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Review of *The Internet and Technology for the Human Services.* Howard Karger and Joanne Levine. Reviewed by Sharon Pittman, Andrews University

Sharon Pittman
Andrews University

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of health and education systems areimplicated. Schwartz and Fishman are correct: Congress, having tackled welfarereform, should now have the political will to reform child welfare and relate it to thesebroader issues.

Sherrill Clark
University of California, Berkeley

Howard Karger and Joanne Levine, *The Internet and Technology for the Human Services*, NewYork: Longman, 1999. $27.19 paperback.

Many have felt that human services and technology are strange bedfellows. Yet ourprofessional future depends on our comfort in adopting a full range of technological tools forimproving services and interventions. Few human service book authors have invested thepersonal and/or publishing resources on this fluid and rapidly transforming phenomenon. Kargerand Levine take on this risky endeavor and make a notable contribution to helping both theneophytes and the technologically savvy move toward the new millennium.

Experts note that the Internet is one of the fastest growing technologies of all time. Themetastasis of web sites, services, and sales creates multiple challenges for human serviceproviders. Tackling the nearly impossible, the authors successfully provide a comprehensiveresource for navigating the white water of technological advances.

Appropriately, Karger and Levine lay the framework for their discussion in Part I bypresenting an overview of the Internet that addresses the historical context of cyberspace. Withinthis venue, they also give a caveat to the ethical dilemmas human service administrators face asthey grapple with technology policy and the corresponding legal implications as they haveemerged in the Information Age.

In Part II of their presentation, the authors make the practical application of the Internet tothe human services milieu. They discuss the use of the Internet for multi-cultural exchange, networking, on-line counseling, and advancing telemedicine. They also provide readers with amyriad of resource ideas for using the Internet to conducting research.

How to prepare for accessing the Internet is the main focus of Part III. Both hardwarerequirements and dial-up software issues are addressed. Suggestions are made for selecting thebest Internet service provider.

Discussion turns from more theoretical to how to and practical in Part IV. This section isespecially helpful to those with limited Internet experience. Karger and Levine present the basicsof netiquette, and how to perform web searches. The steps for downloading files andcommunicating with e-mail are also presented. They discuss on-line security issues andcomplete this section by presenting expert advice on the use of listservs and newsgroups.

Finally, the most advanced applications are presented. While the terms such as Plug-ins,Telenet, MUD, MOO, MUCKs, and MUSHs are decoded for the lay reader, the discussion inPart V is a refreshing challenge to the more advanced user. The ideas and insights presented forweb site design and publishing presented are useful. Even with minimal computer skills, one isgiven enough resources through this discussion to craft a personal cyberstop site. Karger andLevine hedge their largest bets when they tackle the futuring of human services technology. Theyventure scenarios of what problems will need to be addressed and what systems will bedeveloped to enhance treatments, training, consultation, research, community work, andeducation for the 21st Century. Only time will tell how close they come in their predictions.

Among the especially helpful resources that they present are the key terms given at thebeginning of each chapter, leveling the playing field for the novice reader. Also significant is thethorough integration and presentation of the ethical considerations that are critical to ourprofessional values orientation throughout the book. The web resources shared are helpfulwhether one is a student or a professional. The comprehensive research efforts that went into thedevelopment of this manuscript are evident in the voluminous resources that are shared withreaders. These include a marvelous appendix that opens a limitless cyberworld for addressingthe broad range of human service interests. The exercises and case examples provided easilyfacilitate practical learning opportunities for either individual or classroom applications.

The downside of this book is the hard copy, text-based medium in which it is presented. It is very difficult to update and keep current when the content presented is so fluid. Notsurprisingly, some of the web-site resources shared were either down or changed when I triedthem, though most were fully operational. The shelf-life of this book would be greatly enhancedif it were published on-line. Maybe that time is not far off!

In The Internet and Technology for Human Services, Karger and Levine haveaccomplished the impossible. They have filled a void in the technologically diverse humanservices literature to professionally enlighten those with techno deprivation. I'm not as certainabout their contribution to those of us who need balance and recovery for our hypertechaddictions. I know this book has enabled me be more assertive and competitive with my childrenand graduate assistants for equal access to Internet time. It just might do the same for you.

                                        Sharon Pittman
                                        Andrews University

June Gary Hopps and Elaine Pinderhughes. *Group Work with Overwhelmed Clients*. New York: The Free Press, 1999. $29.95

In an earlier work, The Power to Care, the authors of this book examined the evidence for effective ways of helping clients whom they described as overwhelmed by personal, socioeconomic, and environmental problems. In that publication they reported that the interventions that produced good outcomes included group treatment. Yet such treatment was not offered to clients to the degree one might anticipate. This led them to investigate the barriers to offering group services, especially in view of their conviction that group experiences can be very empowering to clients. Their desire to promote group services was, consequently, a major motivation for the writing of this book.

The infrequency with which agencies offer groups for clients conducted by competent group workers is not new information to many of us who have worked to rectify this situation. One of the most important contributions of this book, nevertheless, is its demonstration that group services can be offered in many different settings and take a variety of forms. Specifically, the