



Applying Theory to Policy and Practice: Issues for Critical Reflection

Steven R. Smith

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The analysis of social and public policy and professional practice has become increasingly theoretical in recent years. This volume draws together experienced practitioners and academics in social work, probation and counselling, as well as from other forms of legal and social practice, to better understand the relationship between theory, policy and practice. The contributors argue that the use of theory in studying policy and practice is overall a positive and necessary development. However, they also highlight and explore a number of methodological problems and philosophical issues for critical reflection:

- The often inaccessible nature of abstract theoretical argument
- Perceived problems of relevance and applicability to practice given the structure and purpose of theoretical modelling;
- Philosophical difficulties and questions when applying theoretical generalization to policy and practice.

The authors address these problems in a style fully accessible to non-theorists, offering a unique multi-disciplinary resource for students, academics, policy analysts and practitioners.

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