

## Book Review

Rogers, O.W. (2013). *Beginnings, middles and end: Sideways stories on the art & soul of social work*. Harrisburg, PA: White Hat.

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*Beginnings, Middles and End: Sideways Stories on the Art & Soul of Social Work* is Rogers' reflection on his life as a social work practitioner and educator. It is a profound piece of creative literature that will reinstall idealism within senior social workers who are on the threshold of being cynical about their work. The mood that the author sets is the best aspect of this book. It reminds me of the mood set by the writers of the TV show *MASH*. There is a mixture of drama and comedy that is perfectly blended to capture the attention of a casual reader. I found the entire book a joy to read. Personally, I found it therapeutic.

I see two different readers who would find the book immediately helpful. First, students in their final phases of field work (MSW and BSW) will find help in identifying professional direction and understand that all the theories and single-systems designs are an exercise in futility without an appreciation of the "person within" and the person on the other side of the desk. There are some things that cannot be learned in the classroom and cannot be found in textbooks. *Beginnings Middles and Ends* comes the closest to introducing the practitioner to critical issues that are the basis for good social work practice. Second, I recommend it to graduates who are losing their idealism. Recently, I just spoke to an extremely bright BSW graduate. She was well-read about child protective services and entered the social work major to follow that path. After being a child protective service

worker for three years, she is rapidly losing her idealism and has asked for periodic pep-talks from me. I think the book would be quite fruitful for professionals who have highly stressful positions.

I loved reading this book. After reading, I posted the following on my Facebook page:

I am directing this post to social work students, practitioners and faculty. If your name is listed below, I think you'll be interested in this. I just got finished reading Ogden W. Rogers' book entitled *BEGINNINGS, MIDDLES, AND ENDS*. It is VERY inspiring and moving. In fact, I do not recall enjoying a nonfiction book (written by a social worker). I think that you'd love reading this.