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*Review of Research for Action: Cross-National Perspectives on Connecting Knowledge, Policy, and Practice for Children.* Robert Chaskin and Jona M. Rosenfeld, Editors. Reviewed by Ann Reyes Robbins.

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a conference at Syracuse University under the leadership of noted sociologists Marjorie DeVault who is recognized as an leading exponent of the institutional ethnographic approach. She has successfully organized these very diverse paper is into a coherent collection that examines the way the everyday experiences of people are shaped by wider systems. Although the book is primarily written for sociologists and ethnographers, its concern with vulnerable people and those on the margins on the new economy will be of particular interest to social workers and social policy scholars. Indeed, the book contains several chapters on issues that are of direct social welfare interest such as disability, poverty and income maintenance and support. Despite its academic nature, the book is eminently readable and it makes a valuable contribution to professional as well as scholarly literature.

*James Midgley, University of California, Berkeley*

Robert Chaskin and Jona M. Rosenfeld (Eds.), *Research for Action: Cross-National Perspectives on Connecting Knowledge, Policy, and Practice for Children*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. \$42.95 hardcover.

The themes of cross-national collaboration and learning have increasingly appeared in literature on child welfare policy. Likewise, the notion that research should not be an end goal but should rather serve a practical purpose that effectuates social change has moved from the realm of idealism to become an expectation in policy research, particularly social policy research. This text attempts to move researchers one step closer to action research by providing a framework to engage diverse stakeholders in the research and knowledge dissemination processes.

Robert Chaskin and Jona Rosenfeld divide the text into three parts. In Part I, they provide an overview of the cross-national promotion of evidence-based policy and cross-sectoral governance that involves not only a collaborative sharing of research information between government, non profit, and private sectors, but also the adaptation and application of strategies and technologies among stakeholders. The editors

posit that despite the increased incorporation of evaluative approaches into program implementation, there remains limited understanding about effective means for implementing evidence-based policy and practice within the social welfare and human services fields. The introduction provides a textual roadmap of questions and issues for the reader to consider when reviewing the six case studies that comprise Part II of the book.

Prior to providing the reader with a theoretical framework for the problem and placing the text's contributions within the context of existing research literature, the editors expose the reader to six distinct narratives, all focused on child welfare interventions, arising from experiences in Northern Ireland, South Africa, the United States, Israel, the United Kingdom, and Dublin, Ireland. The case studies are arranged to progress from a macro-level policy focus involving researcher experiences with studies targeting policy development and implementation to shared experiences with studies primarily targeting micro-level practice and administration. The voices and perspectives of service recipients are shared in the sixth case study that focuses on the process involved with disseminating an educational handbook to youth in residential care in Ireland. The next case study focuses on the impact of the Northern Ireland Family Support Research Project to child welfare policy in Northern Ireland. This is followed by a similar analysis of the role that the Child Health Policy Institute at the University of Cape Town played in the development of firearms control legislation in South Africa. The next discusses the implementation of the Quick Response project with reflections about the impact of collaboration between Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. This is followed by a retrospective report on the relationship between the Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute and the Children and Youth Services Division of the Israel Ministry of Social Affairs in implementing the RAF (regulation, assessment, and follow-up) method for quality assurance in residential settings. The last case study provides an overview of the development and implementation of the Going Home? practice tool aimed at reducing the time children spend in out-of-home placement in

the United Kingdom.

In Part III, Robert Chaskin extracts the lessons and key themes suggested by the six case studies and assess their overall contributions to theory and practice. The final chapter is written by both editors, and provides a framework for integrating future research, policy, and practice to more effectively fuse these often distinct “communities” with the purpose of facilitating action at both the organizational and systems levels. The editors reject the notion that the relationship between explanation (research) and change (action) is intrinsically dichotomous and instead argue that fostering a dialectical relationship among researchers, policymakers, managers, and practitioners can lead to inventive approaches to action and generate new questions and inquiry. While the editors acknowledge the complexities of cultivating interactions between diverse stakeholders with varying degrees of power, they view this as an opportunity to build relationships centered on shared core values such as the desire to improve the well-being of children and young people as illustrated in the six case studies.

The volume was ambitious in its scope and the case studies presented provide varying levels of usefulness for the intended audience of researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and advocates. The text is very relevant to child welfare researchers and policy students. The cross-cutting themes and lessons and the analysis of researcher roles, relationships, and engagement styles are valuable contributions to the research on cross-sectoral governance, which has up to this point largely ignored child welfare policy as a focus. The questions raised in the book’s introduction are also useful for guiding students in analyzing case studies generally, not only those included here.

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Andrew Battista, *The Revival of Labor Liberalism*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008. \$45.00 hardcover.

In this book, Andrew Battista situates himself nicely in a long-standing academic dialogue. He makes four central claims in the book. One, the rise of unions and labor shaped the American political and social landscape. Second, the