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Professional Discretion in Welfare Services

Beyond Street-Level Bureaucracy

Tony Evans, University of Warwick, UK

'This is both an extremely important and timely book. Our understanding of discretion is absolutely necessary to our understanding of professional practice in contemporary times. Every researcher who genuinely wants to appreciate the complexities of professional practice needs to read this book. It is written with the author's characteristic combination of clarity and sophistication. I recommend it wholeheartedly.'

–Jan Fook, South West London Academic Network (Royal Holloway University of London, St Georges University of London and Kingston University), UK

'Tony Evans provides a convincing analysis of the key central issues in contemporary policy and practice that swirl around the place and function of professional discretion in welfare services. His critically engaged discussion draws out the complexities that have emerged from the intermingling of managerialism and professional culture. This original, perceptive and stimulating contribution deserves to be widely read.'

– John Harris, University of Warwick, UK

Professional discretion has re-emerged as an issue of central importance in social work as a reaction to the intensification of management culture across the public sector. This book presents an innovative framework for the analysis of discretion by offering three accounts of the managerial role – the domination model, the street level model and the author's discursive perspective. As such this volume will be of great interest to postgraduate students and researchers as well as professionals.

Contents: Introduction; The street-level bureaucracy perspective and discretion; Social services – street-level bureaucracies?; Management and professionals: arguments and perspectives on discretion; Researching discretion: the case study outlined; 'Managers' – are they all the same?; Senior managers and the remote control of practice; Local managers and practitioners: conflict or collaboration in supervision?; Conclusion: the dynamics of discretion; Appendix; Bibliography; Index.

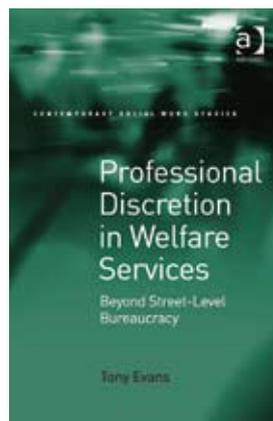
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