



# The McDonaldization of Social Work

*Donna Dustin*

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## **The McDonaldization of Social Work** Donna Dustin

Based upon George Ritzer's McDonaldization of Society thesis and incorporating aspects of social theory, this book examines the introduction of care management to social work practice. Donna Dustin analyzes care management as an example of the managerial application of efficiency, calculability, predictability and control to social work practice. These principles, put to good use in organizations that produce tangible outputs at a profit, are being increasingly applied in non-profit public sector organizations where the outcomes require intangibles such as professional relationships. The author examines whether the McDonaldization process heightens dilemmas such as cost versus rights for professionals working in the social services. Using social theory to frame her research with care managers and their managers in the UK, the author examines the day-to-day implications of care management for social work practice and questions whether the construction of service users as customers contributes to empowering practice. The book's in-depth analysis of the policy background, implementation and practice of care management will resonate with social workers in other national contexts, such as the US, where the care management model has been introduced.

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