol. 29 no. 4, December 2002

"This book is an interesting and significant contribution to social work history. Reisch and Andrews urge their contemporaries to gain courage from aspects of the profession's radical past and continue to translate the principles of social justice into specific policies because "the road not taken still lies ahead" (p.235).."

-Kriste Lindenmeyer, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, *American Historical Review*

"Reisch and Andrews cast fresh light on the neglected history of radical social work in the United States. They document the courage and persistence of radical social workers in prior eras and make an eloquent case for retaining, strengthening, and honoring a radical social work movement in coming decades."

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". . . the most inclusive overview and synthesis to date of radical social work and anti-radical repression of social work in the twentieth century. This is an invaluable study, chock full of historical knowledge and sure to spark debate among radical social workers and their opponents."

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"This important contribution to social welfare history tells the story of the paths we did not take - of how, by marginalizing and repressing some of the most innovative social welfare leaders, we shortchanged American social policy and created a safety net that could be easily shredded. It is essential reading for those who wish to repair the damage.."

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About the Author

Michael Reisch, Ph.D., is professor of social work at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Janice Andrews, Ph.D., is professor of social work at the University of St. Thomas and College of St. Catherine in St. Paul, Minnesota.

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The Road Not Taken takes a new perspective on the course of social welfare policy in the twentieth century. This examination looks at the evolution of social work in the United States as a dynamic process not just driven by mainstream organizations and politics, but strongly influenced by the ideas and experiences of radical individuals and marginalized groups as well.

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A triumph!

By Katherine van Wormer

Going beyond mere history this presentation takes the reader into the heart of radical thinking in contemporary social work. This remarkable work, drawn from original sources--archives and interviews--reveals how much of the past is in the present. Each chapter is a major contribution in itself. Radicals will treasure this book forever; for others it is a must read. Learning about the purges of the McCarthy era is highly relevant in the warfare state of the present day. The Road Not Taken is well written, well organized and well conceived. I could hardly put this book down and will be citing it in my future research on the welfare state.

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