

Social Work 944 - Social Welfare Policy

Spring, 2005
Maria Cancian

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Office Hours: Weds 11-12 (Feb 2-Apr 27)
Social Science 3420
Class list: sw-944@lists.students.wisc.edu

Seminar meeting: 8:00-10:15 Mondays
Conference with paper writers: 10:15-10:30
Room: School of Social Work 106

I. Course Overview

This seminar provides a selective survey of U.S. social welfare policy, with particular emphasis on policy related to poverty and economic support. It is one of the required proseminars for social welfare doctoral students and is open to interested graduate students from other departments.

In addition to covering current social policy issues, this seminar will explicitly consider alternative approaches to social policy analysis. Much of the research reviewed employs the theoretical framework of neoclassical microeconomic theory and standard techniques of quantitative policy analysis. However, we will also consider research that employs alternative methods and theoretical perspectives, including research that emphasizes the importance of race and gender.

II. Objectives

The primary objective of this seminar is to increase students' ability to critically analyze current social welfare policies, with particular focus on the advantages and limitations of standard policy analysis and alternative approaches. Seminar participants will also acquire an understanding of selected current U.S. social policies and improve their fluency in writing about and discussing social welfare policy issues.

III. Course Content

We will consider conceptual and technical issues in the measurement of poverty and inequality, and the implications of demographic change for social policy. We will review public assistance policy issues with a particular emphasis on economic support (especially Social Security and TANF) and family policy (especially marriage and child support).

IV. Readings

Required readings include a reading packet and the following books, available at the University Bookstore:

- Sheldon Danziger and Robert Haveman. 2001. *Understanding Poverty*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Alice O'Connor. 2001. *Poverty Knowledge: Social Science, Social Policy, and the Poor in Twentieth-Century U.S. History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

V. Assignments and Evaluation of Student Outcomes

To prepare for active seminar discussion, participants are asked to:

- Complete assigned readings prior to the seminar meeting. Readings include two seminar papers per week starting the third week of class (papers available the day before the seminar meeting)
- Prepare two seminar papers for distribution the day before the seminar
- Complete eight one page critiques of the readings (not in the same week as a seminar paper)
- Complete a seminar paper for the final seminar meeting (not for advanced distribution).

Final grades will be based on the seminar papers (60% total), the 8 critiques (20% total), and seminar participation (20% total).

Seminar papers should be 5-8 pages, double-spaced. Topics for seminar papers will be discussed with writers at the end of the prior seminar session. The papers should **not** include a summary of the assigned readings, as all participants are expected to complete the readings before reviewing the seminar papers. **No later than 10 am Sunday**—the day before the seminar meeting-- seminar papers should be sent by e-mail attachment to the class list (sw-944@lists.students.wisc.edu). The seminar sessions will generally include brief (5 minute) introductory presentations by each seminar paper writer.

We will develop a schedule of papers the first week of classes. If for any reason you are unable to complete a paper on schedule (i.e. by 10am Sunday) you are asked to find another student to write the paper in your place. All students will be asked to write a paper (not to be distributed to the class) for the final session.

Reading critiques should be a single page, about half devoted to *integrative* summary comments (demonstrating familiarity with all the required readings for the week), and about half to critical responses or questions. Critiques should be completed by 10 am Sunday, and sent by e-mail to the instructor (cancian@lafollette.wisc.edu).

Seminar Schedule and Readings

1/24 Introduction: NOTE: Copies of Mead and E&S are posted on the door of SW 214

- O'Connor, A. (2001). *Poverty Knowledge*. "Introduction," pp.3-22.
- Mead, L (2002) "Misunderstanding Poverty"
- Ehrenberg & Smith (1991) *Modern Labor Economics*. Chapter 6

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Review of US Social Welfare Programs

- Dolgoff Chapters 7 & 9
- Scholz, J.K. and Levine, K. (2001). Chapter 6, "The Evolution of Income Support Policy in Recent Decades" in Danziger and Haveman. *Understanding Poverty*.
- Abramovitz (2001) "Everyone is Still on Welfare" p. 297-308.

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Poverty Measures

- Citro, C.F. and Michael, R.T. (1995). Chapter 1, especially "What is Poverty" and "The Official U.S. Poverty Measure." pp.19-31. In Citro and Michael (eds.) *Measuring Poverty: A New Approach*. Washington, DC: NAS Press.
- Cancian, M, and Meyer, D. R. (2004) "Alternative Measures of Economic Success among TANF Participants: Avoiding Poverty, Hardship and Dependence on Public Assistance." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. 23(3):531-548.
- Meyer B. and J. Sullivan (2003). "Measuring the Well-Being of the Poor Using Income and Consumption." *Journal of Human Resources* 38:1180-1221.
- O'Connor, A. (2001). *Poverty Knowledge*. Chapter 9 "The Poverty Research Industry," pp.213-41

Optional (required for paper writers):

- Beverly, S.G. (2000). "Using Measures of Material Hardship to Assess Well-Being." *Focus*, Vol.21, No.2, pp.65-69. Available:
<http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp/focus/foc212.pdf>

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Poverty Rates: Trends in the US

- Burtless, G. and Smeeding, T.M. (2001). Chapter 1, "The Level, Trend, and Composition of Poverty" (pp.36-68) in Danziger and Haveman. *Understanding Poverty*.
- Rank, M.R. and Hirschl, T.A. (2001). "The Occurrence of Poverty Across the Life Cycle: Evidence from the PSID." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, Vol.20, No.4, pp.737-756.
- Rank, M.R. and Hirschl, T.A. (2002) "Welfare Use as a Life Course Event: Towards a new understanding of the U.S. Safety Net." *Social Work*. 47(3) 237-248.

Optional (required for paper writers):

- Smeeding, T.M., Rainwater, L. and Burtless, G. (2001). Chapter 5, "U.S. Poverty in a Cross-National Context" in Danziger and Haveman. *Understanding Poverty*.

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Poverty Rates: Differences across groups

- Cancian, M. and Reed, D. (2001). Chapter 2, "Changes in Family Structure: Implications for Poverty and Related Policy" in Danziger and Haveman. *Understanding Poverty*.
- Andersen, M.L. and Collins, P.H. (eds.). (1998). "Conceptualizing Race, Class, and Gender." In Andersen and Collins, *Race, Class and Gender: An Anthology*, 3rd Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, CA., pp.67-87.
- Lichter, D. T. et al. 2005. "Child Poverty Among Racial Minorities and Immigrants" *Social Science Quarterly* Forthcoming.
- "Studies Suggest Potent Race Bias in Hiring" *Wall Street Journal* Sept 4, 2003

Optional (required for paper writers):

- Yinger, J. (2001). "Housing Discrimination and Residential Segregation as Causes of Poverty" in Danziger and Haveman. *Understanding Poverty*.
- Darity, W.A. and Mason, P.L. (1998). "Evidence of Discrimination in Employment: Codes of Color, Codes of Gender." *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Vol.12, No.2, pp.63-90. This article is available through Pro Quest on the Electronic Journal List: <http://www.library.wisc.edu/journals/>

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Dynamics/Mobility (poverty and inequality)

- Wright, E.O. "The Class Analysis of Poverty" Chapter. 2 in *Interrogating Inequality*. Pp. 32-50 (p. 39-45 optional)
- Corcoran, M. (2001). Chapter 4, "Mobility, Persistence, and the Consequences of Poverty for Children: Child and Adult Outcomes" in Danziger and Haveman. *Understanding Poverty*.
- Wilson, William Julius. (1996) "Societal Changes and Vulnerable Neighborhoods" in *When Work Disappears*. Pp. 25-50.
- Gosselin, Peter G. "The New Deal: If America Is Richer, Why are Its Families So Much Less Secure?" (<http://www.latimes.com/business/specials/la-fi-riskshift3oct10.0.5639898.story>) and "The Source of the Statistics and How They Were Analyzed" (<http://www.latimes.com/business/specials/la-fi-riskshift3oct10-method.0.7422067.story>)

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Inequality

- Kessler-Harris, Alice. (2001). "Epilogue" in *In Pursuit of Equity* 290-296.
- Skocpol, T.S. (2000). Chapter 1 "The Missing Middle." In *The Missing Middle* Pp.3-21.
- Rector, R. and Hederman, R.S. (2004) "Two Americas: One Rich, One Poor? Understanding Income Inequality in the United States." Heritage Foundation Backgrounder #1791. (Read both the Executive Summary and full report).

Optional (required for paper writers):

- Kaplow, L. (2002). "Why Measure Inequality?" NBER Working paper No. W9342. Available: <http://papers.nber.org/papers/W9342>

3/14 & 3/28

Social Security

On 3/14 Karen Holden will join us for the second half of seminar to discuss Social Security proposals.

The readings for this section will be finalized and distributed later in the semester—given the evolving debate. They are likely to include many of the following:

- Basic information from the Social Security Administration on SS:
<http://www.ssa.gov/understanding.htm> ;
<http://www.ssa.gov/pressoffice/basicfact.htm>
- CBO report on the Outlook for SS: <ftp://ftp.cbo.gov/55xx/doc5530/06-14-SocialSecurity.pdf>
- Final Report of the President's Commission: "Strengthening Social Security and Creating Personal Wealth for all Americans."
- GAO report on the proposals of the 2001 commission (2003):
<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d03310.pdf> and distributional implications (2004):
<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d04872t.pdf>
- Orszag, P. R. and Diamond, P. A. "Reforming Social Security: A Balanced Plan" December 2003 <http://www.brookings.edu/comm/policybriefs/pb126.htm>
- John, D.C. (2004) "How to Fix Social Security" Heritage Foundation Backgrounder #1811
<http://www.heritage.org/Research/SocialSecurity/bg1811.cfm>
- Steuerle, C.E. and Favreault, M. (2002) "Social Security for Yesterday's Family?" Urban Institute *Policy Briefs/Straight Talk*
http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/310598_Straight35.pdf
- Gramlich, E.M. (2004). "Rules for Assessing Social Security Reform"
<http://www.federalreserve.gov/BoardDocs/Speeches/2004/20040812/default.htm>
- Greenstein, R. (2005) "Senator Misrepresents CBO Report" Center on Budget and Policy Priorities <http://www.cbpp.org/1-4-05socsec2.htm>
- Joint Economic Committee Democrats (December, 2004) "Privatization Slashes Benefits and Adds Trillions To Social Security's Long-Term Cost."
(<http://jec.senate.gov/democrats/Documents/Releases/ssprivatizationdec04rel.pdf>)
- Korpi, W. and Palme, J. (1998). "The Paradox of Redistribution and Strategies for Equality: Welfare State Institutions, Inequality, and Poverty in the Western Countries." *American Sociological Review*, Vol.63, No.5, pp.661-87. This article is available through Pro Quest on the Electronic Journal List:
<http://www.library.wisc.edu/journals/>
- Lieberman, R.C. (1998). Chapter 1, "Race, Institutions, and Welfare in American Political Development" in *Shifting the Color Line* pp.1-22.
- Kijakazi, Kilolo (2003) "GAO Report Shows Social Security is Favorable to People of Color...". Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Available at:
<http://www.cbpp.org/5-12-03socsec.htm>
- Krugman, Paul. 2005. "Confusions about Social Security." *The Economists' Voice*. 2: 1/1.
- A good website for other links: <http://www.ebri.org/SSProject/LINKS.html>

4/4 & 4/11

Recent welfare reform: TANF & W-2

Week 1:

- Pavetti, L.A. (2001). Chapter 7, "Welfare Policy in Transition: Redefining the Social Contract for Poor Citizen Families with Children and for Immigrants" in Danziger and Haveman. *Understanding Poverty*.
- Joe Soss, Sanford Schram, and Richard Fording. 2003. "Introduction" In S.F. Schram, J. Soss, and R. Fording. eds. 2003. *Race and the Politics of Welfare Reform*. Pp.1-20.
- "Comparison of PRIOR LAW and the PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WORK OPPORTUNITY RECONCILIATION ACT OF 1996 (P.L.104-193). Available: <http://aspe.os.dhhs.gov/hsp/isp/reform.htm>
- "Comparison of AFDC to W-2" Wisconsin DWD. Available: <http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/dws/w2/afdcw2.htm>

Optional (required for paper writers; included in reading packet)

- Murray, C. (1984). *Losing Ground: American Social Policy 1950-1980*, Chapter 12, pp. 154-166, and Chapter 15, pp.196-204.
- Ellwood, D. *Poor Support* (p.7-9, 14-29)

Week 2:

- Blank, Rebecca M. 2002. "Evaluating Welfare Reform in the United States." (2002). *Journal of Economic Literature* Vol 40: 1105-1166.
- Gooden, S.T. (1998). "All Things Not Being Equal: Differences in Caseworker Support Toward Black and White Welfare Clients." *Harvard Journal of African American Public Policy*, pp.23-33.
- Meyer, B.D. and Rosenbaum, D.T. (2001). "Welfare, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and the Labor Supply of Single Mothers." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol.116, No. 3, pp. 1063-1114.

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Family Policy: Marriage

- Horn, Wade F. "Bush Administration's Proposed Marriage Education Initiatives" Summarized in *Poverty Research Insights*
- Coontz, S. and Folbre, N. (2002). "Marriage, Poverty, and Public Policy." A Discussion Paper from the Council on Contemporary Families (CCF). Available at: <http://www.prospect.org/webfeatures/2002/03/coontz-s-03-19.html>
- Ooms, T., Bouchet, S. and Parke, M. "Beyond Marriage Licenses: Efforts in States to Strengthen Marriage and Two-Parent Families." Center on Law and Social Policy. Available: http://www.clasp.org/publications/beyond_marr.pdf
- Robert Rector. 2001. "Using Welfare Reform to Strengthen Marriage." *American Experiment Quarterly*. (Summer): 63-7.
- "Barriers to Marriage among Fragile Families" Fragile Families Research Brief. 2003. <http://cfcw.princeton.edu/files/briefs/ResearchBrief16.pdf>
- Seefeldt, K, and P. Smock. "Marriage on the Public Policy Agenda: What Do Policy Makers Need to Know from Research? Summarized in *Poverty Research Insights*

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Family Policy: Paternity/Child Support/Fathers:

- Horn, W. and Sawhill, I. (2001). "Fathers, Marriage, and Welfare Reform" (pp.421-41) in Blank, R. and Haskins, R. (eds.). *The New World of Welfare*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.
- Mink, G. (1998). Chapter 3 "Disdained Mothers, Unequal Citizens: Paternity Establishment, Child Support, and the Stratification of Rights," pp.69-101.
- M. Cancian and D. R. Meyer, 2002. "Responding to Changes in Family Organization". *Focus*, Vol.22, No.1, pp. 87-92. Available: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp/focus/foc221-part4.pdf>
- Pate, D. (2002). "The Life Circumstances of African American Fathers with Children on W-2: An Ethnographic Inquiry." *Focus*, Vol.22, No.2, pp.25-30. Available: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp/focus/foc222.pdf>

Additional Reference:

- Grall, T. (2003). "Custodial Mothers and Fathers and Their Child Support: 2001." . Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau. Available: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/p60-225.pdf>

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Assessing Poverty Knowledge

- O'Connor, A. (2001). *Poverty Knowledge*. Chapter 10, "Dependency, the "Underclass," and a New Liberal Consensus" . . . (pp.242-83), and Chapter 11, "The End of Welfare and the Case for a New Poverty Knowledge" (pp.284-95).
- Blank, R. (2003) *Poverty, Policy and Ethics: Can An Economist be Both Critical and Caring?*
- Danziger and Haveman, *Understanding Poverty*. "Introduction" pp. 1-10, Chapter 13 "Politics, Race, and Poverty Research" (Loury) pp.454-62, and Chapter 14 "Research on Poverty and Antipoverty Policies" (Waldfogel) pp.463-72).