



Social Work: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

Sally Holland, Jonathan Scourfield

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Social workers spend their time trying to ease social suffering. They encounter the extreme casualties of social inequality: the victims of poverty, illness, addiction, and abuse; they work with abusers and offenders; and operate in the space between the State and the poor or marginalized. Social work is replete with vivid human stories: the troubled teenage boy who cannot settle in a foster home; the frail older woman who is desperate for social contact; the community seeking a way to tackle gang violence; the sex offender leaving prison; and the disputed territory of international adoption. Social work therefore holds a fundamental importance throughout the modern world.

In this Very Short Introduction, Sally Holland and Jonathan Scourfield explain what social work is and look at its rich historical development. Reflecting international human stories of social problems and social work relationships, as well as the philosophies behind the practice and the evidence about what works throughout the world, they look at the various definitions, history, and debates about purpose and effectiveness, theory, and methods. Including wide ranging examples of social work practice around the world and within particular population groups, they reflect the international variation of social work theory and practice, as well as highlighting all of the main controversies and debates.

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