

PSCI/WGSS 209

Poverty in America

Spring 2014

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Office hours: Wednesday, 2 to 4 pm.

Although some protest that the U.S. is heading toward European-style socialism, social welfare programs in the U.S. differ in important ways from those in other wealthy and democratic nations. In this course, we will analyze the politics concerning the adoption and development of policies to address poverty and inequality in the U.S. The issues we will explore include: What is poverty, and how do Americans perceive its dangers to individuals as well as the political community? What economic, historical, and sociological theories have been advanced to explain poverty? Why has the U.S. adopted some approaches to reduce poverty but not others? What enduring political conflicts have shaped the U.S. welfare state?

A coursepacket of required readings is available in '37 House at 51 Park Street. Please make sure to pick up both parts 1 and 2. The following required texts can be purchased at Water Street Books:

Michael B. Katz. 2012. *Why Don't American Cities Burn?* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Ira Katznelson. 2005. *When Affirmative Action was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America.* New York: W. W Norton.

Frances Fox Piven and Richard A. Cloward. 1993. *Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare.* New York: Vintage Books.

Course Requirements

1. *Class participation (10%)*

- Please come to class prepared to participate in our discussions. This means you should have done the reading, and you should have questions about and reactions to that reading. Respect for all in the class is crucial for establishing an environment in which we are free to explore, think, and question. Respect is not equivalent to agreement, however, and disagreement is welcome.
- You may post questions, comments, and news articles on Glow, and I will make an effort to incorporate these into our class discussions.
- Attendance policy: Regular attendance is essential for a rich intellectual experience and lively class discussion. More than two absences will result in a significant grade reduction. Please send me an email in advance of any single absence.

2. *Three analytical essays, due at 5 pm on (30% each):*

Friday, March 21

Wednesday, April 30

Wednesday, May 21

Each part of the course requirements must be completed in order to pass the course. The Honor Code applies to all written work; if you have questions about compliance with the Honor Code, please ask.

February 5 **Introduction**

February 10 Definitions of Poverty

- John Cassidy, “Relatively Deprived: How poor is poor?” *The New Yorker*, April 3, 2006.
- DeNavas-Walt, Carmen, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Jessica C. Smith, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, P60-245, *Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2012*, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 2013, pp. 13-21.
- Robert Rector and Rachel Sheffield, “Understanding Poverty in the United States: Surprising Facts About America’s Poor,” Heritage Foundation, September 13, 2011,
- Mark R. Rank, “Poverty in America Is Mainstream,” *New York Times*, November 2, 2013. See also: www.heritage.org.
- Diana M. Pearce, testimony before the Subcommittee on Income Security and Family Support, Committee on Ways and Means, U.S. House of Representatives, *Hearing on Measuring Poverty in America*, July 17, 2008. See also: <http://www.selfsufficiencystandard.org/>

Part 1. Growth of the American Welfare State

February 13 The New Deal

- T. H. Marshall, “Citizenship and Social Class,” in *The Welfare State Reader*, ed. by Christopher Pierson and Francis G. Castles (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2006), pp. 30-39.
- Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, *Regulating the Poor*, pp. 3-119.
- Huey Long, “Share Our Wealth: Every Man a King,” national radio address on February 23, 1934, www.hueylong.com

February 17 The Social Security Act and the American Welfare State

- Gosta Esping-Anderson, “Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism,” in *The Welfare State Reader*, ed. by Christopher Pierson and Francis G. Castles (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2006, pp. 160-174).
- Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action was White*, pp. 1-52.
- Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon, “Contract versus Charity: Why is There No Social Citizenship in the United States?” *Socialist Review*, July 1992, pp. 45-67.

February 20 Work, Social Insurance, and the Welfare State

- Katznelson, pp. 52-142.
- Robert C. Lieberman, *Shifting the Color Line*, Chapter 3 “Old-Age Insurance: From Exclusion to Inclusion” (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1998), pp. 67-117.

February 24 Work, Public Assistance, and the Welfare State

- Alice Kessler-Harris, “Designing Women and Old Fools: The Construction of the Social Security Amendments of 1939,” in *U.S. History as Women’s History: New Feminist Essays*, ed. by Linda K. Kerber, et. al. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), pp. 87-106.
- Piven and Cloward, pp. 123-179.

February 27 Great Society: Migration, Disruption, and Relief

- Piven and Cloward, pp. 183-248.
- Joseph McDowell Mitchell, “The Revolt in Newburgh,” in *Vital Speeches of the Day*, January 15, 1962, pp. 214-220.
- Excerpts from “The Moynihan Report”: Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “The Negro Family: The Case for National Action,” Office of Policy Planning and Research, U.S. Department of Labor, 1965, reprinted in *Welfare: A Documentary History of U.S. Policy and Politics*, ed. by Gwendolyn Mink and Rickie Solinger (New York: New York University, 2003), pp. 226-239.

March 3 The Great Society and Its War on Poverty

- Piven and Cloward, pp. 249-338.
- Katznelson, pp. 143-172.
- President Lyndon Baines Johnson, “Special Message to the Congress Proposing a Nationwide War on the Sources of Poverty,” March 16, 1964 (in coursepacket) and “To Fulfill These Rights”, Commencement Address at Howard University, June 4, 1965 (in Katznelson).
- Jill Quadagno and Catherine Fobes, “The Welfare State and the Cultural Reproduction of Gender: Making Good Girls and Boys in the Job Corps,” *Social Problems*, vol. 42, no. 2 (May 1995), pp. 171-190.

Part 2. Retrenchment of the American Welfare State

March 6 The Conservative Attack on Welfare

- Paul Pierson, “The New Politics of the Welfare State,” *World Politics*, vol. 48, no. 2 (Jan., 1996), pp. 143-179.
- Charles Murray, *Losing Ground: American Social Policy 1950-1980* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1984), pp. 41-66, 124-133, 145-146, 154-166, 178-191.

March 10 The Conservative Debate about Work

- Lawrence Mead, “The New Politics of the New Poverty,” *Public Interest*, Spring 1991, pp. 3-20.
- Mickey Kaus, “The Work Ethic State,” *New Republic*, July 7, 1986, pp. 22-end.
- Robert Rector, “How not to be poor; when will this country face the facts about marriage and families?” *National Review*, October 24, 2005, pp. 26-end.

March 13 From AFDC to TANF

- Piven and Cloward, pp. 343-406.
- Holloway Sparks, “Queens, Teens, and Model Mothers: Race, Gender, and the Discourse of Welfare Reform,” in *Race and the Politics of Welfare Reform*, ed. by Sanford F. Schram, Joe Soss, and Richard C. Fording (Ann Arbor, MI: Univ. of Michigan Press, 2003), pp. 171-195.
- Gwendolyn Mink, “Feminists, Welfare Reform, and Welfare Justice,” *Social Justice*, Spring 1998, pp. 146-end.

Recommended but not required:

- R. Kent Weaver, “Ending Welfare as We Know It,” in *The Social Divide: Political Parties and the Future of Activist Government*, ed. by Margaret Weir (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1998), pp. 361-416.

March 17 States, TANF, and Making Work Pay

- Joe Soss, Richard C. Fording, and Sanford F. Schram, “The Color of Devolution: Race, Federalism, and the Politics of Social Control,” *American Journal of Political Science*, July 2008, pp. 536-553.
- Danilo Trisi and LaDonna Pavetti, *TANF Weakening as a Safety Net for Poor Families*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, March 13, 2012. www.cbpp.org.
- Robert Rector and Jennifer A. Marshall, “The Unfinished Work of Welfare Reform,” *National Affairs*, Winter 2013, pp. 94-111. www.nationalaffairs.com.
- *Policy Basics: The Earned Income Tax Credit*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, February 1, 2013. www.cbpp.org
- *Policy Basics: Introduction to SNAP*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, March 28, 2013. www.cbpp.org

March 20 The State of the U.S. Welfare State, 2014

- Christopher Howard, *The Hidden Welfare State: Tax Expenditures and Social Policy in the United States*, Ch. 1 “Sizing up the Hidden Welfare State” (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), pp. 17-39.
- *Policy Basics: Federal Tax Expenditures*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, December 4, 2013. www.cbpp.org
- Suzanne Mettler, “Reconstituting the Submerged State: The Challenges of Social Policy Reform in the Obama Era,” *Perspectives on Politics*, September 2010, pp. 803-824.
- Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL), “Reclaiming the Land of Opportunity: Conservative Reforms for Combatting Poverty,” Remarks prepared for delivery, Washington, D.C., January 8, 2014.
- Annie Lowrey, “Switzerland’s Proposal to Pay People for Being Alive,” *New York Times*, November 12, 2013.

Spring Break

Part 3. Poverty and the Politics of Family

April 7 The Family

- Sec. 101 Findings, *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996*.
- Charles Murray, *Coming Apart: The State of White America, 1960-2010*, Part II “The Formation of a New Lower Class,” Ch. 6 “The Founding Virtues, Ch. 7 “Belmont and Fishtown,” Ch. 8 “Marriage” (New York: Crown Forum, 2012), pp. 124-167.
- Wade Horn and Andrew Bush, “Fathers, Marriage, and Welfare Reform,” Hudson Institute, March, 1997.

April 10 Child Support Enforcement

- Anna Marie Smith, *Welfare Reform and Sexual Regulation*, chapter 4 “The Ideological Construction of Paternafare,” and chapter 5 “Paternafare Law Today” (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 85-146.
- Cindy Elmore, “On and On, Over and Over: The Gender War in Child Support Enforcement Court,” *Feminist Studies* 36 (Summer 2010), pp. 397-403.
- Bill Rankin, “‘Deadbeats’ sit in jail; support debt mounts,” *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, January 24, 2011.

April 14 Fatherhood

- Kathryn Edin and Timothy J. Nelson, *Doing the Best I Can: Fatherhood in the Inner City*, Ch. 8 “The New Package Deal” (Berkeley, CA: Univ. of California, 2013), pp. 202-228.
- Virginia Knox, Philip A. Cowan, Carolyn Pape Cowan, and Elana Bildner, “Policies that Strengthen Fatherhood and Family Relationships: What Do We Know and What Do We Need to Know?” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, May 2011, pp. 216-239.
- Lawrence Mead, “Toward a Mandatory Work Policy for Men,” *The Future of Children*, Fall 2007, pp. 43-72.

April 17 Marriage

- Katherine Boo, “The Marriage Cure,” *The New Yorker*, August 18 and 25, 2003.
- The National Marriage Project, *When Marriage Disappears: Executive Summary* December 2010, and *Press Release: “Family Scholars Propose National Agenda to Reverse Decline of Marriage in Middle America,”* December 16, 2012.
- Charles A. Donovan, “A Marshall Plan for Marriage: Rebuilding Our Shattered Homes,” *Backgrounder* (Washington, D.C.: Heritage Foundation), June 7, 2011.

Part 4. Poverty and Place

April 21 Cities and Suburbs

- Michael B. Katz, *Why Don't American Cities Burn?* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), pp. 1-46.
- Elizabeth Kneebone and Alan Berube, *Confronting Suburban Poverty in America* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2013), pp. 15-36.

April 24 Low-Wage Work

- Katz, pp. 47-77.
- Katherine S. Newman, “No Shame in (This) Game,” Chapter 4 from her book, *No Shame in My Game: The Working Poor in the Inner City* (New York: Russell Sage, 1999), pp. 122-149.
- Annette Bernhardt, Laura Dresser, and Erin Hatton, “The Coffee Pot Wars: Unions and Firm Restructuring in the Hotel Industry,” in *Low-Wage America: How Employers are Reshaping Opportunity in the Workplace*, ed. by Eileen Appelbaum, et. al. (New York: Russell Sage, 2003), pp. 33-76.
- Katherine s. Newman and Victor Tan Chen, “The Crisis of the Near Poor,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, October 5, 2007.

April 28 Protest and Acquiescence

- Katz, pp. 78-100.
- Heidi Swarts and Ion Bogdan Vasi, “Which U.S. Cities Adopt Living Wage Ordinances? Predictors of Adoption of a New Labor Tactic, 1994-2006,” *Urban Affairs Review*, August 2011, pp. 743-774.
- Jason Albright, “Contending Rationality, Leadership, and Collective Struggle: The 2006 Justice for Janitors Campaign at the University of Miami,” *Labor Studies Journal*, February 2008, pp. 63-80.
- Harold Meyerson, “L.A. Story,” *the American Prospect*, July/August 2013, pp. 29-41.
- Richard Vedder and Wendell Cox, *The Wal-Mart Revolution: How Big-Box Stores Benefit Consumers, Workers, and the Economy*, Ch. 8 “Wal-Mart and the Poor” (Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 2006), pp. 117-125.
- Jennifer M. Silva, *Coming Up Short: Working-Class Adulthood in an Age of Uncertainty*, Ch. 4 “Hardened Selves: The Remaking of the American Working Class” (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2013), pp. 81-111.

May 1 Leaving Communities

- Nicholas Lemann, “The Myth of Community Development,” *The New York Times*, January 9, 1994.
- Jason DeParle, “An Underground Railroad from Projects to Suburbs,” *The New York Times*, December 1, 1993.
- Leslie Kaufman, “An Uprooted Underclass, Under the Microscope,” *The New York Times*, September 25, 2005.
- Xavier de Souza Briggs, Susan J. Popkin, and John Goering, *Moving to Opportunity: The Story of an American Experiment to Fight Ghetto Poverty*, Ch. 10 “Lessons” (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2010), pp. 223-237.

May 5 Developing Communities

- Katz, pp. 101-121.
- David Imbroscio, “Beyond Mobility: the Limits of Liberal Urban Policy,” *Journal of Public Affairs*, February 2012, pp. 1-20 and critique by Gregory D. Squires, “Beyond the Mobility Versus Place Debate,” pp. 29-33.
- Michael E. Porter, “More Tales of the Inner City,” *Inc.*, June 2005, pp. 86-end. See also: Initiative for a Competitive Inner City www.icic.org
- John Atlas, “The Battle of Brooklyn: ACORN’s Modus Operandi,” in *The People Shall Rule*, ed. by Robert Fisher (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009), pp. 153-179.

May 8 Microfinance and Asset Building

- Katz, pp. 121-161.
- Ted Howard, “Owning Your Own Job is a Beautiful Thing,” in *Investing in What Works for America’s Communities*, ed. by Nancy O. Andrews and David J. Erickson (San Francisco, CA: Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, 2012) pp. 204-213.
- Michael Sherraden, “Assets and Public Policy,” in *Inclusion in the American Dream*, ed. by Michael Sherraden (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), pp. 3-19.
- Jared Bernstein, “Critical Questions in Asset-Based Policy,” in *Inclusion in the American Dream*, ed. by Michael Sherraden (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2005), pp. 351-359.

May 12 Cash Assistance Redux

- Paul Tough, “The Harlem Project,” *The New York Times Magazine*, June 20, 2004.
- Ray Rivera, “In Mexican town, maybe a way to reduce poverty in New York,” *New York Times*, April 25, 2007.
- Julie Bosman, “City Will Stop Paying the Poor for Good Behavior,” *New York Times*, March 30, 2010.
- James Riccio, “Sharing Lessons from the First Conditional Cash Transfer Program in the United States,” *Policy Brief*, National Poverty Center, September 2010.
- Tina Rosenberg, “The Benefits of Cash Without Conditions,” *New York Times*, August 28, 2013.
- Sendhil Mullainathan and Eldar Shafir, *Scarcity: Why Having Too Little Means So Much*, Ch. 7 “Poverty” and Ch. 8 “Improving the Lives of the Poor” (New York: Times Books, 2013), pp. 147-181.

May 15 Conclusion

- Piven and Cloward, pp. 407-465.