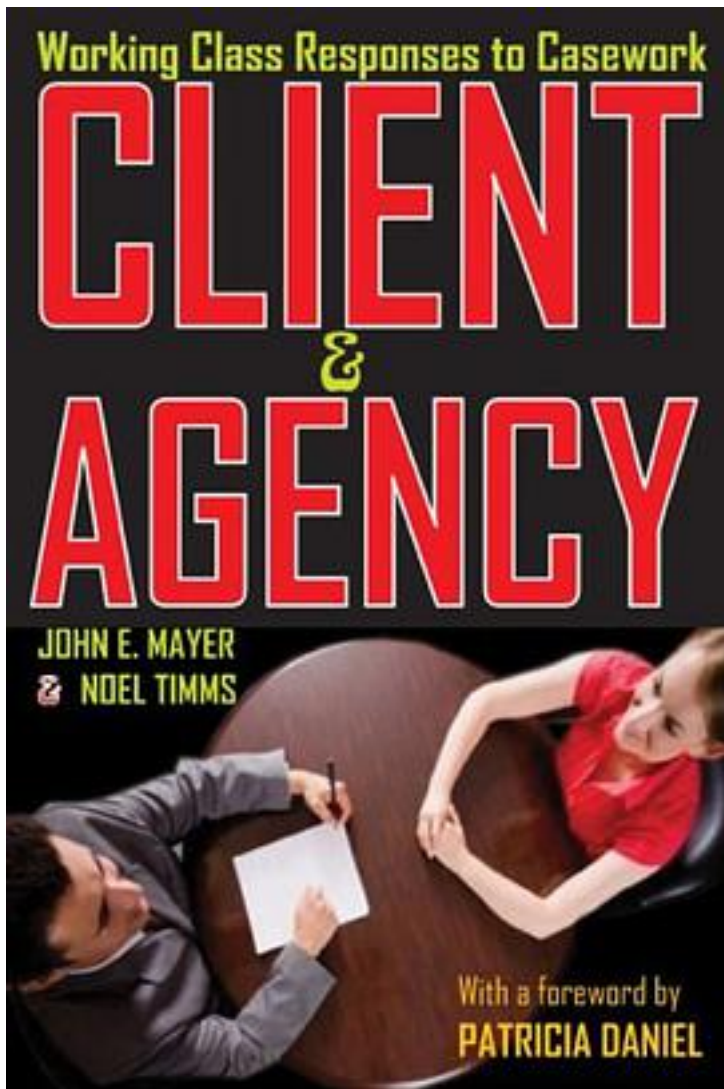


Client and Agency



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It is a startling and somewhat disturbing fact that social work researchers-as well as research psychiatrists and psychologists-have rarely explored the treatment situation from the standpoint of the client. Client and Agency, first published in the 1960s, explores by means of free-flowing interviews, a close-up picture of the client's experiences at a social work agency. There has been a growing awareness of the importance of consumer opinion in the social services following the wide spread impact of consumer groups, particularly those concerned with educational and medical services. Social work agencies have hesitated, uncertain about the researchers and their methods, and fearful of the outcome. But it is desirable that they incorporate the views of consumer groups because client opinion is one way of checking the effectiveness of their work. The practice of social work requires the application of knowledge derived from a variety of sources and academic disciplines. It is frequently difficult to relate conflicting evidence and diverse theories about human behavior for use in day-to-day work with acutely troubled and deprived people. It points to the need for more extensive studies of both consumers and suppliers of social work services because it raises many pertinent questions. In Client and Agency clients of a Family Welfare Association discuss the kind of help they expect to receive, their impressions of the social worker and the treatment process, and the ways they felt they were helped or not helped.

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